



WALDKLINIKEN
EISENBERG

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PRESS RELEASE ABOUT THE INAUGURATION OF THE SYNAGOGUE EISENBERG ON MAY 22, 2022

SYNAGOGUE EISENBERG INAUGURATED

Europe's oldest and youngest synagogues are in Thuringia:

Minister President Bodo Ramelow, Charlotte Knobloch and other prominent individuals attended Waldkliniken Eisenberg's inauguration ceremony for the Synagogue Eisenberg

The Waldkliniken Eisenberg inaugurated the Synagogue Eisenberg in its new clinic building this Sunday with a formal ceremony. Following the symbolic handing over of the keys by Rabbi Yitshak Ehrenberg, Thuringia Minister President Bodo Ramelow declared his support for Thuringia's culture of welcoming and religious pluralism: "That is a powerful symbol of open-mindedness and a welcoming culture." The Waldkliniken is now one of the very few clinics in Europe to offer top-quality medicine with certified kosher stays as well as its own synagogue for Jewish guests.

Eisenberg, May 22, 2022. Both the oldest and the youngest synagogues in Europe are located in Thuringia as of 3 p.m. today. With the ceremonial installation of the Torah scroll in the synagogue and ritual chanting and prayers, a fully equipped prayer room has now become available to the guests of the Waldkliniken Eisenberg. The 30-square-meter Synagogue Eisenberg, with its approximately 80-year-old Torah and furnishings from the workshops of the famous Kibbuz Lavi in Israel, is located in the sensational new clinic



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building designed by star architect Matteo Thun and provides an inviting space for up to 16 people to worship and pray.

The symbolic key to the synagogue was presented to Minister President Bodo Ramelow by Rabbi Yitshak Ehrenberg following the consecration: “We are very pleased that, with the Synagogue Eisenberg, Thuringia is now home to both the newest and the oldest synagogues in Europe at the same time. That is a powerful symbol of open-mindedness and a welcoming culture. And, above all, a symbol against anti-Semitism. An important statement in times like these.

We are proud of the fact that this synagogue is located in a municipal hospital that, for years, has been a national and international ambassador as well as a beacon of Thuringia visible from afar. It demonstrates all that is possible here with us, with the vision and energy of a doer like David Thies and an effective team.”

Charlotte Knobloch, former President of the Central Council of Jews in Germany and President of the Jewish Community of Munich and Upper Bavaria since 1985, joined in celebrating the inauguration held in one of Germany’s best hospitals of its size. “With the Waldkliniken in Eisenberg, Managing Director David-Ruben Thies and all those responsible have achieved the impossible: They’ve created a hospital where it’s a pleasure to stay,” Knobloch said. “And now with the opening of the synagogue, they’ve set another mark: The prayer room is not only a symbol of the clinic’s openness, but also a visible statement of support for the Jewish people in this region. Its opening signifies a historic moment in the truest sense of this term: I congratulate the Waldkliniken Eisenberg on this extraordinary achievement and wish them the best in cherishing the special qualities of this day and infusing them into their future daily work.”

An integral religious component of the Jewish community, the Synagogue Eisenberg was currently the fourth Jewish house of worship in Thuringia, according to State Rabbi Alexander Nachama, who also said: “The Jewish Community of Thuringia is very pleased to



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be able to offer our community members and guests another fully equipped synagogue with the Synagogue Eisenberg. I'm sure that Jewish guests from all over the world will appreciate the distinctiveness of having a synagogue in a clinic.”

For Frankfurt Rabbi Avichai Apel, Executive Board Member of the Orthodox Rabbi Conference Germany (ORD), the ceremonial opening of the Synagogue Eisenberg was both a moving and historic moment. “Today is a happy day for Germany and Thuringia,” he said, adding: “Especially in times like these — unsettled by a pandemic, war and growing anti-Semitism — the opening of the Synagogue Eisenberg is impressive proof that Jewish life is flourishing in this country and it plays an integral role in Germany and Europe despite the dark times of the past. Thanks to the Waldkliniken Eisenberg’s courageous initiative, today’s event not only sends a positive message from Germany, it also sends a message about the future of Jewish life in Europe. Europe’s newest synagogue is intended to serve as a place for peaceful quiet moments and prayer as well as a place open to all for meeting and exchanging ideas, for learning more about and from one another, and for dispelling prejudices. Mazel tov, Waldkliniken Eisenberg!”

David-Ruben Thies, Managing Director of Waldkliniken Eisenberg, discussed the significance of the Synagogue Eisenberg for the municipal hospital, encapsulating it this way: „“Here today we’re breaking new ground in all areas: In architecture, in medicine, in caregiving, in hospitality. We’re one of the very few top hospitals in Europe to offer outstanding medicine and the possibility for all religious guests to fully practice their religion, even during a hospital stay. From the the initial planning stages for our new building, a ‘kosher stay’ played an integral role in the design. I’m very pleased that this has now been fully realized with the inauguration of the synagogue. We welcome Jewish patients from around the world to our clinic.”

More information about the Waldkliniken Eisenberg can be found at:

www.waldkliniken-eisenberg.de



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More information about the Waldkliniken Eisenberg's services for Jewish guests can be found at: koscher.waldkliniken-eisenberg.de

About the Waldkliniken Eisenberg

The Waldkliniken Eisenberg in Thuringia is the only university hospital in the state. With the professorship for orthopedics from Jena University Hospital and the headquarters of the Center for Orthopedics, the Waldkliniken enjoys an excellent reputation both nationally and internationally, primarily for its innovative care for knee and hip patients and its groundbreaking research work in the fields of endoprosthesis, biomechanics and biological implant materials. In addition to the German Center for Orthopedics at the Waldkliniken Eisenberg, the clinics for internal medicine, surgery and anesthesia deliver standard primary healthcare services to the people of the Saale-Holzland district. Each year, 60,000 patients are treated on an inpatient and outpatient basis. In the F.A.Z. study "Germany's Best Hospital," the clinic was named three consecutive times as one of the top three hospitals in the category 150 to 300 beds. Since the end of October 2020, the Waldkliniken Eisenberg has been offering the comfort of a star-rated hotel in its new building designed by star architect Matteo Thun to patients with all types of health insurance.



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About the Synagogue Eisenberg

- **Room location:** 1st floor of the ward block at the Waldkliniken
- **Room size:** around 30 square meters
- **Seats:** 16
- **Furnishings:**
 - Made by Kibbuz Lavi from Israel (www.lavi-furniture.de)
- **Torah:**
 - Approx. 80 years old
 - Bought from donations
 - “Rudolf Elle” support association
 - Private donors
 - Lottery funds from the state chancellery
- **Torah mantle:**
 - Made in Israel with inscription
 - Gedenken an die Opfer der Shoa (front) (*In memory of the victims of the Shoah*)
 - Dank an die Spender und Förderer (back) (*Thanks to the donors and supporters*)
- **Patron and Rabbi at the inauguration**

Rabbi Yitshak Ehrenberg
- **Management of the synagogue**
 - The synagogue is a religious part of the Thuringian Jewish State Community and will be run along orthodox lines.
 - Rabbi Yitshak Ehrenberg (Berlin) with support from the mashgiach Rabbi Motti Waitsman (Magdeburg)



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Services for Jewish patients

From summer 2022 onward, Jewish patients have been able to fully practice their religion during their stay at the Waldkliniken Eisenberg. Times will be set to accommodate this during the patients' stay.

Certified kosher kitchen

The kitchen in the Matteo restaurant on the fourth floor of the Waldkliniken Eisenberg will be certified by Rabbi Yitshak Ehrenberg and an additional rabbi for preparing kosher meals. A separate kitchen, appropriate porcelain (porcelain manufactory Reichenbach) and silverware are available to ensure observance of the kashrut rules. Training courses and job shadowing for kitchen and service employees already took place in spring 2022 at kosher restaurants in Munich and Berlin.

Sabbath rules

The requirements for Jewish patients had already been taken into account when planning the new building at the Waldkliniken Eisenberg, including, for example, preparing the elevators to run in Sabbath mode.

Supervision by a mashgiach

During stays, a mashgiach will supervise the observance of Jewish dietary laws for Jewish patients and be available for any religious questions the guests may have.