



Sächsisch-Böhmische
SCHWEIZ

Saxon Switzerland | Elbe Sandstone Mountains

Media Kit

2019

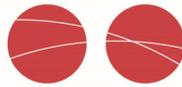


Foto: Jung Hamms/Tourismusverband Sächsische Schweiz e.V.

www.saechsische-schweiz.de



Europäische Union. Europäischer
Fonds für regionale Entwicklung.
Evropská unie. Evropský fond pro
regionální rozvoj.



**Sächsisch-Böhmische
SCHWEIZ**

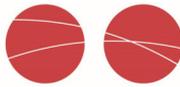
The Elbe Sandstone Mountains: a fairy tale in stone.

The Elbe Sandstone Mountains – comprising Saxon Switzerland and Bohemian Switzerland – offer some of the most spectacular natural and cultural landscapes in Europe. The region straddles two national borders in the extreme south-east of Germany and the north of the Czech Republic and it is only a few kilometres distant from the Saxony state capital of Dresden.

The landscape is positively fascinating with its richness of different forms – with table mountains, plateaus, rocky reefs and rock pinnacles, ravines, forests and the Elbe Valley. A large part of the region, which totals some 710 square kilometres (275 square miles) with its abundant flora and fauna is protected on either side of the border as a National Park.

Adjoining it to the south are the Bohemian Central Highlands, clearly displaying their volcanic origin and characterised by striking conical mountains. Together with the Saxon-Bohemian Switzerland National Park region, they make up a contiguous nature reserve covering 1800 square kilometres (695 square miles).





Sächsisch-Böhmische SCHWEIZ

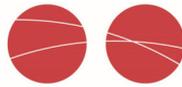
Contents

FACTS	4
Tourism Region Elbe Sandstone Mountains	4
National Park Region Saxon-Bohemian Switzerland	5
Origin and discovery	6
The most important sights worth seeing and special features.....	7
Fountain of Youth Elbe Sandstone Mountains	8
The Elbe Sandstone Mountains Artists' Trail "Malerweg"	11
Elbe Sandstone Mountains Musical Landscape	14
BASIC TEXTS	16
Not of this World	16
Activity holidays in the Elbe Sandstone Mountains: 700 square kilometres of freedom of movement...	18
CONTACT	
Tourism Association.....	21
Press contact.....	21
Social Media channels.....	21
Contact form	22

Media contact:

Sebastian Thiel
Media Relations on behalf of the Saxon Switzerland Tourism Association e.V.
THIEL Public Relations e.K.
Tel.: +49 351 3148892
Fax: +49 351 3148894
E-mail: presse@saechsische-schweiz.de
Internet: www.saechsische-schweiz.de
Online press area: www.press-area.com/sbs





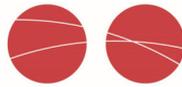
Sächsisch-Böhmische SCHWEIZ

FACTS

Tourism Region Elbe Sandstone Mountains

Situation	On either side of a national border, the tourism region of Saxon-Bohemian Switzerland – also known as the Elbe Sandstone Mountains – is located in the extreme south-east of Germany and the north of the Czech Republic, just some 18 km from Dresden between the towns of Pirna and Děčín (Tetschen).	
Total area	710 square kilometres	
Visitors annually	Day visitors: about seven million, including 3 million to the Saxon Switzerland national park and 1.5 to the Bohemian Switzerland national park. Registered overnight visitors to Saxon Switzerland 2018: 1,7 million (6 % more than in the previous year), arrivals: 514,000 (+9.4 %)	
Activities / facilities offered	1,200 kilometres of walking trails and 1,000 km cycle routes as well as some 21,000 climbing routes on either side of the border on around 1,100 recognised climbing peaks. Mountain biking, water sports, riding, cross-country skiing, health treatment, fitness farms, culture	
Top excursion destinations	Bastei and the Bastei bridge, Königstein Fortress, the historical town centre of Pirna, Saxony's Elbe river steamers, Toskana Therme, Kirnitzschtal Railway, National Park centre, Deutsche Kunstblume (German artificial flowers) Sebnitz, Rathen Cliff stage, Elbe cycle route, Painters' route, Elbe Sandstone forest path, Prebisch Arch, Kamnitzklamm, Edmundsklamm, Děčín Castle	
Accommodation	Hotels, guest houses, holiday flats, holiday houses, camp-sites	
Health resorts	Kneipp resort Bad Schandau, health resort Bad Gottleuba-Berggiesshübel, health resort Rathen, health resort Gohrisch, resort Sebnitz, resort Hohnstein	
Barrier-free facilities	Saxon Switzerland is a member of the working group "Barrier-free holiday destinations in Germany" and publishes a brochure on barrier-freedom of accommodation, excursion destinations, hiking trails and restaurants. www.saechsische-schweiz.de/urlaubsthemen/barrierefrei-reisen.html	
Film settings	Cloud Atlas, Inglourious Basterds, Der Vorleser, Die Päpstin, Die Chroniken von Narnia, Hänsel & Gretel: Witch Hunters, Goya, Lasko – Die Faust Gottes, 1 ½ Ritter, Der Freischütz, Die Jagd nach der heiligen Lanze, Die Söhne der großen Bärin, Der süße Brei, Tatort, Polizeiruf 110, Der Ranger, and many others.	
Information	Saxon Switzerland: Tourismusverband Sächsische Schweiz e.V. Bahnhofstrasse 21 01796 Pirna, Germany Tel.: +49 3501 4701-47 info@saechsische-schweiz.de	Bohemian Switzerland: České Švýcarsko o. p. s. Křínické náměstí 1161/10 Krásná Lípa 407 46, Czech Republic Tel.: +420 775 552 789 informace@ceskesvycarsko.cz
Tourism portal	www.saechsische-schweiz.de	www.ceskesvycarsko.cz





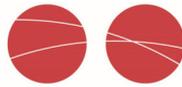
Sächsisch-Böhmische SCHWEIZ

FACTS

National Park Region Saxon-Bohemian Switzerland

	National Park Saxon Switzerland	National Park Bohemian Switzerland
Features	The only mountainous National Park in Germany	Newest National Park in the Czech Republic
Area	93.5 square kilometres	79 square kilometres
Established	1990	2000
National Park region	The Saxon Switzerland National Park lies embedded in Saxon Switzerland (since 1956), which covers an area of 287.5 km ² (111 square miles). Both parts together form the National Park region Saxon Switzerland of 381 km ² (147 square miles).	The Bohemian Switzerland National Park is also surrounded by a nature reserve, established in 1972, over an area of 250 km ² (96.5 square miles). Both parts together form the National Park region Bohemian Switzerland of 329 km ² (127 square miles).
	Total area of the National Park region Saxon-Bohemian Switzerland: 710 square kilometres	
Flora and Fauna	A world of rare animals and plants, threatened species and re-establishment projects. For example the peregrine falcon, black stork, kingfisher, Eurasian pygmy owl, red-breasted flycatcher, lynx, red deer, chamois, beaver, dormouse, salmon, trout, spring snowflake, yellow violet (a relic of the Ice Age), goatsbeard and many different species of fern	
Landmarks	"Lilienstein", the sole table mountain on the right bank of the Elbe; "Bastei" with its bridge	The "Prebischtor", the largest natural sandstone arch in Europe
National Park visitor centres	National Park Centre Saxon Switzerland Dresdner Strasse 2b 01814 Bad Schandau, Germany Tel.: +49 35022 50240 nationalparkzentrum@lanu.de www.lanu.de	Haus der Böhmisches Schweiz Křinické náměstí 1161/10 CZ-407 46 Krásná Lípa, Czech Republic Tel.: +420 775 552 789 informace@ceskesvycarsko.cz www.ceskesvycarsko.cz
Information	Staatsbetrieb Sachsenforst Nationalparkverwaltung Sächsische Schweiz An der Elbe 4, 01814 Bad Schandau Tel.: +49 35022 900-600 poststelle.sbs-nationalparkverwaltung@smul.sachsen.de	ČR - Správa Národního parku České Švýcarsko Pražská 52, CZ-407 46 Krásná Lípa, Czech Republic Tel.: +420 412 354 050 n.park@npcs.cz
Internet	www.nationalpark-saechsische-schweiz.de	www.npcs.cz





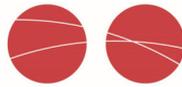
Sächsisch-Böhmische SCHWEIZ

FAKTEN

Origin and discovery

144 million years ago.	An ocean covers the area we now know as Saxon-Bohemian Switzerland. Sediment gathers on its bed.
100 million years ago	The sandstone layer hundreds of metres thick raises and shatters; the sea of chalk withdraws. Wind, water and frost erosion cause the bizarre formations of the Elbe Sandston mountains to be created.
65 million years ago	Magma breaks through the sandstone layer to form conical basalt mountains. The most striking witnesses to this phase include the Grosse and the Kleine Winterberg, the Stolpener Burgberg with its characteristic basalt columns and the Rosenberg on the Bohemian side.
	The Elbe carves its way some 300 metres deep in the sandstone layer. Distinct storeys in the landscape are created (valleys / gorges, plateaus, table mountains and reefs) with a difference in height of up to 450 metres.
Middle Ages	Numerous castle strongholds are built to protect the trade routes. Many of them develop into hideouts for robber knights and are destroyed by the rulers of Saxony in the 15 th century. Only Hohnstein Castle and Fortress Königstein, considered invincible, survive.
1708	August the Strong, Prince Elector of Saxony, climbs the Lilienstein.
1766	The Swiss artists Adrian Zingg and Anton Graff visit the region. The landscape reminds them of their home and they coin the expression "Saxon Switzerland".
1801	The first travel guide on Saxon Switzerland appears: "A Guide through Saxon Switzerland", by Carl Heinrich Nicolai
Early 19th century.	More and more romantic era artists discover the Saxon Switzerland as motif and inspiration. With "Der Wanderer über dem Nebelmeer" (1818), Caspar David Friedrich creates one of the most famous paintings of the romantic era. Inns and guest houses are built at popular excursion destinations. The first tavern opens in 1812 on the world-famous Bastei Bridge, the first guest house in the region is built in 1818 on the Grosser Winterberg. In 1890 the first observation tower is inaugurated on the Pfaffenstein.
1837	First trip of the Elbe Steamship Company (founded 1836) to Rathen
1851	The "Bohemian Railway" opens the line Dresden – Prague
1898	The Kirnitzschtal Railway starts operations.
1901	The first trolleybus in the world – the Bielatalbahn – starts running from Königstein. In 1904 operations are abandoned as it is uneconomic.
Mid-20th century	A number of nature teaching trails are laid down.





Sächsisch-Böhmische SCHWEIZ

FACTS

The most important sights worth seeing and special features

	Saxon Switzerland	Bohemian Switzerland
Highest points	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Grosser Zschirnstein: 560 metres• Grosser Winterberg: 556 metres	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Hoher Schneeberg (Děčínský Sněžník): 722 metres• Rosenberg (Růžový vrch): 619 metres
The most important natural tourist attractions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Bastei and the Bastei Bridge• Lilienstein table mountain• Pfaffenstein table mountain and the rock pinnacle Barbarine• Gohrisch and Papststein table mountains• Fissured Schrammsteine and Affensteine rock formations• Fire-watch "Balcony of Saxon Switzerland"• Kuhstall rock arch• Amselsee in Rathen Spa• Hercules' Columns in the Biela Valley• Zschirnsteine	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prebisch Arch (Pravčická brána)• Edmund's (or Quiet) Gorge (Edmundova souteska)• Hoher Schneeberg (Děčínský Sněžník)• Rosenkamm observation point (Růžový hřeben)• Panorama trail by Dittersbach (Jetřichovice)• Rosenberg (Růžový vrch)• Khaatal (Kyjovské údolí)• Rock city "Tyssaer Wande" (Tiské stěny)
Most important items of cultural interest	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Königstein Fortress• Rathen Cliff stage	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Děčín Castle (Děčínský zámek)

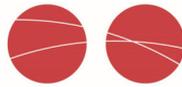
Detailed information on the natural attractions:

<http://www.nationalpark-saechsische-schweiz.de/besucherinformation/ausflugsziele/>

Detailed information on the cultural highlights:

<http://www.saechsische-schweiz.de/urlaubsthemen/kultur.html>





Sächsisch-Böhmische SCHWEIZ

FACTS

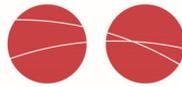
Fountain of Youth Elbe Sandstone Mountains

People have been coming to the Elbe Sandstone Mountains for centuries to benefit from the natural medicines found in abundance in the ground, in the water and in the air in this region. Especially in the 19th century, a lively health spa business developed and in many places the tradition is nurtured to this day.

Spas and health resorts in Saxon Switzerland

Climatic Spa of Rathen	In the middle of the Saxon Switzerland National Park at the very foot of the Bastei lies the idyllic Spa of Rathen, which numbers a bare 300 inhabitants. That makes Rathen the smallest community in Saxony both in numbers and in area. The two halves of Rathen - Oberrathen and Niederrathen - are connected by a historical "flying bridge" ferry, which is today the subject of a preservation order.
Kneipp resort Bad Schandau	The oldest health resort in the Elbe Sandstone Mountains maintains the tradition of the Kneipp treatment and supplements it continuously with modern fitness treatment. Schandau was once an important stop on the trade route between Meissen and Bohemia. Today, the state-accredited health resort has attractive offers for visitors, such as the Toskana Therme, which promises the visitor a unique experience with "Liquid Sound".
Health resort Bad Gottleuba-Berggiesshübel	Between Saxon-Bohemian Switzerland and the Eastern Ore Mountains lies this spa and health resort surrounded by mountain pastures and wooded slopes. Long-established clinics with a countrywide reputation are the Median Clinic in Berggiesshübel and the Median Health Park in Bad Gottleuba.
Health resort Gohrisch	The small village at the foot of the table mountains Gohrisch, Pfaffenstein, Königstein and Kleinhennersdorfer Stein was once popular summer resort in the Elbe Sandstone Mountains. Gohrisch has been a health resort since 1936. Among the most famous guests was Dmitri Shostakovich.
Resort Sebnitz	This idyllic little town on the border between Saxon and Bohemian Switzerland is principally known for its artificial flower manufacturing. Sporting types get their money's worth in snowy winters in downhill and cross-country skiing. In the warmer months, a boat trip along the wild and romantic Kirnitzsch Gorge is very popular. If you are looking for rest and relaxation, the Dr. Petzold-Kräutervitalbad in Sebnitz with its sauna landscape is the place you want to go.





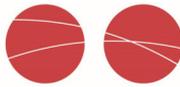
Sächsisch-Böhmische SCHWEIZ

Resort Hohnstein	The resort Hohnstein extends with its eleven districts of the Bastei up to the Kirnitzschtal, over the rock landscape of the national park in the south and the mountains of the Lausitz in the north. At the heart lies the "city on the rock", with its medieval castle and the Brandaussicht, the "balcony of the Saxon Switzerland". Hohnstein is the birthplace of the famous hand puppet Kasper.
------------------	--

Spas and leisure pools in Saxon Switzerland

Toskana Therme Bad Schandau	The Toskana Therme in Bad Schandau is a multi-faceted, imaginatively designed bathing and sauna landscape in this Kneipp resort directly on the banks of the Elbe. Trademark and indeed the main attraction is the "Liquid Sound Temple" ("Tempel des flüssigen Klangs"). The sensuous experience you have when floating in the warm thermal spring water is enhanced here with atmospheric underwater music and ethereal coloured light projections.
Dr.-Petzold-Kräutervitalbad Sebnitz	Oversized herbal motifs welcome the visitor to the Kräutervitalbad in the floral town of Sebnitz. This is more than just decoration. The healing power of herbs accompanies you throughout the entire bathing and fitness experience. The skin will be thoroughly spoiled by massages with herbs, algae, evening primrose oil, healing mud, goat butter and more. In the Rasul, the oriental steam bath, the fragrance of selected essences will beguile you. And in the sensual Cosel-bath, two climb into a golden tub with grooming herbal waters with selected ethereal oils. For bathing pleasure, there is an informal bathing hall and in summer there is a large open-air pool available.
Geibelt Baths complex, Pirna	In the middle of the picturesque Gottleuba Valley and the Kohlberg landscape, the Geibelt Baths complex Pirna invites the whole family to visit the stylish baths and sauna landscape. There is a giant slide to tempt children small and large. With a beneficial massage you can relax on the warm stone in the Turkish Hammam, while there are also brine baths, healing Kneipp treatments and various saunas for you to recover. The Finnish Kelo Sauna, of 500-year-old Lapland pine, is not merely a sauna. You can get away from the everyday things here for a day in a Scandinavian atmosphere
Mariba Neustadt	Tropical air and water temperatures, palms, wave pool, 25-metre pool, giant water-chute, whirlpools, monkey island, kiddies' world and more: the Mariba in Neustadt / Saxony invites you to Caribbean bathing pleasure for the whole family. The superb bathing landscape, with a water surface of 1300 square metres, is supplemented by a similarly versatile sauna paradise with panoramic, earth, mental and bio saunas, steam bath, Roman dry sweating room and a large sauna garden with pool outside. One house speciality very popular with its guests is the garlic pouring in the log cabin.



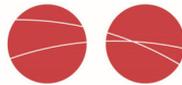


Sächsisch-Böhmische
SCHWEIZ

Leisure pools in Bohemian Switzerland

Aqua Park Tetschen (Děčín)	As well as bathing fun in the hall and the open-air baths, the Tetschener Adventure Baths offer massages and the use of sauna and solarium.
Sportzentrum Rumburg (Rumburk)	Apart from swimming, on these premises you can play squash or go bowling.





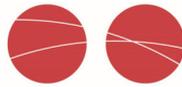
Sächsisch-Böhmische SCHWEIZ

FACTS

The Elbe Sandstone Mountains Artists' Trail "Malerweg"

Special characteristics	In the 18th century, nature lovers and artists in search of experience and inspiration roamed the world of rocks in the Dresden region. They found the ideal footpath through the district, then a few years ago the route was rediscovered as the "Elbe Sandstone Mountains Artists' Trail", upgraded to suit contemporary needs and re-signed. With a total length of 112 kilometres, since it was reopened it has been the flagship of the trails in this hiking region.
Awards	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• "Top Dream Tour in Germany, top 3 in Dream Tours of the World" (Globetrotter Ausrüstung, 2016)• "Favourite walking route in Germany 2008/2009" (Internet survey by Wandermagazin)• "Most beautiful walking route in Germany 2007" (Wandermagazin)• German Tourism Award 2007 (German Tourism Association)
Length / stages / height difference	112 kilometres (69.6 miles), eight one-day stages from 11 to 18 km, 4,000 altitude meters
Mark	Curved "M"
Grade	Moderately difficult to demanding
History	By painting, writing poetry and composing music, artists of the Romantic era made the Elbe Sandstone Mountains world-famous in the 18 th / 19 th centuries. Previously unknown landscapes became favourite subjects for the artists – and the roads from Dresden merged into an ideal route. Whoever followed it came to the most picturesque places in Saxon Switzerland. Development for trippers and summer holidays began in the early 19 th century. New paths were laid down, climbs to the peaks were developed and stone bridges were built. After the railway was opened in 1850, the route fell into disuse. Until 2006. It was then brought back to life, reconstructed on the basis of the historical route, as the Artists' Trail. Signposting was erected; maps, information boards, a website and a brochure were produced. The route along the left-hand bank of the Elbe is new: while the Artists' Trail once ended at the Prebisch Arch, today's tour leads across the river in Schmilka, shortly before the Bohemian border and then back to Pirna along the left bank of the Elbe.
Implementation partners	Tourismusverband Sächsische Schweiz e.V. (project management), National Park Administration, communities, Sachsenforst, the district of Sächsische Schweiz-Osterzgebirge and many others.





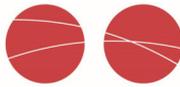
Sächsisch-Böhmische SCHWEIZ

Accommodation	Over 70 hosts with the certificate "Wanderfreundlich am Malerweg" are set up to cater for visitors to the Artists' Trail. They offer overnight accommodation from a single night, help with luggage transfer ("hiking without luggage") and can provide lunch boxes.
Web site	www.malerweg.de

Prominent Walkers

Adrian Zingg (1734-1816)	Swiss landscape artist, etcher and copperplate engraver; is regarded as the artistic discoverer of Saxon Switzerland; subjects: numerous motifs in Saxon and Bohemian Switzerland
Anton Graff (1736-1813)	Swiss portrait painter; frequently accompanied his friend Adrian Zingg
Bernardo Bellotto ("Canaletto") (1722-1780)	Italian veduta painter
Caspar David Friedrich (1774-1840)	Landscape painter and artist; many Elbe sandstone sketches and a large number of paintings of motifs from Saxon-Bohemian Switzerland
Theodor Körner (1791-1813)	Poet during the Napoleonic Wars, a frequent visitor to the Saxon Switzerland, wrote "Reise nach Schandau" (Journey to Schandau)
Adrian Ludwig Richter (1803-1884)	Landscape painter, copperplate engraver, etcher and illustrator, when he was 15, he drew and etched many views of Saxon Switzerland
Carl Gustav Carus (1789-1869)	Landscape painter and artist, personal physician to the King of Saxony, gynaecologist, physiologist, author, friend of Caspar David Friedrich; subjects: numerous Elbe sandstone sketches, some paintings
Carl Maria von Weber (1786-1826)	Composer; his romantic opera "Der Freischütz" is associated above all with Saxon Switzerland by the "Wolfsschlucht" scene
Johan Christian Clausen Dahl (1788-1857)	Norwegian landscape painter, friend of Caspar David Friedrich; subjects: numerous Elbe sandstone views
Hans Christian Andersen (1805-1875)	Danish writer, wrote the famous "Reise nach Dresden und in die Sächsische Switzerland" (Journey to Dresden and Saxon Switzerland)
William Turner (1775-1851)	British painter, visited Saxon Switzerland in 1835 and drew a large number of sketches here
Mary Shelley (1797-1851)	British novelist (including "Frankenstein")



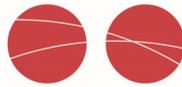


Sächsisch-Böhmische SCHWEIZ

Richard Wagner (1813-1883)	In summer 1846, Wagner stayed in the Lochmühle in the Liebethaler Grund and gained his inspiration for the opera Lohengrin.
Dmitri Shostakovich (1906-1975)	Russian composer; wrote his string quartet No. 8 in c-minor op. 110 in Saxon Switzerland

With information from: Richter, Frank (2006): *Der Historische Malerweg: Die Entdeckung der Sächsische Schweiz im 18./19. Jahrhundert.* Verlag der Kunst Dresden Ingwert Pailsen jr., Husum





FACTS

Elbe Sandstone Mountains Musical Landscape

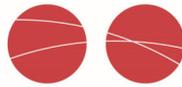
Musicians in Saxon Switzerland and Bohemian Switzerland

Carl Maria von Weber (1786 – 1826)	From 1817 Master of the Royal Music and Director of the German Opera in Dresden's Hoftheater The scenery of Saxon Switzerland inspires Weber to the Wolfsschlucht scene, musical climax of the opera "Der Freischütz", which he wrote between 1817 and 1820 in Hosterwitz
Richard Wagner (1813 – 1883)	Court Director of Music in Dresden from 1842 to 1849 Withdrawal in 1846 to the Schäfersche estate in Graupa, where he composed large parts of his opera "Lohengrin"
Louis Spohr (1784 – 1859)	German composer, conductor and a violinist of international renown, set his "merry wanderings" to music in his sonata for viola and piano, op.96.
Dmitri Shostakovich (1906 – 1975)	Russian composer; wrote his string quartet No. 8 in c-minor op. 110 in Saxon Switzerland
Antonín Dvořák (1841 – 1904)	In 1856 moved to Česká Kamenice (Bohemian Kamnitz), to prepare himself for the Prague organ school; October 1857: taken on in the organ school, graduating in 1859; 1877: breakthrough with the "Sounds of Moravia" which gave Bohemian music composition its unmistakable national identity
Frédéric Chopin (1810 – 1849)	Taught piano for two years to the children of the Tetschen Duke of Thun-Hohenstein's family; composed the "Tetschner Walzer" as a commemoration of happy times spent in Bohemia
Other famous musicians from Bohemia	Taddäus Palme (b. 1756), Franz Bendel (1832 – 1874), Sigmund Glanz (b. 1843), Gustav Jakob Kny (b. 1852), Augustin Stradal (b. 1860)

Museums and Memorials in Saxon Switzerland

Richard-Wagner-Museum "Lohengrinhaus" in Graupa	One of four authentic Wagner residences in the world, as museums; the rooms are fitted out to match historical descriptions
Wagner culture trail in Graupa Castle park	On the trail of 650 m leading right through the park and along the castle walls there are information boards describing Wagner's life and creative locations.





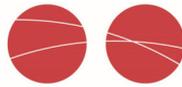
Sächsisch-Böhmische SCHWEIZ

Wagner monument in Liebethal	The monument portrays Wagner as a Knight of the Holy Grail, surrounded by five allegorical female figures representing the five elements of his music: the celestial, the lyrical, the Dionysian, the tragic and the demonic
------------------------------	--

Festivals in Saxon and Bohemian Switzerland

International Shostakovich Festival, Gohrisch	Dmitri Dmitriyevich Shostacovich (1906-1975) is one of the most significant composers of the 20 th century. In July 1960 in Gohrisch he composed one of his major pieces of chamber music: the string quartet No. 8 in c-minor op. 110. Co-founder of the festival, which takes place yearly in summer, is the Sächsische Staatskapelle Dresden; www.schostakowitsch-tage.de
Festival Sandstein & Musik	Annually more than 20 concerts against a unique sandstone backdrop in Saxon Switzerland and the surrounding region: e.g. Weesenstein Castle, Grosssedlitz Baroque Garden, Wehlen quarry, St. Marien Kirche in Pirna; ever-present core of the "Sandstone and Music" are the concerts with Ludwig Güttler; since 1992; www.sandstein-musik.de
International Bad Schandauer Organ and Musical Summer	The church community presents concerts in St. Johanniskirche every Friday, with important musical names from all over the world and top artists from Germany; www.schandau.hiller-musik.de
Wagneriade in Graupa	Wagner stayed from the middle of May until the end of July 1846 in Graupa and wrote in an outburst of creativity his opera Lohengrin. Since 2014, Graupa reminds with the "Wagneriade" to the composer also musically. Concerts, talks, films; www.wagnerstaetten.de
International Music Festival in Srbská Kamenice (Windisch Kamnitz)	Series of concerts in August and September in St. Wenzel Church, built in the Baroque style by V. Sauer, decorated with Baroque statuary and the valuable high altar, which dates from 1785; www.festivalsrbska.cz





Sächsisch-Böhmische SCHWEIZ

BASIC TEXTS

Not of this World

The Elbe Sandstone Mountain range is one of the most poetic landscapes in Europe. For over 200 years artists and hikers have been exhilarated by the fabulous drama and the immeasurable variety of the millions of years old rock formations.

"We were only a short distance from the Bastey, a rock balcony, which you reach quite suddenly from the deepest forest. Now all at once you see directly some 100 feet below you the Elbe and its gentle curves and the eye sweeps from Saxon Switzerland right to the Bohemian Mountains. With their vertical rock faces and the wooded crowns, the Lilienstein, the Königstein, Pfaffenstein, Zschirnstein, Zirkelstein and others stand like altars in this sublime natural temple and each holds your gaze in turn.

My first feeling at this point is almost impossible to describe: my eyes filled with tears and spontaneously I genuflected to the Creator. Only after I had rested against the railings for several minutes, silent and with folded hands, was I able to make a report on what I was seeing".

Chamberlain Carl von Voss set these impressions down on paper in 1822. The notes he took in the course of a one-year progress in the service of the Prince of Anhalt-Bernburg to Dresden and its surroundings give us a wonderful insight today into the sensibility of the era we now call the Romantic period. It is the era of great emotions, the search for significance, the rediscovery of nature and humanity. In the previous century the noise of industrialisation and the bright light of Enlightenment had driven out all the mystery from the lives of the ordinary folk. Intelligence had defeated wonder, utilitarianism had defeated beauty.

Search for the Unfathomable

It wasn't very long before people had the feeling that something important had been lost, that some essential feature of their existence had been sacrificed on the altar of progress. First to react was art, followed by the spirit of the age. Already by the end of that century a strong position was building up against Enlightenment. The unfathomable is sought – and it is found in nature.

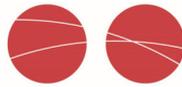
This is the period in which the Elbe Sandstone Mountains are discovered. It's true, this natural beauty has existed since time immemorial, but it also appears never to have been really seen until the dawn of the Romantic era. For a long time, this landscape full of character wasn't even blessed with a name. Not until towards the end of the 18th century do the painters of the renowned Dresden Kunstakademie open the eyes of their contemporaries to the magical charms of the region.

In the occident, it is an era in which people again look closely at aesthetics and emotionality both artistically and philosophically. And the Elbe Sandstone Mountains become a popular subject for study. In 1747, the British-Irish philosopher Edmund Burke brings the concept of the sublime into play again. The sublime is for him complementary to the beautiful. An aesthetic appeal which generates a "pleasing horror".

Horrible! Pretty! Picturesque!

For the romantic sensibility, the sublime plays an important role. It is found in Caspar David Friedrich's paintings, Richard Wagner's operas, Mary Shelley's novels, Hans Christian Andersen's fairy-tales and in Neo-Gothic architecture. While beauty displays itself as small, smooth, charming, clear and tender, the sublime





Sächsisch-Böhmische SCHWEIZ

is big, precipitous, dark, complex and solid. The tension between the two results in the scenic, the picturesque. This natural law was also known to the artists of the time – in particular to the landscape painters. Credited with this discovery is the Englishman William Gilpin, who in a book of landscapes published in 1782 encourages travellers to explain the charm of a landscape in terms of the rules of picturesque beauty.

The Elbe Sandstone Mountains are frequently described as "a picturesque landscape". Only against the background of the aesthetic theory of the picturesque does one appreciate that in this case "picturesque" is, exceptionally, truly more than verbal shallowness. It is a fact.

The geologically-caused variety of forms in such a small area and the resulting variety of habitats make this landscape picturesque. The reefs, the table mountains, steep slopes, ravines, waterfalls and caves provide the sublime; flat areas, fields, gently-flowing streams, plants, animals, villages and people provide the contrasting beauty. Again and again these provide us with picturesque new scenes. It is an inexhaustible store of landscape impressions.

"I took trouble to imprint this magnificent scenery deep within my soul, so that I would be able to enjoy it for the rest of my life".

The theologian and author Wilhelm Leberecht Göttinger, who with his exhaustive articles on local history contributed to a very great extent to the countrywide awareness of the Elbe Sandstone Mountains as a region well worth visiting, notes for his major work *Schandau und seine Umgebungen oder Beschreibung der sogenannten Saxon Switzerland**, which appeared in 1804: "Who can look at this immense expanse of inanimate rock pyramids and columns cheek by jowl emerging and solidifying from enormous depths with a thousand different variations without experiencing spine-chilling wonderment? The utter silence here, only broken occasionally by the call of a woodland bird, intensifies this indescribable feeling".

In contemporary stories and descriptions, it is often exaggerated what eerily beautiful things are to be found in the region. The dramatic contrast between man and his works and the incredible power of nature is frequently utilised: Lohmen Castle or Hohnstein castle precariously perched on rocky slopes, walkers in front of wildly-foaming waterfalls or threatening cliff backdrops. Indeed, for his famous painting "Wanderer above the sea of fog", Caspar David Friedrich drew together rocks from various locations to create his ideal panorama. It's not a case of pictorial representation, but of the aesthetic effect.

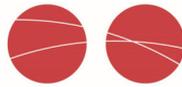
Sublime, beautiful, picturesque: the effect the Elbe Sandstone Mountains natural wonder have to this day. Admittedly, contemporary visitors are obviously less sensitive than the artist wanderers of the Romantic era. Or perhaps they just conceal their feelings better than did chamberlain von Voss, who on seeing the Bastei panorama sank to his knees with tears of happiness in his eyes and drank in the view for minutes without speaking. The view from the Grosser Winterberg was another one which moved Voss deeply: "Absolutely entranced by these impressions, I took trouble to imprint this magnificent scenery deep within my soul, so that I would be able to enjoy it for the rest of my life".

Who nowadays can open themselves up to such a unique landscape in this way? Unfortunately, today we have the snapshot rather than feelings. ■

The historical quotes are taken from Frank Richter's book "Der Historische Malerweg" (The historical Artists' Trail), published by Verlag der Kunst Dresden Ingwert Paulsen jr., Husum, 2006.

**: Schandau and its surroundings, or a description of the so-called Saxon Switzerland*





Sächsisch-Böhmische SCHWEIZ

BASIC TEXT

Activity holidays in the Elbe Sandstone Mountains: 700 square kilometres of freedom of movement

For active people, the Elbe Sandstone Mountains are the Land of unlimited opportunity. Innumerable walking, climbing, cycling and riding trails and the two National Parks on the Saxon and Bohemian sides draw outdoor enthusiasts from all over the world to the region.

Some 1,200 kilometres of walking trails, 1,100 free-standing sandstone rocks with 21,000 different climbing routes on the German side alone, numerous cycle and bridle paths and various opportunities for water sports: the Elbe Sandstone Mountains has plenty to offer the adventurous. There are but few central highland regions in Europe which can compare with this cross-border outdoor paradise close to the capital City of Saxony as far as the variety and quality of the activity facilities offered is concerned. This is above all thanks to the diversity of landscapes in the region. The widest variety of landscape types meet here within shouting distance: rock formations, table mountains, plains, ravines and valleys. This is the reason you can be enjoying a pleasant walk while there are climbers engaged on challenging breathtaking ascents within hailing distance.

The thing which makes activities in the Elbe Sandstone Mountains so special is the immediate and ever-present nature experience. It's true that the most beautiful parts of the region are strictly protected as a national park, but that doesn't mean that climbers, cyclists and wanderers have to stay outside. Quite the reverse: nature preservation authorities and the travel industry work hand in hand to continue offering visitors thirsty for activity spectacular new nature experiences all the time. That is not something to be taken for granted; after all, where else in Germany can you go climbing in the middle of a national park?

Cradle of Climbing

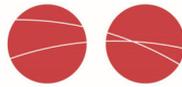
Climbing has been enjoyed in Saxon Switzerland for a long time, and there is documentary evidence of this going back some 150 years. Then in the early 20th century the Saxon Climbing Rules were introduced, and they are largely unaltered to this day. This was where the renunciation of "artificial aids for overcoming the force of gravity" was laid down for the first time and from here, this idea spread right around the world. Today it is known as "free climbing" and it is practised in the USA, Australia, France, Spain, Thailand and many other countries round the world.

To climb in the birthplace of free climbing is a very special experience for followers of the sport from all over the globe. With routes up to difficulty grade XII – the maximum on the Saxon Scale – the region has some real challenges up its sleeve even for extreme climbers. But beginners too can find good starting points. There are climbing schools offering sampler courses in the nature for every age group, so everybody who is interested in the sport can get a taste of it under professional instruction, even if they have neither previous knowledge of it nor equipment.

1,000 Kilometres of Hiking Happiness

Even older than the climbing tradition is the walking tradition in the region: as far back as the 18th century the Elbe Sandstone Mountains were all the rage as a wild and romantic travel and excursion destination. The artists of the time contributed in very great part to the countrywide popularity of this strange world of





Sächsisch-Böhmische SCHWEIZ

rock formations. Thanks to their innumerable paintings and sketches, we know today which paths they trod and which views especially impressed them. This is how in 2006 it was possible to reconstruct and re-sign an historical trail over a total distance of 112 kilometres taking in the most beautiful points in the region along the way. Only a short time after it was opened, the route, christened the "Elbe Sandstone Mountains Painters' Trail", was voted "Germany's most beautiful walking trail" by the Wandermagazin. The round trip from the Liebenthal to the Czech Republic border and back along the other side of the Elbe to Pirna offers not only breathtaking panoramas but is a sporting challenge: in eight daily stages of medium to demanding difficulty of between 11 and 18 kilometres, one conquers – when all climbs are added together – no less than a four thousander.

Despite its imposing length, the Painters' Trail represents less than a tenth of the extensive network of trails in the Elbe Sandstone Mountains. The walking trails on the German side alone add up to something like the distance from Pirna to Greece. There are also many walking trails in Bohemian Switzerland. Their grades of difficulty vary from easy strolls to strenuous clambering up and down stairways, ladders and steps hewn in the rock.

Many of the hosts in the region have long been accustomed to accommodating stage walkers who only stay for a single night and are pleased to see such guests. These houses are easily recognised as they have the certificate "Wanderfreundlich am Malerweg" ("Walker friendly on the Painters' Trail"). Long-distance walking becomes especially convenient with their offer "Hiking without luggage". For a fee, the host undertakes transfer of cases and rucksacks to the next stage destination. In this way and quite unburdened, you can devote all your attention to enjoying the beauties of the landscape to the full.

Cycling through the Elbe Sandstone Mountains

You can also cycle quite unburdened through the region – in particular along the Elbe cycle route. Here you have no great differences in height to overcome; on the other hand, you have your fill of panoramas – and you can use the railway on your way back. If you want to be a bit more adventurous, leave the Elbe valley. A tip here is to use the network of cycle routes through the National Park: on certain walking trails, also marked as cycle routes – there are about 50 kilometres of these – you ride directly through nature. Admittedly, the cycle should be pretty well suitable for off-roading. And you'll have to be ready for sharp climbs, steep downhill runs, narrow places and rutted tracks. But isn't that what makes these tours so exciting?

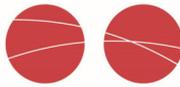
On the move with the horse

If you prefer to travel on horseback, there are at least as many delightful tours available in the region: altogether, in the district of Saxon Switzerland – Eastern Ore Mountains there are about 720 kilometres of official bridle paths. And the riding stables in the region have everything you need for active equestrian holidays: board and lodging, stabling – and naturally horses. The programme also includes riding lessons and special offers such as therapeutic riding, western riding and archery on horseback. Some of the yards are especially focused on trail riders. Here, horse and rider can check in – in best cowboy style – after a long ride through Germany's Monument Valley and pitch camp for the night.

With the Boat on the Elbe

All that remains to tell is of the small but fine selection of active facilities available on the water: the water sport opportunities are an attractive addition to the activities offered in the hills. There are numerous boat-



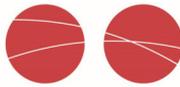


Sächsisch-Böhmische SCHWEIZ

hire stations and tour operators to be found all along the Elbe. Particularly recommended is an organised boat trip to Dresden. Carried along on the river, you will experience for once the majestic rock kingdom from a frog's eye view, admire picturesque little villages to the left and the right of the waterway, pass the historic town of Pirna and the impressive Pillnitz Castle and its grounds and finally arrive in the Saxon capital with its meadows inviting you to picnic there and its world-famous silhouette of the old city and go ashore there.

You'll never get bored in the Elbe Sandstone Mountains. The real challenge is to make a selection from the many possibilities offered. The gratis information and booking service offered by the Tourismusverband Sächsische Schweiz is here to help you and in a practical manner has a complete matching holiday package for most of the offers. Information can be obtained under Tel. +49 3501 4701-47 or under www.saechsische-schweiz.de. ■





Sächsisch-Böhmische
SCHWEIZ

CONTACT

Tourism Association

Tourismusverband Sächsische Schweiz e.V.
Bahnhofstrasse 21
01796 Pirna
Information and booking hotline: +49 3501 4701-47
E-mail: info@saechsische-schweiz.de

www.saechsische-schweiz.de
www.malerweg.de
www.elberadweg.de

Press contact

Sebastian Thiel
THIEL Public Relations e.K.
Media Relations on behalf of the Tourismusverband Sächsische Schweiz e.V.
Tel.: +49 351 3148892
E-mail: presse@saechsische-schweiz.de

Online press area Saxon-Bohemian Switzerland:
www.press-area.com/sbs

Social Media channels

Blog: blog.saechsische-schweiz.de

Facebook: www.facebook.com/elbsandsteingebirge
www.facebook.com/malerweg
www.facebook.com/elberadweg

Twitter: www.twitter.com/saechs_schweiz

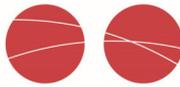
Youtube: www.youtube.com/user/saechsischeschweiz

Instagram: [#saechsischeschweiz](https://www.instagram.com/saechsischeschweiz) [#elbsandsteingebirge](https://www.instagram.com/elbsandsteingebirge) [#sächsischeschweiz](https://www.instagram.com/saechsischeschweiz) [#saxonswitzerland](https://www.instagram.com/saxonswitzerland)

www.instagram.com/saechsischeschweiz
www.instagram.com/elberadweg



Europäische Union. Europäischer
Fonds für regionale Entwicklung.
Evropská unie. Evropský fond pro
regionální rozvoj.



Sächsisch-Böhmische
SCHWEIZ

CONTACT

Contact form

Per fax to +49 351 3148894 or per e-mail to presse@saechsische-schweiz.de

Elbe Sandstone Mountains/Saxon-Bohemian Switzerland

Please mark with an "X":

Please include me with the following e-mail address in your press distribution:

My subjects:

Travel - general

Activity holidays

Work of the Tourismusverband Sächsische Schweiz

Other, as follows:

Please notify me of group press trips in the region

Please contact me to discuss the possibility of making an individual familiarisation trip to the region.

Contact details | Visiting card | Stamp:



Europäische Union. Europäischer
Fonds für regionale Entwicklung.
Evropská unie. Evropský fond pro
regionální rozvoj.