

experience Balzers



BALZERS

Gutenberg Castle; the Iron Age bronze figure, "Mars von Gutenberg", which was found together with nine other votive figures on the Castle Hill; Chapel of St. Peter and the Tower House (from left)



History

Balzers, the southernmost municipality of Liechtenstein, is about 20 km² in size and has 4,604 inhabitants (2018). It is made up of two parts, Balzers proper and Mäls, as well as several Alpine areas. Its landmark is the medieval Gutenberg Castle, enthroned on a striking cliff covered with vineyards in the middle of the village. The earliest traces of settlement date back to the Neolithic Age (5th millennium BC), and there was a larger settlement in Balzers during the Roman period. Balzers is first mentioned in writing in the 9th century as "Palazoles" (palatinate, manor). For centuries, the population lived predominantly from agriculture. Trades produced only for local use. Transport also played a role through the 1820s: The village was situated on an important trade route between southern Germany and Italy. The people of Balzers had the right to transport goods from Balzers over the St. Luziensteig pass to Maienfeld. Because of its border location and as a gateway to important Alpine passes, the village suffered repeatedly from military campaigns, during which it was plundered and soldiers were quartered in the village. From the 19th century until the middle of the 20th century, population growth and lack of work forced many people from Balzers to travel abroad as seasonal workers or even to emigrate entirely.







Modern and liveable



Solar installation on the Balzers Common, Oerlikon Balzers, Primary School (from left)



After the Second World War, Liechtenstein underwent a fundamental economic transformation: Industry and manufacturing, trades, and the service sector developed rapidly, while agriculture lost much of its importance. The industrial boom in Balzers began in 1946 with the founding of the Gerätebau-Anstalt Balzers, now Oerlikon Balzers. The company quickly became the most important employer in Balzers. Entrepreneurship developed rapidly in a wide variety of areas, so that Balzers today has become a diversified business location with over 450 companies and more than 3,100 jobs. Thanks to increased income, the municipality was able to steadily expand its infrastructure. Today Balzers is a modern and attractive place to live with a high quality of life, offering a wide range of educational and cultural opportunities, modern sports and leisure facilities, and beautiful local recreation areas. Thanks to its good public transport links, Balzers can be reached quickly and conveniently.

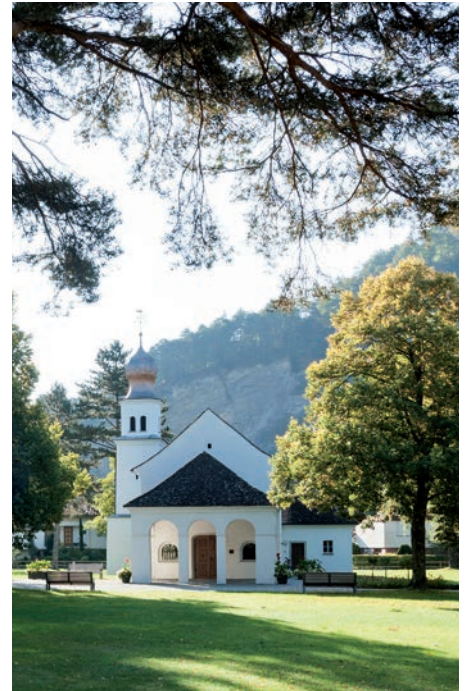
Sights

A walk through Balzers takes you past numerous historically interesting buildings, some of which are privately owned and some of which are public. The most famous building – visible from afar → is **Gutenberg Castle ❶**, which was probably built at the end of the 12th century. The view from here is breathtaking. At the foot of the Castle Hill stands **St. Nicholas Parish Church ❷**, dedicated in 1912. The **Old Church Tower ❸** on the Egerta reminds us of its predecessor. Opposite lies



the baroque **Old Parsonage ④**, which is used as the municipality's multifaceted cultural centre. Other important church buildings are the **Mariahilf Chapel ⑤** from the 17th century, which is a popular venue for weddings, and the **Chapel of St. Peter** (14th century) ⑥, with a late Gothic winged altar. Together with the **Tower House ⑦**, one of the most important medieval secular buildings in Liechtenstein, the chapel makes up the core of the Mäls settlement. **Gutenberg House ⑧**, originally built by Princess Franziska of Liechtenstein in 1854–1856 as a boarding school, now serves as an education and seminar centre. The **Torkel ⑨**, a wine press and cellar preserved from the 18th century, is a witness to the centuries-old Balzers winegrowing tradition. The **Balzers Mill** from the 19th century was restored and has been back in operation since 1994.

Old Parsonage, Torkel, Gutenberg Castle and
St. Nicholas Parish Church, Mariahilf Chapel (from left)



Switzerland

A13

Rhine



Rheinstrasse

Zweistäpfe

Rheinstrasse

Gärten

Finne

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Briel

Marahlf

Tschingel

Unterm Stein

Gatter

St. Peter

Irädug

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Mälsner Dorf

Heraweg

Unterm Schloss

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Elagass

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Gagoz

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Walks in the village

Balzers

Municipal Administration **A** – Mars Fountain – Old Parsonage **4** – Old Church Tower **3** – Old village centre Höfle – Bank building (former customs house) – Old village centre Pralawisch – Torkel **9** – Alte Churerstrasse – St. Catherine's Fountain Nature Reserve – Swiss-Liechtenstein border – Torbariet – Junkerriet – St. Nicholas Parish Church **2** – Municipal Administration **A**.
Detour to Gutenberg Castle **1**.
Approx. 4.5 km, 60 min.

Mäls

Municipal Administration **A** – Old Schoolhouse / Old Town Hall – St. Nicholas Parish Church **2** – Junkerriet with Gutenberg House **8** – Torbariet – Old village centre Iradug – Chapel of St. Peter **6** and Tower House **7** – Mariahilf Chapel **5** – Municipal Administration **A**.
Detour to Gutenberg Castle **1**.
Approx. 3.7 km, 50 min.



Balzers Mill, "Kääsknöpfle", vineyard at Castle Hill with
Gutenberg House in the background (from left)



Culinary delights

The economic development of the last decades is also reflected in the local cuisine: The poor people's food from the time when Balzers was still a farming village is rarely prepared at home today, but instead is offered in gourmet restaurants as a special treat: **Tatsch** (an egg and flour dish) or **Törggarebel** (a typical Rhine Valley dish made from maize meal) with apple sauce. In autumn, specialities are served from the local hunt. The **Hafaläab**, a Balzers speciality made from maize flour, is now only rarely eaten. But **Kääsknöpfle** (small cheese dough dumplings) with sour cheese and apple sauce are still popular today. The traditional cuisine is complemented by dishes from various countries brought to Balzers by immigrants. Balzers restaurants and inns offer dishes ranging from hearty and down-to-earth to exclusive culinary delights. Together with local wines, a beer, cider, or spirits from Balzers, there is something for every connoisseur.





Culture

The municipality of Balzers is known far and wide for its active cultural life. Music associations, choirs, bands, traditional costume groups, theatre and dance groups, schools, and professional musicians and artists ensure that Balzers has a diverse and lively culture. High-quality concerts, performances, and interesting exhibitions attract a large audience to Balzers. Many cultural institutions are known beyond the country's borders: Operetta Balzers, the Liechtenstein Musical Company, the Cultural Summer at Gutenberg Castle, the Open Hair Metal Festival, the Old Parsonage Cultural Centre, which organises several exhibitions throughout the year with accompanying programmes and events, and Gutenberg House with its exciting range of courses and lectures. The Municipal Library is open to all and regularly organises readings by authors. Keeping traditions and customs alive is also a big part of Balzers culture. Numerous customs and rites are celebrated throughout the year, such as Christmas carolling, Carnival, the Funkensonntag (annual bonfire to banish the winter) as well as Catholic holidays and the Alpabfahrt (cattle drive from Alpine pastures to the valley in the autumn).

Funken bonfire on the Balzers Common,
exhibition in the Old Parsonage, concert of the
Balzers Harmoniemusik in the courtyard
of Gutenberg Castle (from left)



Recreation, adventure, and hiking paradise

There are many ways to spend your free time in Balzers. The village is surrounded by a beautiful landscape: Forests in harmony with nature invite you on extensive walks, and several nature reserves such as Äulehäg, St. Catherine's Fountain, and the Junkerriet wetland as well as species-rich meadows offer special landscape experiences. Numerous well-marked hiking and biking trails lead through the nearby and impressive mountains. You can relax and unwind along the banks of the Rhine with sand and gravel beaches. The Ellhorn climbing garden is also located on the Rhine, offering routes with difficulty levels 5 to 8. All year round, sports enthusiasts can also enjoy an indoor swimming pool, a Vitaparcours fitness trail with a Kneipp facility, tennis courts, and an outdoor and indoor riding arena. Smaller children can let off steam at ten different playgrounds, while older children and young people entertain themselves in the Scharmotz youth centre or on the pump track. A reading trail around the Castle Hill introduces visitors to the legends and myths of Balzers. The weekly market is also popular, where fresh regional products are offered every Thursday from April to November.

Canoeing and climbing garden on the Rhine,
pump track in the village centre (from left)





Balzers: Facts & figures

Southernmost municipality of Liechtenstein | Elevation: 477 m above sea level
Area: 19.7 km² | Population (as of 2018): 4,604 | www.balzers.li provides comprehensive information about the municipality, events, and contact addresses of the Municipal Administration and sports facilities, along with local maps and other downloads. Accommodation and restaurants in Balzers can be found at www.tourismus.li
Contact: Municipal Administration of Balzers | Fürstenstrasse 50
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