

Willingshausen -- The Creative Soul In Rotkäppchenland

While many things have remained the same over the centuries here in Germany, change has come in the recent past to the town of Willingshausen. For starters, the current town you see in front of your eyes didn't even exist prior to 1974.

However, and that's a might big H-O-W-E-V-E-R, the one thing that hasn't changed is its Artists' Colony, which dates all the way back to the early 19th century. Now we know two of the Brothers Grimm were quite creative, but there was a third (Ludwig Grimm) who was also creatively gifted — and he lived here for quite some time.

You can learn a lot more about the Colony's inner-workings at the local museum. And on Whit Mondays there's a fantastic Regional Market selling all kinds of artwork and farm-fresh products. If you're truly talented you can even earn a scholarship to live right in the Artist Colony for three months.

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Too bad I can't paint a straight line with a ruler. ;-)

I don't know what they put in the water around here to inspire the ingenious designs, perhaps it's all the half-timbered houses? Maybe it's the quaint countryside that's best seen by hiking or e-biking? Don't worry too much about getting lost, the well-marked *Radfernweg R7* and *Efzetalweg R17* come right on through in what's known as *Rotkäppchenland*, or Little Red Riding Hood Country.

The real question is, how does anyone manage to get any work done with all the festivals taking place? Probably the most famous is the World Music Festival, held in the village of Loshausen (one

of Willingshausen's nine) at the end of July/early August.

You'll find yet another one, a *Kirmes*, in the village of Steina (population only 293) at the end of April, another in Wasenberg at the end of June, and one more in the hamlet of Zella every July.

There's not much more you could ask of any one place than what you'll find in Willingshausen — legends, artists, festivals, and even a Castle Park where a medieval one once stood.

Yeah, now I understand what inspires the creative soul.