



Bellagio, Como. © APT del Comasco

# Great Drives

## Mosel

### Mouthwateringly Romantic Mosel

Discover Germany's dreamy river valley with an Avis hire car. For an unforgettably romantic break, whisk your lover away to the Mosel region of Germany's Rheinland-Pfalz. Trace the Mosel River upstream through vineyard-smothered valleys until you reach the Three Corners of Germany, Luxembourg and France, indulging yourselves in the local luxuries as you go.

#### Test drive this two-day tour for the best of the Mosel Region.

Pick up your Avis hire car from Heidelberg and head west along the 656 road towards French-flavoured Saarbrücken and north to the village of Bernkastel-Kues, where you'll take to the Mosel River before some R and R at your luxurious retreat in Mülheim. Invigorated, keep going against the flow and admire the architecture in Germany's oldest city – Trier – before a short drive south to Perl, where culinary perfection awaits you. Then it's just a skip across the valley towards the highlands and Idar-Oberstein, where you can pick up a sparkling memento of your trip. Drive east back to Heidelberg to drop off your Avis hire car.

#### High Points en route

##### Heidelberg – Love at far sight

For a seductive perspective of **Heidelberg** and its story-book castle, climb up the slope across the Neckar River to the **Philosophenweg**, or Philosopher's Way. The view of the city, surrounded by mountains and lush woodland, explains why the Romantic poets fell so heavily for the place. You'll also be struck by the Mediterranean-like climate up there, which is why exotic flora like bamboo, rhododendrons and yuccas flourish in the **Philosophengärtchen**.

##### Bernkastel-Kues – Just cruising

Motor to the "Pearl of the middle Mosel", where the marketplace, surrounded by colourful half-timbered houses, is a great place to explore. Hit the water for an hour-long scenic cruise to picturesque Trarben-Trarbach, and back.

##### Weinromantikshotel, Mülheim – Unwind, utterly

You can drive the Mosel upstream all the way to **Mülheim** and your hideaway – **Weinromantikhotel Richtershof** – a converted 300-year-old winery next to a tree-studded park. For extra romance points, book ahead for room 401 – with floral decor and a terrace overlooking the gardens – and surprise your partner with a relaxing vinotherapy treatment in the spa.

##### Trier – Just get lost

Lose yourselves roaming among the tempting stalls,

flowers and step-gabled facades of the **Hauptmarkt** – the market square – before retiring to the **Café Zur Steipe**. The beauty of the local architecture goes well with a coffee and a slice of divine chocolate cake.

##### Schloss Berg, Perl – Delectable dining

Seating only 34 diners at a time, the three-Michelin-starred **Schloss Berg** is a wonderfully intimate affair. The sumptuousness of the Renaissance-inspired décor almost matches its exquisite French cuisine, but not quite. Executive Chef Christian Bau imports the finest ingredients from across the border three miles away, and dishes like the 24-hour-simmered veal shank, served with winter truffles and celery, are superb.

##### Steinkaulenberg mine, Idar-Oberstein – Let it shine

Not even the **Felsenkirche** – the church elegantly built into the cliffs high above the town – can distract from this town's heritage. Everywhere you look in the gem capital of Germany, something sparkles at you. The town's shops are replete with sculptures and jewellery, but true romantics can hunt down a unique keepsake at the local **Steinkaulenberg** mine, where agate, rock crystal, amethyst and many more rare stones are found.



## High Points en route - Free time on your hands? Take your pick from the following five gems:

### 1/ Zehnthauskeller, Beilstein – A right song and dance

This sleepy village, just upstream from Ediger-Eller, is the perfect spot for a memorable date – just sniff out the **Zehnthauskeller**, behind the **Haus Lipmann** hotel. The medieval charm of this vaulted tavern is a real winner, and the live music at the weekends gives you the perfect opportunity to sing and dance the night away with the uber-friendly regulars.

### 2/ Burg Eltz, Moselkern – Queen of the castles

Sat majestically on a steep crag at the end of the wild Eltz valley, the 10-storey **Burg Eltz** castle is straight out of a fairytale. Beautifully preserved over the past 700 years, the interior of this fortress transports you straight back to medieval times. Seek out the treasure vault, where there are some remarkable pieces from the 12th to the 19th centuries.

### 3/ Grevenmacher – Have a flutter

Drive across the border into Luxembourg to discover the **Jardin des Papillons** – Butterfly Garden. Set back from the river in a striking glasshouse, you can roam and relax

as a kaleidoscope of colour flutters around you.

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### 5/ Metz – French fancy

Sat on the bank of what is called the Moselle River in this part of the world, the French town of **Metz** has an abundance of stunning churches. The richly coloured stained glass of the gothic St Etienne Cathedral is unmissable, as is the view of the neo-Romanesque **Temple Neuf**, perched on an island in the river, from the flower-bedecked Moyen Pont.



## Need to know

### Round trip

217 miles (350 km)  
4 hours 20 minutes approx

### Best time to come

To make the most of the weather and local attractions, travel between April and October.

### Soundtrack

Rheinland-Pfalz State Philharmonic Orchestra – Ernst Boehe's Odysseus' Travels

### Essential item

A digital camera to capture the river views.

### Tip

On-street parking is common in Germany, just look for a sign with 'P' in white on a blue background.

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