

## ASPECTS OF FRANCONIA

January 2026

### ***Obere Pfarre in Bamberg***



On the theme of "bazaar", the photo above shows a merchant exhibited in the nativity scene in the "*Pfarrkirche Unsere Liebe Frau*" in Bamberg, which is known as "*Obere Pfarre*" by the residents of that city. This nativity scene is one of the largest and most famous in Franconia: it is 12m wide, more than 3m deep and comprises more than 190 human figures. The scenes are regularly rearranged according to the story told in the Bible. It is shown every year from November to February and is well worth a visit—perhaps an idea for a trip in 2026?

Old invoices from the late 18<sup>th</sup> century were found in the archives, documenting the purchase of objects for a nativity scene. However, in 1803, the government decided to ban these scenes, because of secularisation in the Age of Enlightenment. Then, in 1825, King Ludwig I of Bavaria lifted the ban on nativity scenes. Fortunately, the figures had been kept somewhere in the attic, so the nativity scene in the Obere Pfarre was restored and put back on display. Invoices from the 19th century document many new purchases, repairs and restorations. Currently, major restoration work is planned once again in order to preserve these treasures.

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