

Wildeshausen Geest -- Scenic Routes And Archaeological Sites

The 1,532 square kilometers large Wildeshausen Geest Nature Park lies between [Bremen](#), [Oldenburg](#), and [Vechta](#).

Known as the *Wildeshauser Geest* in German, the Wildeshausen Geest has a funny name, right? Geest is a Low German word that means border cross... Oh, I get it — the Wildeshausen Geest crosses a handful of county borders.

Yes, I'm joking around again, but the Geest itself needs to be taken seriously. This is why I've picked my "Top 10" towns for you.

Why ten?

Why not? ;-)

What's even better about the Wildeshausen Geest is if you're truly a history buff, you'll be more than delighted with all the archaeology sites. It's been said that the Geest is the "longest and best preserved cemetery in northern central Europe."

They're not my words, but I'll give you the general gist of it — think lots and lots of megalithic (uh, prehistoric) graves. Makes sense why you'll find the Route of Megalithic Culture here.

This scenic route isn't the only one to come through the Geest. The Lower Saxon Mill Route (filled with wind and water mills); the *Jadeweg*, *Pickerweg*, and *Geestweg* (all hiking routes); and the *Beerenlehrpfad* (a cycling route) are to just name a few.

I'm going to start in [Ganderkesee](#), as this state-approved resort is conveniently located on the A28 [Autobahn](#).

Besides, Ganderkesee's got the Gaukirche with its *Arp-Schnitger-Orgel* (an organ from the year 1699), and in the *Hügelgrab* in its Stenum district are more than 5,000 year old archaeological findings.

Next door is [Hude](#), a town where you can go from the far reaches of space along the Planet Trail to medieval Kloster ruins at the half-way point of our trip.

As if the Wildeshausen Geest isn't a nature area in itself, the town of [Wardenburg](#) has its own nature area. It also has a Blacksmith Museum, a Water Mill, and a City Festival that takes place on the second Sunday of every August.

You might've noticed the Wildeshausen Geest has gotten a little more forested by now. And it will pretty much the rest of the way — but you will also see marshes, moorlands, and farmland too.

Another nature loving town is [Großenkneten](#), as they, too, have their own nature area known as the *Ahlhorner Fischteiche* (Ahlhorn Fishponds) — in addition to Canoe tours on the Hunte River.

A good way to get to know Großenkneten and its history better is to see the Sage War Cemetery in its Sage district, which used to be a line of battle for the Allies during [WWII](#).

We're not going far to our next town. [Wildeshausen](#) is right next to where we've just come from. Sure, there is a Romanesque basilica, an awesome looking *Rathaus*, a Distillery Museum, and Jewish cemetery. But, you'll like the information boards that tell about all the different tree species, the 16th century Lohmühle (once used for tanning) that's now an artist's studio, and the highlights of the Route of Megalithic Culture.

Like to swim? Sure. Let's head to the Hartensbergsee, a recreational lake in [Goldenstedt](#) with all sorts of activities, or just plain relaxation. And a tour with the cute *Moorbahn* along the Goldenstedter Moor is in order too.

Awesome, we've made it to [Twistringen](#) — you know the place I told you about being on the Beerenlehrpfad? This route will take you from Bremen to Osnabrück, highlighting all the fruits and berries grown around the region — however, if you want to stay local, check out the 160 meter long Wild Rose Path.

You can thank me for telling you by sending me white roses, they're my favorite. ;-)

Won't you thanking me again for telling you about [Bassum](#)'s Stift und Stiftskirche, in the southwestern part of the Geest. This 13th century church is filled with all sorts of religious art, and the building itself is a unique blend of Romanesque and Gothic architecture. I'm sorry to say not much remains of its mid-9th century beginnings — but it is the oldest of its kind in Lower Saxony, and one of its most famous patrons was St. Victor of Xanten.

[Syke](#) is next, known mostly for its hiking and biking trails. You'll get a true Geest experience here with 24 stations of information, and an outside "classroom", in addition to the observation tower. Also in the forest is all sorts of sculpture; but inside town is a County Museum (with prehistoric archaeology finds), a theater, and a pretty Evangelical Church.

We'll finish our circular trip through the Wildeshausen Geest in [Stuhr](#). Hot spots are the numerous old mills from the 19th century that are still working, and the *Gut Varrel*, a farmhouse from the 14th century.