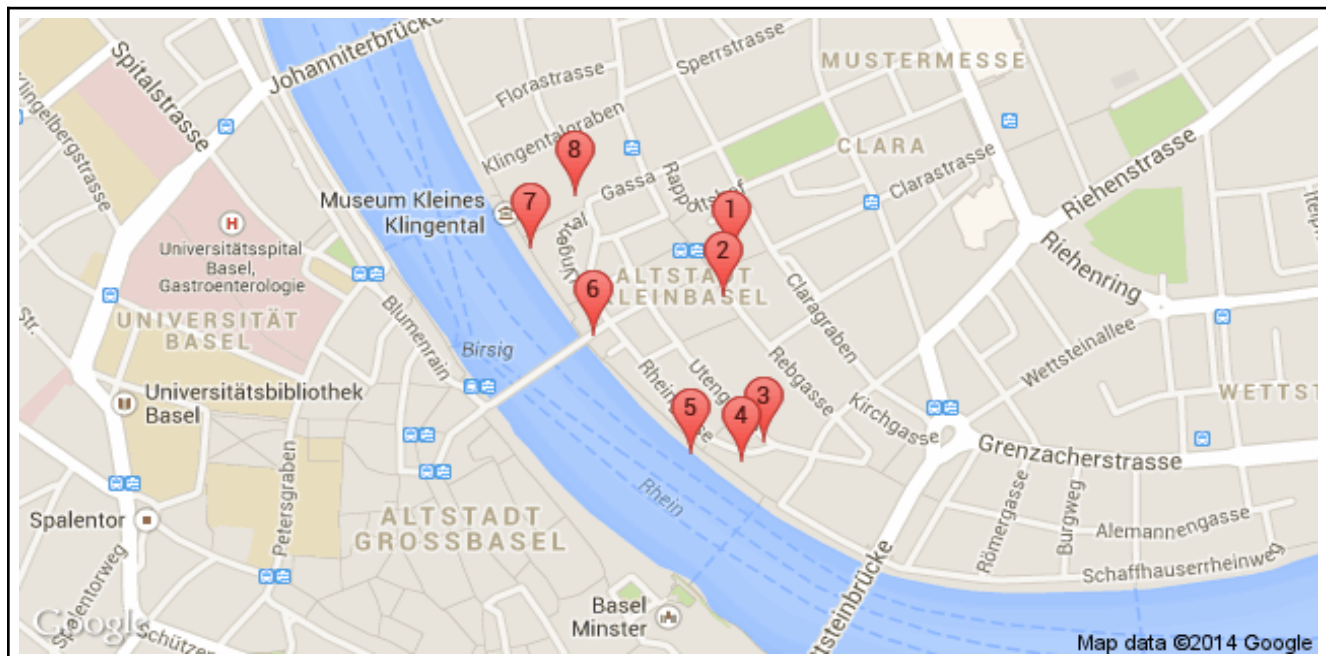


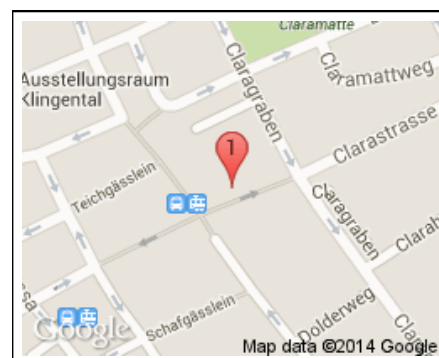
## Tour Description «Walk of legends»

Hi kids! Legends and scary stories of ghosts and spirits can be found in all ancient cities and of course in Basel, too. On this walk you will get to know the stories of Kleinbasel. The walk with 8 stations will take you through alleys along places, where the legends can be read aloud (try to be scary!). The tour can be made with all kind of bikes or scooters (just at the very end are 5 steps). Duration 1 - 1.5 hours. Print the pages and go ahead! (Maybe not at full moon at midnight!)



### Place 1: Claraplatz and Rebgasse

On **Claraplatz**, opposite the Clarakirche ("St Clare's Church") and behind the little weather station, used to stand the stately Äbtische Hof. This was a semi-detached house with a high hipped roof, later called the Schetty Houses, because the semi-detached house came into the ownership of silk dyer Joseph Schetty. Stories are often told of ghosts that strike fear into people there.



#### Dr Grey

People were especially afraid of "Der Graue", (the "Grey Man"), a terrifying ghost that also used to go in and out of the neighbouring property on Untern Rebgasse. Lets go to Rebgasse 38 The "Grey Man" was not actually evil; however, he used to rattle chains and make eerie sounds with his shoes as he walked. He was a small man in a grey costume, with elegant buckled shoes on his feet, and a bagwig. His appearance would actually not have been frightening at all - if he hadn't been a ghost!

He also had the unpleasant habit of suddenly appearing in the middle of the room or walking past people, which gave women especially a terrible fright. There were many witnesses reporting the appearance of the Grey Man, and in the evening, when people in Kleinbasel were sat in front of a warm fire, they would tell stories of the Grey Man and wonder what was troubling him and why he couldn't find any peace.

One time, when the two youngest daughters of silk dyer Joseph Schetty were lying in their beds

in the bedroom and chatting, the small man in the grey costume suddenly appeared standing between their beds. "Dr Grey!" screamed the two girls in terror and hid under the bedsheets. However, the older of the two soon plucked up courage again. She had the presence of mind to remember that ghosts cannot tolerate religious expressions. So she cautiously looked out from under the bedcovers and shouted loudly and clearly: "All good spirits praise the Lord!" - and pffff - the Grey Man instantly disappeared! It was some time until the girls recovered from their big shock, especially because another sister had to endure an encounter with the Grey Man soon afterwards.

One evening, she was sitting in the living room sewing, when a hand was suddenly laid on her shoulder. Instead of getting agitated, she simply said: "Who's that messing around behind me?" When she turned round, she saw the Grey Man! She was so angry that she didn't get scared but just stared angrily at the Grey Man. At that point he disappeared - obviously disappointed that he couldn't fluster this young girl.

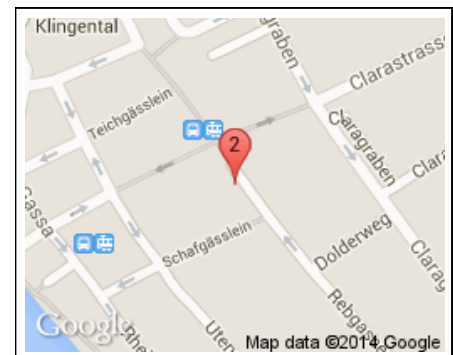
However, after this experience it was decided that the Grey Man needed to be dealt with, and a pentagram was painted on the threshold of the house. People were convinced that this prevented any ghosts from entering the house. But it didn't help much - the ghosts never entirely disappeared from the Schetty Houses until they were demolished in 1951.

However, the house here on Rebgasse is still standing. Do you want to hear another story about it?

## Place 2: Rebgasse

### The evil eye

**Rebgasse 38** is where Gredi Beck once used to live. She had the evil eye - people were convinced of it. She could make bad things happen to the inhabitants of Kleinbasel just with her look, such as cause deformities or illnesses. So people tried to stay out of her way whenever they possibly could. People also avoided the house, as it was haunted, as we have heard. It was uncertain whether it was just the "Grey Man" getting up to no good in this house, or if there were other spectres involved. The government and the clergy made every effort to counter the superstition and the stories related to it. On Sundays the priests would issue warnings from the pulpit against fortune-telling and devil worship and would advise people not to believe in them, but in vain. The rumours about the house on the Rebgasse persisted. Eventually, the renowned exorcist Johann Jakob von Brunn was brought in, to use prayers to chase the mysterious shapes from the house and exorcise their power. And in fact he managed to do so and the people finally got some peace.



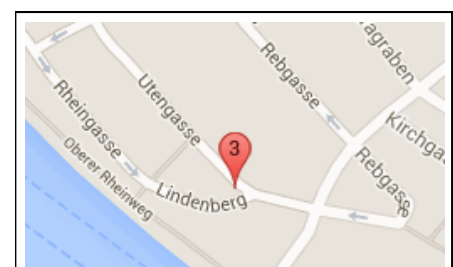
Now go past the Altersheim zum Lamm ("Zum Lamm Nursing Home"), down the Schafgässlein to the Utengasse, then turn left to house number 47.

## Place 3: Utengasse

Stand opposite the Utengasse 47, look at the house and read the following story about it.

### The ghost of Utengasse

In 1929 the property at **Utengasse 47** was inexplicably visited by a "poltergeist". It got up to its mischief on the second floor. A woman and three children were living there in



a small apartment, and the ghost took up residence in the children's room. This children's room was separated from the living room by a thin wall. In this wall, a curious and eerie knocking and tapping could be heard. The "poltergeist" particularly targeted the 10-year-old boy Marcel, because every time Marcel approached the wall, he was struck by a dreadful feeling of panic and his whole body would tremble. Many people in the Utengasse would look in awe as they walked past the house, talking about the "poltergeist" in whispers, while others lay siege to the poor, stricken family's home, trying to hear the knocking for themselves. When there seemed to be no end to the "poltergeist" after six months, the caretaker finally complained to the police. Several policemen checked out the apartment in detail and, above all, the partition wall, carefully searched the apartment from top to bottom, but found no clues as to the source of the unusual knocking noise. They also watched the ten-year-old boy for some considerable time, even going as far as restraining his arms and legs - but despite this, the "poltergeist" noises could be heard whenever he went near the partition wall. In short, they were faced with an unsolvable riddle. The story was talked about more and more. Spiritualists turned up to look into the matter, asking the boy questions, listening to the knocking noises and trying to interpret them. Crowds of interested, curious people besieged the apartment. A physicist and several doctors also looked into the occurrence, but despite their great skepticism they could not find any explanation for the knocking noises.

Although people were tempted to believe it was a fraud, the matter remained unexplained! And after all their unsuccessful investigations, even the police could no longer exclude the possibility of it being supernatural. So the public works department decided to evacuate the "poltergeist" apartment and decreed that it should stand empty for three months. After that, the noises were never heard again

This story is true! Of course, it would have been better if it had happened in the little house next door (Holzacherhof)

Walk down Lindenberg and into the small lane - **Rustgässlein** - (dead end) until you can go no further.

## Place 4: Rustgässlein

Go right to the end of the lane until you can go no further and read the following story.

### The beast of Kleinbasel

There once lived a shaggy beast on Rheingasse, a monster! People believed it was an evil spirit and were very afraid of it. They did not dare to put their heads out of the window when the beast of Kleinbasel was walking in the streets. However, one day, a clever and brave inhabitant of the Rheingasse decided to put an end to the nuisance. He noticed that the shaggy beast generally tended to do the rounds when the women went to the fountains with their copper pots to fetch water.

In those days it was not just a matter of turning the tap in the kitchen when you needed water - you had to tediously fetch all the water from the fountain and carry it back home.



**Lindenberg**



As they filled their pots with water, the girls and women would chat to one another. But when the beast of Kleinbasel appeared, they would split up screaming and run away. When they dared to go back to the fountain a short time later, the beast had disappeared again - and with it the copper pots! Rightly, it seemed odd to our man that a spirit might be interested in copper pots. One day he decided to solve the riddle - in fact he had once been a brave soldier. So he took up his walking stick and sword and made his way to the fountain in Kleinbasel when it was time to fetch water. And in fact he soon came face to face with the beast. It was more than a little surprised, but it had to determine whether the man was not going to run away and was instead going to stand up to him! It quickly turned around and tried to slope off. However, the man ran after it; it ran faster, but the man went even faster and was close on its heels.



**Basiliskenbrünneli**

Finally the hounded beast ran through the Rheingasse until in its confusion it turned right into the narrow **Rustgässlein** near Hattstätterhof and in panic realised that it could not get through this dead-end road. It crouched in a corner, made itself small and hoped that nobody could see it. However, its pursuer discovered it and bravely approached, looked quickly at the shaggy back and brought his walking stick down onto it with all his might. But the spirit made no noise (spirits do not feel pain, as you know). When the man noticed that his blow had achieved nothing, he pulled out his sword. But this was too much for the beast! It straightened itself up and pleaded for mercy: "Have mercy, I am just a simple journeyman bricklayer in a bear's fleece." Our brave Kleinbasel resident pulled the bear's fleece over the unmasked beast's ears and threw it into the Rhine. The journeyman fled the city and the people of Kleinbasel have had peace ever since.

Now follow the Rheingasse to the small street (Referenzgässlein) that goes left down to the Rhine.

## Place 5: Oberer Rheinweg

View of the Rhine at Oberen Rheinweg 65

### The silver bell on the Rhine

If you look towards the **middle of the Rhine** opposite the palace at night, and your eyesight is good, you might make out a bright, twinkling point, and, if your hearing is good, you might also hear a charming ringing sound. This is the silver bell, and the story goes that it once hung in one of the Minster towers. However, in the large earthquake of 1356, all the towers collapsed and the silver bell fell into the Rhine and sank. It now calls the river spirits to prayer at midnight whenever the Moon is full. People have often tried to raise the bell, but they say that this will only happen when the Minster is a Catholic church again. Can you hear it?

Walk downstream along the Rhine to the Mittlere Brücke ("Central Bridge").



**The riverside of Kleinbasel**

## Place 6: Mittlere Brücke

Look at the Mittlere Brücke and imagine the following story.

### Dream of the Basel Rhine bridge

A poor labourer who lived on the Alp Rafrüti in Emmental dreamt one night that he was going find his fortune on the Rhine Bridge in Basel. The dream bothered him, because he had an urgent need for some money for himself and his family. The following night he had the same dream, and again the third night. So he decided to follow this dream, to travel to Basel and have a look at the **Rhine Bridge**.

He walked slowly across the bridge - at that time there was only one bridge over the Rhine in Basel, called the "Mittlere Brücke" today - but nothing happened and he found nothing remarkable that looked in any way like good fortune or money. The following day he again spent hours walking back and forth across the bridge, but nothing happened. He had long grown tired of the affair and wanted to go back home to his wife and children. But he said to himself that he has had the dream three times, so it would make sense for him to look for his fortune for three days.

A policeman had been watching the labourer and his curious to-ing and fro-ing for some time. He wondered what the man had been looking for on the bridge all day and finally went to talk to him: "What are you doing here? What are you looking for? You look very suspicious to me going back and forth on the bridge all the time." The labourer told him about his dream. "Ah," replied the policeman, "don't pay attention to such dreams! For example, last night I had a dream that a treasure was buried in a kitchen on Rafrüti. But who knows where Rafrüti is?"

The labourer looked at him in astonishment, but said nothing and rushed back to his family on the Alp and starting digging a big hole in the kitchen of their Alpine hut. Suddenly a black figure appeared standing next to him and started to help without saying a word. Then they struck a large pot full of gold coins! The black figure split the treasure into three piles and said: "Choose! One pile belongs to the poor, one pile to me and one to you. But choose the right one, otherwise you'll be sorry!" The labourer stood there for a while and thought. Finally he said that the black figure did not need any gold coins, as he was not made of flesh and blood, and he could give something to the poor himself - in short, he pushed all three piles back into one large heap and said: "I want this pile." With that the black figure disappeared and the labourer and his family lived there with no worries for ever more. The Rhine Bridge in Basel had brought him a fortune.

Carry on in the same direction to the small garden in the Klingentalmuseum (Unt. Rheinweg 26)

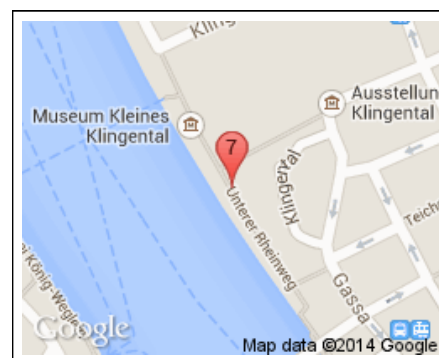


## Place 7: Klingentalmuseum Unterer Rheinweg 26

In the herb garden in the Klingentalmuseum:

### The blessing of St Christina

Some 600 years ago a woman called Anna zem Blumen gave the blessing of St Christina to everyone who asked. People would use it to gain the ability to win the affections of other people. The blessing also helped to cure nasty illnesses. To do this Anna zem Blumen used a special herb, lemon verbena (a type of vervain), that she dug up after sunset on the evening before each festival of Johannis (June 24). In doing so she called upon all the saints, recited the Lord's Prayer and then said: "I ask you, noble



verbena root, to leave no goodness in the ground - everything should be in my control, with the same power with which God created it. Amen."

The blessed root not only brought affection - it also had a positive effect in conflicts. For example, if a married couple laid blessed lemon verbena under a shared pillow and said the Lord's Prayer 15 times, they would be instantly reconciled and live together in harmony.

Next to the Klingentalmuseum, 5 steps lead to a path that will take you to the church of the former monastery (visible on the left).

## Place 8: Klingental Klosterkirche (Kasernenplatz)

### Ghost in the Klingental barracks

Only women live in a nunnery, and only men live in a monastery. They pray a lot, are humble and lead a godly life. The Kloster Klingental ("Klingental Nunnery") with the **convent church**, the cloister and the living areas for the nuns, was one of the wealthiest nunneries in Basel. For a long time the nuns in this nunnery lived happily and, being surrounded by an entire household, were hardly living in humility. People tried again and again to caution them about this, but they would not listen. Once, when somebody tried to tell them

what they should be doing and observing as nuns, they banged on all sorts of objects and, by doing so, made such a noise that they could then justly claim that they had never heard anything of this. Much later - by which time the nunnery was empty and the city of Basel had been reformed - the cloister and living areas were demolished and the barracks that you can see today were built. The church was allowed to stay, although several storeys with wooden floors were added to make space for the soldiers to sleep. However, they often didn't sleep peacefully. Again and again in the morning, a soldier, white with fear, would speak of ghosts of nuns who could not find peace after death once their fortunes had taken a turn for the worse, and who haunted the convent church at midnight, praying loudly and devoutly.

Hopefully you enjoyed your tour and will get a good night's sleep, despite the ghost stories! Thanks for joining in!



## Useful Hints

### Tram Station close to Claraplatz and Rebgasse (First Place)

Claraplatz

### Tram Station close to Klingental Klosterkirche (Kasernenplatz) (Last Place)

Kaserne

### A selection of public toilets close to the tour

Place 1 (Claraplatz and Rebgasse): Toilette Claraplatz, Claraplatz

Place 8 (Klingental Klosterkirche (Kasernenplatz)): Toilette Klybeckstrasse, Klybeckstrasse