

## Kolbermoor Wraps You Up With Cotton, Football, Rings Of Steel

Kolbermoor's original landmark, a massive cotton mill, is now one of the region's premier shopping complexes. It's almost obligatory to stop there, even if you don't like shopping, because the mill is where things all began here. What better place to start an exploration of the town than at the very beginning?

Of course, the very beginning would be the track next to the cotton mill. Kolbermoor was born as a part of the industrialization efforts in the 1850's by the Emperor Maximilian, and his Mangfall Valley Railway is still running. The track exposed the beautiful potential of the area, which had previously been an undeveloped stretch of wood and bog land.

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There's still a fair stretch of ground around the town that isn't developed, making for good hiking, biking, and picnicking spots. After an afternoon out exploring, you'll want to head back into town before the museums close. There's a good one explaining the history of the town, and you can also check out the Blacksmith's exhibits.

The local blacksmiths are part of an international group dedicated to preserving smithy culture. Every other year they host a convention in Kolbermoor with groups coming in from all over Europe to do demonstrations and show off their latest marketing efforts. It's loud and hot, but definitely interesting.

Of course, the other thing the locals are interested in preserving is their reputation as a sports breeding town. If you like watching football, ice hockey, or weightlifting competitions you'll enjoy the events of the sports clubs here. Some of Germany's best known players in these events have

grown up and trained here, and there are still more than 60 sports clubs encouraging athletes in the area.

The town's most famous football player is even on tv now — Paul Breitner, a native son, does national sports commentary.