

SAMMLUNG ROTHSCHILD

# Inside the GOLDKAMMER Frankfurt

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A visit to the Goldkammer Frankfurt is an encounter with the most magical of all precious metals. Nowhere else in the world can you discover so many different facets of gold.

The metal has stirred human desire ever since one of our early ancestors saw the first piece of gold glittering on a riverbed and could not resist reaching out for the temptingly shiny object. This chance discovery began humanity's untiring search for gold and fired its ambition to harness its properties in various ways. Frankfurt's latest museum brings to life the history of gold for all of the senses. The Goldkammer has been conceived as a museum of art and cultural history, and as an information centre for gold's multifaceted uses as both a material and precious metal.

## HG MERZ

The entrance is located in a landmarked mansion in Frankfurt's Westend district within walking distance of the Alte Oper opera house. The renowned architectural office of HG Merz was commissioned to design the museum and has created a focused exhibition that offers visitors the impressive experience of being at a show. Despite its small size, the Goldkammer provides all the amenities of a modern museum, including a permanent exhibition, a space for special exhibitions, an exclusive events room, a café, a bistro and a museum shop.

## GOLD MINE

Visitors are prepared for the unique world of experience while descending to the museum in the elevator. A sequence of small treasure rooms on the first underground level, spanning a period of over 6,000 years, bring more than 500 objects to life. With walls of rough natural stone, the rooms in the Prologue section have been designed to resemble a gold mine. This area is dedicated to the geology of gold – its origins, emergence and extraction. It focuses on gold as a material while providing a tactile experience of the precious metal. Digital screens and the corresponding exhibits provide clear explanations of complex topics.

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Bronze age gold smith's masterpiece gold bracelet formed from alluvial gold.

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## EARLY CULTURES

From the Prologue, visitors enter the main section of the Goldkammer, which presents gold from various cultures. Here, in Early Cultures, the rammed earth walls lend the objects a mysterious air and the great skill of prehistoric goldsmiths comes into view. Cast ring idols from south-eastern Europe are eloquent proof that the beginnings of the gold industry lay in the Copper Age. Unique artifacts made by the Scythians, Thracians and Achaemenids provide a glimpse of goldsmithing in the regions around the Black Sea. In the first millennium BC, their artisans engaged in a lively cultural exchange that is reflected in a shared formal language – particularly in animal symbolism.



An impressive presentation of 300 standard gold bars from the Rothschild & Co. Collection

An unrivalled find is the hoard of a Bronze Age goldsmith who lived in central Europe. His masterpiece is a solid gold bracelet forged from alluvial gold. In *Piece of Gold – Piece of Money*, gold is presented as a sought-after object of exchange and a means of payment. In the sixth century BC, the Lydian king Croesus popularised the use of silver and gold coins imprinted with his state seal and thus guaranteed the stability of the money in circulation.

## FROM ANCIENT TO NEW WORLDS

The unique objects in *Ancient Worlds*, including the finely wrought bust of the Roman emperor Licinius I, tell of power, honour and prestige in ancient Greece and Rome. *El Dorado*, by contrast, shows the artistic and technical skills of ancient American goldsmiths. A gold mask made in Colombia

is a true masterpiece of pre-Columbian goldwork and was meant to transform its wearer into a divine figure of light.

The treasures in *Gold from the Seas*, which were recovered from sunken galleons, document both the conquest of the New World by Spanish conquistadors and the accompanying rise in trade and economic activity in Europe, triggered by the enormous influx of precious metals from the Americas. Driven by the thirst for adventure and gold, treasure hunters salvaged precious cargo that had been lost for 400 years.

## THE UNIQUE OBJECTS IN ANCIENT WORLDS TELL OF POWER HONOR AND PRESTIGE IN ANCIENT GREECE AND ROME

## ROTHSCHILD COLLECTION

The path through the Goldkammer culminates in an impressive presentation of 300 standard gold bars from the *Rothschild Collection*. These bars, collected from different countries, embody gold's international significance as a popular investment, collector's item and store of value. An animated film recounts the economic history of gold over the last 6,000 years.

## VISITOR AIDS

The Goldkammer is designed for young and old. Its mission is to impart interesting and surprising facts about gold while generating enthusiasm for the precious metal. In the show, visitors receive a wealth of information about the exhibited objects, their contexts and background. Enthusiasts can learn more about the objects with the help of a free museum app or an exhibition companion available at the ticket desk. These aids, however, do not detract from a personal engagement with the artworks. Before regular opening hours on workdays, the Goldkammer is reserved for school classes and other groups, and it provides activities for its youngest visitors. Following a vein of gold that runs through the display rooms, they can track down Aguila, the museum's mascot, who introduces them to select objects with the help of fairytales audible on a smartphone.

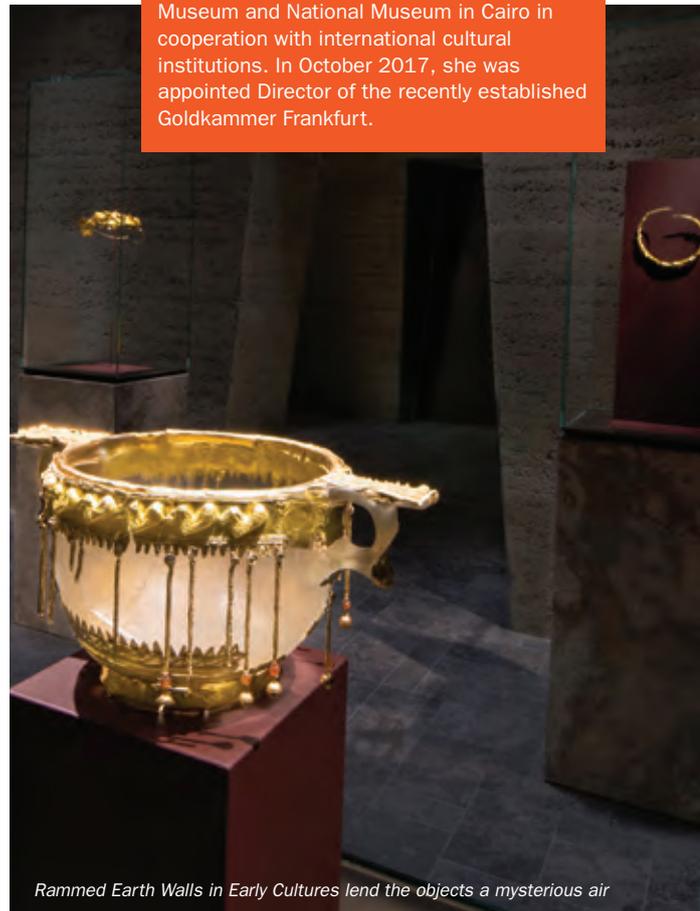
The museum shop carries a select range of products, including the Goldkammer Jewellery Collection, postcards showing various images from the collection,

exhibition catalogues and additional souvenirs. The café and bistro serve special culinary delights in a cozy atmosphere and, during the summer months, visitors can eat their snacks on the terraces on the ground and first floors. In addition, the Goldkammer offers a bookable all-round package of services for exclusive evening events.



**Nadja Tomoum graduated from the Ludwig Maximilians University of Munich with a Ph.D. in Egyptology.** She was

sent by the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development to Egypt to work as a museum expert for the Ministry of Antiquities and the private sector. From 2006 to 2015, she spearheaded pioneering exhibition and cultural heritage projects at the Coptic Museum and National Museum in Cairo in cooperation with international cultural institutions. In October 2017, she was appointed Director of the recently established Goldkammer Frankfurt.



Rammed Earth Walls in Early Cultures lend the objects a mysterious air

From museum tours and a versatile multimedia wall to catering, interested parties can design their personal programme to suit their tastes. Our high-tech equipment and

special atmosphere guarantee a festive occasion. The Goldkammer Frankfurt wishes its visitors an entertaining journey into the world of gold!

## GOLDKAMMER IS DESIGNED TO IMPART INTERESTING AND SURPRISING FACTS ABOUT GOLD WHILE GENERATING ENTHUSIASM FOR THE PRECIOUS METAL

Photos were taken by Hubertus Hamm and the Goldkammer jewellery collection produced by Kevin Barnes.

