



ilmenau

himmelblau

The Goethe Trail



Thüringen
-entdecken.de





*„You have only been really there
if going there by foot.“*

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

The 20 kilometres of the Goethe Trail from Ilmenau to Stützerbach links places related with Goethe and his work, blended into the beautiful setting of the Thüringer Wald, which Goethe loved immensely, too.

As the first trail in Thüringen, the Goethe Trail was awarded the Qualitätsweg Wanderbares Deutschland seal of quality (**Germany's Quality Trails**), it was granted anew recently. It is marked with the initial Goethe used as a signature, “g”.

*“I have always loved being here,
I believe it comes from the harmony
of everything around here ...”*

(Goethe wrote to Schiller on 29 August, 1795, from Ilmenau)

The Goethe Trail starts at the Amtshaus (1; **former Court House**) which was built by the Dowager Countess Sophie von Henneberg as her home on widowhood on Ilmenau's market square. Partially destroyed in a fire in 1752, it was restored to the plans of Gottfried Heinrich Krohne, a great architect of the baroque period, to include offices for the Duke's administrator and living quarters for the ducal family. In the well-lit corner room on the first floor, one can still stand on the same floorboards as did Goethe, and admire the stucco ceiling as well as the pretty view on the market square.

Today, the Amtshaus is home to the Ilmenau Tourist Information Office and the GoetheStadtMuseum (the museum celebrating both Goethe and the town). Here Goethe the poet, the public servant and the natural scientist is presented. On his duty to revive silver mining in the region and due to his love for the nature around here, Goethe has visited Ilmenau 26 times.

The trail now follows the Obertorstrasse to the Cemetery (2). On the left close to the entry, there is the grave of Corona



The Mining Room in the GoetheStadtMuseum

... the Poet

Schröter, the celebrated singer and first actress of “Iphigenie”, who was much loved by the Weimar Court.

Now the trail passes through the upper part of the old town, following Mittlerer and Oberer Berggrabenweg, which, with their gentle gradient along the side of the hill were water channels for the mines in Goethe’s time. They brought over a distance of 14 km the water necessary to drive the pumps at the Sturmheide and Roda shafts.

On the Schwalbenstein (3), offering enchanting views into the Manebach valley, Goethe wrote the fourth act of “Iphigenie”. You can read the first lines inscribed on a plate at the porphyry rock.

Passing the Schöffenhäuser (4), you walk on over the Heidelberg to the Marienquelle (5; **Mary’s spring**) and the rock called the Emmastein (6). Now, the trail takes you downhill to Manebach and the Kantorhaus (7; **Choirmaster’s House**), where you also cross the river Ilm, and uphill again at the Kammerberg opposite towards Helenenruh (8; **Helena’s**

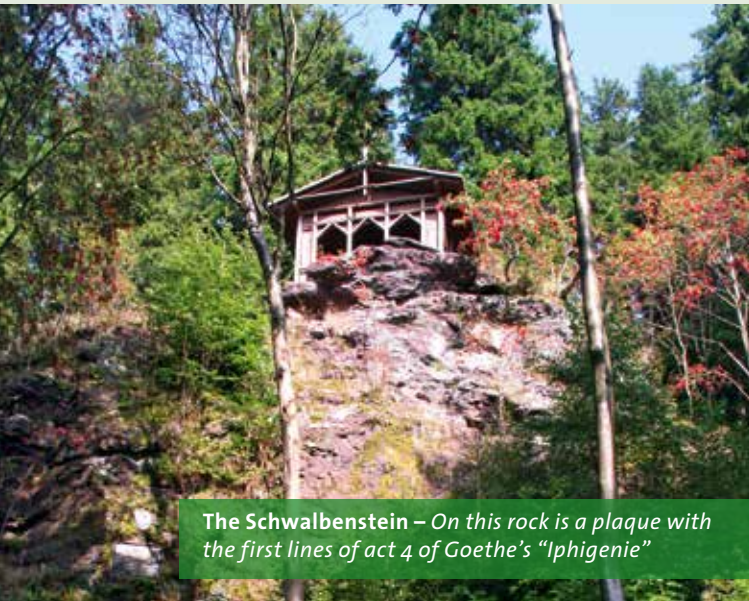
... the Artist

rest). Walking through the forrest, you get to Sophienquelle (9; **Sophia’s spring**) and to the Großer Hermannstein (10). This part of the trail is the steepest, but from the platform, you are rewarded with stunning views, just as in Goethe’s drawing “Dampfende Täler” (Steaming Valleys). The cave in the rock is man-made and thought to have served as a shelter for an outlook post in the Middle Ages.

Goethe visited it many times, and described it as follows:

*“(it is) my beloved place of sojourn,
a place to make my home.”*

Goethe worked and drew here. He also brought Frau von Stein here when she visited him in Ilmenau in the summer of 1776. When words failed him, he turned to drawing. He drew the cave in the Hermannstein, the cloud-hung vales leading to Ilmenau, the valley bottoms at Manebach and at Stützerbach.



The Schwalbenstein – On this rock is a plaque with the first lines of act 4 of Goethe’s “Iphigenie”



“... it is all beyond description or depiction”.

... over all the hills



The Kickelhahn – from Ilmenau’s local mountain, there are breathtaking views across the Thüringer Wald.

This is where the trail reaches its highest point – on the Kickelhahn with 861 m a.s.l. Upon nightfall of September 6th, 1780, Goethe wrote on the inside of the Goethehäuschen (Goethe Hut), then a hunting cabin: “Wandrer’s Nachtlied” (Wanderer’s Evening Song):

*Over all of the hills
Peace comes anew,
The woodland stills
All through;
The birds make no sound on the bough.
Wait a while, Soon now
Peace comes to you.*

... the Natural Scientist



The Goethehäuschen (Goethe Hut) – here, near the Kickelhahn Tower, you can read Goethe’s “Wanderer’s Evening Song” at the wall.

The “Goethe Hut” is always open. On the inside wall, you find 16 translations of Goethe’s “Wanderer’s Evening Song”. In 1870, the original hut went up in flames because of the carelessness of people picking berries. It was restored four years later.

Perhaps 100 m away, there are the foundations of the historic hunting facility owned by earlier Dukes of Saxe-Weimar. It was no longer used even in Goethe’s time. The hill top is crowned by the Kickelhahn Tower (12), which is 24 m high, offering breathtaking views to those making the effort to climb the 107 steps. Goethe himself loved this hill and its beauty, visiting it many times. The tower, however, was not built until 1855.

Jagdhaus Gabelbach (Hunting Lodge)



Museum Jagdhaus Gabelbach – Museum with Goethe’s scientific drawings and works | Waldstr. 24 | +49 3677 202 626 |

🕒 *Apr to Oct: Tues to Sun and public holidays 10 am to 5 pm,
Nov to Mar: Tues to Sun and public holidays 10 am to 4 pm*

Gundelach House



The Goethe museum in Stützerbach –

also known by its owner’s name, Gundelach House
Sebastian-Kneipp-Straße 1 | +49 36784 50277 |

🕒 *Wed to Fri and public holidays 10.30 am to 3.30 pm*

Now, the trail takes you downhill to the Museum Jagdhaus Gabelbach, a former hunting lodge (13). This building, hastily constructed in summer 1783 to serve as a guest house to the Carl August Duke of Saxe-Weimar-Eisenach and his hunting parties, is in late baroque style though relatively plain.

On the first floor of the former hunting lodge, an exhibition on, “The Kichelhahn Area – Goethe’s Forrest Through the Ages” is on display, while the second floor features, “Goethe, Nature and his Ilmenau Companions”. It is now set out as a museum offering fascinating insights into hunting as a pastime, into the social life of the Weimar Court, and into Goethe’s scientific pursuits.



From the Hirtenwiese (14), the Shepherds’ Clearing, the route now crosses the main road to Neustadt and takes you to the picturesque Schorte valley with its pond Knöpfelstaler Teich (15) and Finsteres Loch, a gloomy gorge with a little waterfall (16). This shady hollow saw the Duke’s hunting party rest here in 1776. Goethe described the nightly revelling in his poem “Ilmenau”.

After about 20 min walking, you reach the historic Auerhahn Inn (17), named after the local capercaillies who were native to the woods around here. Down the hill the trail takes you to Stützerbach with its Schlossberg (18) and Goethe House (19).

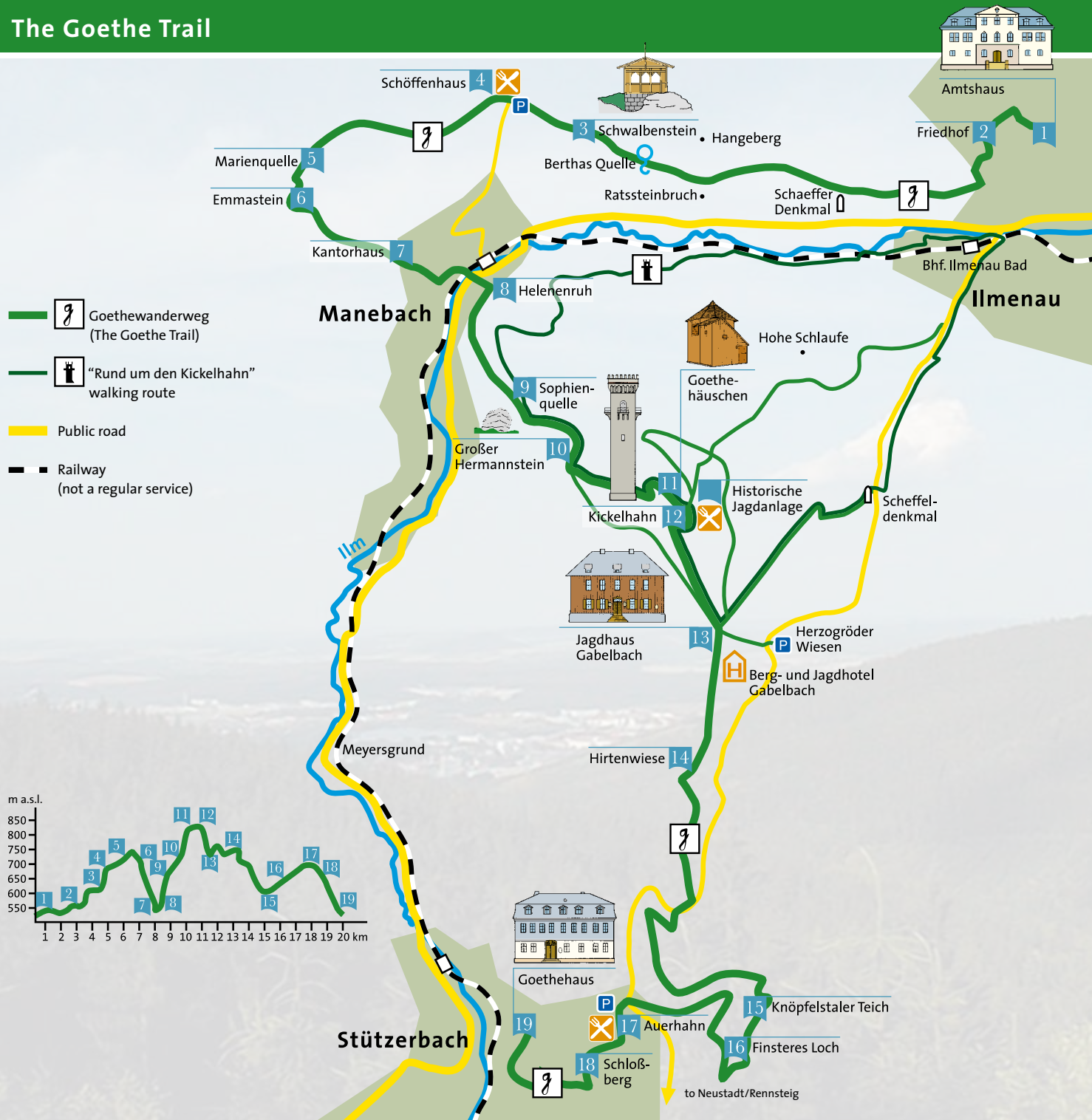
This third Goethe museum on this quality trail shows rooms used by Goethe and Duke Carl August during their stays in Stützerbach. In the museum, drawings, letters and poems by Goethe from 1776/1777 are on display. Also, you find information on Thuringia’s scattered regionalism as well as on glass and paper manufacturing in Stützerbach.

Bus and Rail Link:

www.rennsteigbus.de

www.rennsteigshuttle.de

The Goethe Trail



Amtshaus (Court House)



GoetheStadtMuseum at the Amtshaus –

Goethe as administrator, natural scientist and poet
Am Markt 1 | +49 3677 600 300 |

  Tue to Sun and public holidays 10 am to 5 pm

Ilmenau-Information Tourist Office

98693 Ilmenau | Am Markt 1

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Fax: + (49) 36 77 – 600 330

www.ilmenau.de | stadtinfo@ilmenau.de



Opening hours	Tue to Fri	10 am to 6 pm
	Sat, Sun, public holidays	10 am to 5 pm

Service with a smile

- Reservation of accommodation: hotel, guesthouse, bed & breakfast; also self-catering flats and cottages
- Arrangement of tourist programmes for groups
- Packages and hiking tours for individual travellers
- Arrangement of themed guided tours in English
- Free audio guide to the GoetheStadtMuseum and Museum Jagdhaus Gabelbach
- Ticket service for local, regional and national events
- Brochures, souvenirs and literature

Ilmenau-Information – the Ilmenau tourism specialists. We look forward to seeing you!

