



## Eigelstein City Gate

historical building



KölnTourismus, Foto: Christoph Seelbach



Like Hahnen City Gate and Severins City Gate, Eigelstein City Gate is one of the three surviving gate castles of Cologne's medieval city wall. It is a particularly fine example of what were once twelve large city gates from the 12th/13th century, most of which were demolished in the 19th century. The Eigelstein City Gate still clearly shows how each gate was designed as a small castle in its own right, which served to control the main routes. This is where the route to the north was located, which was already laid out by the Romans in the direction of Neuss, Xanten and Nijmegen. Indirectly, the name "Eigelstein" also goes back to the Romans, as there were burial monuments along the road that were crowned with a pine cone. These were later reinterpreted as the fruit of the oak tree, from which the current name is derived.

The Eigelstein City Gate is still adorned with monuments in its conches. On the one hand, the wreck of the small cruiser "SMS Cöln" can be visited. The warship named after the city was sunk in the North Sea during the First World War, with the loss of 509 lives. The wreck was washed up in Norderney and then brought to Cologne for inspection. A copy of the Kölsche Boor can be found in the Konche on the other side of the City Gate. The Kölsche Boor symbolises the defensive nature of the city of Cologne, which was also defended by the Kappesbauern (cabbage farmers) living along the city wall. The figure therefore carries the city keys. As the Kölsche Boor was attached to the City Gate when Emperor Wilhelm II visited the city, the saying: "Halt Fass am Rich Do, Kölscher Boor, mag et falle soess ov soor" (Hold fast to the Reich, you Cologne farmer, may it fall sweet or sour) goes back to the visit of the then Emperor Wilhelm II and the national tendencies of the 19th century. On the one hand, it harks back to Cologne's past as a free imperial city; on the other hand, it is a reminder to remain loyal to the new empire in this tradition. The Eigelstein City Gate can continue to adorn itself with other dubious royal celebrities who walked beneath it. Alongside Maria de Medici, Napoleon ceremoniously entered the conquered city through the City Gate some time later.

Today, the Eigelstein City Gate no longer has a martial atmosphere. Since 1994, the city of Cologne has entrusted the building to the Offene Jazz Haus Schule e.V. for use. The City Gate can also be hired for celebrations of various kinds, so the old walls are quite cheerful.

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When the weather is nice, the best place to spend time is in the numerous cafés and restaurants on the square in front of the City Gate, a place where the feeling of the city and the neighbourhood is particularly tangible.



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