



Old Beeches, Crystal Clear Lakes

Beech forests and clear water lakes – these are the trademarks of the Stechlin-Ruppiner Land Nature Park. Forests grow on two-thirds of the park's area. The large beech forests are exceptionally beautiful and ecologically valuable. In Germany beech trees no longer exist on only eight percent of their original locations – in the nature park they still cover about 25 percent.

The nature park has more than 150 lakes, including many clear water lakes, which are here a relative rarity. About one-half of all Brandenburg's nutrient-poor, clear water lakes are to be found in this area. The Großer Stechlinsee – 425 hectares



wide and up to 69 meters deep – is the largest and most significant in the entire North German Plain. The originates comes from the Slavic: either from »steklo« meaning »glass« and referring to the clear water or from »-tek« which means something like »flowing, moving.« Even with moderate winds the waves on Stechlinsee are surprisingly high. The lake is in turn also the namesake of Fontane's late work »Der Stechlin« and Brandenburg's second largest conservation area.

Angling and bathing are possible in almost every lake. Besides the waters of the Havel and Rhin, the Rheinsberger lakes are particularly suited to canoeing. The Rheinsberger Rhin may only be travelled along from 15 June to 31 October with a minimum level of 65 cm at the Obermühle (upper mill) in Rheinsberg.

It is possible to take a steamboat ride from Rheinsberg, Fürstenberg/Havel and Neuruppin, among others. Almost every lake in the nature park can be walked around on foot. A hike along the 250km long Ruppiner-Land-Rundwanderweg (Ruppiner Land Circular Trail) is recommended.

A Golden Eye

The heraldic animal of the nature park is the Golden Eye – whose flight sound reminds one of the ringing of a bell. It belongs to the diving ducks and hunts by sight. Because of the golden rings around its eyes it is called »golden eye.« The Golden Eye breeds in former black woodpecker hollows found in beech trees. Especially fascinating is the »foray« of the ducklings. The little »cotton balls« jump from nests eight meters or higher down to the ground and then waddle after the clucking mother duck to the water. For this reason the area of the Stechlinsee with its clear water lakes and old beech stock is an ideal habitat for the shy ducks. The elusive



fish otter is found everywhere in the nature park. The beaver and the European terrapin, osprey and crane, kingfisher and stock pigeon also live here.

House and Garden for the Senses

Discover, touch, experience – the NaturParkHaus Stechlin in Menz offers a fantastic journey through the natural spaces and sensory garden. It is the visitors' center for the Stechlin-Ruppiner Land Nature Park. Guests are invited on a fictitious expedition from the highest treetops to the deepest lake floors. You can uncover the features of the nature park, enter the secret workings of ants, learn the language of the moor frog, see the world through the eyes of a dragon fly or a fish and telephone with a crane. Visitors can also take in the garden of the NaturParkHaus with all their senses. Many herbs, shrubs and trees tell stories and invite tasting, smelling, feeling and listening. The NaturParkHaus and the garden are both equipped for the handicapped, groups can book tours, and environmental programs are offered for school groups. The NaturParkHaus is open daily from 10 am to 6 pm, in winter until 4 pm. Lovers of glass can learn about the cultural history of domestic glasswares and the preindustrial production of glass in the northern forests of the province Brandenburg at the Neuglowsow Glass Museum.

Wonderful Time for the Prussian King

The Prussian king, Friedrich the Great, lived in Rheinsberger Castle as the crown prince from 1736 until the death of his father in 1740 and later referred to this period as the most wonderful of his life. In addition to the Mirrored Hall and the Mussel Hall, the castle also houses the Kurt Tucholsky Literature Museum. In 1912 the poet and satirist of the city built a literary monument with »Rheinsberg – ein Bilderbuch für Verliebte« (»Rheinsberg – a picture book for lovers«). Rheinsberg is, inter alia, host of the annual festival Kammeroper Schloss Rheinsberg (Chamber Opera Castle Rheinsberg). The castle theater is currently used by the Musikakademie Rheinsberg for events. Every other weekend in October a pottery market takes place in the Prinzenstadt with over seventy exhibitors from all over Germany.



Stechlin-Ruppiner Land Nature Park

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Naturpark
Stechlin-Ruppiner
Land





Stechlinsee with its unique four-armed form and the peninsula-like jutties can be easily explored on the 12 kilometer long walking trail.



The small white-fish, a regional specialty of the Brandenburg clear water lakes, are offered by fishermen in the nature park

The White Nun of Lindow

The three-lake town of Lindow/Mark offers pure relaxation. First a convent was founded on the isthmus between Gudelack and Wutzsee, which is surrounded by the myth of the beautiful nun. The girl, having fallen in love with a boy of low standing, was sent to the Lindow Convent by her parents. The boy scratches and scrapes at the convent walls until he is able to flee with his beloved. Since then the two have escaped without trace; only at midnight one can hear, at that spot where the lovers surmounted the convent wall, scratching and scraping. ... For a hundred years today's nature park area has been famous as a summer retreat. One can relax in nature not only on the Lindow lakes or on the Stechlinsee near Neuglobsow, but indeed everywhere in the nature park: on the Havel and the Rhin, in the Ruppiner Schweiz, in the Meseberger Heide Arboretum, at the Rheinsberger lakes, and in the forest and lake areas around Zempow-Sewekower.

The Ranger Service or specially trained culture and landscape guides will happily provide one or the other (secret) destination tip or organize tours and excursions upon request.

The beech forests, with their surfeit of old and dead wood, are home to rare beetles like the stag beetle, hermit, and the Great Capricorn Beetle as well as a total of seven (!) species of woodpeckers.



The Bioland Ranch Zempow, an organic farm with 500 hectares and 300 suckler cows, invites one to rural vacationing.



The rare Wild Rosemary is a typical plant in the moors that are numerous in the nature park, but endangered throughout the country.

The landscape is delicious! – under this motto the nature park administration supports the marketing of regional products.

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