

Ratekau -- From Ghoulish History To The Best Church Around

Only a few kilometers north of [Lübeck](#) lies the little, gorgeous town of Ratekau, a stone's throw from dazzling [Timmendorfer Strand](#) and the opulent [Baltic Coast](#).

While the town's been around for around a thousand years, the area itself has been inhabited for much longer, making for some great historical sites to visit.

The grave hills from around the Bronze Age shouldn't be missed. The stone rock formations date from even further back. From a more modern time in history there are still remnants of a divided Germany found on both sides of the A1 Motorway that runs through the middle of the town.

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One of the most beautiful sites in all of Ratekau is the 12th century *Feldsteinkirche* (Field Stone Church). This Roman style church is one of the best kept in all of [Schleswig-Holstein](#). It looks more like a military fortification than a place of worship with its soaring round tower.

For a bit of ghoulish history, the nearby Church of St. Lawrence has a 17th century cemetery for victims of the plague.

Another gem is the Ruppersdorfer Lake. Its Observation Tower gives a great view of the town. It also is a great place for bird watching and a haven for some endangered species. The castle ruins only add to the natural beauty of the area on the small island in the center. That's one effective castle moat! The 13th century Castle Gosevelde, near the Hemelsdorfer Lake, also lies in ruins here in Ratekau.

Speaking of beauty, the town's Garden Museum is filled with not only wonderful smelling flowers but lots of period history. You'll find appliances, crafts, and everything for daily life from the 1880's to cooking in a German kitchen in the 1940's. Yum!