

GERMAN GEMSTONE ROUTE

A journey of discovery along the
German Gemstone Route



By two circular routes the German Gemstone Route connects all sites in the Hunsrück/Nahe region that are characterized by working with gemstones. The origins of gemstone cutting go back to the Middle Ages when rich mineral occurrences were discovered and subsequently mined in the region. From the traditional craft of gemstone a rich variety of touristic offers have developed. Today's mineral deposits along the German Gemstone Route still delight passionate collectors and hobby geologists. The world of gemstones offers fascination for tourists: there is in fact no other place in the world showing such concentration of all things to do with gemstones and jewellery. The fascination of precious stones combined with the picturesque scenery and many interesting sights make the holiday route German Gemstone Route a unique experience.

We invite you to come and join us on a discovery tour of the German Gemstone Route. Immerse yourselves in the sparkling, shining world of gemstones, enjoy the magnificent scenery and learn about the special culture of this holiday region.

Since the German Gemstone Route has been planned as a circular route you may freely choose where to begin your tour, or where you would like to spend a well-earned break before resuming your trip.

Tourist-Information Deutsche Edelsteinstraße
Brühlstr. 16, D-55756 Herrstein
phone: +49 (0)6785-79104 Fax +49 (0)6785-79120
email: info@edelsteinstrasse.de
www.deutsche-edelsteinstrasse.de

Opening hours:

Monday – Friday 9.00 a.m. to 12.00 p.m. and 1.30 p.m. – 5.00 p.m.



Tickets for the region
Guest card / family card

Visit 14 sights along the German Gemstone Route at a reduced entrance fee:

Church in the Rock, Museum Idar-Oberstein, Jakob Bengel Industrial Monument, Historical Gemstone Cutting Mill Biehl, German Gemstone Museum, Gemstone Mines Steinkaulenberg, Edelstein-Erlebniswelt, Indoor playground Sternenland Idar-Oberstein, Gemstone Waterwheel Grinding Mill, Historical Copper Mine Fischbach, Animal Park Wildenburg, Medieval Herrstein, Slate Mine Herrenberg, Fossil Museum Bundenbach, Celtic Settlement Altburg.

Guest card

price: 2.00 € per person, valid for 1 adult, you will get the group rate

Family card

price: 5.00 €, valid for 2 adults and their children. The adults pay the group rate, one child under 14 years is for free



ATTRACTIONS ALONG THE GERMAN GEMSTONE ROUTE

Historical Gemstone Cutting Mill Biehl, Asbacherhütte

At the historical Gemstone Cutting Mill Biehl you may learn how the cutters used to cut agates and other stones while lying on a special chair in front of the wheel.

Opening hours:

daily 9.00 a.m. to 5.30 p.m., closed on Wednesdays
(except on holidays)

Entrance fee:

adults 2.30 €, Children over 6 years 1.70 €

Contact:

Wasserschleiferei Biehl, D-55758 Asbacherhütte
phone: +49 (0)6786-1505, info@alte-edelsteinschleiferei.de, www.alte-edelsteinschleiferei.de

Historical Copper Mine, Fischbach/Nahe

Closed at the end of the 18th century the copper mine Fischbach was once one of the biggest and most important ones in Germany. During centuries miners have been working in the twilight of the galleries, mining precious copper ore. Huge hollows grottos of up to 30 m of height and a farreaching system of galleries have been dug into the mountain. Copper Smelter: Once a year, on the first weekend of October, the past comes alive when the old smelting techniques are presented during the "Copper smelting in medieval times".

Opening hours:

15.02. - 14.11. daily 10.00 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Entrance fee:

adults 4.50 €, groups over 10 persons 3.50 € per person, children (5 to 16 years) 3.00 €

Contact:

Copper Mine Fischbach, Hosenbachstraße, D-55743 Fischbach, phone: +49(0)6784-2304, info@besucherbergwerk-fischbach.de, www.besucherbergwerk-fischbach.de

Medieval Herrstein

Visit romantic Herrstein! This small town retains the picturesque charm of the middle ages with its narrow streets and historical „old town“. Walk a few centuries back in time along streets of cobble stones and half-timbered houses. Besides the clock-tower there is the "Schinderhannes tower" which, tradition says, imprisoned Germany's Robin Hood. The little church holds real treasures in an organ by the famous Stumm family, paintings by an unknown artist of the middle ages, a pre-reformation baptismal font and medieval grave plates.

Guided tours:

May – October on Thursdays 4.30 p.m. and on Saturdays 2.30 p.m.

Meeting-point: Clock tower (Uhrturm)

Prices for guided tours:

adults 2.00 €, children (6 to 16 years) 1.00 €, group rates on request

Contact:

Tourist-Information, Brühlstraße 16, D-55756 Herrstein
phone: +49(0)6785-79104, info@edelsteinstrasse.de, www.herrstein.de

Petrified Visitor's Book, Veitsrodt

The Petrified Visitor's Book Veitsrodt is a reminder of the numerous VIP visitors who have come to the German Gemstone Route. Real stones, which have been signed by guests from politics, industry and culture have been erected along a circular route amounting to a 1.7 km hike.

Open all year, free entrance.

Gemstone Garden, Kempfeld

When following the signs to the Gemstone Garden, you will find a unique and high-carat sight! More than 100 raw gemstones are displayed for you to admire and touch. Boards give explanations about gemstones and background information. The centrepiece of the garden is an arrangement of the 12 gemstones that decorated, according to the bible, the fundaments of the "New Jerusalem" (Revelation 21, verse 19/20).

Open all year, free entrance.

www.edelsteingarten.kempfeld.de

Tower of Wildenburg Castle, Kempfeld

High above the village of Kempfeld, at a height of 674 m, the tower of Wildenburg Castle reaches up to the skies. Originally constructed on the remains of a Celtic retreat in the Middle Ages, Wildenburg castle can look back on a vivid history of destructions, reconstructions an changing ownership. As a landmark preserved from pre-Christian times the Celtic ring wall still stretches down from the castle site to the North-East into the national park around the Wildenburger Kopf mountain.

Open all year, free entrance.

Animal Park „Wildfreigehege Wildenburg“ with Wildcats Information Center, Kempfeld

At the foot of Wildenburg castle you will find the animal park. It spreads out across a huge area and gives you the opportunity to watch the animals in its natural habitat. A special pet zoo offers children the chance to actually cuddle with some animals.

New since summer 2010: Wildcats Information Centre with rehabilitation station
Did you know that in the Hunsrück still lives up to 1.000 wildcats? At the wildcats information centre Wildenburg you can learn more about the shy animals. In addition to the information centre with four interactive stations you can discover an exciting "geocaching"-project. There is also a rehabilitation station. Injured wildcats become cured and returned to the wild. Some injured animals find a new home in the wild park.

Opening hours: daily 8.30 a.m. to 5.00 p.m.

Entrance fee:

adults 4.50 €, in groups over 10 persons 3.50 € per person, children (4 to 16 years) 3.00 €

Contact:

Wildfreigehege, An der Wildenburg, D-55758 Kempfeld, phone: +49(0)6786-7212
www.wildfreigehege-wildenburg.de

Geology Palaeontology Exhibition Rudolf Opitz

The teacher Rudolf Opitz started his collection of fossils from the Hunsrück slate in 1925. The collection is worth a visit and fascinates tourists and specialists alike. This is a permanent exhibition that can be visited at the info pavilion of the open-air enclosure Wildenburg.

Historical grain mill, Allenbach

The historical grain mill Allenbach was actually used until 1900 as a grain and oil mill. The different runs for hulling and husking, for producing flour and coarse meal are still intact and have retained full functions.

Opening hours:

daily 10.00 a.m. to 5.00 p.m.

Entrance fee:

adults 2.00 €, children under 15 years 1.00 €

Contact:

Mr. Müller, In der Schied 11, D-55758 Allenbach, phone: +49(0)6786-2162
(registration recommended)

ATTRACTIONS IN IDAR-OBERSTEIN

Museum Idar-Oberstein

On exhibition: one of the countries most important collections of minerals with high quality pieces found in the mines of the Saar-Nahe region. Exhibits from local engravers and gold and silver smiths, the interior of an agate cutting workshop driven by water power and functioning, the crystal hall, fluorescence cabinet, a section for town's history and palaeontology.

Opening hours:

01.11. - 31.03. daily 11.00 a.m. to 4.30 p.m.

01.4. - 31.10. daily 9.00 a.m. to 5.30 p.m.

Entrance fee:

adults 4.70 €, groups over 10 persons 3.80 € per person, children 6-14 years 2.40 €, students 15-17 years 3.80 €, Family card 12.00 €

Contact:

Museum Idar-Oberstein, Hauptstraße 436, D-55743 Idar-Oberstein
phone: +49(0)6781-24619, museum-idar-oberstein@t-online.de, www.museum-idar-oberstein.de

Felsenkirche / Church in the Rock

About 200 ft/60 m above the town of Idar-Oberstein you can see the Church in the Rock. It was built between 1482 and 1484 and accommodates a natural cave inside. The church shelters several valuable pieces of art.

Opening hours:

15.03. - 31.10. daily 10.00 a.m. to 6.00 p.m.

01.11. - 15.11. daily 11.00 a.m. to 4.00 p.m. (except during weddings and services)

Entrance fee:

Adults 2.00 €, groups over 10 persons 1.50 € per person, students 1.50 €

Contact: Felsenkirche, phone: +49(0)6781-22840, www.felsenkirche-oberstein.de

Edelstein-Erlebniswelt

The beauty of precious crystals and minerals presented in a mystic and bizarre world of magic with caves and galleries, the „Grotto of Yearning“, murmuring waterfalls, glowing volcanoes, a smoke spitting dragon and a crystal crypt.

Opening hours:

Monday – Friday 9.00 a.m. to 6.00 p.m., Saturday 10.00 a.m. to 6.00 p.m.

Entrance fee: adults 3.00 € (incl. shopping coupon 1.00 €), children 2.00 €

Contact:

Edelstein-Erlebniswelt, Nahestraße 42, D-55743 Idar-Oberstein
phone: +49(0)6781-2050, info@goldgottlieb.de, www.edelstein-erlebniswelt.de

German Gemstone Museum, Idar-Oberstein

The exhibition with more than 10.000 exhibits presents nearly all of the gemstones used worldwide, in cut form, untreated or as crystals. In addition to shining jewels and diamonds, artistically crafted engravings and sculptures strike the eye of the visitor. In the museum's vaults special exhibitions present regularly different aspects of the gemstone sector.

Opening hours:

01.05. – 31.10. daily 9.30 a.m. to 5.30 p.m., 01.11 – 30.4. daily 10.00 a.m. to 5.00 p.m.

Closed from November to January as well on 24. and 25.12., 31.12. and from 08.01. - 14.02.

Entrance fee:

adults 5.00 €, groups over 10 persons 4.00 € per person, children to 14 years 2.50 €, students over 15 years 4.00 €, family card 12.00 €

Contact:

Deutsches Edelsteinmuseum, Hauptstraße 118, D-55743 Idar-Oberstein
phone: +49(0)6781-900980, info@edelsteinmuseum.de, www.edelsteinmuseum.de

Jakob Bengel Industrial Monument, Idar-Oberstein

Historical factory for necklaces and jewellery with machines from the age of mechanics (1870-1990). Guided tours with a presentation of the machines at work. Jewellery and Art Deco Jewellery produced on Site. More than 20 showcases with exhibits from the company's production in the 20th century. Changing special exhibitions of modern jewellery design.

Opening hours / Entrance fee:

Monday – Friday 7.00 a.m. to 4.00 p.m. (3.00 € per person)

Guided tours by appointment (also on weekends) 4.50 € per person (at least 5 persons)

Contact:

Jakob Bengel Stiftung, Wilhelmstraße 42 a, D-55743 Idar-Oberstein
phone: +49(0)6781-27030, Jakob.Bengel-Stiftung@t-online.de, www.jakob-bengel.de

Historical Weiherschleife, Idar-Oberstein

The Weiherschleife (operation between 1754 and 1954) is the last remaining watermill along the Idarbach. A demonstration offers an insight into the work of the ancient gemstone cutters operating the huge sand stone wheels. In addition an interesting multimedia show, a mineral room and a gemstone-mining zone for young and old can be visited.

Opening hours:

15.03. - 15.11. daily 10.00 a.m. to 6.00 p.m.

Entrance fee:

adults 4.00 €, groups over 10 persons 3.50 € per person, students (6 to 16 years) 3.00 € per person

Contact:

Historische Weiherschleife, Tiefensteiner Straße 87, D-55743 Idar-Oberstein, phone: +49(0)6781-31513, edelsteinminen-idar-oberstein@t-online.de, www.edelsteinminen-idar-oberstein.de

Gemstone Mines Steinkaulenberg, Idar-Oberstein

The gemstone mines in the Steinkaulenberg (exploited till 1875) are the only gemstone mines in Europe open to visitors. In a visitor gallery you can discover agates of unique beauty, sparkling rock crystals, amethysts, calcareous spar, jasper and other quartz. A gemstone camp and mining fields are available as well as a geological trail.

Opening hours:

15.03. – 15.11 daily 9.00 a.m. to 5.00 p.m.

Entrance fee:

adults 5.00 €, groups over 10 persons 4.00 € per person, students 6-16 years 3.50 €

Contact:

Gemstone Mines Steinkaulenberg, phone: +49(0)6781-47400,
edelsteinminen-idar-oberstein@t-online.de, www.edelsteinminen-idar-oberstein.de

MORE ATTRACTIONS in the neighbourhood

- Slate mine Herrenberg, Bundenbach:** adults 3.50 €, children (6 to 16 years) 2.50 €
Fossil museum, Bundenbach: adults 3.00 €, children (6 to 16 years) 1.50 €
Celtic settlement Altburg, Bundenbach: adults 3.00 €, children (6 to 16 years) 2.00 €
Combined ticket:
slate mine, fossil museum and, celtic settlement: adults 6.50 €, children 4.50 €
Opening hours: 1.4. – 31.10., 10.00 a.m. to 5.00 p.m.
Contact: phone: +49(0)6544-9272
- Archaeological Park Belginum, Morbach**
The museum presents finds from the Celts and Romans.
Opening hours: March – June 10.00 a.m. to 5.00 p.m., July – August 10.00 a.m. to 6.00 p.m., September – October 10.00 a.m. to 5.00 p.m., closed on Mondays
Entrance fee: adults 3.00 €, children 1.50 € Contact: phone: +49(0)6533-957630

- Hunsrück Holzmuseum, Morbach**
Exhibition / feeling, hearing, touch, taste / Living with wood
Opening hours: 03.04. - 31.10. Tuesday – Saturday 2.00 p.m. to 5.00 p.m., Sunday + holiday 10.30 a.m. to 5.00 p.m., 01.11. - 31.03. Saturday 14.00 a.m. to 5.00 p.m., Sunday + holiday 10.30 a.m. to 5.00 p.m., Closed in January
Entrance fee: adults 2.00 €, children 1.00 €, family card: 4.00 €
Contact: phone: +49(0)6533-959750
- German Telephone Museum, Morbach**
(Nov. – Feb. 0170-5718660)
Collection of over 2.000 exhibits / The History of Telecommunications
Opening hours: 1.3. – 31.10. daily (except for Monday) , Tuesday – Saturday 10.00 a.m. to 6.00 p.m., Sunday + holiday 11.00 am. to 18.00 p.m.
Entrance fee: adults 3.00 €, children 1.50 €
Contact: phone: +49(0)6533-958626
- Barefoot-path Bad Sobernheim**
Barefoot-path with a total length of 3,5 km
Opening hours: 1.5. – 3.10., daily 9.00 a.m to 8.00 p.m.,
Entrance fee: adults: 3.50 €, children 2.00 €
Contact: phone +49(0)6751-81241
- Open-Air-Museum, Bad Sobernheim**
Discover the history and life of former times in the Rhineland-Palatinate open-air museum.
Opening hours: 16.3. - 1.11. daily 9.00 a.m. to 6.00 p.m. (except for Monday), Offices close 17 p.m.
Entrance fee: adults 4.50 €, children 2.00 €
Contact: phone +49(0)6751-3840

SPECIAL EXPERIENCE ROUTES AND WALKS / SPECIAL MOTTO TRAILS

Circular Mining Route, Fischbach

The Circular Mining Route at Fischbach introduces hikers to geological and metallurgical history of the surroundings. Interesting background information on geological and historical facts is provided on clearly illustrated display tables along the route.

Length: 3,5 km

Historical path Wildenburg, Kempfeld

The historical path will take you on a tour through two thousand years. Follow in the footsteps of Celts, Romans and the medieval knights all around Wildenburg Castle.

Length: 1,5 km

Experience route through the forest Wildenburg, Kempfeld

Children and adults alike will enjoy the 3,5 km long experience route through the forest. The woods around Wildenburg Castle are the ideal scene for experiencing the forest in a playful way.

Geological park „Geopark Krahloch“, Sensweiler

The geological park „Geopark Krahloch“ between the villages of Sensweiler and Wirsweiler offers a 1 km round course where exhibits and boards provide information for those who interested in geology, mineralogy, raw material or aspects of nature and regional landscape.

Nature trail, Allenbach

The preservation and protection of nature permeates the site of the the Allenbacher Weiher pond. 1 hectare of water surface and about 3 hectares of natural reserve area can be enjoyed when you walk around the biotope, offering information on the numerous and unique specimen of animals and plants encountered on your route.

Nature trail Idarbach

The Idarbach Nature Path links the recreational areas "Allenbacher Weiher," the "Krahloch GeoPark," and the "Celtic Ringwall Ringkopf." The wooden panels offer information on nature and geology, pointers on the commercial use of the Idarbach and gives a demonstration of the diverse flora and fauna. Length: about 10 km

Strewing fruit experience path, Mackenrodt

The traditional cultivation of fruit trees can be seen when you take the strewing fruit experience path at Mackenrodt. On 1,5 km you will learn a lot about the advantages of cultivating different sorts of fruit trees in meadows as in former times, and about the wealth of different varieties and possible uses.

Sirona-Weg

The 100 km long Sirona Trail follows the traces left by Celtic-Roman culture in the region between the Hunsrück mountains and Nahe river. A culturally minded hiker may not only enjoy the beautiful natural surroundings, but will have the opportunity to explore this modern-time place of refuge offering sanctuary from busy modern life as an area which has preserved traces of early settlements to be discovered at selected sites.

The Saar-Hunsrück Climb

Hike along 114 mi/184 km of magnificent trails ...past bizarre stone formations and idyllic brooks ...through deep valleys and mysterious moor landscapes. Discover romantically situated lakes, enchanted valleys, and fantastic panoramas. The Saar-Hunsrück Climb borders on the Saar Bend near the ceramics centre Mettlach, on the Roman city Trier, and on the gem centre Idar-Oberstein. The Saar-Hunsrück Climb has been certified by the German Hiking Institute as a Premium Hiking Trail. With 58 adventure points, it achieved the TOP position among the long-distance trails in Germany. Its unique feature: More than 70 % natural trails.

Dream Loop “Middle Ages Trail”

Medieval Herrstein with its picturesque half-timbered houses is the starting point for this eventful trail, one with interesting references to the Middle Ages in the region. The Middle Ages Trail offers everything a top trail comprises: almost natural paths, splendid vistas, diverse forests and special features such as the natural monument "Misery Oak" or the "Raven's Pulpit". The hike is ideal for adding a sightseeing tour of historical Herrstein. The trail was assessed with 84 adventure points by the German Hiking Institute.
(Length: 5.3 miles / 8.6 km)

Dream Loop „Köhlerpfad am Steinbach“

The "Charcoal Burner's Trail at Steinbach" introduces hikers to about 8 miles (13 km) of natural beauties on the German Gemstone Road, where dense forests and wide-open landscapes alternate with picturesque views. The medium-difficult trail begins in the charcoal burners' village of Langweiler, directly on the Saar-Hunsrück Climb and leads around the Steinbach Reservoir over almost undeveloped paths. The reservoir not only provides drinking water for the region but also offers hikers an impressive landscape. It is not surprising that the trail was awarded 67 adventure points by the German Hiking Institute.

ADVENTURE PROGRAMMS

Wine tasting in the heart of a mountain

You're looking for something special? Taste high quality wine from the Nahe in the unique atmosphere of the historical copper mine Fischbach. Enter the deep galleries and enjoy a choice of excellent Nahe wines.

Regular events: 19.3., 1.10. and 12.11.2011.

For groups over 15 persons on request. Prices: 12.50 € per person

Be a gemstone cutter, goldsmith or engraver

Jewellery design has a long tradition all along the German Gemstone Route. Hobbyists can learn the arts of gemstone cutters, goldsmiths and engravers in short, basic or intensive seminars during 9, 15 or 35-hour courses.

In search of quartz and crystals

With an experienced guide you will collect minerals, visit an gemstone cutters workshop driven by waterpower and observe an expert gemstone cutter at his work place, while cutting your findings.

Regular events: 2./3. July, 23./24. July, 13./14. August, 15./16. October 2011

Guided hikes on the Saar-Hunsrück Climb

Length: about 15-18 km. Regular events: 30.4., 1.5., 17.9., 18.9.2011 10.00 a.m. to 4 p.m. Prices: 12.00 €

Guided hikes on the Dream Loop “Middle Ages Trail”

Length: about 8,6 km. Regular events: 17.4., 15.5., 12.6., 4.9.2011 14.00 a.m. to 6 p.m. Prices: adults 12.00 €, children under 12 years 6.00 €

