ACCESSIBLE TOURISM IN SAXONY.
A very special welcome

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Why we have a special brochure for accessible tourism in Saxony? The answer is as simple as sophisticated: Because Saxony cares!

Saxony can look back on more than a thousand years of living history. We are very proud of this heritage. For centuries, it was the most affluent region of Germany. Thus, you can find first-rate cultural attractions in Saxony as well as modern manufactories with long traditions – and beautiful and distinctive landscapes added for good measure.

Saxons have it in their blood to not only extend a warm welcome to visitors from all over the world but also convince them that they have come to one of the most beautiful places on earth. Nobody is excluded from this. To the contrary: Germany’s number one destination for culture-loving tourists welcomes you with open arms.

You matter, no matter why accessibility is an issue for you. As the German umbrella organisation for accessible tourism, Tourismus für Alle Deutschland (NatKo), has rightfully pointed out: For 10 percent of the population good accessibility is required, for 30 percent it is helpful and for 100 percent it makes life easier. Having grown up in a religious environment and being a proud father and grandfather, I have learned what responsibility means and I feel strongly about taking care of people with special needs.

Saxony is seen as a leading player in the field of accessible tourism in Germany. This is no coincidence: We in Saxony have never stopped pushing. And it is not only because the Saxon State Government, which I am happy to represent here, has always taken this issue seriously. On the contrary: It grew from the bottom up. And I am proud to add that the government has always supported these efforts in every possible way – with only one objective: to make your trip to Saxony an unforgettable experience.

I do not promise too much when I tell you: the expectations of travelers coming to Saxony for the first time are almost always exceeded. Come to Saxony and convince yourself.

Looking forward to your visit!

Yours,
“Saxony? What’s that?” This is a question we often hear. Our first response - one of the federal states of Germany. “And where is Saxony?” Between Berlin and Prague, we say, to make it easy. Maybe we add that Saxony shares borders with Poland and the Czech Republic and also with the German state of Bavaria.

And now comes the crucial question: “Why should we visit Saxony?” No one would have asked this question prior to Second World War, when Saxony was economically the strongest and the most prosperous region of Germany. Business people came to Chemnitz, the city with the highest industrial production in Germany; to Leipzig, the center of commerce in Europe, a cosmopolitan city like London and Paris. And tourists came to Dresden, the richest and most beautiful city in Germany. But then Saxony fell behind the Iron Curtain. Access became difficult and priorities shifted.

But since German reunification in 1990 more and more people are discovering that the things that attracted travelers to Saxony earlier are still there: spectacular architecture, art collections of world renown, a deeply rooted love of music, living traditions, and locations of world history, and the unconditional attachment of the Saxons to their home and their love of life. But what does Saxony have that other destinations do not have? Saxony offers highly authentic experiences! Let’s look at some examples:

The ultimate Protestant church building – this is how the Church of our Lady or “Frauenkirche” in Dresden can be described. Not only was it built to the ideas of Martin Luther, the great reformer who founded the Protestant movement, and not only is it a masterpiece of baroque architecture and an integral part of the famous Dresden skyline. It was also rebuilt – after its destruction in World War II – in the years 1994 to 2005 with donations from all over the world, reusing as many original stones and sculptures, as possible. It is a symbol of reconciliation. The determination of Saxons to maintain their heritage, to restore and relive.

Just a detail on the edge of a beautiful painting, added as an afterthought. The two angels at the bottom of Raphael’s masterpiece “The Sistine Madonna” in Dresden’s Old Masters picture gallery are known in the entire world even though many people do not have a clue where they originate from. In the early 19th century, they had become “independent” and had begun an international career that took them first onto porcelain and jewellery, and later into poetry albums, and onto bed linen and even chocolate wrappers. Raphael's famous 500-year-old painting has been in Dresden since 1753 in what is known as the Dresden State Art Collections that actually dates back to the year 1560, making it one of the oldest collections in Europe and one of the most cherished.

Music of Johann Sebastian Bach can be enjoyed in concerts all over the world – but nothing beats a performance in Leipzig’s St. Thomas Church. The brilliant composer spent the last 27 years of his life in this city, where he was employed as cantor of St. Thomas Church and music teacher at St. Thomas School. This also put him in charge of the St. Thomas Boys Choir, one of the most famous choirs in the world. As part of their duty – if not on tour – the boys perform the motet and cantata every Friday and Sunday, including musical pieces which where premiered in the same location 300 years ago with Bach at the helm. Even today, his presence can be felt since he is buried in St Thomas Church, too. His story is told across the churchyard located in the Bach Museum in Leipzig.
It is aptly titled “Ore Mountains” – the mountainous region in the South of Saxony. For centuries, extensive mining took place here, from silver mining, which started in the 12th century and made Saxony rich, to the uranium mining ordered by the Russians during the Cold War era. Along the so-called Silver Route, witnesses of the mining age are open to visitors. The mining not only shaped the landscape, but also its people. They still greet each other with the miners’ greeting “Glück auf” today and a large number of traditions are kept alive, including miners’ parades and the celebration of the last shift before Christmas. Later, mining was replaced or rather augmented by the production of handcrafted wooden products, like the grim nutcracker, representing the authorities, and the smoking man, standing for the common people.

Napoleon was defeated in Waterloo, or so you might think. That battle only put an end to his attempt to make a comeback on the European stage. His real Waterloo was the Battle of Leipzig. It is also known as the Battle of the Nations, which, until World War I, remained the largest battle in the history of mankind. More than 100 years ago, the biggest monument in Europe, which one can climb on, was erected near the site of Napoleon’s command post offering beautiful views of Leipzig. Napoleon retreated and although France was not punished, but Saxony, which had stayed faithfully on his side, lost half of his territory and was reduced to present-day size.

It is perhaps not porcelain that is the greatest treasure of the Meissen State Porcelain Manufactory – but its collection of moulds. Because for every piece that has been made in the 300 years of its existence, each one of them has been preserved. The European hard porcelain was invented in Dresden in 1708, by a team put together by the Saxon ruler Augustus the Strong, who not only reshaped the face of the city and his country, but also was a great facilitator. The Albrechtsburg in Meissen, Germany’s oldest palace, became the first production site. He also put together the finest collection of porcelain in the world, still on display in Dresden’s Zwinger. And the devotion of the Saxons to their home and heritage becomes beautifully clear in the Procession of Princes, a large mural in Dresden, made from 25,000 porcelain tiles, each showing the members of the Wettin family who ruled Saxony for more than 800 years.

As you can see, Saxony offers unique experiences and a large variety of activities. Last but not least, Saxony also offers exceptional value for money. So, in Saxony you can have a good day and a good night!
TRAVEL TO SAXONY:
By air:
The airports in Dresden and Leipzig are very well connected to the two most important hubs in Germany, Frankfurt and Munich. There are also regular connections to other major German airports. In either case, flying time is under an hour. In addition, there are direct connections to several European cities. Berlin Airport is 170 km (105 miles) from Dresden, and Prague Airport just 150 km (90 miles).

By rail:
Dresden and Leipzig are connected to the ICE (InterCity Express) rail network and therefore to German high speed trains. EC (EuroCity) trains connect Dresden with major cities such as Berlin, Prague and Budapest.

By road:
The comprehensive German motorway network connects Saxony to all major routes. Dresden has direct motorway connections to Berlin, Prague, Kraków, Frankfurt, Munich and Hanover.

TRAVEL WITHIN SAXONY:
Saxony is one of the smaller states of Germany so places are never far away from each other. Sightseeing time can be easily maximised. Apart from good roads, there is also a dense bus and rail network, for which there are also local, regional and Saxony-wide tickets. Here are some examples of how long it takes to get from A to B:

By car:
Dresden – Leipzig: 1 hour
Dresden – Chemnitz: 45 minutes
Dresden – Czech border (motorway to Prague): 45 minutes
Dresden – Görlitz (Polish border): 1 hour 15 minutes
Dresden – Bavarian border: 1 hour 45 minutes

By public transport:
Dresden – Leipzig: 1 hour
Dresden – Chemnitz: 1 hour
Dresden – Görlitz: 1 hour 15 minutes
Dresden – Meissen: 45 minutes
Dresden – Saxon Switzerland National Park: 30-45 minutes
When it comes to commitment to accessible tourism, Saxony is one of the leading German states, having won several awards in this field. For many years, our project “Sachsen Barrierefrei“ has been dedicated to the development and marketing of accessible tourism in Saxony – from research to on-site inspections of the facilities and the assessment of the accessibility for wheelchairs to the publishing of detailed and reliable information about the facilities. We do not only limit this information to travelers with mobility impairments, we also have gathered special offers for visitors with sensory impairments – featuring induction loops, texts in Braille and special guided tours – and people with learning disabilities or mental handicaps.

Please check out the section on accessible tourism on our website www.visitsaxony.com

Only those Saxon facilities that have been thoroughly inspected on-site by our project manager are marked with pictograms designating accessibility. We place great emphasis on the quality of the products listed as well as on the accuracy of the statements made. Since we do not want to rely solely on our own expertise, we work closely with our partners in Saxony and the representatives of communities with special needs.

What we can do for you

Saxony is considered to be a destination for the whole family. That is why we have established strict guidelines for family friendly accommodation and leisure facilities. Those facilities that fulfil these standards are marked with the logo “Familienurlaub in Sachsen“ (“Holidays for the Family in Saxony“). All of them fulfill high quality standards in order to guarantee you perfect conditions for carefree holidays with your loved ones.

We are primarily the tourism board of Saxony and we are licensed to book your accommodations, arrange transport and plan your sightseeing program, if required. We are happy to assist you in every possible way because we care – to make your trip to Saxony an enjoyable experience.

Handbike tours on the Elbe River Cycle Trail

Pictograms used on the website are supposed to visualise the information provided and are not connected with official standards like “wheelchair-accessible“ or “limited wheelchair-accessibility“. The assignment of the pictograms mainly relates to the standard DIN 18040 but may deviate in some aspects. A certification of the facilities according to DIN standards is not the subject of our internet directory. It serves rather to display the actual accessibility as detailed as possible in order to enable mobility-impaired guests to plan their trip according to their needs. We recommend the visitor to discuss individual requirements in regard to the accessibility of the facility in advance with the respective supplier.

Bruehl’s Terrace, Dresden

The Kunsthof (Artists' Court), Dresden

Pillnitz Castle & Park, Dresden
DAY 1:
The best place to begin your Saxon experience is Dresden, the “Florence on the Elbe River”, one of the most beautiful cities in Europe. Join one of the guided tours of the historic city center. It takes about two hours and takes you to famous buildings like the Church of Our Lady (“Frauenkirche”), the Zwinger and the Royal Palace, giving you a heart-throbbing insight into how the city was literally rebuilt from the rubble. Then enjoy a visit to the museums of the Dresden State Art Collections in the Royal Palace, the Zwinger and the Albertinum. To round off your day, cross the Augustus Bridge and explore the baroque New Town (“Neustadt”) which was created as a carefully laid out new settlement in the 18th century. Stop, turn around and gaze at the spectacular skyline of Dresden that will leave you spell-bound. Shop at the artisans' stores, fashion boutiques and dine in the Michelin star “Carousel” restaurant or in a quaint baroque courtyard.

DAY 2:
If you think that you have seen the city, think again. For Dresden is unlike any other city in Germany. It stretches for 30 kilometers (20 miles) along the Elbe River. Also, do not get the impression that the whole city was destroyed in World War II. In fact, 65 percent of all buildings are still pre-war. Some of the most beautiful can actually be found on the river banks and the hills beyond. UNESCO has called this the “perfect harmony of architecture and nature” and the best way to explore it is to cruise on one of Dresden’s historic paddle steamers. Take a ride to Dresden-Pillnitz and back to the city center and enjoy the naturally winding river and the palaces, villas, farmhouses, vineyards and meadows it is lined with – and maybe try a piece of “Eierschecke” cake. Do get off at Pillnitz and visit the former summer palace of the Saxon kings – built in the Chinese style – and its beautiful park and gardens.

DAY 3:
Today you explore other unique places close to the city center. First, you experience the Asisi Panometer Dresden, a huge panorama picture of Dresden in the baroque times – or, after its destruction in 1945, if it is winter. Next is a guided tour in the world’s most unusual car factory, the so-called “Transparent Manufactory” of Volkswagen, where, in a fully transparent set-up, electric vehicles are made. You can just walk in and have a look around – or take a guided tour. Do not forget to buy Volkswagen’s best-selling product there – the curry sausage, which you can eat at the bistro. On the other side of the Elbe River is your last stop, the spectacular Museum of Military History, re-imagined by American star architect Daniel Libeskind. Unlike any other military museum in the world, it is focused on the effects that war has on human beings. From there, it is easy to explore the Outer New Town with its trendy boutiques, clubs and bars.
How to do Saxony

SAXONY IN 5 DAYS:

DAYS 1 TO 3:
In Dresden.

DAY 4:
Today your first visit is to the marvellous hunting palace of the Saxon kings in Moritzburg located barely 20 minutes from Dresden. It rests on an artificial island in an artificial lake. The near perfect symmetry of Moritzburg Castle makes it a picture perfect shot. The interior of the castle is famous for its leather wall coverings and the “Feather Room”, decorated with millions of bird feathers. Your next stop is Meissen, Saxony’s oldest town, home of the Meissen State Porcelain Manufactory where guided tours are offered on a regular basis. On the castle hill, dominating one of the few completely intact historic towns of Germany, visit Albrechtsburg, Germany’s oldest palace, and the impressive Gothic cathedral. Enjoy a glass of Saxon wine in Meissen, otherwise known as the “capital” of the Saxon wine region and then carry on to Radebeul for a visit to the Wackerbarth Castle Saxon State Winery. Enjoy a sparkling wine tour and a delicious meal in their restaurant – while admiring the beautiful baroque scenery. From there, it is only a short drive back to Dresden.

DAY 5:
Time to explore one of the most distinctive and beautiful landscapes of Europe, known as Saxon Switzerland National Park, with its dramatic rock formations and table mountains. Your first stop is the Bastel rock formation, one of the most visited sights in Germany. Here’s your chance to have lunch in the Panorama Restaurant with it’s spectacular views of the Elbe Valley. A scenic drive will take you to such small, but enchanting towns like Hohnstein and Bad Schandau where you cross the river. Going back towards Dresden, you soon spot Europe’s highest fortress, Königstein, which was never conquered. There you are offered interesting history lessons and 360 degrees views of the national park. Pirna, the “Gateway to Saxon Switzerland”, is a charming town which still looks like in the paintings of the famous 18th century artist Canaletto who mostly painted major cities like Dresden and Warsaw. Visit the beautiful St. Mary’s Church, have dinner in one of the historic restaurants and return to Dresden.
How to do Saxony

SAXONY IN 7 DAYS:

DAYS 1 TO 5: In Dresden, Meissen and the Saxon Switzerland National Park.

DAY 6: It is about time to visit Saxony’s largest city, Leipzig which has a vibe completely different from Dresden’s. As the oldest trade fair place in the world, Leipzig has always been connected to the rest of the world and it comes as no surprise that the Peaceful Revolution, which brought the Communist regime down, originated in the city’s St. Nicolas Church, which also has a stunning interior. Leipzig’s music history can be compared to Vienna’s. Follow the Leipzig Music Trail to the birthplace of Wagner, the former homes of Mendelssohn and Schumann, the Bach Museum and his grave in St. Thomas Church, and the fabulous Music of Musical Instruments. Shop in the famous arcades created by merchants and industrialists or in the huge central station – and dine in one of the most famous restaurants in the world, the Auerbachs Keller, where Luther and Goethe were regulars. And enjoy an easy ride back to Dresden.

DAY 7: Academy Award winners “The Grand Budapest Hotel” and “The Reader” are just two of the many movies shot in Görlitz, perhaps the most beautiful town of Germany. A self-guided trail takes you to all important movie locations in the city. In Görlitz, there are almost 4,000 buildings listed in the National Register of Monuments. It is a picture album of architecture. The former part of town on the East side of the Neisse River is now the Polish town of Zgorzelec. There are no border controls to stop you from exploring it. Almost halfway between Görlitz and Dresden, there is the medieval town of Bautzen, with an upper town on a large granite rock and a lower town on the Spree River. You encounter the Sorbian culture, the language and traditions of the local Slavic minority, in the Sorbian Museum and the restaurant “Wjelbik”. And, before you return to Dresden, taste the mustard, the town is famous for, either in the mustard shop or with a meal in the mustard restaurant.
What else to see

JUST 10 EXAMPLES:

1. **THE BIRTHPLACE OF AUDI**
   In the original Audi factory in Zwickau is the August Horch Museum today, named after the company’s founder. The exhibition shows pre-war vehicles made by Audi and its sister brands Horch, Wanderer and DKW, collectively known as “Auto Union” (four brands = four interwoven rings), post-war cars like the Trabant, prototypes from that era and the famous “Silver Arrow” racing cars.

2. **THE CHRISTMAS VILLAGE**
   In the small village of Seiffen in the Ore Mountains, where Christmas products like the nutcracker and smoking man were invented and are still made today, there is Christmas every day. The demonstration workshops, the shops of the manufacturers and the Ore Mountains Toy Museum attract visitors from all over the world.

3. **THE PINNACLE OF WATCHMAKING**
   If a watch is sub-branded with “Glashütte i. Sa.”, it was made in the Saxon town of the same name and can be considered to be among the best in the world. The German Watch Museum Glashütte tells the amazing story of the local watchmaking industry and the transparent production of Glashütte Original provides insight into the manufacturing process.

4. **THE WORLD’S MOST BEAUTIFUL COLLECTION OF MINERALS**
   Erika Pohl-Ströher, member of the family which founded Wella in Saxony, collected minerals from all over the world, with beauty being the only criteria. Sorted by continent, they are on display today at Freudenstein Castle in Freiberg, a beautiful medieval town which is also the birthplace of mining in Saxony that became the foundation of Saxon wealth.

5. **ICON OF MODERN ARCHITECTURE**
   To build “a modern house for two parents, four children and occasionally one or two guests”, this was the briefing for architect Hans Scharoun by a pasta manufacturer in Löbau. The “Schminke House” is an outstanding example of the Classical Modern style which is still included in every architecture digest with peers like Frank Lloyd Wright’s “Fallingwater”.

6. **SCULPTED NATURE**
   Hermann Count of Pückler-Muskau was a colourful, reckless and restless personality with a keen interest in landscape gardening. Around his palace in Muskau, he created the largest English-style park in Central Europe which today is both on German and Polish soil and has been declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

7. **FIRST NEWLY-BUILT PROTESTANT CHURCH**
   It was dedicated in 1544 by the great reformer Martin Luther himself, the church of Hartenfels Castle in Torgau, former residence of rulers of Saxony, the “Motherland of the Reformation”. Constructed to Luther’s ideas, it became the blueprint for all Protestant churches that followed, reaching the pinnacle during construction of the Church of Our Lady in Dresden.

8. **A LEGENDARY COLLECTION**
   After gathering nearly 2,500 works of classic modernism, art dealer Alfred Gunzenhauser wanted a worthy presentation for his collection. While others only suggested to integrate it into their own collections, the city of Chemnitz offered the collector his own museum, the “Museum Gunzenhauser”, which is located in a former bank building from the 1920s.

9. **LIGHT OF THE WORLD**
   Because their parents traveled the world as missionaries, the children of Herrnhut, a town founded by religious refugees, had to attend boarding schools where the Moravian Star evolved, which lights up churches and homes at Christmas around the world. Still made in Herrnhut today, it is literally the star of the Herrnhuter Sterne visitors’ center with its demonstration workshop and its exhibition.

10. **THE SOUND OF MUSIC**
    Around the towns of Markneukirchen and Klingenthal, musical instruments have been made for many centuries, which once even dominated the world market. The Museum of Musical Instruments in Markneukirchen has more than 1,000 exhibits from the region and all over the globe on display, ranging from the world’s smallest violin to the largest accordion ever made.
Where to sleep

The present-day tourism infrastructure in Saxony – including accommodation facilities – was mostly created or at least renovated and modernised in the last 25 years, following German Unification. As the only large city in Germany, Dresden does not host trade fairs, a fact that keeps rates for accommodation low and stable. And while international hotel chains maintain a strong presence, boutique and family owned hotels are quite popular. Apartments are also available, even directly in the city centers. And for low budget travelers, there are charming B&B’s and hostels. Here are some examples:

蛋白 | COFFEE AND CAKE:
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It is a German tradition to have coffee and cake in the afternoon. This was very much shaped by the Saxons who have a very sweet tooth and took to coffee immediately after seizing a few bags of beans from what the Turks had left behind after the siege of Vienna. You should visit one of Europe’s oldest coffee houses, the “Coffebaum” or “Coffee Tree” in Leipzig. Or enjoy a hot drinks and cake ceremony at the Meissen State Porcelain manufactory. The typical Saxon cake is the “Eierschecke”, which is similar to a cheese cake at the bottom and a sweet omelette at the top. A specialty from Leipzig is the “Leipzig Lark” which is a small, sweet pie filled with marzipan. During Christmas time, the rich “Stollen” is served, the traditional German Christmas cake, which is only original if it halls from Dresden, often augmented by “Pulsnitzer Spitzen” jam-filled and chocolate-coated gingerbread fingers made by professional gingerbread makers in the town of Pulsnitz.

DINNER:

At the Saxon court, meals were cooked to high standards. Fine dining was also appreciated by the upper class when Saxony was very wealthy. To get an idea, try the traditional “Leipziger Allerlei”, a vegetable dish normally consisting of peas, carrots, asparagus, morels, crayfish, crab butter and bread dumplings. A more modern take is offered by the gourmet restaurants, among them East Germany’s only two-star restaurant, the “Falco” on top of the Westin Hotel in Leipzig. To sample the cuisine of the common people, try the poor man’s dishes in restaurants in the countryside, like the “Teichlmauke” in the Upper Lusatia region, mashed potatoes with a pool of broth with sauerkraut and beef. In general, traditional food is on the heavier side and contains some form of potato and meat, mainly pork. Naturally, sausages are also big in Saxony, like the “Kamenz”, a specialty from the town of Kamenz.

BEER, WINE AND LIQUOR:

The Saxons boast the highest consumption of beer per head in Germany which might surprise you. There is a large variety of Saxon beers on sale, made either by traditional or micro-breweries. The most unusual beer is Leipzig’s Gose, which has always defied Germany’s purity laws with its added ingredients of salt and coriander. Some breweries offer tours and seminars, like Landkron in Görlitz and Radeberger in Radeberg near Dresden. For more than 850 years, wine has been grown in Saxony, mostly on the sunny southern slopes along the Elbe River from Pima via Dresden to beyond Meissen. Try the Goldriesling, a grape variety only found in Saxony. In Witten, Germany’s oldest brandy is distilled and in other places you can find even local-made whisky and gin. But much more typical for Saxony is the herbal liqueurs produced in many places and the elderberry liqueur made in the Ore Mountains and the Vogtland region.
They say true beauty comes with age, and you’ll find the best proof of this in Saxony. For instance the cities of Dresden and Leipzig with their historical buildings and unique cultural scene. If you’re looking for more peace and quiet, discover the dreamy towns of Görlitz and Bautzen, with the medieval and relaxed flair that makes Saxony so special. For more information, go to www.visitsaxony.com, or write to TMGS, Bautzner Str. 45-47, 01099 Dresden, Germany, or call us on +49 351 491700.