

## Schneeberg -- Mining Town With Gorgeous Light Festival

Schneeberg (Erzgebirge) is a neat little town in the [Erzgebirge a.k.a. Ore Mountains](#). For over 500 years the mining of silver, cobalt, and bismuth had fueled the local economy in a town that was once on the “Silver Road.”

Although, from 1946 through 1958 uranium was mined here and the town saw a economic and population surge. You'll learn all about that at the local Uranium Mining Museum.

Since mining had always been huge in Schneeberg, the town's *Lichtelfest* is just a highlight celebrating the miners. On the second weekend of Advent, just before Christmas, this celebration is quite a large (and famous) pre-Christmas pageant, glorifying — what else, light, since miners very rarely saw the sun during the winter months. ;-)

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Join in the festivities with concerts, crafts, and lectures, with plenty of activities for both adults and children.

The most prominent building in all of Schneeberg is the St. Wolfgangskirche, a 16th century church built on the highest peak of the town. The alter once stolen in 1633, was luckily returned some 16 years later. The townspeople saved the Late Gothic church from fires in both 1719 and 1945.

The Parish Church of George and St. Martin doesn't have quite such a colorful history, but having been around since the 1200's, it is the oldest church in the the Western Ore Mountains.

Schneeberg's medieval Town Hall from the 1500's was replaced in an elegant Baroque style

sometime in the 19th century, standing majestically at the end of the town's marketplace.

If the town's mining and medieval history isn't enough for you, the Snow Mountain city ("Schneeberg" in English) offers plenty of hiking trails throughout the mountainous region or you could just choose to relax by the *Filzteich* lake. A reservoir once used in local mining and created in the 1400's, the lake has been a bathing beach in the local area since 1933.

The *Filzteich* now plays host to concerts, dancing, and an open air cinema in the summer.