

Off into the forest realm

The outdoor magazin for Siegen-Wittgenstein



The magic of the moment

RELAXING AND SPENDING
FREE TIME WITH YOUR
LOVED ONES

As green as it gets

UNspoilt forests,
countless springs
and lots of fresh air

Gemorje! Gon Dach!

This is how we greet each other in Siegerland and Wittgenstein. And this is how we welcome our visitors, too! We look forward to showing you our pristine, beloved home and invite you to explore, relax and enjoy yourself here.

Siegen-Wittgenstein enchants with rustic charm and living traditions. A handshake still means something here; we keep our word. Living traditions and a down-to-earth attitude connect us to our lively culture and modern life – far from the masses, without the hectic hustle and bustle. These contrasts in combination with our wonderful natural surroundings are what make our region so exciting.

Enjoy the moment! Experience the feeling of home and the magic of our beautiful uplands on the Rothaarsteig!



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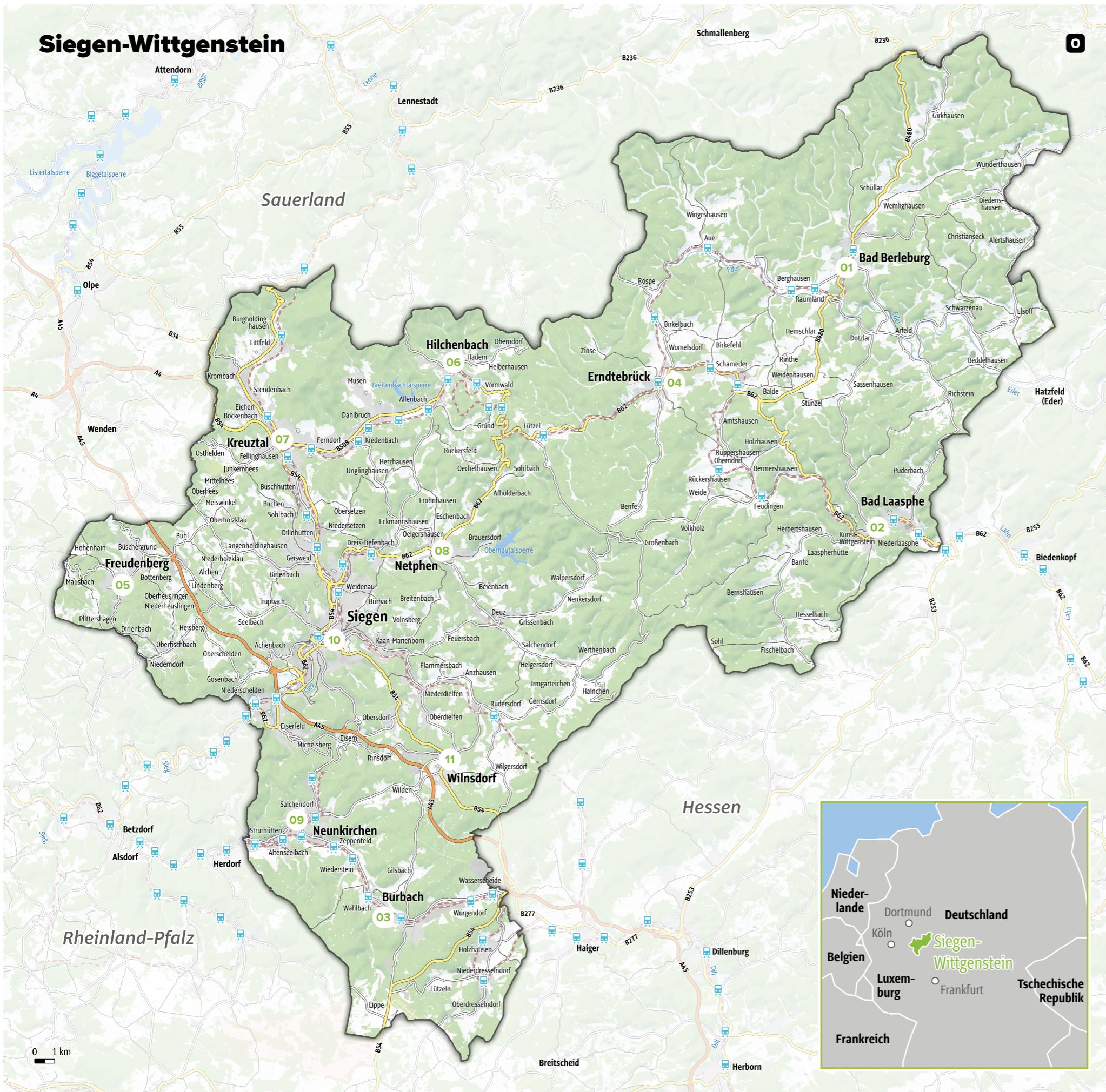
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Our best day trip destinations

These are what our visitors like best





Our experts at the local tourist information centre know the region well and have chosen their favourite tips especially for you:

Our tips

01	Bad Berleburg Marktplatz 1a	Nature Park Info Centre
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04	Erndtebrück Talstraße 27	Old-timer Museum
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11	Wilnsdorf Marktplatz 1	Tiefenrother Heights

 You will find QR codes throughout the magazine. Simply scan and explore the highlights! This QR code will take you to our favourite tips.



Our tourist information can also be found at www.siegen-wittgenstein.info in the Service section.

01



© BLB-Tourismus GmbH, Tina Scheffler

03



© Michael Bahr

02



© Achim Meurer

04



© Alexander Kiss

The magic of nature

Fully relaxed, spending free time together

What is the best thing about holidays and weekends? Wonderful free time with family, friends and loved ones. Finally out and about again together, having fun and taking a break from everyday life. Breath in deep, relax and experience unforgettable moments together.

Here in Siegen-Wittgenstein, there are lots of wonderful places waiting to be discovered. Whether with children, partners or friends – there is something to suit every taste here in our pristine, low mountain landscape.

01 The new, six kilometre long Märchenspur (Fairytail Trail) in Bad Berleburg invites children and adults to enter the realm of fantasy. Along the child-friendly circular trail, hikers get to know the historical old town, Berleburg Palace, the palace park and the mystical forests. The Märchenspur (Fairytail Trail) is a certified premium walking trail – the first in all of South Westphalia! The tour is full of variety and adventure, experiences and relaxation. Rapunzel, the Frog Prince and the Bremen Town Musicians greet young and old throughout the fairytale forest. In order to explore all six fairytales, you sometimes have to use your own imagination, too. Fun hiking for the whole family is combined with a fairytale quiz. Just drop into the Tourist Information Centre Bad Berleburg at Marktplatz, stick the flyer with the quiz into your rucksack and follow the trail of the fairytales. At each of the six stations, you write the correct answer on the sheet and use the punch to stamp the right fairytale symbol on the flyer. Have you completed all six stamps? Then it's back to the Tourist Information Centre to collect your reward.

Our valley reservoirs are the perfect place for you, if you like it a little quieter and want to be on the go accessibly. Originally constructed to collect drinking water, they are perfect for relaxing. In the dense green surroundings, these patches of blue sparkle picturesquely as they reflect the sky. **>> Page 36**

02 "Forest for beginners"? We could also describe the Siegquelle Forest Experience Path on Eisenstraße near Netphen like this. Along one and a half kilometres, the circular trail meanders through the forest near the source of the River Sieg as a narrow, winding beaten track. Children in particular gain special insights into nature here.

Here, the forest is still quite rustic and the trail is literally made of sticks and stones. Warning, it can get adventurous here! Wear sturdy shoes as the route goes downhill over roots. The tiny snail called Bythinella, the trail mascot, lovingly leads the way through this exciting and educational community worthy of protection in the sea of leaves. Various stations, e.g. such as the wooden chimes, forest guitar, spring glasses and tree binoculars, invite playful exploration. On the adventure bridge, the spider's web or the climbing station, bravery and skill are required. Do you dare? Higher up, you come to the Kindelsbergpfad (Kindelsberg Trail). The tower with a restaurant and a fantastic panoramic view await you at the very top.

03 The technology museum in Freudenberg clatters and crashes, there is a smell of hot oil and the enormous steam engine hisses! Younger and older explorers experience up close what a Siegerland industrial plant looked like 100 years ago. The picturesque, historical old town of Alter Flecken is not far from here... **>> Page 8-9**

04 Would you like to delve into the world of art? The Kulturbahnhof in Kreuztal draws visitors in from afar with its imposing "Kofferturm" (baggage tower). The "scene change" concept constantly offers small, unusual exhibitions. Allow yourself to be surprised! Would you like to experience even more art? Then head over to Siegen and the modern Museum of Contemporary Art or the Siegerlandmuseum with its Rubens gallery.



Happiness is a day off
with a perfect view.



Photo spot:
Coordinates: 50.899653, 7.875320



More panoramic views?
On Instagram at #siwierleben



Kings of the Forests

Very gentle shaggy giants

Do you know that bison were threatened with extinction and are still a "potentially endangered species"? They are called the "Kings of the Forests" and are the largest land mammal in Europe. The species had almost completely died out when the last wild bison was shot about 100 years ago. But then a new population was bred from just twelve bison living in zoos and they were gradually reintroduced to the wild. Since 2013, the majestic creatures have been living in the wild again here in Bad Berleburg and the surrounding area. The fascinating conservation project is scientifically monitored.

Our visitors can also see these shy animals by visiting "Wisent-Wildnis am Rothaarsteig". Two herds live here in a mostly natural enclosure covering an area of about 20 hectares. With a little luck and detective work, you can see the creatures up close. If one of the little calves also peeks around the corner, the day is perfect. Right by "Wisent-Wildnis" near Aue-Wingeshausen, you can also enjoy delicious food at the Wisent-Hütte restaurant. The "Kleiner Wisent" adventure playground next door also ensures that the little ones enjoy themselves.

Would you like to find out more about the gentle giants? Then you are in the right place at the information exhibition at the Nature Park Info Centre at Marktplatz in Bad Berleburg.

A hike through our pristine low mountain landscape along the 13.5 kilometre Rothaarsteig-Spur Wisent-Pfad (Bison Trail) is the perfect addition to your trip. Around the two villages of Aue and Wingeshausen, this circular trail offers varied stages through picturesque natural surroundings along soft forest trails and narrow paths.

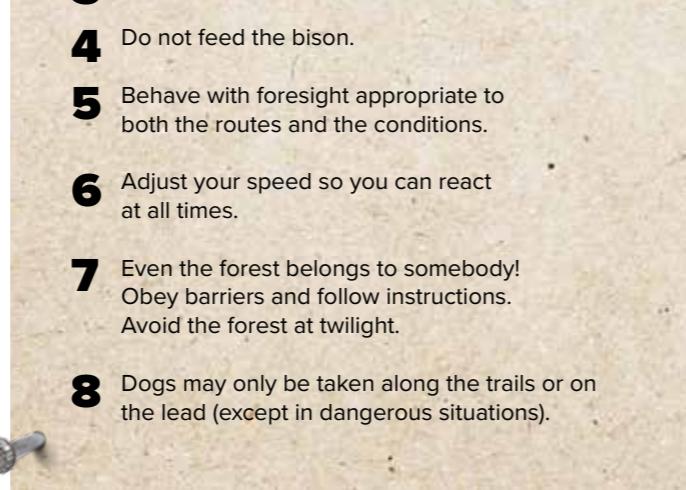
Tip: "Wisent-Wildnis" is geared completely toward families. You can borrow binoculars for the hike through the Wisent-Wildnis (Bison Wilderness) and wellies are available in all sizes so the little ones can jump into the mud bath. If you have no luck seeing the animals, you can collect a voucher to visit again from the cashier. **Warning:** Unfortunately, dogs are not permitted here!



These rules of behaviour also apply for all other wild animals in the forest!

If you come across a bison in the wild...

- 1 Stay on the designated routes.
- 2 Keep your distance! You are close enough if you can cover the animal with your thumb when your arm is outstretched.
- 3 Do not actively move closer.
- 4 Do not feed the bison.
- 5 Behave with foresight appropriate to both the routes and the conditions.
- 6 Adjust your speed so you can react at all times.
- 7 Even the forest belongs to somebody! Obey barriers and follow instructions. Avoid the forest at twilight.
- 8 Dogs may only be taken along the trails or on the lead (except in dangerous situations).



Voice

Bison hardly ever speak. From time to time they bellow, which sounds like a muffled, low mix of short bear growls and pig grunts. Cows use this to find their calves.

Diet

Bison are herbivores and eat grasses, bushes, bark, leaves, lichen, berries and fungi. They find their food in the forest and in open land.

Herd

Bison live in herds of cows and their young. They are led by a head cow. Sexually mature bulls live alone or in so-called bachelor groups. A bull will only join a herd during mating season.

Physique

The animals have pronounced withers, which is why they cannot turn over on their back. Height approx. 1.80 m. Cows: c. 400 – 600 kg, Bulls: c. 800 – 1,000 kg.

Hooves

Bison can reach speeds of up to 60 km/h on their cloven hooves, but over a short distance. That is why the creatures prefer to wait until it is absolutely necessary to run away from danger.

Horns

The calves grow horns after they are born. Both cows and bulls have horns and they stay on their head for life.

Coat

The animal's coats are brown, woolly and warm. This protects the bison against wet and cold.

As green as it gets

Unspoilt forests, countless springs and lots of fresh air

Siegen-Achenbach Historical Circular Route Numbachtal
© Michael Bahr

Would you like to let your soul run free and your body and spirit to relax, to slow down? Siegen-Wittgenstein is the most forested region in Germany – as green as it gets! Our region offers often still unspoilt natural surroundings, expansive forests, innumerable springs, streams and rivers and lots of fresh air to breath in deep. We also have mysterious valleys, proud mountain peaks, picturesque villages, a very green city, culture, majestic animals and so much space in unspoilt natural surroundings to hike, frolic about and explore.

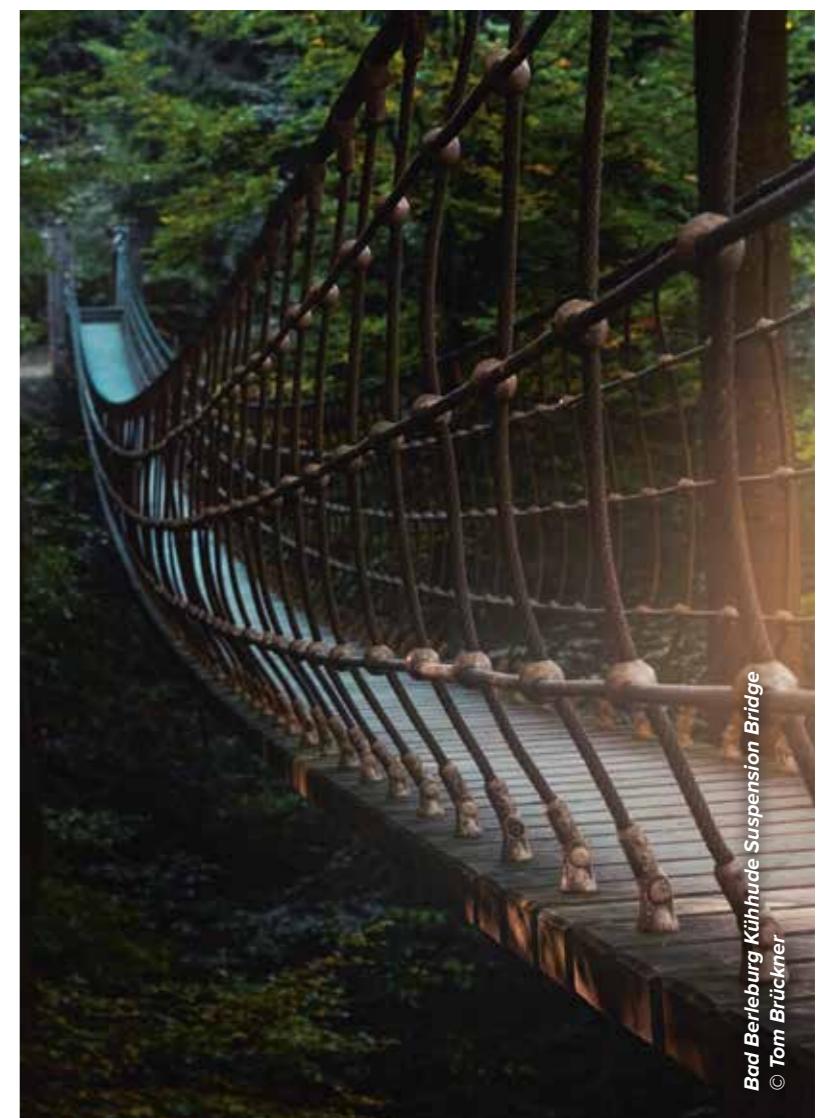
Not even the terrible storm of the millennium, Cyclone Kyrill, could dent the popularity of the region with the famous Rothaarsteig. As bad as it was for many – personally, financially and commercially – it also inspired new perspectives. For example, the storm at the beginning of 2007 created entirely new views along the hiking trails. Since then, the natural world has recovered well and regenerated itself. In many places, you no longer even notice that all the trees were knocked down. If you would like to take a closer look, the Kyrillpfad (Kyrill Trail) at Hohenroth Forester's House is right for you. This area damaged by the storm was left to its own devices and now impressively demonstrates the power of nature to heal itself and the natural forest regeneration process.

Our forest is now facing new challenges: Bark beetles have been killing lots of trees for some time now, causing them to fall or to have to be cut down. This has created new open areas and our low mountain landscape is changing again. We already know that: We will overcome this challenge too in the end with the help of regenerative nature. A true wonder that plays out before our astonished eyes. For example, last summer the cleared areas were full of foxgloves – an impressive, enchanting spectacle of colour in bright purple.

Our forest is a valuable leisure area and sustainable provider of raw materials. This may currently lead to detours on the trails in the forests in Siegerland and Wittgenstein. As a visitor to the forest, we ask for your understanding regarding these measures and solidarity with the foresters. If routes are blocked off, this is for your safety.



Siegen-Achenbach Historical Circular Route Numbachtal
© Michael Bahr



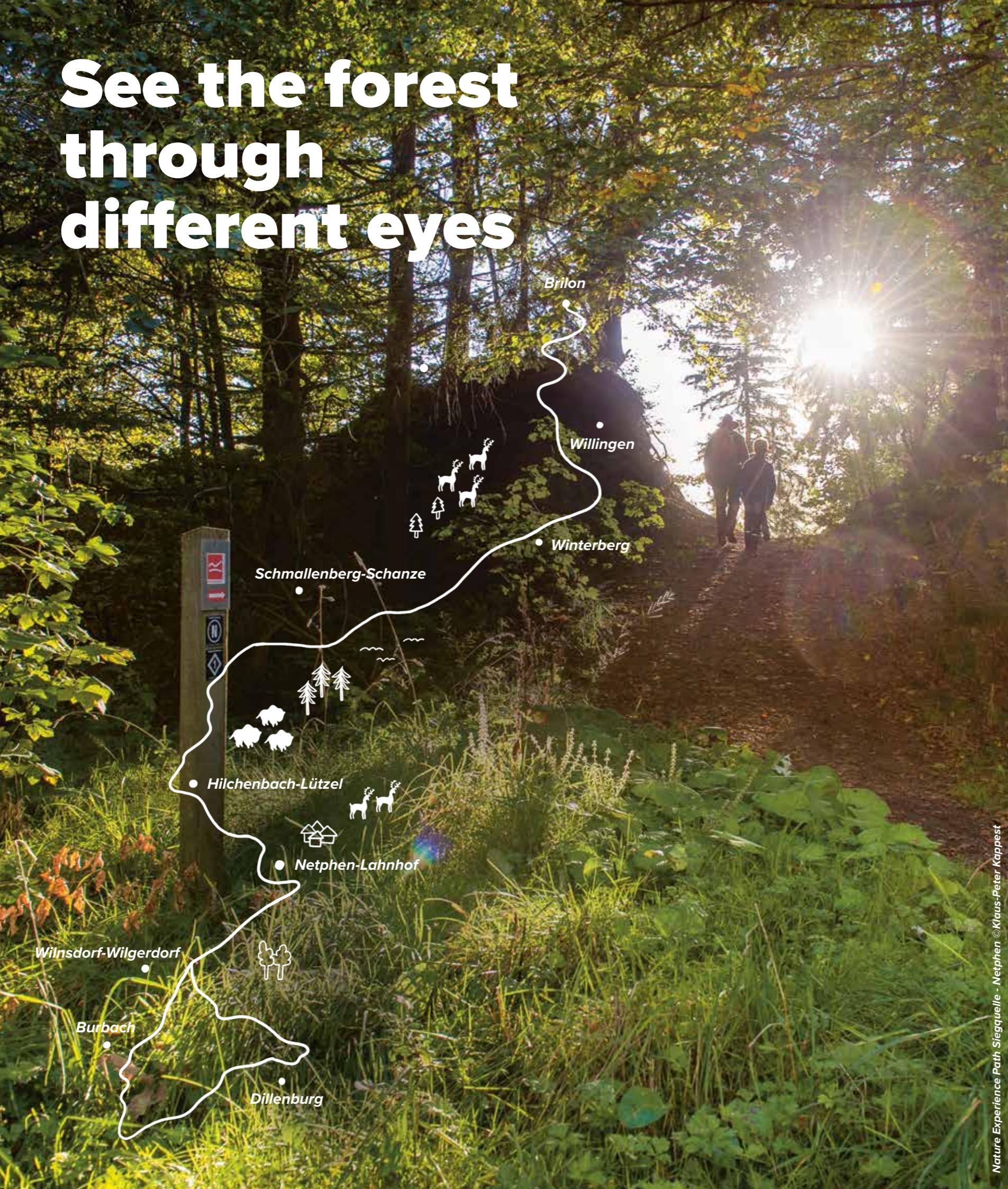
Bad Berleburg Kühhude Suspension Bridge
© Tom Brückner



Our tip: Visit the 40 metre long suspension bridge in Kühhude – a very special connection from Siegen-Wittgenstein to the Sauerland. You can feel the magic of nature particularly intensively here.



See the forest through different eyes



Out and about on the Rothaarsteig with a ranger

A hike along the Rothaarsteig is always an excursion for all of the senses. The experience of nature is even more intense when accompanied by a ranger. You can forget time on the Rothaarsteig and slow down wonderfully.

Our companion for this family hike is hard to miss. Matthias Speck is wearing a broad-brimmed hat with the symbol of the Rothaarsteig trail, a flat R in white on a dark red background. Rangers can be recognised by this and by the forest administration coat of arms on their arm.

A ranger? What is that?

The German word for this is "Schutzgebietsbetreuer", but the term borrowed from the National Park Rangers in the US sounds more catchy. There is a total of ten rangers in South Westphalia, with six of these on the Rothaarsteig. Since 2003, Speck and his five colleagues have been points of contact for anyone hiking along the Rothaarsteig, also known as the "way of the senses". You begin to relax after just a few steps along the premium hiking trail. The trails are well-maintained, so your mind is free to allow the sensory impressions to come and go: the sound of the wind in the treetops, the smell of the forest floor and sap, the knocking of a woodpecker, the buzzing around the beehives and the spectacular view into the distance from the "Nase im Wind" (nose to the wind) viewing platform. The rangers provide expert accompaniment so that both younger and older visitors can experience the forest with all of their senses. They offer forest experience tours that run for several hours and each of them has their own specialist area. For Matthias Speck, it is "animal trails in the forest" and "Hauberg forest management".

Forestry management and sustainability

"Hauberg is a form of sustainable forest management typical of Siegerland, which is still practised today", explains Speck. "This form of forest management is hundreds of years old and yet entirely modern, because sustainability is a major topic again today. Hauberg management allows the trees time to grow and only a few are felled, so the forest remains in balance. Today, the forest

is seen through different eyes and no longer just primarily as an economic region.

It is multi-talented: A habitat for animals and plants, a place to relax for humans. The forest also protects against noise and is good for the air, water and soil."

What was that? Was that a hare scurrying through the undergrowth? The ranger is quite aware of the presence of animals: He has a trained eye for tracks, can recognise signs of feeding and identify what animal was there from its droppings. "Deer are the most common creatures here", says Speck, "and many bird species." What animals impress him the most? "The wildcats. It is always a very special experience every time one scurries by."

The ranger points out ruts in the bark of a thin little tree. He takes a deer antler from his rucksack and explains how a buck rubbed the velvet from his antlers here.

Great for slowing down

Time is soon forgotten on the Rothaarsteig. Even Matthias Speck himself can "slow down wonderfully" there.

A dream job? "Many envy me because of it. But the working day consists of more than just going for walks."

He lists tasks such as: Taking care of trails and walkways, maintaining forest experience trails, protecting nature, including making sure that there is no rubbish lying about. There are hardly any litter bins: "Most of them were removed: The raccoons were too interested in the contents", Speck laughs.





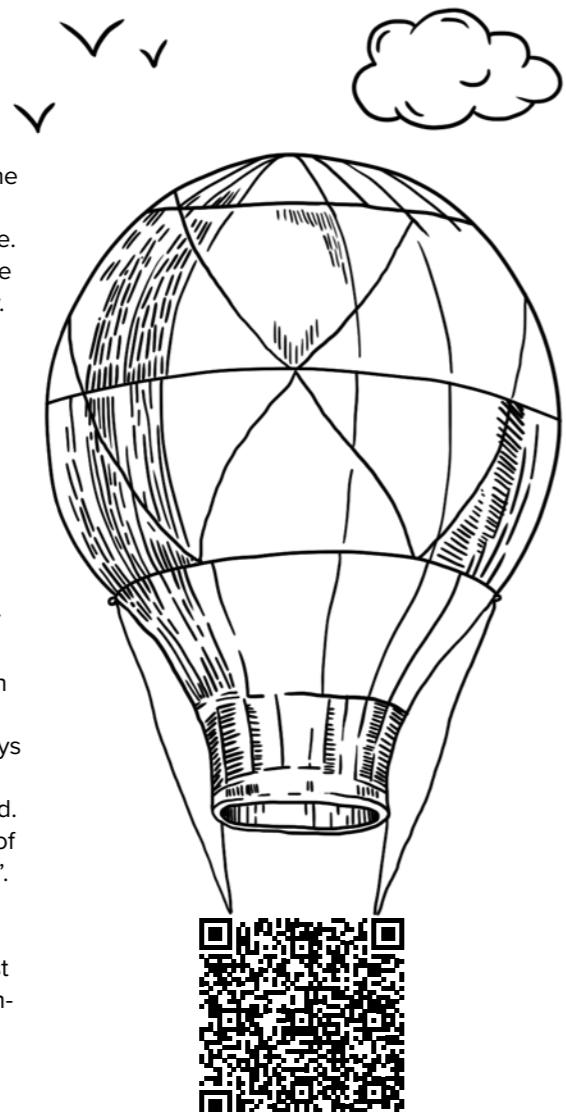
Both photos: Nature Experience Path Siegquelle
Nephren © Klaus-Peter Kappert

Germany's most forested region

Visitors touch small saplings with the ranger. The brown sprigs feel rough like sandpaper. "That is why this tree is called the "Sandbirke" (silver birch), Speck explains. Later on, the bark will turn black and white. A lot is planted in Siegen-Wittgenstein, the most densely forested region in Germany. More than 80 percent of the forests are privately owned. Many of the owners relied on spruce for a long time but now they are changing to more durable species like fir, Douglas fir, ash and maple. Climate change is becoming obvious and is of course a topic on the guided tours. Like the problem of bark beetles, which are currently appearing in massive numbers and damaging entire forests. Ranger Matthias Speck offers about 75 tours per year and has great fun with the children in particular. He recently took some primary school children on a tour. Some of the boys got really excited: "A bird exploded over there!" There were feathers on the ground. Speck explained: "It had been the victim of a plucking. Another creature had eaten it".

What does the ranger like most about his job? "The people that come into the forest are always in a good mood. They are coming here during their free time after all."

And what does Matthias Speck do in his own free time? "Then", he laughs and takes a breath of forest air, "I like to go hiking with my own three children in our local forest".



Simply scan the QR code with your smartphone to see the 3D preview and immediately set off virtually along the Rothaarsteig.

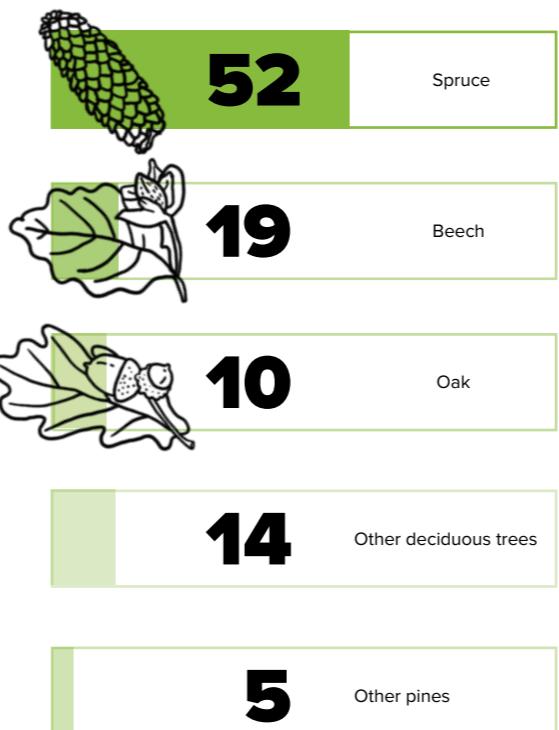


MATTHIAS SPECK

Born in 1969, a trained forester, has known his territory since childhood. As a Landesbetrieb Wald und Holz Nordrhein-Westfalen forestry agency ranger, he takes care of the forest, offers guided tours and ensures the safety and well-being of visitors along the Rothaarsteig premium hiking trail. Speck and his five ranger colleagues are also trained as nature and landscape conservationists. Their main focus is on the people who hike, cycle, jog and ride in the forest.

Trees in Siegen-Wittgenstein

Percentage figures



1 Heat and pests have severely afflicted the forest. Because of this, extensive forestry work is now needed again and again. Please obey closures and instructions – danger to life in areas where work is being carried out!

Rules in the forest



- 1 Stay on the trails designated for you.
- 2 Behave with foresight appropriate to both the routes and the conditions.
- 3 Adjust your speed so you can react at all times.
- 4 Make your presence known in a timely and friendly manner.
- 5 Allow other nature users to pass by without risk.
- 6 Even the forest belongs to somebody! Obey barriers and follow instructions.
- 7 Use the trails responsibly.
- 8 Avoid the forest at twilight and night time.
- 9 Conserve and protect animals and plants and behave appropriately.
- 10 Take your rubbish home with you.
- 11 Dogs may only be taken along the trails or on the lead (except in dangerous situations).



© Michael Bahr



© Michael Bahr



© Volker Walther

A real lucky devil

Over 900 species can be marvelled at

Mycology? Never heard of it? No idea about mushrooms and what they can do? Then visit the Pilzmuseum (Mushroom Museum) in Bad Laasphe. In the heart of the town at Haus des Gastes, more than 900 different types of mushrooms can be marvelled at. Volker Walther is the master of this small, enchanted realm. He really is a lucky devil, because he has found the perfect job for himself. As you listen to him, it immediately becomes clear that mushrooms are his world. He loves the colourful caps and many different fruiting bodies, and he really knows his stuff. When he was studying biology in Marburg, he already knew that he wanted to work at a museum. Luckily, his professor had contacts in Stuttgart and, after his studies, he completed a three-year traineeship there at the Natural History Museum.

Volker Walther can no longer escape the world of mushrooms: "I became hooked on mushrooms. And when the position in Bad Laasphe came up after my traineeship in Stuttgart had ended, it was a real stroke of luck for me!" Since 2001, the 54-year-old has been responsible for the museum in Bad Laasphe with its many little cap-wearing exhibits.

His love for the living organisms that grow hidden away and represent the third largest group after animals and plants is clear in every word he utters. He literally beams when he talks about gills, fruiting bodies and the many varieties. He finds them fascinating and this enthusiasm is contagious. "There are about 150,000 known species of mushrooms, but one can assume that this is probably just one tenth of all species of mushrooms on earth. Mycology, the study of fungi, is a really new science. So there is still lots to discover!"

There is also lots to discover at the Pilzmuseum (Mushroom Museum) in Bad Laasphe. Three years ago, the space was completely cleared out, renovated and redesigned. "I was initially concerned about whether it

would end up how I imagined it. But now I am absolutely delighted because it has turned out so chic and modern. We are one of only a few mushroom museums in Germany and the large number of species we hold, about 900, is unique." It is also quite special that these are real mushrooms and not reproduced models. The fresh mushrooms are freeze dried and are therefore preserved indefinitely if stored in dry conditions and not gnawed by insects. "Only the colour fades a little over time. But we do see real fruiting bodies with all of their fine features." Volker Walther also often travels around the region to collect and prepare new mushrooms for the exhibition. It takes two to three years for the fresh specimens to be turned into exhibits in the freezer using silica gel.

Another aspect of his work is integrating new exhibits into the existing exhibition. In 2021, an elderly gentleman from the Netherlands contacted the museum to donate his collection. "I collected about 40 banana crates from him. These included numerous expensive books and a mushroom stamp collection. He wanted nothing for it; he only wanted the items to remain together." Volker Walther promised to do so and now many new treasures adorn the museum at Haus des Gastes.

So it's out into the fresh air for seminars in summer and autumn. These are available for beginners and advanced collectors; mushroom enthusiasts and curious dabblers have been coming here for over 40 years wanting to learn more about the world of mushrooms. In addition to theoretical segments, collecting and identifying mushrooms yourself are also on the programme. "Collecting mushrooms has become modern again. Lots of people have fun doing it – regardless of whether they are young or old", says the expert joyfully. He is never bored. He has just built a scent organ for mushroom smells. How does it work? This is never revealed... off to the museum!



**Happiness is a perfect day
with an open view.**



Photo spot:
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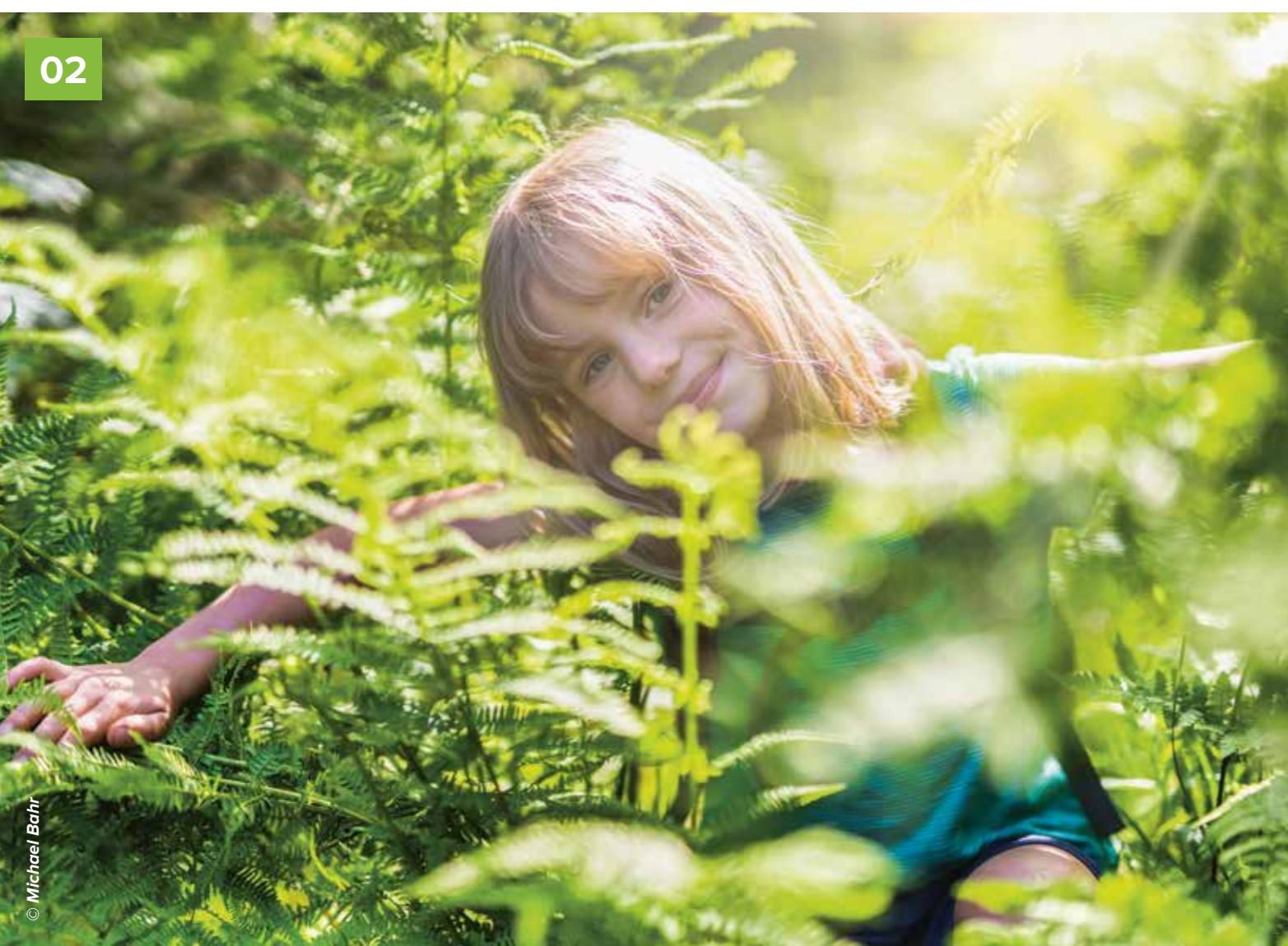


More panoramic views?
On Instagram at **#siwierleben**

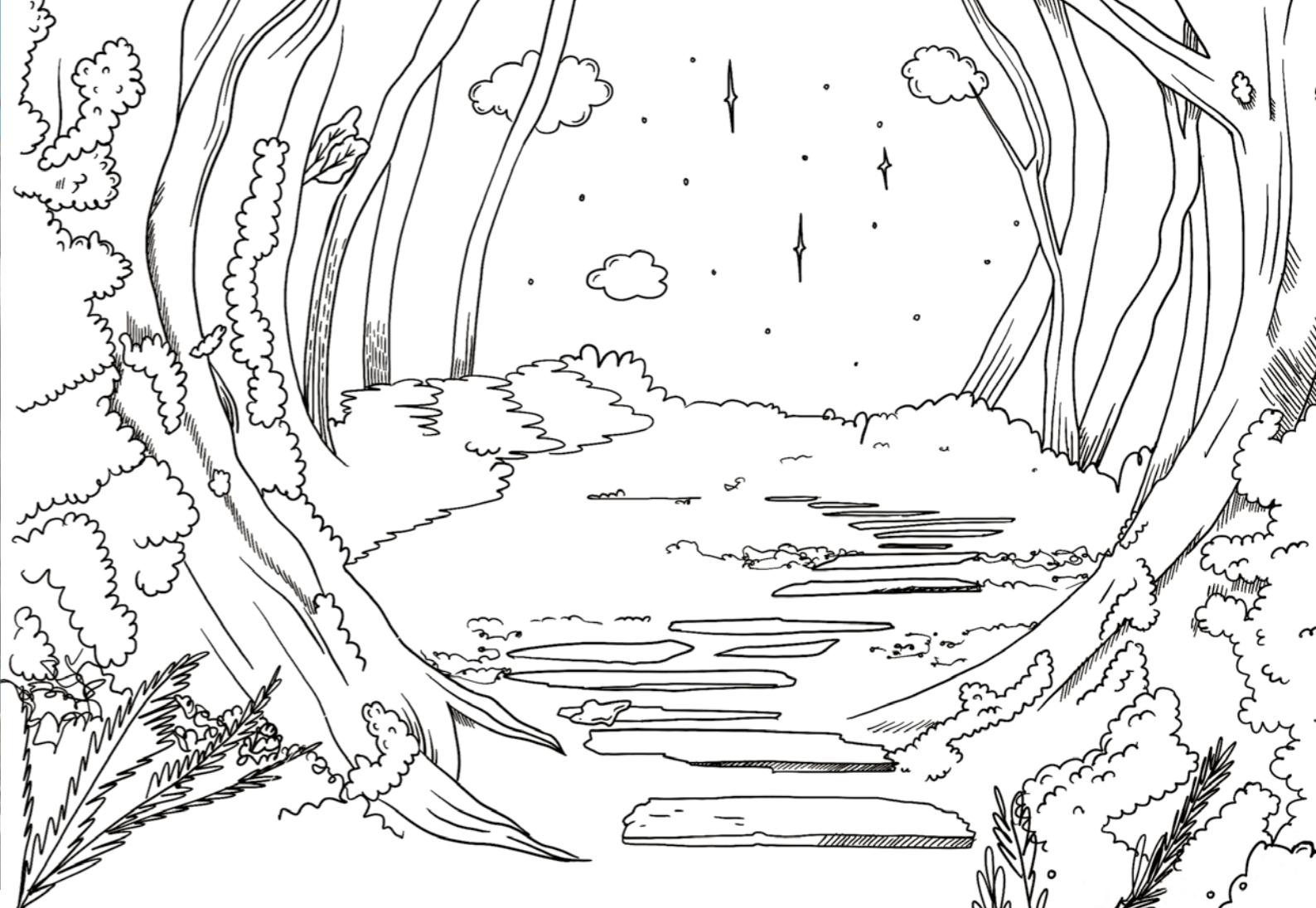




© Klaus-Peter Koppes



© Michael Bahr



Fairytale Forests

Stories and lots of nature

Fairytales and forest, the perfect pair. Many fairytales take place in the forest, and with its gnarled old trees, fairylike ferns, idyllic little streams and the shy animals, the forest is already like a fairytale. As it is here in Siegen-Wittgenstein: Of course, our expansive forests are also affected by drought and the bark beetle, but many places are still picturesque and unspoilt. The fresh air, the aromatic scent of sap, the soft forest floor and the quiet sounds of the plants and animals invite you to relax and enjoy yourself. To be mindful, to check in with yourself – to breathe in deeply and leave everyday life behind.

01 It is not just the natural surroundings in Siegerland and Wittgenstein that will enchant you but also the palaces, castles and hiking trails in the fantastic world of sagas, stories and fairytales. A real prince even lives here, Gustav of Sayn-Wittgenstein-Berleburg, the nephew of the Danish Queen Margarete II. He lives with his wife, Princess Carina, at

Berleburg Palace. The princely family of Sayn-Wittgenstein-Berleburg have lived in the Baroque palace for more than 750 years. The enchanting palace park and orangery is freely accessible.

The new Märchenspur (Fairytale Trail) initiated by the Tourist Information Centre leads right past the palace through the palace park. Along this special trail, you can hike and delve into the magic world of fairytales. » [Page 6-7](#)

Impressive contrasts

02 Nature and culture – a wonderful combination. This duo are among the most popular holiday activities for Germans. In our low mountain region, the fresh air and unspoilt nature is complemented perfectly by culture: You can experience exciting journeys through time hiking the Rothaarsteig or cycling the Oranier Route. Along the way, medieval castles and grand palaces invite you to make a detour. Alte Flecken, Freudenberg's historic

town centre, offers an impressive contrast to the natural backdrop. The view over the romantic old town is world famous with about 80 black and white half-timbered houses.

» Page 8-9

03 Trees, bushes and lots of landscape, virtually endless trails, far-reaching views and a white 'R' lying flat on a dark red background. The Rothaarsteig, signposted as the "Weg der Sinne" (Way of the Senses). This "Top Trail of Germany" is a model of success. In 2021, the long-distance hiking trail already celebrated its twentieth birthday. The treetops rustling overhead, green meadows and soft, bouncy moss under your hiking boots. Wonderful forest air, gentle hills, impressive panoramas, tranquil villages and wonderful natural surroundings as far as the eye can see. To the left and right of the paths, not only do the so-called Rothaarsteig tracks await but also lots of natural beauty spots. Places steeped in history such as the Ginsburg ruins, which are shrouded in legend, provide variety. From here, William I of Oranien-Nassau, known as William the Silent, planned the liberation of the Netherlands from Spanish rule in 1568. Four years later, he gathered his troops on Ginsburg – and the Eighty Years' War began. You can delve even deeper into European history while cycling on the German-Dutch Oranier Route.

04 Siegen with its Upper Castle is also along this route, which is now home to the Sieger-

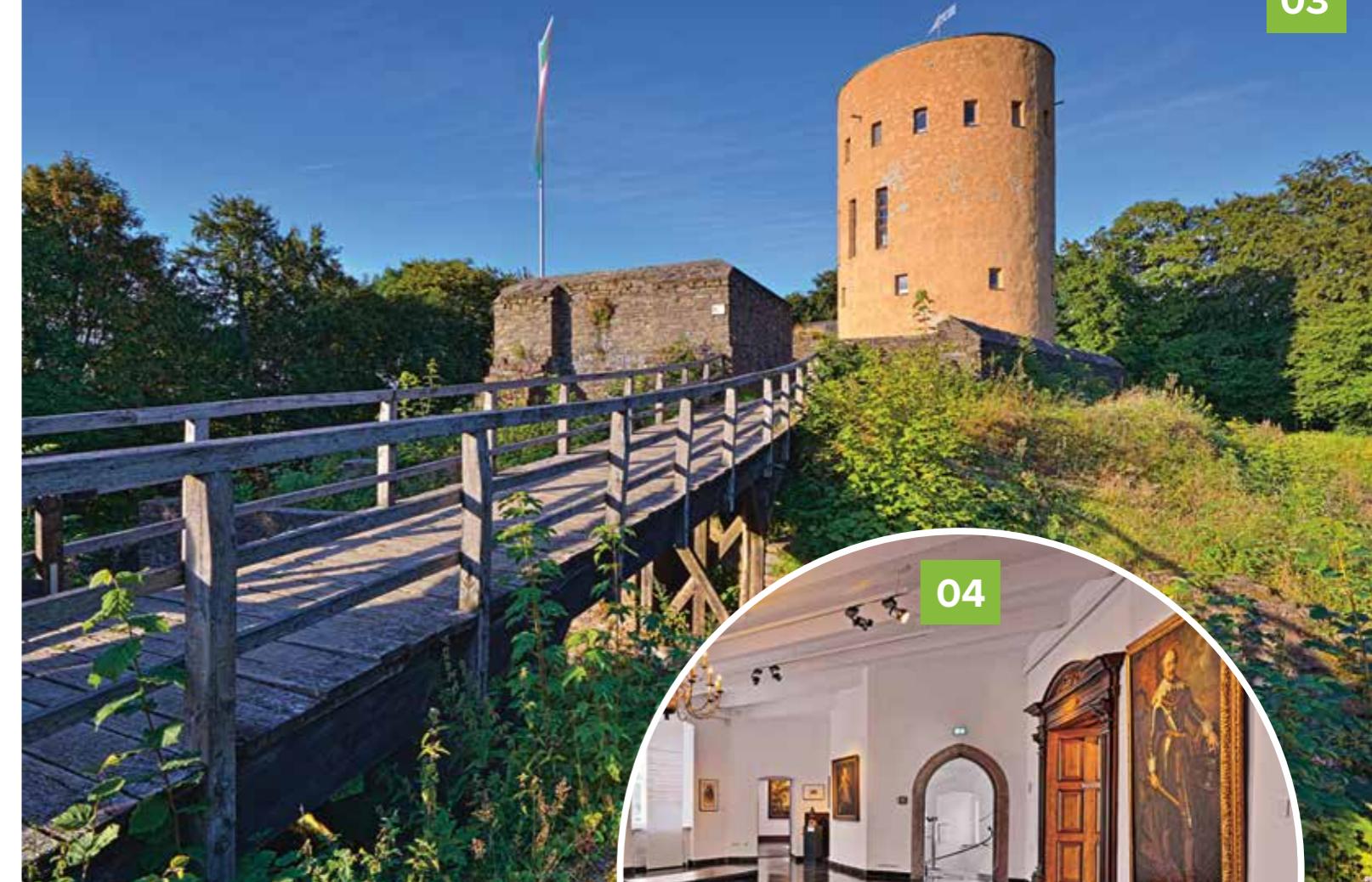
landmuseum. The exhibition of works by Peter Paul Rubens is quite special. One of the most famous Baroque artists in the world, he was born in Siegen in 1577. The Nassau sovereigns defined the cityscape of Siegen: The Upper Castle is not the only imposing feature; the Lower Castle with its "Fat Tower" is also quite impressive. Then there is the monastery, the residence of the House of Nassau-Siegen and the later prison. The Lower Castle is now home to a campus of the University of Siegen and the royal crypt. This is where one of the most prominent Oranier, Fürst Johann Moritz, known as "The Brazilian", was laid to rest. Right next to this in the building complex of the former telegraph office is now the top class Museum of Contemporary Art.

Still not had enough of mythical creatures, legends, fairytales and special places yet? Then search for the footprints of the tiny Celtic German mythical creatures that are said to live in the forests here along the Dilldappenweg (Dilldapp Trail). The Dilldapps are described as being extremely shy and mainly eat potatoes, which they steal from the fields. » Page 34-35

It is said that fairies and nymphs live in the little streams and springs of the headwaters of the Sieg, Eder and Lahn. The spring snails known as Bythinella certainly live here too. The Walderlebnispfad (Forest Experience Trail) follows their trail to the source of the River Sieg. » Page 6-7

Did you know?

- The town of Bad Berleburg lies in the heart of the Rothaar Mountains, on the Rothaarsteig, and is the first premium hiking location in North Rhine-Westphalia. There are only two places in the whole of Germany that bear the coveted Seal of the German Hiking Institute. That really is worth a trip.
- The Rothaarsteig is 154 km long and runs from Brilon in Sauerland via the Wittgenstein hill country, Siegerland and the Westerwald mountain range to Dillenburg in Hesse.
- There are 14 Rothaarsteig tracks. Six of these circular hiking trails are in Siegen-Wittgenstein.
- The wonderful, green city of Siegen is the centre of the region and has a picturesque, historical old town, colourful student life and of course lots of shops, restaurants, cafés and bars in the city centre.
- A trip on the Hübbelbummler open-top bus is quite special and makes the climb to the upper part of the city and the old town of Siegen easier.



03



04



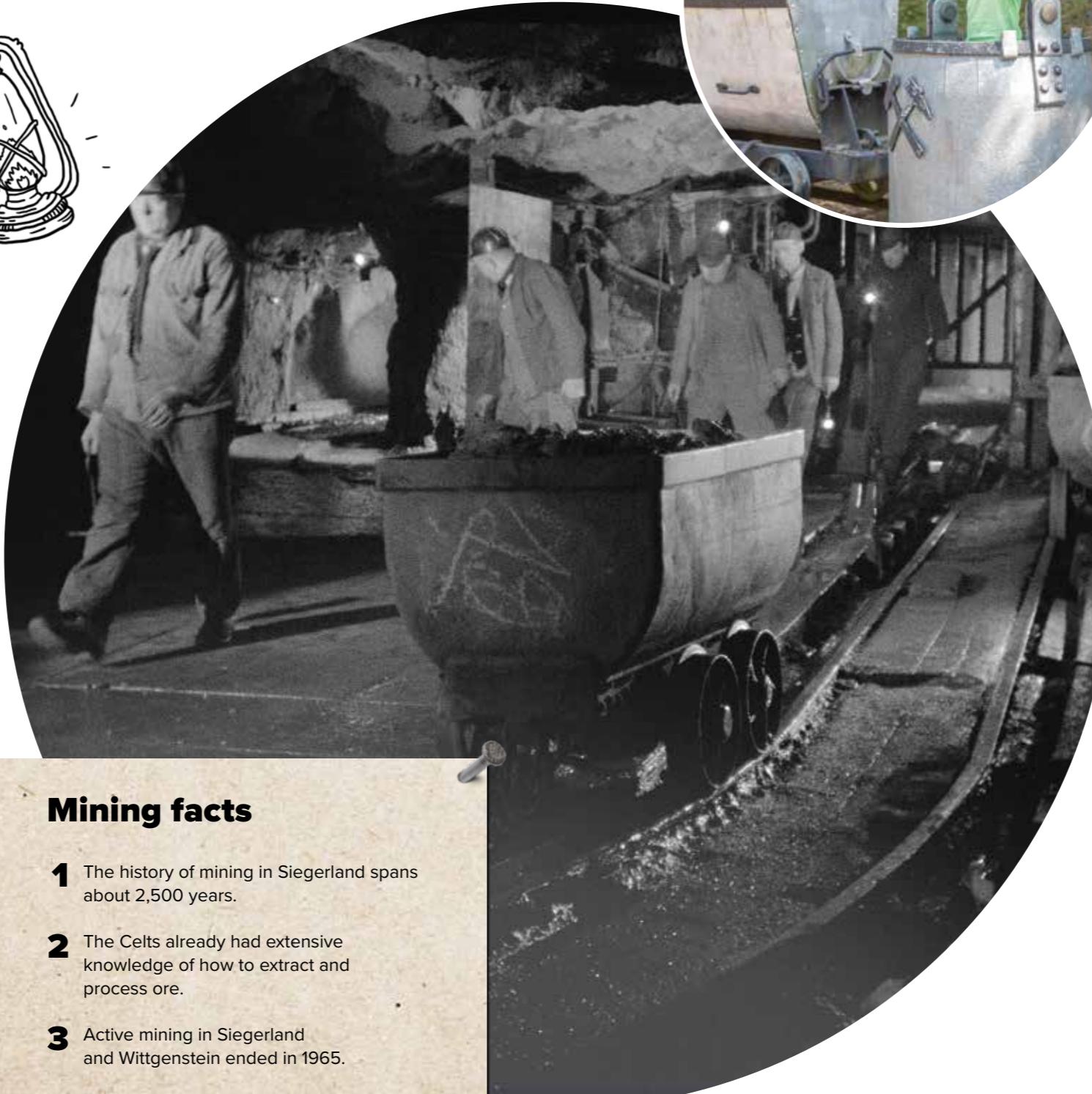
04

A deep feeling of home

Schieferschaubergwerk Show Mine Raumland

Cool temperatures and ancient rock formations lead you into another world at the slate show mine. In the seven degree Celsius shafts, you can learn about the formation, mining and processing of the dark, natural stone. For centuries, it was used as a building material for roofs, walls, windowsills and steps.

Im Edertal,
57319 Bad Berleburg



Mining facts

- 1 The history of mining in Siegerland spans about 2,500 years.
- 2 The Celts already had extensive knowledge of how to extract and process ore.
- 3 Active mining in Siegerland and Wittgenstein ended in 1965.
- 4 The metal processing industry is still the strongest industry in Siegerland today.
- 5 Silver was also found in the region and during the Middle Ages there was even a mint in Siegen.



Altenberg Medieval Mining Settlement

Legend tells of a town on Altenberg that became incredibly rich through mining but burned down because of the arrogance of its inhabitants. Archaeologists did in fact find a hoard of coins in the remains of a medieval settlement here. Hike through the cultural landscape with building ruins, shafts and imposing mining heaps.

Müsener Straße/Littfelder Straße,
57223 Kreuztal

Schaubergwerk Show Mine Wodanstolln

At Wodanstolln, you can experience how hard the ore miners worked along 600 metres – from its origins to mechanised drilling, blasting and spoil pile techniques using pneumatic drill hammers and scrapers. It can get quite loud! Today, Wodanstolln serves as a show mine with miners' cottages and a pitman's trail.

Arbachstraße 28A,
57290 Neunkirchen

Museum Wilnsdorf

Lots of knowledge and a shot of adventure for all age groups: The folk museum demonstrates life and work in the villages and mines of Siegerland, and uses virtual reality glasses, too. The cultural history meeting place invites you on a trip through various epochs.

Rathausstraße 9,
57234 Wilnsdorf

Grimberg pit / Niederdielen shaft tower

At the Grimberg pit, you take a relaxed trip into the work-filled past. The historical sidelite and ore mine offers you a view into the depths at 68 metres, protected by armoured glass. A typical Siegerland shaft tower extends 16 metres into the air and symbolises around 200 years of economic history.

Grimbergstraße,
57234 Wilnsdorf-Niederdielen

Tunnels at the Siegerlandmuseum in Siegen

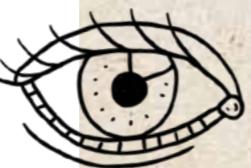
The Upper Palace in Siegen was the residence of the Counts of Nassau for centuries. Its splendour was generated underground: For 2,500 years, ore formed the basis of the regional economy. You can see its history today at the Siegerland museum. The show mine under the castle courtyard is a special attraction.

Oberes Schloss 2,
57072 Siegen

Five times true

Experience home with all of the senses

If we smell rain on a warm day, it reminds us strongly of our childhood and the endlessly long summers. If we eat something special, we think of our parents with love and their cooking, and if we hear a particular piece of music, wonderful images suddenly come to mind. Many of our most vivid and beloved memories are associated with sensory impressions. Our many senses are something wonderful and they want to be challenged! Look forward to unforgettable, sensual moments here!



Seeing – Sparkling eyes

Lights down, spotlight on at the Heimhof Theatre in Burbach! Jannik Strunk always provides the right light at the appropriate angle. Since 2013, the 28-year-old has enthusiastically been operating the modern stage technology for the listed theatre: "The great thing is that the people see the old theatre in the style of the 1950s and the technology behind it is brand new!"

Photo: Michael Bahr



Taste – Fresh from the bakery

Self-cut 'Schanzen', small bundles of brushwood, from the bakery's own Hauberg forestry heat the ovens. The smells of dough and fire fill the room. The warm, crispy bread smells of home, which you can taste. Dirk Wunderlich is a passionate baker: Combining old traditions, fresh flavour and hand-craft is his world.

Photo: Sascha Hüttenhain



Hearing – stags belling

As quiet as a mouse with ears pricked. Right by the forest, there is a powerful red deer stag and it reacts to Tasso Wolzenburg's special call. He is one of the best stag callers in Germany and is happy to take visitors into the forest. Nature is his true passion, it is what excites him. Listening to him is inspiring, informative and fascinating.

Photo: Tasso Wolzenburg



Feeling – with your whole body

Anyone who walks around the rose garden at Alter Friedhof Erndtebrück with Antje Laues-Oltersdorf and Renate Ludwig-Bernshausen learns to feel all over again. Over 450 varieties of roses provide sumptuous blossoms in summer: The garden hums, the blossoms glow and the historical roses give off lots of scent. Shady retreats offer places to slow down.

Photo: Tanja Evers



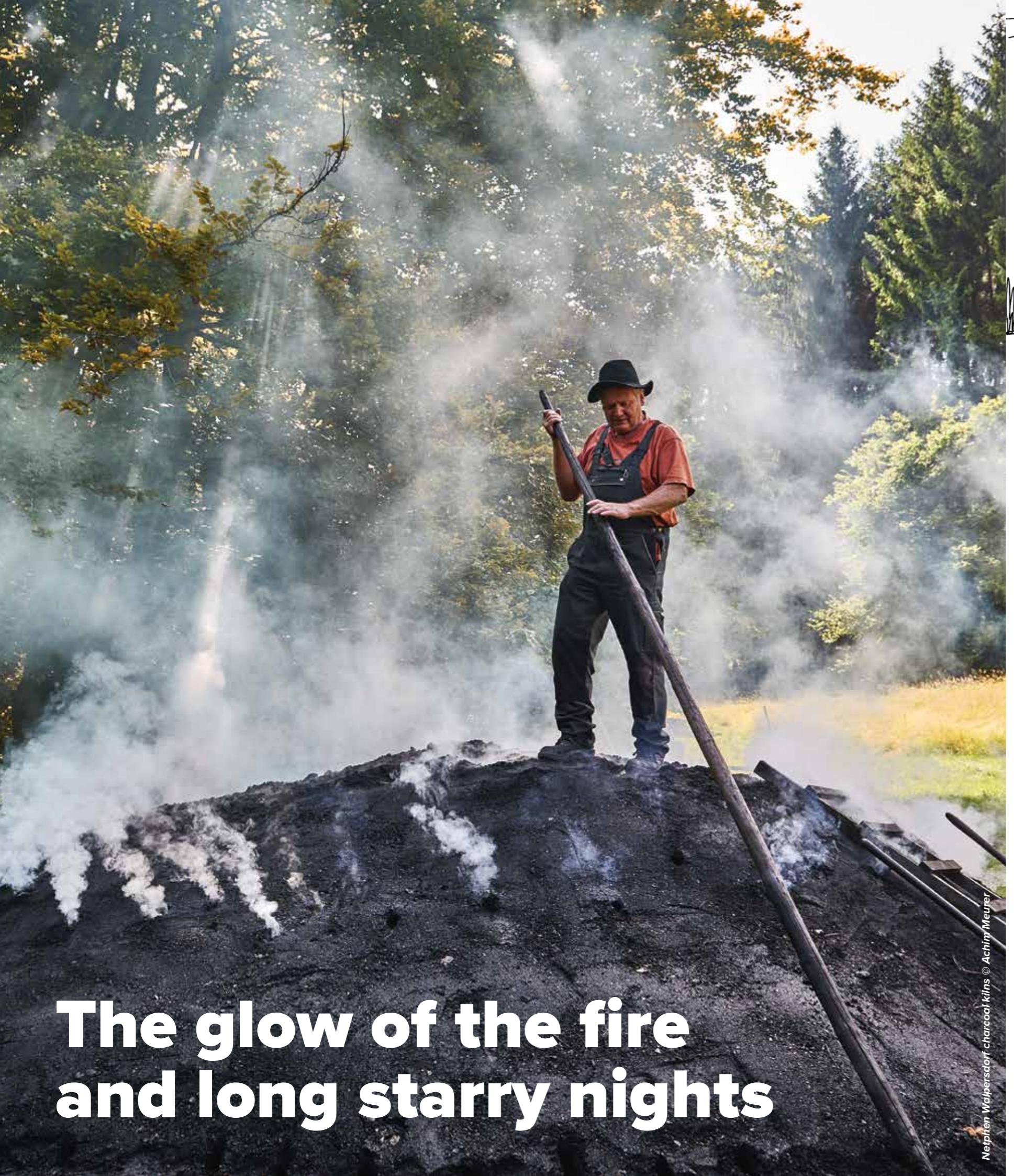
Smell – Savouring the aroma of charcoal

The archaic smell that rises from the charcoal kilns can already be smelled from far away. The billowing smoke, which smells both cosy and exciting at the same time, reaches every nose. Reinhold Wagener is a charcoal burner by tradition. The charcoal burners in his family have been producing charcoal in enormous charcoal kilns for generations.

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Photo: Sascha Hüttenhain





The glow of the fire and long starry nights



Visiting the charcoal maker of Walpersdorf

The smoke from the pile hovers over the edge of the forest and as you get closer you can also smell the archaic aroma of fire and burning wood. And then, someone is standing there in the middle of the smouldering black mound: Reinhold Wagener, a charcoal maker with a passion for his work! Anyone who is in his company will learn lots of new things and experience how a pile for making charcoal is built. Reinhold Wagener makes charcoal from wood. Today, this special black substance is normally still only used for barbecuing. In the past, charcoal was very valuable and an important source of energy – especially for iron smelting in the Siegerland. Charcoal production is one of humanity's oldest handicraft technologies. Up until the last century, there were still hundreds of charcoal piles in our region's valleys. Later on, other fuels were cheaper and so the piles disappeared. In Netphen-Walpersdorf, one of the last charcoal piles in the region can be found at the mouth of the valley above the village. Charcoal has been produced here for more than 200 years. The ninth generation of the Wagener family now practises the handicraft of charcoal production. Charcoal maker Reinhold Wagener is preserving this old tradition and passing it on to further generations. He has trained some young men from the village so the tradition stays alive. His nephew is also involved and is learning what being a charcoal maker is all about.

The characteristic smell of burning wood can already be smelled from afar. You instinctively

think of cosy evenings by the fire, campfire bread, barbecues and the magical light of the dancing fire. If you come closer, you notice that the pile is smoking but you cannot see any open fire. It is hard to believe but this type of pile burns for ten to twelve days. This is how long it takes for the "charcoal to be cook", as the expert says. During this long period, the charcoal maker has to check time and time again if it is being done properly. Reinhold Wagener or one of his helpers spend days at the pile site, sleep in the little charcoal maker's hut at night under a beautiful starry sky and monitor the charring of the logs. Not so simple at all. Anyone who buys their charcoal here appreciates this and gets a very special product. The wood charcoal is perfect for barbecuing because it heats up long and evenly.

Once the pile is "cooked", it is extinguished and the charcoal is taken out. Only about a quarter of the original volume remains intact once the fire is put out. Walpersdorf hardwoods such as ash and beech from the Haubergswald forest are used to make charcoal. Wagener and his companions carefully stack the pieces of wood into a cone. Then they pack everything with pieces of turf and charcoal dirt to keep the wooden cone airtight. Just some small holes are punched in the outer shell so the smoke can escape. The fire is ignited via the central shaft. From then on, the pile has to be watched for about two weeks. If only a little air is let in, the wood smoulders instead of burning. This is how

charcoal is made over the course of days. A hike along the approximately five kilometre long Köhlerpfad (Charcoal Maker's Trail) – marked as A1 – is a very special experience. On the trail of the charcoal making craft, you delve deep into its history. With 15 information panels, you can learn about the history of the Wagner family of charcoal makers, the construction and function of a charcoal pile, Hauberg communal forest management and the history of charcoal. The tools of the charcoal maker and charcoal making terminology are also clearly explained. The start and end of the circular hike through the idyllic landscape is at the free Köhlerplatz hiking car park right on the L719 above Walpersdorf. It passes a charcoal pile site to Siegtal and on into a side valley and another charcoal maker's site and charcoal maker's hut. It then passes around the edge of Walpersdorf through the forest and back to the start point.

Ever written with charcoal before? No? Well, now is your chance! If you want even more fun and entertainment, pick up the charcoal maker's quiz at the first information panel on the Köhlerpfad (Charcoal Maker's Trail). Of course, there is also a piece of charcoal to write with. Along the themed hiking trail, there is plenty to learn and discover. The Köhlerpfad (Charcoal Maker's Trail) is for the whole family and is suitable for children from the age of six. For the really little ones, a rough terrain pushchair is recommended as the paths have been left natural or gravelled.

For any children who still want to muck about after the round trip, the nature playground with sandboxes, a zip line, swing and mud kitchen is perfect. A special place for little explorers in nature. The children's playground is in a small dip in the green meadows of the Rothaar Mountains between the hiking car park and the charcoal pile site, right at the start and end the Köhlerpfad (Charcoal Maker's Trail). The course of a small stream even winds through the site. Tables and benches invite you to linger for a while.

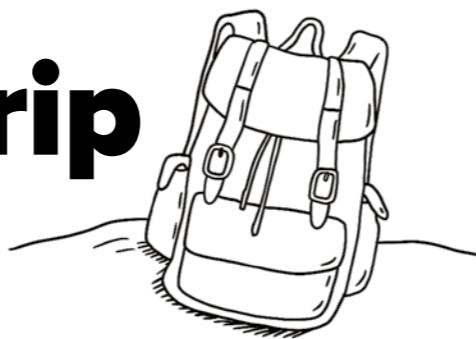
How exactly is charcoal made?

Anyone who would like to learn more about the exciting transformation of wood into black charcoal can book a tour with the charcoal maker in person. Further information on this is available on our website.



Our best day trip destinations

Let your spirit run free, on the go together, enjoying time with family and friends... Our most beautiful excursion destinations invite you to have fun and enjoy unforgettable moments. These are what our visitors like best:



Tiefenrother Heights

After a beautiful forest hike, the viewing platform at Tiefenrother Höhe invites you to enjoy the view with your "Nase im Wind" (nose in the wind). The popular Rothaarsteig also passes by this special rest stop near Wilnsdorf. Here, you can experience wonderful views and insights, allow your eyes to wander and enjoy the aromatic, oxygen-rich, fresh forest air with all of your senses.



© Klaus-Peter Kappest

"One of those places that always magically calls to me time and time again"



Realm of Springs

The QuellenReich (Realm of Springs), where the Sieg, Lahn, Eder, Ferndorf and Ilse rise. The natural surroundings here are pristine and full of secrets. On a walk through the hidden spots in the forest, you would not be surprised to see nymphs or elves dancing.



© Klaus-Peter Kappest



"Here, you can hike along little paths and the various stations in the forest are always great to motivate little hikers."



© fotomoppe.de

Hainchen Moated Castle

If you like something special, Hainchen Moated Castle in Netphen is right for you. The cultural history monument is a unique upland moated castle in South-Westphalia and is right on the Rothaarsteig. The 33,000 square metre parkland invites you to linger for a while. You can enjoy a meal at the old coach house on Wednesdays and Sundays. Weddings and overnight stays are possible at the moated castle. The experience trail provides fun for young and old.



Adventure forest Siegen Wildlife Park

Close to the city and yet this part of the Siegen municipal forest is located in utterly idyllic natural surroundings. In the open-air enclosures of the adventure forest, you can marvel at fallow deer. With a little luck, Peter will be there too, the stately stag. On the circular hiking trail, there are lots of plants and animals to see. In addition to the educational trail, there are many other circular trails in the municipal forest with fantastic views of the city of Siegen and the mountains ranges around it.

Tip: If you cannot see the fallow deer, you can also visit the fallow deer enclosure from another spot, the "Im Tiergarten" student accommodation. Maybe the deer will be there...



Bison Wilderness

One very special experience is, of course, a visit to our "Kings of the Forests" in Bad Berleburg. » [Page 10-11](#)

"The ten kilometre long, asphalted circular trail is ideal for hiking, inline skating, jogging, walking and cycling. The reward is magnificent views of the reservoir."



Obernautalsperre reservoir

Houses and a church once stood here; now the valley is flooded and invites you to enjoy relaxing walks around the magnificent blue waters. The Obernautalsperre reservoir in Netphen impresses with a picturesque circular trail that you can also explore on wheels.

If you would like it even flatter and easier, then you are in the right place at the Breitenbachtaalsperre reservoir in Hilchenbach. After completing a circuit of the body of water used to collect drinking water, you can head over to the "Alte Wärterhaus" for refreshments.



You have to see it!



 You can also find all of our favourite places and many other wonderful locations at www.siegen-wittgenstein.info.

We look forward to your comments, tips and pictures!



Siegen-Wittgenstein for the pocket...

Feeling curious? There's lots more Stories and interesting facts about our home!

Tour Planer & App

Travelling with the family? Do you want to spend a quiet, relaxed weekend or explore our region as a bon vivant? Our App is an interactive guide for travellers with more than 1,400 tours and over 5,000 leisure tips. Just choose your favourite tour and head out into the countryside. Of course, you can save all of the tour suggestions and maps beforehand and use them offline, too.



i All information, lots of tips, pictures and of course our hosts can be found on our website at www.siegen-wittgenstein.info.

Brochures and flyers

Pay attention hiking fans and explorers! Our new pocket guide with the top 15 tours in Siegen-Wittgenstein is just right if you want to go hiking. Discover the popular Rothaarsteig hiking trail or explore your own trail between Celtic ramparts, enchanted mushroom glades and mystic rocks. Our regional highlights will enchant you in picturesque, pristine natural surroundings and invite you to recharge your batteries. All of the tours in the pocket guide are certified by the Wanderverband (Hiking and Association) and stand for quality. Our magazine "Freizeit. Tagesausflüge gemeinsam genießen" (FreeTime. Enjoying days out together) lists more than 50 excursion tips to suit every taste.

As the most forested region, the environment and the topic of sustainability are very important to us. That is why we are focusing on the online offering. All of our brochures are available to download as PDF files on our website. Would you prefer a paper copy? You can also find print offerings on the site, which we will gladly send directly to you at home. So up off the sofa and see how beautiful it is here!



Not sure which brochure is the right one for you or which route is the most beautiful? If you cannot find what you are looking for, just call our colleagues at the local tourist information centre.
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Das ist unsere
Natur.
Und das ist ihr
Bier.



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