

Rockenhausen -- Teeming With Sharks on the Schlossstrasse

Right between [Bad Kreuznach](#) (north) and [Kaiserslautern](#) (south), is the Collective Municipality of Rockenhausen.

This is a town where Romans once stomped, the French occupied, and viticulture is celebrated; but it didn't used to be like this. Oh no, it seems a few million years ago, none of this was possible — because the place was teeming with sharks.

You didn't see that coming, did you? Well, neither did I. ;-)

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Let me try to explain better... During some kind of archaeological dig, some lucky archaeologist found shark fossils. Yeah, real shark fossils. Totally cool, right?

Somehow, somehow, the waters receded and shaped the landscape of Rockenhausen as we know it. The town even has its own castle, Schloss Rockenhausen, with a modern day hotel (with a Michelin star restaurant and excellent wine cellar, no less) right on the grounds. You'll find this medieval castle (originally built in 1243) at Schlosstraße 8.

And to learn more about the region's geology, paleontology, and even medieval blacksmithing and gunsmithing, come to the *Heimatmuseum* (Heritage Museum). Which isn't to be confused with the *Pfälzisches Turmuhren Museum*, or Palatine Tower Clock Museum.

What is it with Germans and their obsession with time? No time to ponder that — I have to tell you all about the town's many cultural events.

October is one of the best months to visit, because that's when the Oktoberfest, *Kerwe* (in Dielkirchen), and *Oktobermarkt* take place. Of course later in Fall brings on the *St. Martinsfest* and Christmas Market — so that's a good time to be here. But, now that I think about it, September's good because of the Autumn Festival.

It's probably best to go swimming at the *Natur-Erlebnisbad* when the weather's a tad warmer. Here you can do everything from just relaxing, to playing beach volleyball, go diving, or careen down the waterslide — right into the chemical-free water.

One last place to see before you skip town, the *Museum Pachen*. It's a 20th century museum with everything from paintings to sculpture; and if you're into this sorta thing, you'll find more at the *Kahnweilerhaus*. Too bad I didn't see any pictures of sharks though. ;-)