

Contact:

PR department

Hirschelgasse 9-11

90403 Nuremberg

Tel.: +49 (0)911 / 2 31-54 20

Fax: +49 (0)911 / 2 31-1 49 81

presse-museen@stadt.nuernberg.de

Albrecht Dürer's House

Albrecht-Dürer-Straße 39

90403 Nuremberg

Tel.: +49 (0)911 / 2 31-25 68

Fax: +49 (0)911 / 2 31-24 43

albrecht-duerer-haus@

stadt.nuernberg.de

museen.nuernberg.de

museen der stadt nürnberg

Albrecht Dürer's House

"Back to Dürer" – this is the motto of Albrecht Dürer's House, presenting the living and working quarters of the great artist, Albrecht Dürer (1471-1528). The museum shows all facets of Dürer and his work. A tour takes visitors through all four floors of the house which was Dürer's residence between 1509 and 1528. A particular attraction: the large painting and printing workshop from Dürer's time where artistic techniques are demonstrated.

Along with Johann Sebastian Bach and Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, Nuremberg painter, graphic artist, and art theorist Albrecht Dürer is one of the world's best-known figures in German cultural history. His oeuvre represents a turning-point in art history: Drawing on ideas from German, Italian, and Dutch art, Dürer was able to create something entirely new – works of art that wedded precision with emotion and intellectual depth. Yet at all times he was also profoundly concerned with the fundamental questions of art. What can it accomplish? What are its limits? How does it change the people who deal with it?

Albrecht Dürer was born in exactly the right place at the right time. During his lifetime, Nuremberg was one of Europe's largest and most powerful trading and cultural hubs. His father had initially meant for the boy to take over the family's flourishing goldsmithing business, but young Albrecht decided instead to train as a printer in the studio of Michael Wolgemut. This proved to be the right decision. By 1509 the artist's standing in his home town had risen so high that he was accepted as a member of the city's "Great Council"; and by 1520, Dürer was a European celebrity.

The City of Nuremberg began preserving the memory of its famous son long before such practices became commonplace in modern times. The house where Albrecht Dürer lived and worked from 1509 until his death nearly twenty years later was first known as "Dürer's House" as early as 1714. And in 1828, it became one of the world's longest-standing memorials to an artist, founding a museum tradition that has continued down to today.

When Albrecht Dürer bought the large house near the Tiergärtnerter, he made what would probably have been considered a good deal even then. The area was a distinctly "intellectual" district, and the house had been expanded and renovated just a few years earlier. By this point the stately, five-story structure was already more than 80 years old. But today's peaceful square is deceptive: in Dürer's day the space was partly filled with

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buildings, and every day the big Tiergärtnerort gate fed a noisy stream of people and vehicles down five of the city's streets.

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The house was an outward expression of prosperity – lots of window space meant that the owner could afford expensive heat in winter. The property also included a small courtyard with its own well, adjoined by a modest outbuilding. After Dürer's death in 1528, the building quickly changed hands – and shape: over the years, walls, doors, and windows would be added or removed without too much expense, depending on the needs of each new owner or tenant.

In 1826 came what was probably the most important event in the building's history since 1509. To prevent any further disfigurement, and to provide an appropriate place to honor the 300th anniversary of the painter's death, the City of Nuremberg bought the house. A memorial room with a bust of Dürer was installed as well as a meeting room for the Nuremberg artists' associations and a custodian's apartment. The artist's death was then commemorated with due ceremony in 1828, with the participation of an international group of artists, academics, and art patrons.

Then in 1871 the house became a proper museum, with regulated public access. To celebrate Dürer's 400th birthday, it was once again renovated and gradually filled with copies of Dürer's paintings and graphics, along with furnishings inspired by the historicism movement. The brand-new "Albrecht-Dürer-Haus-Stiftung e.V." foundation assumed special responsibility for running and maintaining the building and the museum.

The massive air raid on Nuremberg's Old Town on January 2, 1945, did not entirely spare the Dürer House. Bombs landing nearby blew part of the roof off and knocked out the windows and sections of the exterior walls. But the building never caught fire, and never suffered a direct hit. Its core was still standing when the war ended, and by 1949 it was ready to reopen as a museum – an important symbol of the reconstruction of the Old Town.

In 1971, Dürer's 500th birthday was the occasion of the most recent major alteration. For the anniversary exhibition a capacious room was added in the style of the day, which now reads as a sharp contrast to the historic part of the structure. Since autumn 2010, major changes to the exhibitions at the Albrecht Dürer House had been underway, culminating in the refurbishment of the 1971 "Dürer Room" and the grand opening of the new "Graphics Cabinet" on the third floor. Created mainly as a space for changing exhibitions, the new rooms succeed in making historical architecture clearly visible again, while at the same time incorporating modern, state-of-the-art, but unobtrusive exhibition technology.

The Albrecht Dürer House has become more and more significant since the destruction of the Old Town in the war. It is the only publicly accessible bourgeois house from Nuremberg's Golden Age that can still convey an impression of what it was like to live here in that era. More than ever, though, it is the only authentic place for visitors to encounter one of the greatest artists in history.



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INFORMATION

Entrance Fees

Adults: 5 Euro
Concessions: 3 Euro

Contact

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Museum Ticket Office and Information

Tel.: +49 (0)911 231 - 25 68
Fax: +49 (0)911 231 - 24 43
E-Mail: albrecht-duerer-haus@stadt.nuernberg.de
www.albrecht-duerer-haus.de

Opening Hours

Tuesday-Friday 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.
Thursday 10 a.m. - 8 p.m.
Saturday and Sunday 10 a.m. - 6 p.m.

July until September and during the Christmas market in December also:

Monday 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Traffic Connection

Tram line 4: Station Tiergärtnertor
Bus line 36: Station Burgstraße
U1/U11: Station Lorenzkirche, exit Hauptmarkt

For further information, please contact the public relations department of the Municipal Museums of the City of Nuremberg, telephone number +49 (09)11 231 - 54 20.

