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01.03.2023 11:00 CET

Walking in Brandenburg

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2,000 Kilometres of Main Walking Routes

Six „Wanderbares Deutschland“ Quality Walks

There are more protected landscapes in Brandenburg than anywhere else in Germany. In addition to extensive river valleys with wide meadows and floodplains, large parts of the state are characterised by thousands of lakes

and forests. White tailed eagles can be seen circling overhead, cranes settle to rest in shallow waters and beavers make their homes here. A total of 15 National Natural Landscapes protect the most attractive and valuable regions and are perfect for walking, relaxing and observing nature.

It is hardly surprising, then, that for 65 percent of visitors who stay overnight in Brandenburg, spending time in nature is one of the main reasons for their visit. More and more people are discovering each year that Brandenburg, with its numerous lakes, rivers, ponds and streams, is ideal for walking. 48 percent of visitors to Brandenburg who stay overnight said that they took a walk during their holiday and 25 percent that they went hiking (source: GFD Destination Monitor / Brandenburg 2021, multiple responses possible). For some years now, walking has also become increasingly popular among day visitors.

2,000 kilometres of walking trails that are particularly relevant to tourism

In Brandenburg there are around 2,000 kilometres of walking trails that are especially relevant to tourism, including 700 kilometres that have been awarded the “Qualitätsweg Wanderbares Deutschland” quality seal. In addition there many local routes that are not included here.

Six trails currently carry the “Deutscher Wanderverband” quality seal: **the Castle Hiking Trail** and **the International Art Walking Trail** in the Fläming region, **the Märkisch Overland Trail** in the Uckermark and **the Nature Park Trail Märkische Schweiz**, as well as the **Schlaube Valley** and **Oderland Trails** in the Oder-Spree Lakeland. Before awarding the “Qualitätsweg Wanderbares Deutschland“ seal, experts test the paths according to criteria such as surface condition, signposting, the walking experience, refreshment stops and transport services to the route. Overnight accommodation on the way is a further criterium. The website www.wanderbares-deutschland.de includes twelve especially hiker-friendly places to stay in Brandenburg, among them the Luisenhof Molchow in the Ruppiner Lakeland and the Pferdehof Ruhnau in the Uckermark.

Its numerous lakes and rivers are a particularly strong feature of the Federal State of Brandenburg, which forms a circle all around the Berlin capital. Many of the walking trails run around lakes or along rivers. The best example is Brandenburg’s most popular walking trail – the **66 Lakes Trail** – which is recognised as one of the most attractive lowland walking routes in Germany.

The tour is 416 kilometres long and divided into 17 stages, which together encircle Berlin. It is regarded as the leading walking trail in the region and represents an attractive cross-section of Brandenburg's natural and cultural landscapes. Each stage is a day walk and the stages can be combined to create the walker's own multi-day tour. The stages are all so laid out that the starting and ending points are serviced by public transport.

An Overview of Brandenburg's "Wanderbares Deutschland" Quality Walking Trails

From castle to castle: The Castle Walking Trail in the Fläming region (149 kilometres)

The Castle Hiking Trail in the south west is one of the six quality trails in Brandenburg. Alongside countless scenic attractions, the region can boast several locations that are of cultural and historical interest. Always a border region and the site of many historic events, it has a surprisingly large number of imposing forts and castles. The 149-kilometre-long Castle Hiking Trail meanders through the Upper Fläming Nature Park and connects four castles: Eisenhardt Castle in Bad Belzig, Rabenstein Castle in Raben, Wiesenburg Castle and the Bishop's Residence in Ziesar.

Where time seems to stand still: The Märkische Overland Trail (187 kilometres)

The walk, which starts in Feldberg, is divided into ten stages and crosses three natural landscapes: the Uckermark Lakes Nature Park, the Schorfheide-Chorin Biosphere Reserve and the most easterly conservation area in the state – the Lower Oder Valley National Park. The landscape along the entire trail was shaped by the ice age. In the sparsely-populated region near the River Oder, walkers can experience rare swamp and alluvial forests in the floodplains. This is considered to be the most intact floodplain landscape in Europe.

An outdoor art gallery: The International Art Walking Trail (37 kilometres)

The International Art Walking Trail through the centre of the Upper Fläming Nature Park is proof that walking in lowland countryside is by no means boring. Along the 37-kilometre-long network of paths there are 28 works of

art, which stand out like landmarks in the gentle landscape of forests and meadows. All the works of art, which have attractive names such as “Unter Kiefern” (Beneath Pine Trees) or “Ein Wasserfall für den Fläming” (A Waterfall for Fläming) relate to their location and were selected as prize-winners of a competition. The International Art Walking Trail connects the towns of Wiesenburg and Bad Belzig and walkers can choose between the 19-kilometre-long northern and the 16-kilometre-long southern routes.

Good views: The Märkisch Overland Trail (60 kilometres)

Bad Freienwalde is a good place to start out on this varied tour in Eastern Brandenburg. On the edge of the Oderbruch, the route takes walkers along shady footpaths, through sun-drenched deciduous forests and narrow valleys and, time and again, along lakes, rivers and streams. The almost 60-kilometre-long circular trail can be explored on between four and eight shorter walks or three longer hikes. One section is the “Turmwanderweg” (Tower Walking Path), which is 12 kilometres long, has a total difference in altitude of 490 metres and passes by four lookout towers and several viewpoints. For each tower that they climb, walkers receive a stamp and those who master all four towers can exchange their stamp card for a Tower Diploma in the Tourist Information Centre in Bad Freienwalde.

Rattling mills and streams: Schlaube Valley Walking Trail (28 kilometres)

A hike through the Schlaube Valley and the nature park of the same name is still an insider tip. The River Schlaube flows through a stream valley with forests, meadows and inland sand dunes. It carves its way into gorges, leaves behind moors and flows through lakes and ponds. Rare plant and animal species have settled in this diverse habitat. The Schlaube Valley is also known for its water mills.

Even Fontane was inspired by it: The Märkische Schweiz Nature Park Route (20 km.)

“At the mere mention of the name, pleasing images of the landscape spring to mind: mountains and lakes, pine trees on slopes, deciduous trees in ravines and springs that ripple over pebbles”. This is how Fontane begins his description of Buckow, a town in the centre of the Märkische Schweiz Nature Park, in his “Wanderings through the Marches of Brandenburg”. To this day, the landscape Fontane described has not changed. The 20-kilometre-long

Nature Park Route, is one of the most popular among those day walks that are just outside Berlin. Nestled in a hilly landscape of end moraines, Lake Schermützel, together with several smaller lakes and ponds, dominates the landscape. The path between them follows several streams that give off a touch of “everglades feeling”.

Other Long-Distance and Circular Walking Routes

Unspoilt nature: The Uckermark Circular Trail (152 kilometres)

This circular route is made up of six stages, which can be started in Prenzlau, Angermünde or Templin. It crosses the Schorfheide-Chorin Biosphere Reserve and the Uckermark Lakeland Nature Park: landscapes with dense forests, extensive fields and meadows, small villages and lakes that are the home to several protected bird species such as white-tailed and lesser-spotted eagles, ospreys and black storks.

Discover Barnimer Land: A Walk “Around the Schorfheide” (135 kilometres)

The fascinating landscape of the Schorfheide is part of Barnimer Land and gained another walking route in 2021. It is 135 kilometres long and divided into seven stages. The route starts in Eberswalde, then heads eastwards via Niederfinow and Oderberg. It also passes Chorin Abbey and Joachimstal, before returning to Eberswalde via Lake Werbellin, Marienwerder and Bliesthal. The paths lead into the forests and along the lakes and streams of the Schorfheide-Chorin Biosphere Reserve and Barnim Nature Park.

Almost like being in the mountains: The Peak Climbing Tour (23 kilometres)

Mountain hiking enthusiasts can test their physical fitness and head for heights after travelling just around an hour by train from Berlin. Alpine hiking at an altitude of almost a thousand metres, four lookout towers and the only “Watzmann” outside Bavaria are all on the itinerary of this around 23-kilometre-long tour. On the hilly Upper Barmin Plateau with its deep ravines, hikers should be prepared for a challenging stretch between Falkenberg and Bad Freienwalde. Thanks to the hills left behind by ice age glaciers, the hike begins with a stiff uphill climb from Falkenburg Railway Station to the rustic ridgeway that is on a level with the Giant Mountains.

For further reading:

A detailed overview of attractive one-day and multi-day walking routes can be found at www.reiseland-brandenburg.de/wandern. Here you will find information on routes, possible route combinations and also tips on where to obtain more detailed maps and information. In addition, each route is shown on a map.

Further information:

www.brandenburg-tourism.com

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