

German Volcanoes Route -- 36 Stations Of Volcanic Education

Welcome to Volcano, the home planet of Mr. Spock of the U.S.S. Enterprise.

Ahhh, gotcha, there's no such place as the planet Volcano — but, there is a 280km route in the [Eifel](#) known as the German Volcanoes Route, or *Deutsche Vulkanstrasse*. The entire route lies within the [Eifel](#) with so many places to stop along the way and a landscape created from what was once living fire spewing volcanoes.

There are 39 stations of the German Volcanoes Route, each showing the very best of the region. Not all of the stations are just stone cliffs created from erupting volcanoes; you'll find spectacular vistas, fun interactive museums and towns along the way.

The 39 Stations Along The German Volcano Route

Station 1 starts your journey at a parking lot called *Erntekreuz*, located close to Laacher See, the largest lake in the [Rhineland-Palatinate](#) state. Enjoy the great vistas, and then take a boat rental around the volcano created lake.

Here's where you'll catch a glimpse of the Maria Laach Abbey in the village of Glees (Station 2), which is found on the southwest side of the lake. Built in the Middle Ages, this church is a brilliant example of Romanesque architecture and priceless artwork.

The Eppelsberg hill west of Nickenich is next on list (Station 3). It is where you'll find a quarry of stone created from volcanic ash.

Afterwards, head over to Station 4 and the interactive *Römerbergwerk Meurin*, a Roman Mine Museum near Kruf. Although not volcano related, the museum is a fantastic way to learn how the Romans mined the area.

Station 5 is covered by the *Rauschermühle* Information Center in [Plaidt](#), which shows films and exhibitions about the evolution and eruption of volcanoes, particularly the Michelberg volcano from 200,000 years ago.

The Lava Dome a.k.a. *Deutsches Vulkanmuseum* in the town of [Mendig](#) is next (Station 6). Take a tour 32 meters underneath the surface of Mendig to the "volcano cellars." Get off your bike and come inside to visit the 12th century basilica church.

With that done, get back on your bicycle and ride through the nature protected area of Dachsbusch in Glees. Make sure you stop there first because you'll want to visit the wine cellar of the Steinfeld

Monastery afterwards (yeah, wine!).

Wow, you're at station 12 already when you ride into Niederzissen, passing the Bausenberg — once a "cone" type of volcano. Stay a bit and explore around the Castle Olbrück, the church of St. Germanus, and a short ride on the Volcano Express Railway.

Get ready to work a bit harder but, when you get to Hohe Acht, the highest peak in the Eifel, it'll be worth it. The Hohe Acht, or the High Eight, has ski lifts (for winter skiing) and many walking paths winding around. It'll be nice to come off the bicycle and just take your time wandering about.

Next to visit is the Ulmener Maar in Ulmen with the ruins of the Ritterburg (Knights Castle) from the 11th century. The Ulmener Maar legend tells of huge fish that are said to live in the water — so keep your camera ready — it'll be like capturing a picture of the Loch Ness Monster!

The next maar is the Immerather Maar (near Immerath), the smallest of all them in the Eifel.

Onwards to Pulvermaar (east of Gillenfeld), created some 20,000 years ago and one of the deepest natural lakes in all of Germany. Swimming is allowed on the eastern side.

Passing by the Holzmaar (west of Gillenfeld), stop at Dürres Maar (created 25,000 years ago), a protected nature area, and the Hitsche Maar.

Go back up towards Daun and you'll come across the Weinfelder Maar (a.k.a. Totenmaar). This one is only half as old as those around it, dating back 10,000 years ago. Come see the Weinfelder Church and cemetery, it'll be a nice to walk instead of bicycling.

Same for the Gemündener Maar just west of it.

Once you've reached the Volcano Museum in [Daun](#), there are only 11 stations left! Not only will you learn more about the Eifel's volcanoes, but ones still active all over the world.

The Arensberg (station 30) has a beautiful 12th century pilgrimage church and was once a Roman and medieval quarry. Here you can take a ride down in the quarry.

Steffeln still goes with the entire volcano theme with its *Vulkangarten* (Volcano Garden), but it also has a Roman Mansion Rustica from the 2nd/3rd century.

Oh goodness, how time flies! After you've watched the *Kaltwassergeysir* (yes, there's even a geyser, cold-water geyser to be exact) in Wallenborn, you've completed station 35.

The Meerfelder Maar is within the village of Meerfeld, which isn't anywhere as old as the maar itself, which thought to be somewhere between 30,000–80,000 years old!

The Windsborner Kratersee, the third last stop, southeast of Bettenfeld, lies within another protected nature area. It was created some 29,000 years ago.

Lastly, don't leave out a visit to the Maarmuseum in Manderscheid, there's no better place to learn more about all those maars you've just cycled along.

The German Volcanoes Route ends at the *Gesteinsfalten* (rock folds?) east of Manderscheid. Be proud of yourself, you did it!

I only hope that you love the unique and remarkable natural landscape of this region as much as I do! Now, take a well-deserved break before you head off on one of the other [scenic routes in Germany](#).

German Volcanoes Route Web Site

Here's the official Web site of the [German Volcanoes Route](#).