

Hürtgenwald -- Bloody History Hidden Within The Eifel

From the quiet stillness of the forest in the town of Hürtgenwald, you'd probably never believe one of the worst battles of [World War II](#) took place here.

What took place here from September 1944 to February 1945 is told daily at the Museum Hürtgenwald, which is along the Kall Trail; it's where you'll also find a line of bunkers. The museum explains (much better than I could) how the "Battle of Hurtgen Forest" was one of the longest fought on German soil; and how tens of thousands of men died fighting over the six month period — many of them are buried within two large mass graves.

Walking and hiking (bicycling, too) trails and paths are also found within the the heavily forested area of the town's thirteen villages.

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Since Hürtgenwald lies within the hills of the Eifel the view from the ground is spectacular (and a nice place to BBQ at the many grill huts), but the view from atop the *Krawutschketurm* (built 1972) from 40 meters above the forest floor is magnificent! Can you think of a better way to get a eagle-eye view of the Eifel's 230 plant and animal species? No, neither can I.

After trekking the forest, it's time to see the architectural side of Hürtgenwald. The Chapel in Simonskall might have only been built in 1934, but it's a lovely piece nonetheless.

Not old enough for you? How about the fortress looking *Burg des Simon*, which was built in 1643.

Right around the same time the *Haus des Gastes* was built, a wonderful framework and stone house built around 1651 and renovated in the 1770's.

Still not old enough for you? OK, how about the *Burgberg*, a castle that was built in 1172. Oops, it's not really there anymore — it was destroyed only about 20 years after it was built...

There sure is a lot of history hidden within the forest that surrounds Hürtgenwald. Imagine what we could learn if the trees of the forest could actually talk. ;-)