

# Lichtenthal Abbey

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The Lichtenthal Abbey (Kloster Lichtenthal) is a Cistercian nunnery in Lichtenthal in the town of Baden-Baden, Germany.

## History and buildings

It was founded in 1245 by Margravine Irmengard bei Rhein, widow of Margrave Hermann V of Baden, whose body she had brought here in 1248 from Backnang for reburial. She seriously over-reached herself financially on the project, however, and was obliged to ask her family for help.

The imposing gateway, built in 1781, leads into a three-sided walled courtyard with a fountain to the Blessed Virgin Mary, surrounded by the various abbey and domestic buildings, the school, the abbey church, Prince's Chapel and a hermit's chapel.

The Gothic abbey church, of which the choir dates from the 14th century and the nave from the 15th, contains works of art and furnishings of many dates, particularly of the 15th century, as at this time, on the initiative of the Abbess Margaret of Baden, the church interior was lavishly refurbished and ornamented.

The Prince's Chapel was built in 1288, and until 1372 was the burial place of the Margraves of Baden. Here is also the tomb of the foundress, Margravine Irmengard. Besides the tombs, the high altar and several side altars, this chapel also contains the statue of the "Madonna of the Keys", so called because in times of danger the abbey keys are entrusted to her. (The abbey has until now survived every danger unscathed, as is related in a Baden-Baden drinking song).

The three statues over the gateway are from the nearby ruined All Saints' Abbey and represent Saint Helena, above, Abbot Gerung, first abbot of All Saints, to the left, and his mother and the foundress of All Saints, the Duchess Uta of Schauenburg, to the right, who was a relative of the Margravine Irmengard.

The hermit's chapel, built in 1678, is used as a mortuary chapel for the nuns.

## Burials

- Rudolf I, Margrave of Baden-Baden
- Herman V, Margrave of Baden-Baden

## Activities

The nuns particularly devote themselves to teaching - the nunnery accommodates the primary school of Lichtenthal - and to religious handicrafts.



The Prince's Chapel.