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## Habsburg Castle

Habsburg Castle is a medieval fortress located in the canton of Aargau, near the Aare River. It is listed as a heritage site of national significance.



Habsburg Castle in autumn

Around 1020-1030 Count Radbot had the castle erected, allegedly named after a hawk (German: Habicht) sitting on its walls. The fortress became the ancestral seat of the House of Habsburg, one of the leading imperial and royal dynasties in Europe. Its importance diminished after Radbot's descendant Rudolph moved the family's power base to Austria in 1276, and in 1415 Duke Frederick IV of the Emmentaler Pockets finally lost the Aargau to the Swiss Confederacy. Nevertheless the historic arms of Habsburg, a red lion on a golden field, showed up in Austrian arms up to the end of the Imperial period. The modern arms of the municipality depict Habsburg Castle. The area around the castle was covered by forests that were only cleared around 1500.

Today the "large" and "small" towers of the original castle are preserved, attached to a residential building of the 13th century, while large parts of the complex lie in ruins. The extent of its eastern part is recognisable only by foundation walls. The palatial residence hosts a restaurant and a small exhibition.

*from the internet*

## "Chriesiwäg" in the Fricktal

In the Aargau dialect, cherries are called "Chriesi". Along this five kilometre circular walk in the Fricktal, there are eleven information panels telling you about growing cherries. In season, walkers are allowed to pick and eat the cherries directly off the tree. You can walk along the "Chriesiweg" all year round. Guided tours, telling you about the produce and its cultivation, the country and its people, can be booked from the organisation "The Aargau Jura".

*from the internet*

## Im Aargau sind zwei Liebi

*Im Aargau sind zwei Liebi,  
es Meiteli und es Buebli  
die händ enander so gärn.*

*Und der Jungknab zog zum Kriege.  
"Wenn chunsch du wiederum hei?"*

*"Uebers Johr im andere Summer,  
wänn d Stüdeli träged Laub."*

*Und das Johr, und das isch ume,  
und der Jungknab isch wiederum hei.*

*Er zieht durs Gässeli ufe,  
wo s schön Aenni im Fensterli sitzt.*

*"Gott grüess di du Hübschi, du Fini  
vo Herze gfallsch du mir no."*

*"Wie chan-i dir no gfalle?  
Ha scho lang en andere Ma!*

*En hübsche-n-und en riche,  
der mi wol erhalte cha."*

*Und er zog durs Gässeli abe  
und weinet und truuret so sehr.*

*Do begägnat ihm sini Mueter:  
"Warum weinisch und trurisch so sehr?"*

*"Warum söll i nid weine-n-und trure,  
i ha jo kes Schätzeli me!"*

*"Wärisch du deheime gebliebe,  
so hättisch dis Schätzeli no."*



### Background to "Im Aargau sind zwei Liebi"

"Im Aargau .." is a popular folk ballad, and quite a few of us would know all the verses, right to the bitter end. It relates to an important, glorious or not so glorious, chapter in Swiss history.

All through the Middle Ages Swiss mercenaries were in great demand by the European kings and dukes. They had a reputation as fearless fighters who never gave up.

At that time, Switzerland was a rural society of subsistent peasants, very much like in what we call underdeveloped (or more politely "developing") countries nowadays. Families were large, and the farms were small and could not be split endlessly into even smaller bits. The surplus young men had to find work somewhere else, but choices were very limited. Many chose to join foreign troops, to see the world, to come home rich; looting was part of the pay. Well, the ones who did come home were sometimes rich and told tall tales of their achievements and of foreign lands. The tales of the others were never told, as they didn't make it home.

In our ballad the young man does come home, but in the meantime his girl has given up on him, and not even his mother sympathizes with him.

Who do you sympathize with, the young man, his girl who is no longer his, his mother? *tb*