

## **Erzgebirge. The Ore Mountains Experience**

### **Christmas Wonderland**

The splendour and soul of the Erzgebirge are perhaps most intensely experienced at Christmas. Virtually no other place in Saxony is better known for its Christmas rituals than the Erzgebirge. Starting on the first Sunday of Advent, some 500 Christmas events turn the region into Germany's unrivalled "Christmas Wonderland".

### **Home of Traditions**

Centuries-old customs and traditions such as the traditional Mettenschicht (miner's last shift before Christmas Eve), miners' parades, Hutzenabend (traditional evening gatherings) and Christmas light tours are still deeply rooted here and joyfully celebrated.

Miner`s Parades: on these days, celebratory music accompanies the miners in their splendid traditional costumes, as they parade through the towns and villages. During these visually stunning miners' parades, observers will get a sense of the valuable work once performed by the miners.

Mettenschicht: an old mining tradition. The term was at one time used to refer to the last shift worked below ground before Christmas and is still celebrated today in many towns and villages in the Erzgebirge. The festivities are marked with original mining music, special bread made with dripping and Glühwein (mulled wine).

### **Home of Angels**

Miners and angels are amongst the most famous symbolic figures of the Erzgebirge. They have been produced for many years and in several imaginative variations by the skilful hands of toy makers and craftsmen.

The 100-year-old traditional manufacturing company Wendt & Kühn in Grünhainichen is one of the most renowned companies in this craft. The Wendt & Kühn World of Figures in Seiffen is worth a visit at any time of year to marvel at the famous eleven-dot angels and figurines.  
[www.wendt-kuehn.de](http://www.wendt-kuehn.de)

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The display in the "Factory of Dreams" lives up to its name - it is truly dreamlike. Located at the heart of the old town in Annaberg-Buchholz, its impressive range of Erzgebirge figurines – ranging from angels and miners to nutcrackers, composition figures and wonderful toys – will entice you into a realm of the make-believe.

[www.manufaktur-der-traeume.de](http://www.manufaktur-der-traeume.de)

### **Home of Lights**

Warm, white lights transform the Erzgebirge into a dreamlike setting at the beginning of Advent. This sea of lights is one of the Erzgebirge's main attractions and has its origins in the tradition of mining, belief in God and man's longing for light. The Schwibbogen (candle arch) is a typical symbol of this engrained longing. You can experience the festively decorated Erzgebirge on a **twilight tour**.

Christmas pyramids: even today you will still find Christmas pyramids in almost every room in the Erzgebirge during Advent – in all shapes, sizes and colours. They revolve gently in the candlelight and conjure up a special atmosphere of peace and Christmas in every room with the brightness and warmth they radiate.

In almost every town and village in the Erzgebirge, you can admire outdoor pyramids with electric lights.

### **Home of Scents**

The mysterious scent of Christmas – the exact composition of Erzgebirge incense candles remains a secret to this day.

Whether it is frankincense, fir, orange or sandalwood – every incense candle maker guards his formula closely. Nevertheless, the ingredients of the scented cones are known: high-quality powdered charcoal, ground sandalwood and common beech, a binding agent and fragrances made from herbs, resins, blossoms, roots and essential oils.

*Tip: see incense candle production in action in Crottendorf and in the "Zum Wehrichkarzl" visitors' workshop in Neudorf. [www.wehrichkarzl.de](http://www.wehrichkarzl.de) ; [www.crottendorfer-raeucherkerzen.de](http://www.crottendorfer-raeucherkerzen.de)*

If you get the chance to see some of the dining tables of the people of the Erzgebirge on Christmas Eve, you will find various traditional dishes, such as Neunerlei. Its nine dishes (from which it takes its name) can vary widely from place to place and are all closely connected with wishes for the new year.

**Welcome to christmas wonderland !**

<http://www.erzgebirge-tourismus.de/en/traditional-trades-christmas/>

