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Although much of it is modern, the city still has some beautiful buildings and gardens, which can be easily accessed from centrally situated hotels in Hannover. There are also plenty of open areas in the city. The Royal Gardens of Herrenhauser are almost 450 years old and are landscaped in both the Baroque and English style. There are four separate sections to these gardens, as well as a castle, a museum and a former royal palace. In the summer, a spectacular annual festival is held here, which features fireworks, acrobatic acts, clowns and street performers. The Stadtpark is another favourite green space in Hannover. There is a Japanese Tea Garden and a Rose Garden with a cafÃ© and in the summer there are weekend concerts.

A major attraction for a day out is Hannover Zoo. This innovative animal park is one of the most visited zoos in Germany. It covers 22 hectares and has no caged enclosures; instead, the animals live in habitats that are as close as possible to their natural environment.

Art lovers will find a great deal to see, as there several high quality galleries, such as the Sprengel Museum, situated by the Maschsee Lake, which has a good selection of work by modern artists that include Picasso, Nolde and Klee, while the Wilhelm Busch Museum has a unique collection of the artistâ€™s satirical work.

The Landesmuseum is a good child-friendly ethnological museum, complete with an aquarium, which is particularly popular with youngsters. A really fun museum for the family is the Museum of Energy, on the Humboldtstrasse, which features household technology through a century of development.

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