

The Vogelsberg Mountains Attract Millions Of Visitors Every Year

The name Vogelsberg Mountains is actually named twice. If you don't speak German, the word "berg" means mountain, just so you know.

I'm not here to discuss language, I'm here to tell you about the 2500 square kilometers of the Vogelsberg in [Hesse](#) that was created totally from volcanoes some 19 million years ago.

No worry about an eruption, this contiguous volcanic region has been long extinct. Although they did make some of the most amazing basalt rock formations anywhere in the world.

Don't believe me? Go see the *Uhuklippen*, then you'll understand.

Regardless, the volcanic countryside brings millions of people every year along the *Vulkanradweg* and the Vogelsberg Southern Railway Cycle Path, among many other scenic routes and cycling trails. The *Vulkan-Express* (Volcano Express) is one of the most popular buses around here.

Whether you take one of the routes or try to do it on your own, you'll want to at least see the Vogelsberg from the top. The highest points are the Taufstein with its Bismarck Tower at 773 meters, and the Hoherodskopf (at 764 meters), one of its touristic highlights in both summer and winter.

By going clockwise to the towns surrounding the Taufstein, you'll get the best of the 883 square kilometer Vogelsberg Nature Park (like 70km of mountain biking trails), and the best mountain towns anywhere.

That just sounds biased, doesn't it? ;-)

Anyway, I'm going to start in [Schotten](#), which is where you'll find the source of the Nidda River, prehistoric burial mounds, the Eppstein Castle (you knew I'd find one somewhere), and the Liebfrauenkirche in the Old Town area.

I told you, awesome mountain towns. And the Nidda River, BTW, isn't the only one you'll find in & around the Vogelsberg. There's a whole bunch of 'em: the Fulda, Kinzig, Ohm, Nidder,...

In fact, spring water from the Vogelsberg drops most of the drinking water to the Rhine/Main Region.

[Lauterbach \(Hesse\)](#) is found along the eastern edge, a town with another castle (Schloss Eisenbach), and famous for its Lauter Rose and the the 16th century "stepping stones" that cross

the little Lauter River.

Better yet, try the Lauterbach Beer while you're here.

It's probably best to wait a little bit after that before going to [Neuhof \(Fulda\)](#), a town along the 240km Rhine-Main-Kinzig Cycle Trail.

The Romans used to travel along this way, except they called Neuhof Nova Curia, and the [VIA REGIA](#) was once a "road," protected by the King — and the place was once on a trade route called the *Antsanvia*.

I don't know if all those old travelers could recognize the same town, but it is still on the [Way of St. James](#) — and the landmark St. Michael Church has been welcoming pilgrims for hundreds and hundreds of years.

The Cathedral in [Birstein](#) has been doing the same thing. The fortress at Birstein Castle, not so much. Who would actually want to spend "time" in a dungeon?

Oh, it's not so bad today — the 12th century castle doesn't look so scary today; and real princes have lived in the castle since 1517.

The last town we're going to see is [Gedern](#), where you're able to swim and camp around the Gedener See. In early September the lake hosts an annual Elvis Festival — don't you just love the King?

Love Me Tender, love me... sorry, got carried away for a minute.

Right before the Elvis Festival is the *Stadtlauf* or City Run (on the second weekend of August), and there's always an outdoor concert of some sort in July.

You can always visit the 14th century castle (with a cultural history museum) just about any time, and so too the Evangelical Church.

Now that I think about it, even if there was a chance of a volcanic eruption — I would brave it to see this striking countryside. With any luck, the toboggan run sleds might outrun the lava. ;-)