

Ruins in the Rhineland, Trier's Roman Ruins

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TRIER , Germany -- Arriving in Trier on a dark and moonless night, was never part of my plan. I rushed through the train station, misplaced my carry-on luggage, found it after a frantic search then missed the express train to Trier. I should have slowed down, ordered a bratwurst in one of the station's cafes then moseyed on down to the platform and taken the next train out. What I mean is, you don't have to make the same mistake. Plan to arrive at dusk and you'll be treated to a light show, the moment when the spots illuminating Trier's Roman ruins blink on, bringing them to life. If you've done your homework in advance you won't think you've seen the ghost of Nero, as I did, when the Porta Nigra , the Roman gate to the city, built in the first century A.D., loomed up in the dark. Trier's best preserved ruin, the Porta Nigra looked so new that I almost expected to see armed centurions marching underneath. Made of massive sandstone blocks, it was easy to see why the 98-foot-high pile lasted into the 21st century, long enough to be declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site, one of Trier's nine such sites. It was early when I returned the next morning, but the tour groups were already there, milling around in front of the Tourism Office , sipping take-out coffee, perusing brochures and waiting for their guides. While they snapped pictures, I stopped at the office to get a city map and to ask about local restaurants and available city tours. "We've got something for every age," said the desk clerk, looking me up and down to assess [Full story on huffingtonpost.com](#)



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