

New garden app: A stroll round Nymphenburg Palace Park

The Nymphenburg Palace complex is appreciated by art and nature lovers alike. Today people from all over the world come to walk in the place where the Bavarian court in the Wittelsbach era once hunted and enjoyed tournaments and plays. A new garden app now reveals hidden aspects of the park and takes you on a splendid journey into the past. Stroll with contemporary witnesses from two centuries through the palace park and hear, see and experience first hand the change from a Baroque park to an English landscape garden.



The Badenburger blends harmoniously into the landscape created by Friedrich Ludwig von Sckell with Badenburger Lake and Lion Valley. Photo: Bayerische Schlösserverwaltung.

An app for Nymphenburg Palace Park, a synthesis of the arts

Nymphenburg Palace Park is a synthesis of the arts that was created over a period of two centuries under five rulers. The park and the architecture of the complex still form a single unit, in spite of the major transformations that took place during its history. This is exactly what the new garden app shows you. It provides brief information about the history of the complex and then focuses on the characteristics of the palace park and how it changed from a Baroque park to an English landscape garden. It does this in the form of a many little stories related at 23 selected stations in the park. They not only bring court culture to life but also show how the preservation of a historic park and the protection of nature go hand in hand. Nymphenburg Park has been designated both a protected landscape and a European Natura 2000 site.



Friedrich Ludwig von Sckell replaced the Baroque pall mall alley used by the court with Pagodenburg Valley with the Kugelweiher or Ball Pond. Photo: Bayerische Schlösserverwaltung.

The object of the new garden app is to present Nymphenburg Palace Park as a synthesis of the arts and a monument that is worth preserving. It serves as an entertaining guide through the park, reveals how it was transformed and links the past with the present. To give you a better understanding of the app, a brief description of the history of the Nymphenburg palace complex will be given first, before the concrete functioning of the app is explained.

A Baroque garden for the elector

Nymphenburg Palace with its large park and the former extensive hunting grounds in the west of Munich was once the summer residence of the Wittelsbachs. From May to September, the ruling family stayed here with their entire court. Today the park is an inviting place for a stroll and the state rooms of the palace take you back into the past. The magnificent rooms are furnished in styles spanning a period from the Baroque era to Neoclassicism. Two particular highlights are the room in which King Ludwig II of Bavaria was born and King Ludwig I's world-famous Gallery of Beauties. The history of the palace complex dates back to the 17th century.

There was great joy and relief when the long-awaited electoral prince Max Emanuel finally came into the world in 1662. His birth ensured the succession of the Bavarian rulers from the house of Wittelsbach. In 1663, Elector Ferdinand Maria (1651-1679) expressed his gratitude by presenting his wife, Henriette of Savoy, with the farm of Kemnat west of Munich, their residential capital. The electoral couple immediately commissioned the architect Agostino

Barelli with the construction of Nymphenburg Palace – the present central building – and the ‘borgo de la ninfe’, a summer residence with a small garden, was created for the electress. From 1701 Elector Max Emanuel (1680-1726) enlarged the palace, redesigned the garden and had a canal built that diverted water from the River Würm into the park. In 1704, following his defeat in the Spanish War of Succession, Max Emanuel was forced to leave Bavaria. All work on the palace ceased until he returned from exile. It was only in the period from 1715 to 1726 that the main extensions to the palace and garden were completed.



There is a splendid view of the palace from the Large Cascade .Photo: Konrad Rainer, Salzburg

In 1715 the elector brought with him from Paris Dominique Girard, a Versailles water engineer and garden designer from the school of the famous garden designer André Le Nôtre. Together with Joseph Effner, Girard created one of the most important Baroque garden complexes in Germany. The palace was the main focal point of the park. An axially symmetrical garden was laid out with an elaborate parterre and hedge gardens on either side that were used for the games and entertainments of the court. This intensively structured garden area was bordered by an extensive wooded park dominated by the central canal and numerous avenues and vistas. There were three main vistas with the left-hand one pointing towards the church in Pasing in the south, the middle one to the church in Pipping and the right-hand one to **Blutenburg** – a Late-Gothic Wittelsbach castle – in the north. In the wooded park were the symmetrically aligned park pavilions with their formal gardens, the Badenburg and Pagodenburg, the Magdalenenklaus and the Amalienburg, which was built in 1731-1739. The palace park was once decorated in on a par with Versailles with a large number of artistic waterworks. One that stands out in particular is the Large Cascade at the end of the central canal. It is in fact an elegant way of diverting the water from the River Würm, which is at a higher level, into the palace canal system. Joseph Effner completed the Large Cascade in 1717. Its marble cladding was only added under Elector Max III Joseph (1745-1777).

The Baroque design principles such as strict symmetry, avenues and vistas and geometric forms in both the layout and the plantings corresponded fully to the absolutist ideal: the elector was imposing his will on nature.

Transformation into an English landscape park

At the end of the 18th century ideas about nature and gardens changed. The formal garden design of the Baroque age was contrary to the spirit of the Enlightenment. Jean Jacques Rousseau's 'back to nature' philosophy took over and formal garden design fell out of favour. This also had consequences for Nymphenburg Palace Park. From 1800, the garden designer Friedrich Ludwig von Sckell transformed the Baroque garden for the subsequent King Max I Joseph (1806-1825) into an extensive English landscape garden. What remained of the Baroque complex was the Large Parterre, in a simplified form, the central canal with the avenues and the Large Cascade. Friedrich Ludwig von Sckell turned the two side vistas into 'meadow valleys' with variously shaped borders of naturally growing trees and shrubs. He replaced the formal water basins in the park with natural-looking water features, creating Badenburg Lake and Pagodenburg Lake. Most of the artificial waterworks were removed from the palace park. The Baroque Flora Fountain in the Large Parterre with its gilt cast lead figures gave way to an idyllic-looking round water basin with a fountain rising like a geyser from the stone island in the middle. Sckell designed lakes and streams with natural-looking banks and islands and paths that followed an elegantly winding course.



The palace park extends from the palace with the Large Parterre and the fountain, the central canal and the side meadow valleys. Photo: Bayerische Schlösserverwaltung.

Sckell created numerous picturesque landscapes with deliberate surprise elements. Landscape gardens in the English style are in fact three-dimensional, walk-in landscape paintings. The paths, as 'silent guides', lead the visitor as it were from one picture to the next. Although the scenes look perfectly natural, everything has been deliberately

composed. Sckell effectively incorporated the park pavilions into his design. On Badenburg Lake he had a Hellenistic Monopteros built, which was replaced in 1865 by a stone version designed by Leo von Klenze.



Badenburg Lake with the Monopteros is a pleasant place to linger. Photo: Bayerische Schlösserverwaltung

Friedrich Ludwig von Sckell created a landscape garden that combined striking Baroque elements with English-style garden design principles. The basic structure he created has remained more or less unchanged to the present day.

Strolling with the app round Nymphenburg Palace Park

The app 'Nymphenburg Palace Park. A stroll round the park' focuses on precisely this transformation from a Baroque park into an English landscape garden. In addition, it covers garden conservation aspects and brings court culture to life. It invites you to stroll round the park. Strolling ('Lustwandeln' in the German of the day) is a term frequently used by Carl August Sckell, the nephew of Friedrich Ludwig von Sckell and his successor as Court Garden Superintendent, in his article *Das königliche Lustschloß Nymphenburg und seine Gartenanlagen*, München o. J. [1837] (*The royal summer residence Nymphenburg and its gardens*, Munich, undated [1837]). Starting from the palace, the author goes on a tour of Nymphenburg Park and describes in highly poetic terms particular places in the garden, the atmosphere they create and their relevance to the culture of the court. He makes his

readers feel as if they walking round with him. This is precisely what the app is recreating: 'A stroll round the park' – in the past and present.

The app takes you on a walk round the park with descriptions at 23 GPS-programmed stations of the place concerned. You can choose between three guided tours – a short tour, a south and a north tour – or explore the park on your own. The transformation of the park and conservation measures are explained in 140 audio minutes. Picture galleries, interviews with experts and octocopter images reveal hidden aspects of the park.



Friedrich Ludwig von Sckell had the Magdalenenklause surrounded by a dense wood with a few narrow paths leading up to the building. Photo: Bayerische Schlösserverwaltung

The app tells you about the favourite places of the royal family, technical achievements and the interests of the Wittelsbachs. It focuses in particular on the design principles of the garden designer Friedrich Ludwig von Sckell. In the app he functions as a guiding figure and is frequently quoted. At some stations he appears on your smart phone and aptly describes the particular characteristic of the place concerned, always of course from the perspective of an English landscape garden. As a guiding figure he is given his own speaking voice, like Carl August Sckell, who sometimes almost takes up the whole station. The app deliberately focuses on contemporary witnesses to give a vivid impression of the features and special atmosphere of the individual places and their relationship to court life. You can thus compare past and present, with the additional help of the zoomable pictures in the picture gallery.

Hidden aspects revealed

The picture galleries make the invisible visible. Historical maps, paintings and drawings with views of Nymphenburg and the park pavilions illustrate the transformation from a Baroque park into an English landscape garden. In addition, there are new photos of unfamiliar views. For example, the picture for the station 'Crown Prince's Garden with pavilion', shows the so-called 'Witch's House' with its shutters open. These are otherwise always closed. Further pictures give an impression of the rooms inside that are not open to the public. The app also explains why the pavilion is called the 'Witch's House'.



By means of skilful planting, Sckell created a meadow valley with several pictorial levels that give the impression of depth. Photo: Bayerische Schlösserverwaltung.

Another example of an unfamiliar view is the 'Amalienburg' station. A photo shows the view to the east from the round gallery above the main entrance. Originally this vista was designed according to strictly formal principles, as shown by the section of a plan dating from 1755 in the picture gallery. Friedrich Ludwig von Sckell turned the vista into a meadow valley. Like a painter or photographer, he created several pictorial levels in the meadow area. How he did this is explained in the 'Amalienburg Vista' station. There is also an interesting description of Electress Maria Amalia's link with the round gallery.

At some stations users also receive information about the responsibilities of the Bavarian Palace Department and current conservation measures. They learn how historical paths are being recreated or how a historical grove was recently separated out of a dense woodland

area. Or how the Iron House has been restored to its original condition and newly planted on the basis of a historical plant list.



The octocopter photos taken especially for the app provide magnificent views of Nymphenburg. Photo: Bayerische Schlösserverwaltung

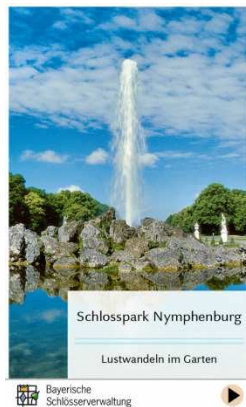
Breathtaking octocopter pictures were taken especially for the app. The Octocopter flies along the central canal to the palace from the city side and simulates a flight through the Great Hall before flying up on the garden side to give a view of the whole complex and then continuing along the central canal to the Large Cascade. The idea was to show the structure of the park as a whole in line with the topography of Nymphenburg. Further octocopter pictures are integrated into the interviews with experts, vividly illustrating the information being given. At the Monopteros there is an interview with the Palace Department's garden expert, who explains the design principles of Badenburg Lake. Another interview features the maintenance of the Large Cascade, and two further specialists describe the Pagodenburg and the Iron House.

Nymphenburg Palace Park is a synthesis of the arts. This is precisely what the app is designed to convey.

How does the app function?

The 'Nymphenburg Palace Park' app is programmed for iOS and Android can be downloaded free of charge from the stores on smart phones or tablets. After you start the software, data are reloaded. Then you're all set for your walk in the park. You can decide on the spot

whether to select one of the three GPS-guided tours and be taken round or to go round the park on your own. If the GPS on your mobile phone is switched on, as soon as you approach one of the stations a signal tone will indicate that you can download information for listening to. Every station has a main descriptive track which explains the station's essential features. A further level gives details about particular aspects. You can also read the texts of all the audio descriptions. Basically the app provides a story about each station. Purely factual knowledge is stored in the menu under the time line and the 'Index of persons'.



▶ The free 'Nymphenburg Palace Park' app presents the complex as a synthesis of the arts.

The app has many different filter options. The map with the flags shows the stations. With the first click you get the station name, with the second you go directly to the station. In addition, you can have the stations on the map sorted into the categories of monument, water and garden. The station overview provides further access to the app's contents. Every station has a picture gallery and at least one further audio track, videos or interviews with experts. The 3-D view is a further filter function. If you click on this in the menu and point your smart phone round you, the nearest stations will come up on your screen. You can then click on each one to go directly to the station. The full-text search will help you find quickly something you've already heard. Pictures can be taken in the park without exiting from the app. Just click on the camera symbol.

The games module is not just something for children. In the quiz the players are fictitiously apprenticed to the Court Garden Superintendent. They have to answer ten questions, which they can do on the app while going round the park or at any other time. The quiz is divided into three apprentice years. After every year players get feedback on their results. On completion, successful participants can have a training certificate sent to them by e-mail. In the historical pheasant game, players must get as many pheasants as possible in a minute by tapping on them. Points are deducted for hitting a hawk.

The Nymphenburg app has many exciting stories and insights for you to discover during your walk in the park, or before or after your visit.

Schloss Nymphenburg

Schloss Nymphenburg 1, 80638 München

Tel. +49 89 179080

www.schloss-nymphenburg.de

Opening times of the park and park pavilions**Park, main gate:**

January – March, November, December: daily 6am-8pm

May – September: daily 6am-9.30pm

Park pavilions:

April – 15 October: daily 9am-6pm

16 October – March: closed