

Mecklenburg Lakes - Mecklenburgische Seenplatte

You could spend several lifetimes attempting to learn each of the lakes and rivers of northeastern Germany's Mecklenburg Lakes by heart (German: *Mecklenburgische Seenplatte*) — a.k.a. the Land Of A Thousand Lakes. But you only have a vacation in which to enjoy the best of this region of more than 1,800 (!) interconnected glacial lakes and three Nature Reserves. So why not start with Müritz, the largest lake in Germany?

The eastern shore of Müritz lies in Müritz National Park, where ancient forests and heaths give way to glorious meadows of wild-flowers where sheep and cattle peacefully graze. The waters here are off limits to powerboats, because they are home to a wide variety of endangered birds including cranes, storks, and Germany's national emblem, the noble sea eagle.

It only makes sense, when you are vacationing in the Mecklenburg Lakes, to do most of your traveling on the water itself. Think about booking a pleasure cruise from the old lakeside town of [Waren](#), but before you do, take in some of Waren's own attractions.

Not the least of these is the town's new Visitors' Center, which is actually partly submerged in the lake! There you'll find a regional natural history collection, as well as an enormous freshwater aquarium, in the 100,000 liters or 26,000 gallons of which more than forty species of fish feel quite at home! The star of the show is a 27-year-old carp which tips the scale at an impressive 20 kilos or 44 pounds!

Arrange your boat tour of the lake through one of the boat lines which operate from the Waren marina. They last between one and seven hours, costing between €7 and €20, with children half-price. If you have the time and are comfortable managing your own boat, you can also rent a kayak, dinghy, catamaran, or even a windsurf board!

Waren is at the northwest corner of the National Park, but the park's southwestern region is where you will find most of its wildlife. The best way for you to see as much as possible of the Park is by bus, although its many trails attract hundreds of cyclists each week. Hiking can be a challenge simply because the park is so vast in the trail so long, but cycling is fine even for novice bikers, because very few of the Park's hills are strenuous climbs!

When you've had enough of the Mecklenburg Lakes outdoor charms, why not go to [Wismar](#)? One of the founding cities of the 14th-century [Hanseatic League](#) and later expanded into one of the largest European fortresses, it has undergone enormous restoration since the [reunification of Germany](#).

Wismar's *Altstadt* has [northern Germany](#)'s largest marketplace. The *Marktplatz*' bewildering variety of architecture will give you some idea of the city's history of ruin and recovery, and the *Schabbelhausmuseum* has a marvelous selection of medieval artifacts and historical paintings

documenting Wismar's past.

An August vacation in the Mecklenburg Lakes can certainly include a trip to the Warnow River town of [Rostock](#), within 10 km or 6 miles of the Baltic Sea. August draws over a million visitors to the town to celebrate Hanse Sail, when over two hundred tall ships are docked between the city's harbor and the Baltic Sea. They unfurl their sails in degrees as they approach the open sea!

While you're there, enjoy a day trip to the shore district of Warnemünde, and if you're not bashful (and not afraid of those nippy Baltic breezes) take a dip off one of the city's nude beaches! A December visit to Warnemünde will be in time for the largest Christmas market in [northern Germany](#). :-)