

## 50,000 exhibits at the Criminal museum in Rothenburg

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Rothenburg, a small town in Bavaria (South German state) is famous for its half-timbered houses, well-preserved cobblestone streets from the medieval age.

Many call it the most beautiful [German](#) town as it lies in the country's Romantic route (350 km stretch: Würzburg <—> Füssen)



A day is enough to explore this picturesque town on foot. But one of the unique things to do in Rothenburg is to visit the [criminal museum](#).

The museum is all about the crimes committed in the middle ages (5th – 15th century) and how justice was served. After the museum visit, your thoughts will be, 'Oh my god, I never knew these many punishments existed before'

- There are about 50,000 exhibits ranging across a 1000-year period of European law.
- It also ranks #6 in the list of most popular museums in Germany.



#### Entrance fee

Adult – 7.5€ and student – 4.5€

The prices are subject to change. Enquire directly on the [official website](#) before the visit.

#### Opening times

Monday – Friday from 10.00 to 18.00

#### Inside Rothenburg Criminal Museum

The ground floor has only the ticket office, cafeteria, and souvenir shops.

#### 1. Basement

As soon as you buy the ticket, you enter a haunted underground. The basement is all about torture. It's not something everyone will enjoy, but interesting and informative.

The entire floor exhibits a list of instruments used to torture a prisoner such as

1. Spiked chair (to threaten)
2. Stretching ladder or a rack (to stretch joints or to dislocate bones)
3. Mouth Pear (an instrument that prevented the prisoner from crying during torture)
4. cutting off ears, finger screw, and leg screw (for pressing), burning, drowning.



## 2. First floor

This floor in the museum contains detailed information about the law, public humiliation punishments, women during this period, town proceedings.

You will find the floor boring, especially coming from the torture floor.

### Imperial criminal code

The 19th century led to the merge of different versions of criminal law. The method provided different gruesome methods of punishment together with the death penalty only in the case of murder or betraying the country.



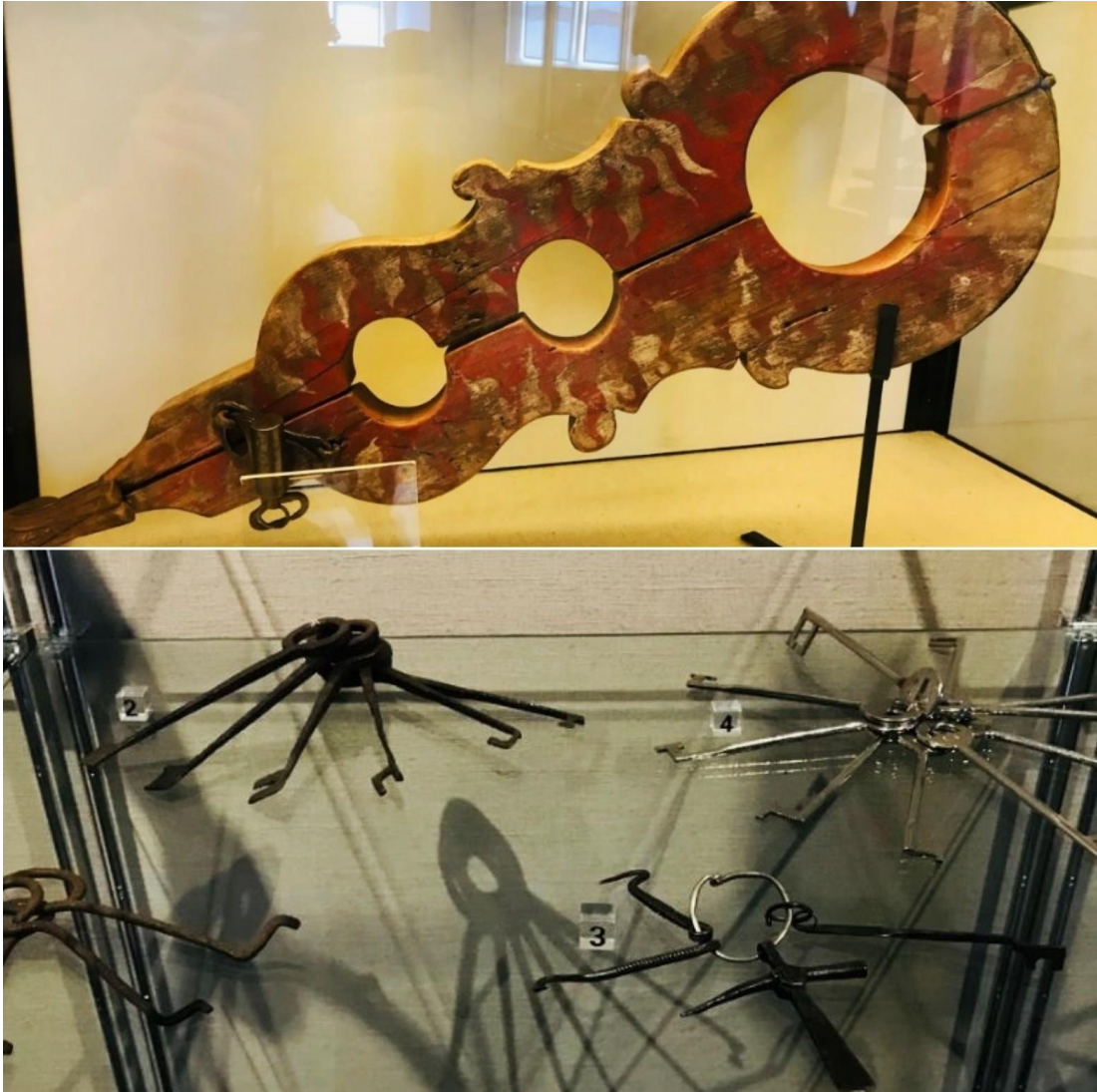
### Witch trials

The only interesting thing worth reading on the first floor is about Witches.

1. The Witch trials led to the largest mass execution of humans by humans in Germany.
2. An estimated 50,000 died between the 15th- 18th century (dark middle ages) mainly women.
3. Their routine included casting evil spells, sexual devil union, witch-ride, signing an agreement with the devil.

### 3. Second floor

The final floor of the museum has various antiques like iron rocks dating back to 750 B.C, iron keys, skeleton keys, shame masks, neck violin, letters, books about the protocol of witness, the theory of torture.



### Shame masks

They are the highlight of the floor. A shame mask looks similar to a normal mask but with a bell that produces sound when you move around.

If proven guilty, you have to wear, go out public. The bell sound naturally attracts people around you. This was a form of humiliation. It was applicable to every form of punishment and existed in many shapes and forms such as

- Neck iron with a bell (for cleaning the street)
- Pig shape for those who acted like a pig
- Talkative women with a long tongue and long ear (for gossips)



What you can expect?

When you exit, you will feel, 'Thank god, I was not born in the middle ages'. The Criminal Museum in Rothenburg is worth visiting if you are keen to know the punishments across different centuries, a place where there are unbelievable ways to punish humans.

**Time of visit: July 2020**

[" The empty, the angry, the lonely, the tricked, we are all museums of fear." – Charles Bukowski](#)

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