

Nature- and Geopark Styrian Eisenwurzen



Highlights:

Arzberg Cave

Brunn Lake

Kläffer Spring

Kraus Cave

Noth Gorge

Spitzenbach Gorge

Teufelskirche

Wasserloch Gorge

Where to find the Geopark

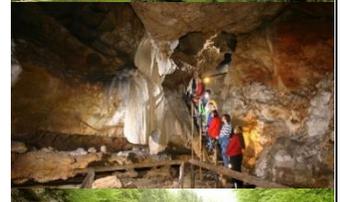
The Nature- and Geopark Styrian Eisenwurzen is located at the foothills of the Gesäuse and the Hochschwab mountain massifs in the center of the Northern Calcareous Alps. Geographically, it is situated in the north of the Austrian province of Styria at the boundaries to the provinces of Upper and Lower Austria. The Nature- and Geopark communities are Altenmarkt/St.Gallen, Landl, St. Gallen and Wildalpen

A wealth of rocks: The first view of the Geopark

The Geopark Eisenwurzen was founded in 1996. With an area of 568km² and a population of 6100, it is characterized by a diverse natural and cultural heritage. It is dominated by gorgeous forests, wide-spread orchard meadows, romantic Alpine pastures and spectacular rivers cutting deeply into the mountainous landscape. Powerful manufacturers of iron products (Hammerherren), char burners and log floaters guaranteed prosperity in the 15th and 16th century, when the ore from the Styrian Erzberg was processed into high-quality products at Eisenwurzen. Geological research started in the first half of the 19th century. Since that time, a considerable amount of knowledge has accumulated. Mesozoic limestones and dolomites are the main rocks of the area. The Anisian stage (245-237 million years ago) of the Mesozoic was defined in 1895 at the Geopark area and named after the Latin name of the Enns River, Anisus fluvius.

Famous among geologists is the Gams basin because of its fossils including ammonites, snails and bivalves. Stunning caves and springs are the result of an intense karstification. Huge springs at Eisenwurzen provide pure spring water for the capital of Austria through the Vienna mountain spring line. The Spring Water Museum of Wildalpen provides an overview of its history.

You can learn more about the geology of the area at the GeoVillage of Gams. The GeoCentre provides an overview of the local geology, you can explore the geological features along the GeoTrail, visit the famous Kraus Cave, and become familiar with rocks and fossils at the GeoWorkshop. You can further experience geology along the Salza River at an adventurous white-water GeoRaft tour, with the Palfau conglomerate gorge as an absolute highlight.



Activities and Offers

<p>GeoVillage Gams www.geodorf-gams.at</p>		<p>Besides the breath-taking and diverse landscape, you can experience geology at the GeoCentre, the GeoWorkshop and the GeoTrail. Fossil sites and the romantic Noth Gorge, which you will pass along this trail, will provide unique insights into the geology. Attending a guided tour through the Kraus Cave is a must. It is one of the earliest show caves of Austria and the largest gypsum-bearing cave in German-speaking Europe. By the way, it is the only show-cave in Europe where sulfuric acid from thermal water has turned limestone into gypsum.</p>
<p>Arzberg Cave www.wildalpen.at</p>		<p>The protected Arzberg Cave is situated in the Salza valley, close to the community of Wildalpen at a sea level of 730 meters. On a guided tour, you will learn about glaciers and rivers at the Great Ice Age, about the origin of the cave, which was inhabited by cave-bears, and about Ice Age hunters who used it as a hideout. But not only the past counts. It is equally fascinating to watch the bats in the cave.</p>
<p>GeoRafting www.rafting-salza.at www.raftingcamp.at www.salza.at</p>		<p>The origin of the landscape can hardly be better explored than on an adventurous raft tour on the Salza River, one of the last natural white-water rivers of Central Europe. GeoRafting is both a sporty challenge and a deep look into the geology of the Alps.</p>
<p>Spring Water Museum Wildalpen www.wildalpen.at</p>		<p>If you want to follow the course of the drinking water from inside the rock to the spring and to the water faucet in Vienna, the Spring Water Museum at Wildalpen is the right place to go. A unique experience is a visit to the Kläffer Spring, one of the largest karst-springs of Europe, escaping powerfully from a rock fissure.</p>
<p>Wasserloch Gorge www.wasserloch.at</p>		<p>The trail leading from the mouth of the Wasserloch Gorge to the top has a length of 900 meters. Walking along the steep rock face, the sights of the five impressive waterfalls and the view into the "Wasserloch", where water escapes from a cave lake, will fully reward your efforts.</p>

