

Steinheim am Albuch -- Meteorites In The Swabian Alb

It's hard to consider that the town of Steinheim am Albuch was created 15 million years ago. That's right, 15 million. Sure is a long time ago, isn't it? But, how? Well, that's when a meteor slammed into the Earth — thus creating the landscape you see today.

Sure sounds like a right place to have a Meteorite Museum — good thing there is one, housed in one of Steinheim's old schools; and only five of its kind exist worldwide. :-)

People, however, didn't come to stay in this [Swabian Alb](#) region until about 800-480 B.C. At least, that's what the ancient burial mounds tell us.

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But, I'm pretty sure prehistoric man didn't have the manicured greens of the town's golf course to play on. Neither did they have the cycling trails to traverse. Good thing you're visiting now instead of a few thousand years ago. ;-)

In-between Steinheim's very early history and today, there were the Middle Ages. One noble family's influence (including Frederick I a.k.a Barbarossa) in the area (and beyond) follows right through here along a 300km scenic route known as the *Straße der Staufer*.

During the Hohenstauffer's heyday, the nearby Castle Hellenstein was built in the 12th century. I know the castle actually lies within the town of [Heidenheim an der Brenz](#), but that's only about 10-15 minutes away. And you didn't come this far to not see a castle, right?

Besides, a few museums are actually housed within the castle, so consider it a learning experience! You're just gonna have to do it between March 15 and November 15, because that's

the only time the castle's open.

Because there's so much to do in (and around) Steinheim, why not stay in a 300 year old brewery & guesthouse? Thankfully, the amenities have been upgraded since then, but the *Ringhotel zum Kreuz* has been taking care of guests for a very long time. Try some delicious [Swabian](#) cuisine in the restaurant.

Eat up, because you'll need the energy to hike the Wental (a dry valley) and to see the area of the old Augustinian Monastery, which opened in the late 12th century; and eventually abandoned about 300 years later.

Of course, if sitting around one of Steinheim am Albuch's many beer gardens is your idea of a good time — great! Have one for me, too! ;-)