



From rivalry to unity - a bridge connecting France and Germany

Weil am Rhein - a beautiful but also highly interesting city in the south of Germany.

If one visits the town they will have to get in contact with the "Dreiländereck", a point where the borders of three different countries meet, in this case the borders of Switzerland, France and Germany. And next to the "Dreiländereck" there is the "Dreiländerbrücke", a bridge that connects the German town Weil am Rhein and the French town Huningue.

When walking over the bridge, one is able to move from one state to another in a few minutes. And even though the countries are only less than 500 meters apart, it is stunning to see the differences between both cultures.

Architecture, shops and lifestyle are not the same in both towns, but thanks to the bridge cultural exchange is possible.

And this phenomenon is not only experienced when crossing the bridge. Already in Weil am Rhein one is able to get into contact with a lot of different mentalities.

Walking next to the Rhein on the German side, the town can be perceived as a melting pot. Many different cultures meet, and the diversity is obvious.

And being able to get to another country as easily as it is in Weil am Rhein by using a bridge was not always possible. Especially when thinking about the history Germany and France share, it is not self-evident that living together in peace is possible.

After many conflicts and wars in the last centuries, a bridge like the one between Weil am Rhein and Huningue is not only practical, but also extremely symbolical.

A bridge connects, unites and, like a rainbow, it stands for harmony and creates a link between two different areas.

That after all a German-French friendship exists, also visually, is truly amazing and gives hope that even after stormy times, there is a chance for a new beginning. In order to get to know each other and to feel connected, interaction is the key — and this can only be achieved by bringing together different mentalities.

So besides being an effective building for tourists, the bridge conveys a powerful message that clarifies the meaning of progress and a new understanding of being a union.

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Photo by Michael Weiss