

Bad Grund (Harz) -- Humble Spa Town, Compelling Monuments

Within the western [Harz](#) (in the Naturpark Harz to be more precise) is the quite charming town of six districts known as Bad Grund. This spa town is a delight for just about everyone — offering up old castles, museums, half-timbered architecture, and (of course) a spa, in addition to a number of cultural events held throughout the year.

The hardest thing about Bad Grund would be where to start your journey. Well, if you're lucky enough to be here for events like the torchlight procession on Walpurgis Night (April 30th) — that's a great place to start. It'll take you to the Hübichenstein, a natural rock formation standing some 50-meters skyward. The eagle at the top is a much later addition, created as a monument to German Emperor Wilhelm I.

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And I wouldn't miss a visit to the Burgruine Stauffenburg, an 11th century castle ruin whose crumbly gray walls once housed a prison and hospital before falling into its eventual decay in the 18th century. Another old castle would be the Burgruine Windhausen, a 12th century castle that survived up to the 19th century.

For buildings a bit more intact, visit places like the half-timbered Church of St. Johannis (called a *Fachwerkkirche*) in Windhausen, or the wide-towered Church of St. John in the village of Gittelde, although there's something quite special about the 16th century St.-Antonius-Kirche (Church of St. Anthony).

There's also something remarkable about Bad Grund's Arboretum (a.k.a. *WeltWald*), filled with hundreds of species of plant life. But, if you meander around the town's Nordic trails you'll see

plenty more flora and fauna. Although the *König-Hübich-Route*, an 11.6km scenic route of sorts, is something to explore, too. Don't miss out on the Iberg Dripstone Cave while you're here, OK?

Want to expand your mind as well? Visit the *Bergbaum Museum*, the Museum of Industrial Mining, or the *Uhr Museum* (Clock Museum).

Once you've managed to do all this, then it's off to soak at the local spa with its 32-degree Celsius (89.6°F) 2-percent brine waters — and maybe a massage or two. ;-)

I might be a sucker for a relaxing massage, but I'd gladly give one up to party at Bad Grund's Oktoberfest, or join in the community horse riding events, that's for sure. And after you've managed to buy something for all your loved ones at the Christmas Market, why not treat yourself to a spa day?

So if you find yourself in the area of the western Harz, you'll for sure want to visit Bad Grund — you'll truly be glad you did.