

Hiking Tips

Into the Wild

The charm of the community Neunkirchen-Seelscheid and hence the reason for the high immigration in recent years, is due to the fact that it is not far to attractive shopping centers but also close to beautiful natural reserve parks. Too often, we take our surroundings for granted and pay little attention to the beauty our environment.

Those who travelled through Windeck, Waldbröl, or Nümbrecht, past several old mills, chapels and historic stud work houses, will know why it is called Natural Reserve Park “Bergisches Land”, which also includes the community of Neunkirchen-Seelscheid, although the region is not named, as is often assumed, after the valleys and rolling hill sites, but after the former rulers, the dukes “von Berg”.

The following pages will give you a few hiking tips.

However, we recommend sturdy footwear, as one is clear: „We’re going into the wild“

Detailed hiking maps of mountain trails are available at the counter.

And if you get hungry and thirsty after a full day of fresh air, rest assured to be welcomed back as we always did in many generations.

In the footsteps of “The Lords von Stein”

Unknown to many immigrants (the Immies) is the fact that the lords “von Stein”, resided in the castle Herrnstein located in the Bröltal. Since the Middle Ages they were also the landowners of the entire region. The oldest parts of the castle go back the 13. century when it was erected for the protection of many nearby mines. The rule of the lords “von Stein” was later inherited by the family

“Nesselrode Reichenstein” , who even today continue their legacy and hold ownership over the surrounding forests.

From castle Herrnstein (please park your car somewhere before

the barrier, as it will get closed after closing hours) we take the middle path for our hike; simply follow the A2 direction signs on trees. The trail leads up toward Winterscheid and back down to Bröleck from where we follow the river Bröl back to the starting point.

Of course you can start the hike at Winterscheid or at the cross of Hatterscheid.

On the way we come to a small ravine, where a tragedy took place 60 years ago. After a visit to church the horses of the coach of the Countess Nesselrode went wild and plunged into the ravine to their deaths. The Count could just save himself by jumping off the coach.

Today, an old stone cross commemorates the place (on the old road to the castle, opposite the trail).

Once a year, a field mass held at the castle in memory of the Countess.

The castle Herrenstein can be visited once a month (dates are displayed on the board).

The Legend of the Devil's Chest in the forest to Beiert

From the country inn we go after the legendary Devil's Chest, which is marked on relevant maps, where it is referred to as a pagan place of worship.

First we go downhill to Oberhorbach past the last remaining working mill of the community. Around the turn of the last century there were dozens of them. From here we follow the left trail uphill to the lovely village of Beiert, where you can choose between a forest trail and a paved road to get to the Beiert estate, the residency of the former Count Herrnstein's administrator.

With a bit of luck you might see the foggy roosting in an old chimney, which is guarding the estate by night and day.

Whether by road or forest trail, we reach our next stop: the village chapel of Beiert, built by the families of the village to honor their dead. From there we follow

the cattle trail into the forest of Beiert, again passing another cross. Soon after that, we get to a fork on the trail where we turn right. The short trail takes us to the Devil's Chest, where, according to legend, the devil lies entombed under a rock after the

settlers of Neunkirchen, Much, and Winterscheid defeated him in a bitter battle on a foggy November night (The truth, of course, will only be known by the people of Beiert). From that day on, the settlers were able to finally build their houses and pursue their work.

Whenever the people of the Bröltal have a dispute, the prince of darkness stirs under the rock, so that the stone itself is moved and threatens to plunge down into the valley.

This is just one of seven legends surrounding the tale of the Devil's Chest. Annually in early spring, on the 20th of March, the country inn offers a small torch-lit walk to Devil's Chest, followed by lunch and other regional stories.

Back on the track we walk in the direction of the Bröltal and are soon back on a paved road that leads to Niederhorbach, from where it is not far to Eischeid, where good food and plenty of beer will sooth the rigors of hiking.