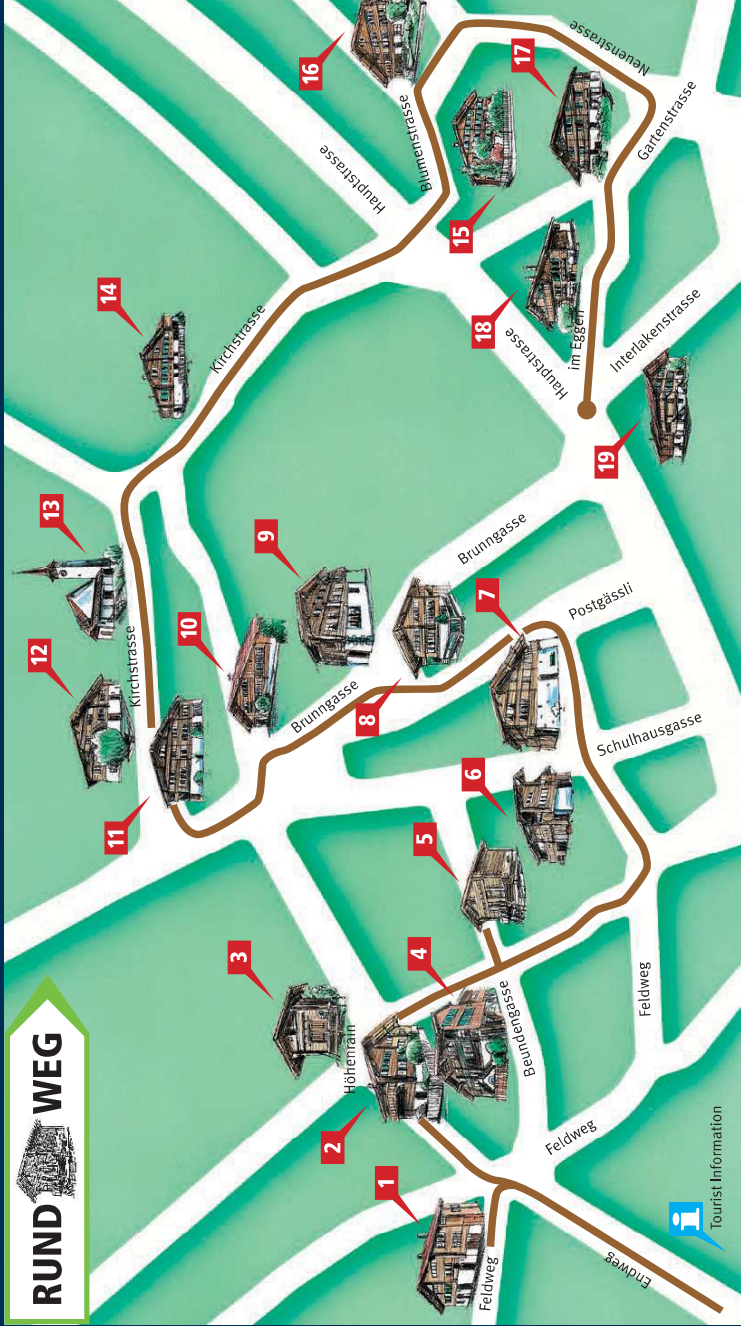


RUND WEG



The village of Bönigen is unique for its richly decorated houses. Here in this small area, numerous buildings dating from 1549 onwards are preserved as representatives of earlier ages which took pleasure in ornamentation. The village has never suffered the ravages of fire and no generation in search of quick profit or obsessed with modernisation laid hands on the beloved, old dwellings. Most of the houses are dared and show the history of settlement in this place. The visitor arriving from the lake will find the original village on the left of the main road, on the gentle slope leading up to the wooded mountain. Buildings are tightly packed together along the narrow streets which radiate from the broad fountain square, the former town centre, out into the once open fields. Historically, the meadows, fields, pastures and forest provided the people of Bönigen with their livelihood. For this reason they were careful with their land and bathe granting new land for building. Up until the 18th century the village was often threatened from the south by flooding from the Lutschine. It was only when it was finally controlled, that the inhabitants ventured to build, on the alluvial land, houses which were more frivolous and extravagant in their construction. This short guide contains directions to a selection of carved and frescoed houses in both parts of the village. However the enquiring eye will have no difficulty in discovering here and there further delightful detail or even whole paintings.



- 1 **Semi detached houses on the Stadl, 1740.** Numerous friezes (rows of rhombi). Consols in the form of masks. Inscriptions in Roman and Gothic script. Fresco: Adam, Eve and the serpent under a fruit tree. Alterations and additions have spoiled the right half of the house.
- 2 **Semi detached houses on the Höhenrain, 1602.** Typical construction from the turn of the 16th century. Gothic fluted bands. Roman lettering. Flat cut bears and chip cut six pointed stars.
- 3 **Storehouse for cheese, 18th century undated.** Painted motifs in the spirit of the period, new. Stands on posts.
- 4 **«Chänelterhuus», 1735.** Beurdengasse. Built onto the rear of the Höhenrain house (No. 2). Double flight of outside stairs. Numerous bands of rhombi. Gothic and Roman lettering. Inscription: «Many a one judges me and forgets his own shortcomings. Should he think of his own, so may he forget mine. Christen Michel, Master Carpenter, speaks to the reproving mine, saying he should not despise me but rather ask himself if he could do it better....»
- 5 **«Christi's storehouse», 1746.** Storehouse for cheese, still in use. Double door. Inscription and carved friezes in the gable. Mask on the ridge piece. Inscription: «I Christen Mühlimann, at the time Master of the Purse, as well as his housewife Anna Stierchi, built this storehouse in 1746....»
- 6 **«Haus am Chänel», 1734.** Double frontage. Rear towards the lane. Large variety of carvings not coloured. Consols alternating with masks. Facade: the gallery in the second storey has a wooden parapet with ornamental turned posts instead of the usual boards.
- 7 **«Chänelter Christi Huus», 1715.** Next to the Schulhausgasse. Many rows of incised inscriptions, picked out in various colours. Some in ornamented Roman script, others in varied forms of Gothic script. Overhanging beams supported by consols, many having the form of masks. Inscription on frontage Schulhausgasse: «He who builds near a road must suffer much criticism. He must let those who hate, hate and the envious remain envious. What God has granted and does not grudge will nonetheless stay in his possessions». The builder was Captain

- 8 **House on the Brunngasse, 1603.** Like house No. 2 it includes elements of the 16th century (fluted friezes) and of the period there after (bands with rhombi). The windows have recently been restored to their earlier position of an unfortunate 19th century improvement. Inscription: «Everyone strives after honour and riches – and having achieved them they lie down and die».
- 9 **Complex of buildings 1715, 1748, 1549.** The architecture of old Bönigen is clearly documented here.
- 10 **Facing the Brunngasse is a house, 1748, built onto another dated 1715.** The older one is ornamented with mouldings, with carved cubes and rhombi; the other is decorated with inscriptions and a large number of carvings. The «Höthaus» was built by Ulrich Michel, High Sheriff. Inscription facing the Brunngasse: «A Judge's greatest honour is that he knows God and his teachings». The facade facing south is in pure Carpenter's Gothic. The date 1549 is flat-carved, the windows sills are ornamented with fluted bands. Note the cruciform smoke holes on either side of the gable. The wood used to construct the gable has never had to be replaced.
- 11 **Semi detached houses, 18th century.** At one time deplorably altered, it has recently been restored to what is presumably its original form. Impressive mouldings run beneath and connect the windows of the various rooms. Rows of consols support the tip beam. The masks were created by Arnold Michel, woodcarver in Bönigen, after old prototypes.
- 12 **«Frutgerhuus», 1611.** On the Kirchstrasse. Imposing construction in late Carpenter's Gothic. Northern frontage renovated in 1978. Upper windows in their original position. Roman lettering and incised house or wood signs. Inscription: «This house was built by Kristien Michel and Lena Dietrich and their trust lies in God».

- 13 **Protestant church, built 1957.**
- 14 **«Fäldhuus» (Field House), 1776.** Lies in what was formerly called «The Fields». A representative of the time when more and became available for building in Bönigen and a new period commenced. Rows of large cubes run the length of the facade accompanied by flat cut floral ornaments as well as inscriptions in Gothic script.
- 15 **«Houshuus», 1757.** Built by Peter Michel, who was a Bailiff. His son, Captain Christian Michel, set up the first inn in Bönigen in this house. The wife and children of General von Erlach, who was killed by farmers on 5 March 1798 stayed here from the end of February 1798 onwards. King Frederick of Württemberg stopped here in 1808 when he attended the second Alpine Pastoral Festival on the Unspunnen meadow. Many other distinguished personalities of the first decades of the 19th century were also guests of this establishment. Proliferous carved and painted ornaments in the style that period decorate the broad facade. The antlers prove that red deer were still indigenous here in the middle of the 18th century.
- 16 **Semi detached houses on the Blumenstrasse, 1772.** The gable is richly carved on both sides and the original windows are still in position. Delightful paintings in scrolled frames. The family crest of the Mühlemanns, granted to a Captain Mühlemann by the King of France in whose service he stood (a fleur-de-lis with three stars), can also be seen.
- 17 **Semi detached houses on the Gartenstrasse, approx. 1750.** Flat cut carvings and rows of large cubes ornament this spacious house. Note the barred openings in the cellar doors.
- 18 **Semi detached houses in Eggen, 1730.** Right extension more recent. Proverb in the gable. Unusual lettering. The window sills are ornamented with bands of rhombi.
- 19 **Village museum «alte Pintex».** Exhibitions on the history of the village and its inhabitants.



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