

Ilseburg (Harz) -- Frog And Castle Come Together In The Harz

In society today, could you imagine having to build a castle to protect hunting grounds? Yeah, it's not exactly something that would come up in modern day conversation. However, when Emperor Otto III did it, it wasn't present day; it was the late 10th century in what is now the town of Ilseburg (Harz).

Otto's castle is gone in a sense, but the area where it was built is now what attracts many visitors. Why? Thanks for asking, but I was gonna tell you anyway. The castle Otto built (sounds like the name of a book) is now where you'll find the Ilseburg Monastery.

This *Kloster* (so called in German) was established back in 1003 by King Henry II. Abbey Ilseburg might not be as active as it once was; and it has certainly seen a good deal of war (during the [Peasants' War](#) the abbey was totally plundered).

— Top Areas Of Interest

- [History](#)
- [Webcams](#)

- [Gunzenhausen](#)
- [Sigmaringen](#)

Its Romanesque Abbey Church is really beautiful. I'm glad it's still standing like a thousand years later.

The castle that was here, however, was destroyed in 1107; and there is a memorial stone (called the *Ilsestein*) indicating there was a 10th century Burg on the spot.

Just so you know, there is a memorial by the order of some Ilseburg Count who commissioned it in honor of his friends who died during the [Napoleonic Wars](#); and one to the soldiers of [World War I](#) (at the St. Mary's Church), and one more at the cemetery for the forced laborers of the Dora-Mittelbau sub-camp that was here.

One set of stones isn't because of any medieval, 19th or 20th century history. It's called the *Froschfelsen*, or Frog Stones, because the granite rock formation looks like.... Wait for it. Wait for it. A frog!

Tell me you didn't see that coming. ;-)

The *Froschfelsen* is within the [Harz](#) National Park. There are many other hiking trails within this park, so find one you like & have at it. Ilsenburg is surrounded by forested mountains on three sides, so rest assured the view is wonderful.

When a museum is what you're after, the Museum Ilsenburg is just the thing. It's all about four centuries of iron production; open Wednesdays to Sundays from 1pm-4pm. The gift shop, however, is open Monday to Friday from 8am to 4pm. Don't you just love shopping?

Just as I think you'll love the medieval sites and natural beauty of the area. Let's thank Otto, this all started with him — even if it was just to protect his hunt.