



Saxon-Bohemian  
SWITZERLAND

# DISCOVER

## SAXON SWITZERLAND





## **Your plans are made, your bags are packed, and you're ready to go.**

Excitedly, you travel from one place to the next. In eager anticipation, you track down the top recommendations from Instagram, Pinterest etc. and try to snap the best shots. But who says the most popular hits on social media will also give you the best memories? Maybe you're missing out on countless fabulous moments because you only focus on reaching your destination. Is not the journey its own reward?

Sometimes, all it takes is a small step off the beaten track to enter an entirely new world.

Saxon Switzerland is precisely such a place: inconspicuous, but once you're there, you'll love every second. The peaceful River Elbe winds its way through a picturesque rocky landscape, narrow gorges and idyllic forests. The National Park is a place of wonder, and there are many breath-taking views just waiting to be discovered.

So, let's take some time to explore and allow yourself to be enchanted by the countless hidden beauty spots the region has to offer.



## Facts & figures

Saxon Switzerland is full of surprises and is definitely well worth exploring. But to save you from jumping in at the deep end, here are **10 facts** about this special holiday destination.



An area of roughly 700 km<sup>2</sup>, the Elbe Sandstone Mountains run along both sides of the Elbe River: as Saxon Switzerland in Germany and as Bohemian Swit-

# 1

In 1990, the region became Saxony's first national park. It is the only distinctly rocky national park in Germany.



# 2



# 3

There is a network of more than 1200 km of hiking trails, including the 116 km long Malerweg, which takes you all the way across Saxon Switzerland

Cycling enthusiasts can start their trip in Hamburg and follow the 1,000 km long Elbe cycling path, which also crosses Saxon Switzerland and ends in Prague.



# 4

The region boasts a total of more than 1100 freestanding sandstone rocks, which can be explored on roughly 21000 climbing routes.



Climbing girl

© Marko Förster

# 5

For a nostalgic experience, take a ride on the more than hundred-year-old Kirnitzschtalbahn. It is the world's only tram that serves a national park.



7 The national park frequently plays host to film crews: roughly 70 films are made here every year, including two to three feature films, such as Cloud Atlas or The Reader



The 76-m-long stone Bastei Bridge was built in 1851 and is now listed as a “technical monument”.

10

9 At 562 m, “Großer Zschirstein” is the highest elevation in Saxon Switzerland and offers spectacular views.



The city of Pirna is the perfect starting point for trips into Saxon Switzerland, which is why it is also called “Gateway to Saxon Switzerland”



Hintere Sächsische Schweiz

©Stephan Wiesner

The best reason to visit the region is the gorgeous landscape and its charm. Numerous painters roamed the ragged rocks in the 18th century to capture their unique beauty. These days, most people leave their easel and paintbrush at home and use their camera or smartphone to snap souvenir photos instead.





Nationalpark—Bahnhof Bad Schandau

©Florian Trykowski

## Arriving and getting around in Saxon Switzerland

Exit the train, board the suburban train and watch as the city turns into national park outside the train window. The historic Kirnitzschtalbahnhof even takes you right into the heart of the nature reserve. We have compiled a number of gentle modes of travel to ensure a holiday with genuine deceleration.

### Mobility guest card

Travel with ease with the mobility guest card “Gästekarte mobil” – it allows you to use all regional public transport free of charge. The guest card is available in 13 districts, and you can get it upon your arrival at your accommodation. The mobility add-on is currently available in Pirna, Königstein and Sebnitz, but many other places are due to follow.



**Dresden main station:** Dresden main station is the first step towards a relaxing holiday. It offers numerous connections to destinations all across Europe and links metropolises such as Berlin and Prague. From here, Pirna is only 20 minutes away.



**Hiking buses:** Cross country buses provide access to the entire region. Key interchange points between S-Bahn and bus are the bus station ZOB in Pirna, Reißiger Platz in Königstein, the national park station Bad Schandau and the main station in Dresden. The routes with the most sights are marked “Wanderbus” (hiking bus).

**Kirnitzschtalbahn:** For more than 120 years, the Kirnitzschtalbahn has been taking hikers to the starting points of their trips through Saxon Switzerland. It is the world’s only tram that serves a national park. In summer, the Kirnitzschtalbahn leaves half-hourly, in winter every 70 minutes. Historic tramcars run on special occasions.

**S1:** The S-Bahn service S1 runs along the River Elbe and links Saxon Switzerland with Dresden and Meissen. The S1 runs hourly between Schöna and Bad Schandau and half-hourly between Bad Schandau and Pirna.

### Hiking boat

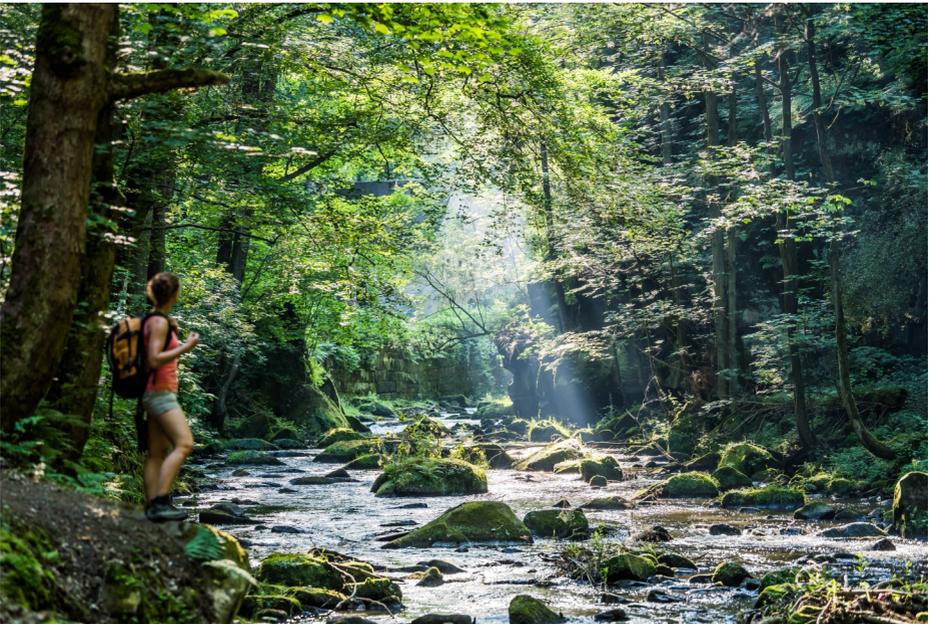
The hiking boat serves as a kind of water taxi and can take you 10 km along the twists and turns of the River Elbe. It leaves four times daily from Bad Schandau and stops at Krippen/Postelwitz, Schmilka and Hřrensko before returning. Every stop is a great



## Hiking tips

When you travel to Saxon Switzerland, you simply have to go hiking! Discovering the region's beauty spots on foot has a long tradition and is still worthwhile today.

But don't worry, you don't have to go on exhausting five-hour hikes. The region has something to offer for everyone. Both short trails for those who are not so keen on walking and demanding trails for experienced hikers. Take a look at our website and see what tickles your fancy: you can choose between different destinations, difficulty levels and hiking duration. We would definitely recommend you make a stop at one of the many rustic mountain inns for a refreshing drink and to rest your feet. To narrow down the huge array of choices, here a few of our many favourites:



**Malerweg Stage 1**

©Sebastian Thiel

## From Königstein to Lilienstein

The distinctive table mountain Lilienstein is the landmark of the national park Saxon Switzerland. Climbing this colossus is an exhausting but also a rewarding hiking adventure.



Lilienstein  
©Rico Richter

<https://elbitogo.link/3>



<https://elbitogo.link/2>



Basteibrücke  
©Rico Richter

## Hike from spa town Rathen to Wehlen via the Bastei rock formation

Shortly after leaving the spa town of Rathen, you will arrive at the reservoir Amselsee. Continue through the gorge-like valley Schwedenlöcher to the Bastei Plateau, from where you can enjoy endless views and visit the rock castle Neurathen. On the way to the town of Wehlen, you will pass the historic stone table. The starting point in the spa town of Rathen is easy to reach by suburban train.

## Hike to the “balcony” of Saxon Switzerland

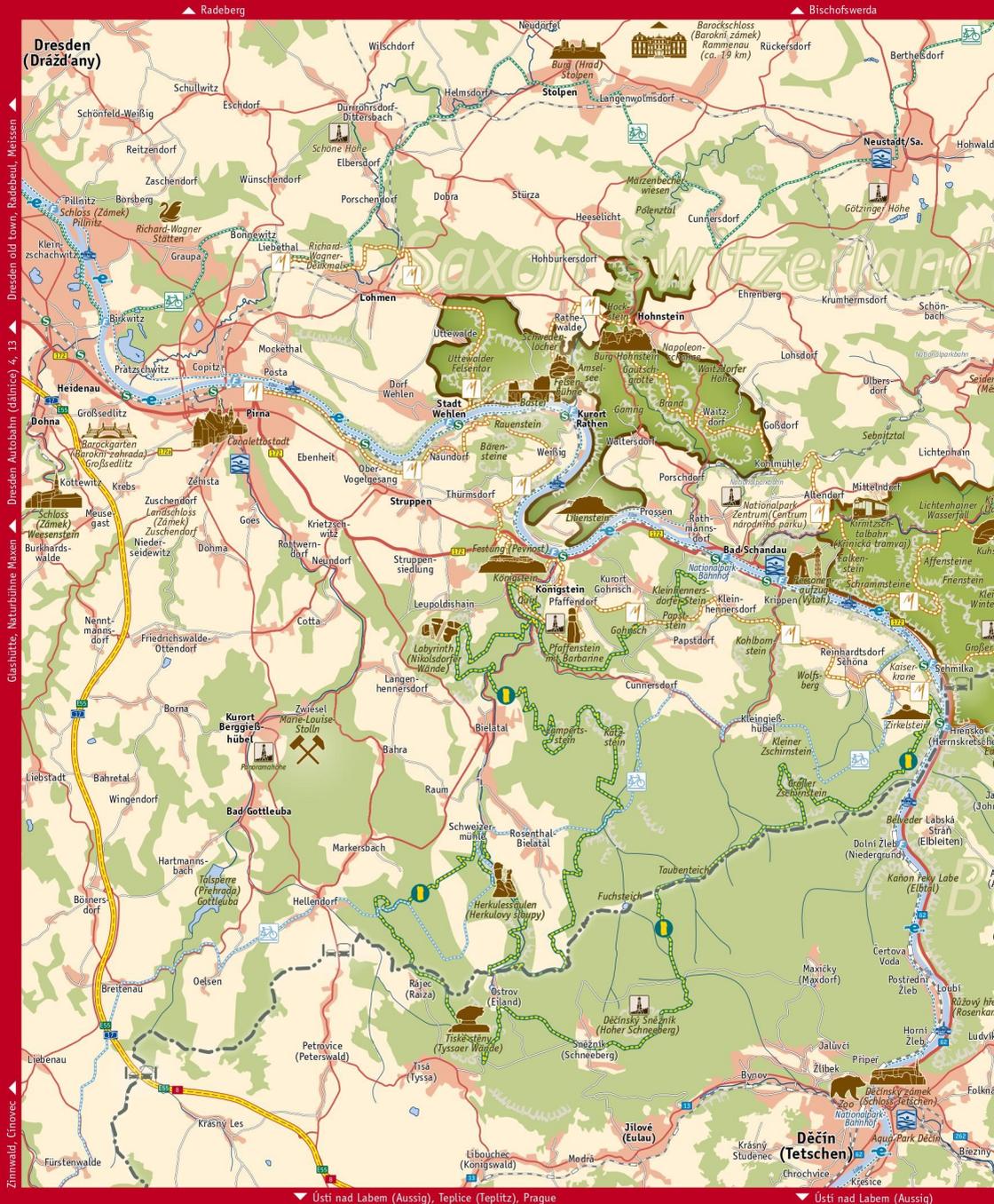
This hiking trail will take you to the Brand viewpoint, the so-called “balcony” of Saxon Switzerland. Here, the landscape ends in a sheer drop, and you can look down into the deep Polenz Valley. The location is exposed, and views down into the canyon-like valley and into the landscape beyond are truly spectacular.



<https://elbitogo.link/1>



Brandaussicht  
©Philipp Zieger



# Saxon-Bohemian Switzerland

[www.saechsische-schweiz.de/en](http://www.saechsische-schweiz.de/en)

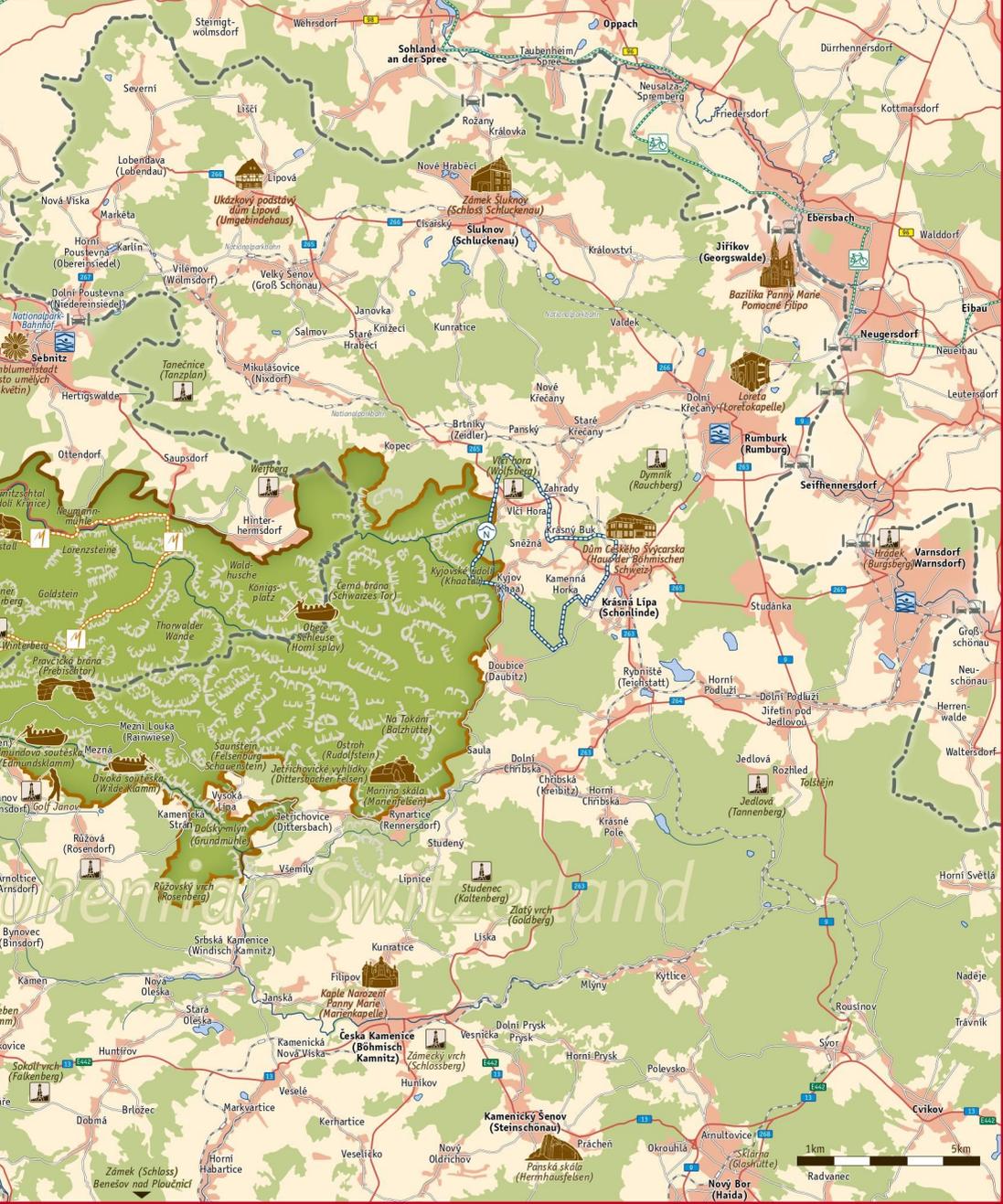
Sächsisch-Böhmische  
SCHWEIZ



European Union,  
European Regional  
Development Fund.

orientation map  
status february 2021  
tourism association  
(listed non-profit organisation)

	Highlight
	look-out
	swimming
	border



Česká Lípa (Böhmische Leipa)

	Painters' Way		Elbe Cycle Path
	Kögler's Nature Trail		ferry
	Forest trail		boat service
	Cycle Path		National Park Saxon Switzerland
	Cycle Path		National Park Bohemian Switzerland



## Bucket list for Saxon Switzerland

Saxon Switzerland may be a small region, but it is jam-packed with picturesque views, giant rock formations and magical woodlands. In addition to the many natural highlights, there are also a number of other attractions waiting to be explored. To ensure you make the best of your time here, we have compiled a list of our favourites.



©Maik Rähler

Enjoy a slice of Eierschecke (regional layered cheesecake) in the historic town centre of Pirna

Marvel at the Herkulesssäule  
(rock formation Pillars of Hercules)



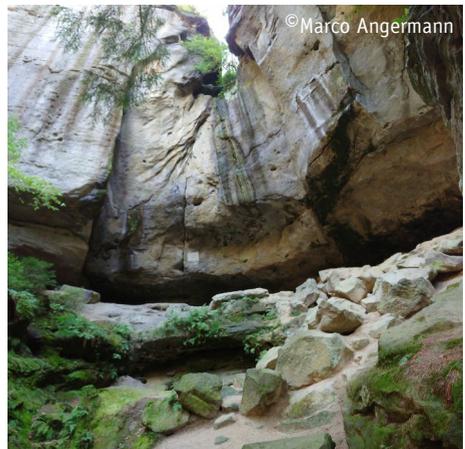
©Marko Förster



©Maik Rähler

Recharge your batteries in the grotto  
“Gautschgrotte”

Conquer the castle Königstein on foot



©Marco Angermann



©Emily Wolf

Do your workout on a natural stepper (e.g. Brand ascent: 970 steps)

Give your imagination free rein while taking a stroll through the rock castle Neurathen



©czechvibes

Climb a mountain (beginners' climbing courses are available)



©Marko Förster

Explore the Elbe Valley by rubber dinghy



©Yvonne Brückner

Take the tram Kirnitzschtalbahn to the Lichtenhain Waterfall



©Marko Förster

Try regional products in the organic village of Schmilka



©Achim Meurer

## 4 Seasons

...but when is the best time to travel to Saxon Switzerland?

Always, of course! Every season has its own charm – you'll have to decide for yourself which one your favourite is.



### Winter

The cosiest of the four seasons wraps the rocky landscape in a thick blanket of snow. Everything looks idyllic and magical. An atmosphere that warms the heart. The festive season in the Elbe Sandstone Mountains is full of

Papststein, Gohrisch

©Stefan Junghanß

### Spring

Lush meadows and a newly formed, dense leaf canopy – a green oasis of calm. After the dark winter days, the first warm rays of sun allow the region to radiate. Perfect for soaking up some much-needed vitamin D on long hikes.



Märzenbecherwiese im Polenztal

©Yvonne Brückner

## Summer

Hiking on hot summer days? Great idea! You'll be hard put to find a better (dry) way to cool off than a gentle walk between the ginormous rock formations. Take a break and enjoy a fresh beer in a rustic, historic mountain inn and dangle your feet in a crystal clear stream.



Sounds like a perfect summer's day.

**Malerweg 1 Etappe**

©Sebastian Thiel



**Pfaffenstein Babarine**

©Britta Prema Hirschburger

## Autumn

A rocky landscape in a blaze of colours. Autumn brings an explosion of yellow, red, gold and brown, swirling mists and that fresh forest scent.

This tends to be the favourite season of rock climbers, and it is clear why. It's a chance to get some colourful memories before the grey and cold winter months.



Fresh, from the area and bursting with flavour! Beyond the supermarket range, which is dependably always the same, the many farm shops and weekly markets offer an individual and authentic shopping experience.

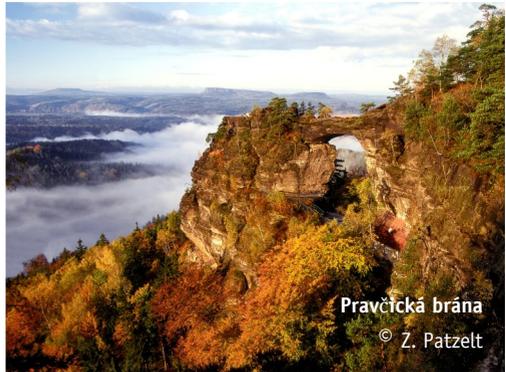
But if you're looking for a real treat, the local chefs cook with passion and flair. They know exactly with what to thrill their guests, so there is sure to be something great for everyone.



## Saxon-Bohemian Switzerland

The rocky fairy tale world of the Elbe Sandstone Mountains doesn't all of a sudden stop at the border. Saxon Switzerland is just half of a much bigger landscape: the other half is Czechia's youngest national park, Bohemian Switzerland.

The most famous landmark of Bohemian Switzerland is the 16-metre high 'Pravčická brána'. Located just beyond the German-Czech border, this natural rocky archway – the largest in Europe – is definitely worth a visit.



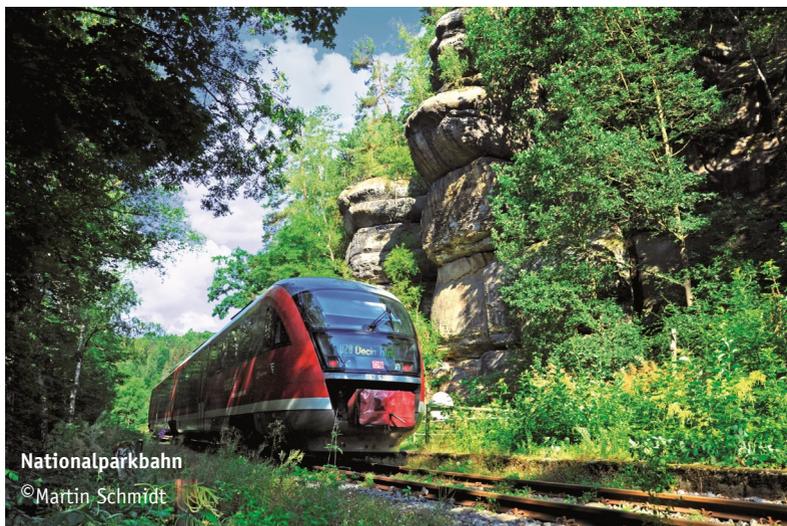
Close by, in the 'Kamenice' Valley, lies the romantic ruin of a former mill, the Dolský Mlýn. In the past, you could take a boat along the 'Ferdinandova soutěska' from here. These days, you can explore the gorge on foot.





You'll be able to get plenty of information on Bohemian Saxony in the city of Krásná Lípa, which is also a popular starting point for hiking trips. The tourist centre Dům Českého Švýcarska is located on Křínické náměstí 1161/10 and also hosts changing exhibitions on the region.

The national park train line U 28 links the two regions of Saxon and Bohemian Switzerland. It goes from Děčín via Bad Schandau, Sebnitz, Dolní Poustevna and Mikulášovice dolní nádr. to Rumburk. The transborder service thus connects destinations along the Elbe Valley, the Sebnitz Valley and the so-called Schluckenauer Zipfel.



## Booking service

You're ready for a trip to Saxon Switzerland?  
Then find backpack and get packing.

We have compiled a list of essentials we like to take on hikes to make sure you won't forget anything important. But should you need anything else, the hiking centre Aktiv Zentrum on Marktplatz 1-11 in Bad Schandau is always happy to help. Here, you can hire equipment and find additional inspiration for active holidays in the Elbe Sandstone Mountains.

We can also help you decide on suitable accommodation: just write us an email, and together we will find the perfect place for you to stay on your trip through beautiful Saxon Switzerland.



**Mandy Schumann, Manuela Morawietz and Doreen Wünsche**

©Marko Förster

## packing list

- Fleece jacket / pullover
- First aid kit incl. thermal blanket and blister plasters
- Hiking map & guide
- Drinking bottle
- Provisions
- Passport / ID card
- Cash / credit card
- Headgear
- Scarf
- Sunscreen & sunglasses
- Umbrella / rain cape
- Camera
- Small seat pad
- Hand sanitiser
- Handkerchiefs
- Small binbag
- Penknife / multitool
- Small towel
- Flashlight



**Rule of thumb:** pack heavy items near your back

.. next vacation in sight..



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