

## Uhlstädt-Kirchhasel -- Cheers For Goethe's Girl And Castles

I was reading a book the other day whose main idea centered around Goethe's *Faust*. Historians and book lovers around the world might consider this story of a guy who sells his soul to the devil "the best piece of German literature ever."

Honestly, I wouldn't know about all that since I'm not a historian. But, I do know where you can walk in the footsteps of the world's most famous German writer, right here in the [Thuringian](#) town of Uhlstädt-Kirchhasel.

To say you'll find an extensive network of hiking trails is an understatement. The one that has the Goethe theme leads you to Schloss Kochberg; a white and red Renaissance castle that was a medieval one from 1125. Goethe stayed here, met his buddy Friedrich Schiller (another one of Germany's famous writers) here, and he met his muse and friend, Charlotte von Stein.

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Don't be confused... Schiller's wife's name was also Charlotte — but she was Charlotte von Lengefeld.

Anyway, Schloss Kochberg isn't the only castle around; nor is it the only one Goethe visited as he used to frequent Burg Weißenburg. It had to be rebuilt in the 1790s, so it looks a tad different from when it was originally constructed in the 1300s. Today you can spend the night, grab a bite at the restaurant, or even get married if so inclined.

The last castle in Uhlstädt-Kirchhasel doesn't have anything to do with Goethe, but I think you'll appreciate the Burgruine Schauenforst anyway (Rödelwitz district). No one knows exactly when it was built (some think around 1222), but over the centuries it was repeatedly sacked, and

eventually destroyed a couple of centuries ago.

One other ruin to see in Uhlstädt-Kirchhasel is the Kircheruine Töpfersdorf. You gotta hike to see it, but well worth the effort.

Another effort that's worth it is at the *Luisenturm*, an observation tower that overlooks the mountainous terrain in this part of Thuringia.

I'm starting to see how Goethe could be so inspired. But, my little scribbles don't even hold a candle to his work. Maybe I can come up with something while out in the 1000+ acre nature reserve in the [Saale](#) Valley.

Nah, I got nothin'... best to leave it up to the professionals.