

MADE TO EXPLORE

THE COASTER ROAD

*Eight parks from the Baltic to the Black
Forest, sleeping as close to the gate as they allow*
8 stops · 1,350 km · by campervan



1

HANSA-PARK

Sierksdorf — the only park with a beach

THE PARK The only big park in Germany that sits on the sea: Lübeck Bay is right behind the fence. Nessie, from 1980, was the country's first looping coaster and still runs. Kärnan, 73 metres, is the tower you can see from the beach. It is a park of medieval theatre and Hanseatic piracy, smaller than the southern ones, and for that reason a good place to start.

THE CAMPER It has no campsite of its own, but 160 m from the entrance is the WOMO Sierksdorf camper area: 28 pitches, with toilets, showers and emptying, open all year, arrivals between 10:00 and 20:00. The Baltic is five minutes away on foot.

FREE The beach at Sierksdorf and the promenade. And twenty kilometres away, Lübeck, a Hanseatic city with the Holstentor, seen without a ticket and worth half a day.

WHERE TO SLEEP Camper area · WOMO Sierksdorf, Am Fahrenkrog 12 · GPS 54.07163, 10.78026

Hansa-Park → Lübeck → Hamburg → Heide Park, about 150 km · ~2 h by camper. Through Hamburg you stay on the motorway, not the city.

2

HEIDE PARK

Soltau — the biggest in the north

THE PARK The largest park in the northern half of Germany, since 1978, today owned by the Merlin group. Colossos is a 60-metre wooden coaster, among the tallest in Europe, rebuilt in 2019. Krake was the country's first dive coaster. It is the north's thrill park, less themed than Phantasialand, rawer and more direct.

THE CAMPER No campsite of its own — the park's Holiday Camp is cabins, not camper pitches. You may, however, sleep on the main car park, with toilets but no water or waste point, paid, including the night; the barrier is open evening and morning. Proper campsites at 800 m and 5 km.

FREE The Lüneburg Heath surrounds the park. It flowers in August and September, purple to the horizon, and the car-free village of Wilsede is reached on foot or by carriage.

WHERE TO SLEEP Camper parking · Bus- und Wohnmobilparkplatz, Heide Park Resort · GPS 53.02260, 9.87104

FOR THE VISIT The camper parking ticket is bought online, in the caravan and camper category; after the entrance, turn right at once. Late at night the barrier no longer opens — arrive in the evening or the morning.

Heide Park → Hanover → Movie Park, about 300 km · ~3½ h by camper. The longest stage, almost all motorway.

3

MOVIE PARK

Bottrop — Hollywood in the Ruhr

THE PARK Opened in 1996 by Warner Bros., it is the only park themed on film. Star Trek: Operation Enterprise is the launch coaster built by Mack, the Europa-Park family. It is the best park for children of six to twelve on the northern half, with fewer height limits than its neighbours.

THE CAMPER You sleep on the park's car park, with a separate charge per night on top of the parking fee. The entrance is two minutes away. No water, no waste point.

FREE The Ruhr is an open-air museum and it is free: Zeche Zollverein in Essen, a UNESCO site, is walked from outside without a ticket, and the Tetraeder in Bottrop is a steel tower on a slag heap from which you see the whole basin.

WHERE TO SLEEP Camper parking · Busparkplatz, Movie Park Germany, Warner Allee 1 · GPS 51.62232, 6.97492

Movie Park → Cologne → Phantasialand, about 120 km · ~2 h by camper. Through Cologne, the cathedral stands beside the station and is seen in passing.

4

PHANTASIALAND

*Brühl — the densest park in Europe***THE PARK**

Twenty-eight hectares, the smallest site of the big parks, and the most built upward: the three-dimensional park was invented here. Taron has four launches and 117 km/h. F.L.Y. is the world's first launched flying coaster. Black Mamba is an inverted coaster through an African village built to the last detail. It is the park the others cite.

THE CAMPER

The one park on the route where you cannot sleep at the gate: its own car park is open by day only. There are two small camper places a few minutes' walk away, which fill up at weekends and in the holidays, plus campsites in the area. This is the park to book ahead for.

FREE

Ten minutes away, the Augustusburg and Falkenlust palaces, a UNESCO site — the palaces charge, the gardens do not, and the gardens are half the reason.

Phantasialand → Koblenz → Plopsaland Deutschland, about 230 km · ~3 h by camper. On the A61 past the Middle Rhine — if you have driven The Rhine Road, this is where they join.

5

PLOPSALAND

*Haßloch — the coaster that was the best in the world***THE PARK**

Expedition GeForce, from 2001, 53 metres and 120 km/h, was voted the world's best steel coaster year after year and is still why people come. The park dates from 1971, today belongs to the Belgian Plopa group, and is the smallest of the eight, with one good day inside it.

THE CAMPER

No campsite of its own. There are marked camper areas in front of the park, good for a day visit, and for the night you move to one of the places around, several within a few kilometres, among the vines or in the forest.

FREE

The German Wine Route runs past: Neustadt, the wine villages, and Hambach Castle, the cradle of German democracy, seen from outside without a ticket. The Palatinate Forest is the largest continuous forest in Germany.

Plopsaland → Heilbronn → Tripsdrill, about 90 km · ~1½ h by camper.

6

TRIPSDRILL

*Cleebronn — the oldest park in Germany***THE PARK**

Opened in 1929 and still owned by the Fischer family, it is the country's oldest amusement park. The theme is Swabia two hundred years ago, with humour and with vines. Karacho launches at 100 km/h through village scenery, Mammüt is a wooden coaster among the firs. Next door is a wildlife park, with its own ticket.

THE CAMPER

It has its own campsite — the park's Natur-Resort, with camper pitches and electricity. It is the quietest park on the route, and the quietest night.

FREE

The Stromberg vineyards and the Michaelsberg, the hill with the chapel, from which you see the whole district. Cleebronn is a wine village whose cellars open at weekends.

WHERE TO SLEEP

Campsite · Natur-Resort Tripsdrill, Cleebronn · GPS 49.02796, 9.05037

Tripsdrill → Stuttgart → Legoland, about 150 km · ~2 h by camper.

7

LEGOLAND

*Günzburg — the park for the small ones***THE PARK**

Since 2002, for children of three to twelve. Miniland has twenty-five million bricks and is where the adults linger longest. The coasters are gentle, the queues are long, and the day ends early. With small children it is the main park of the route; with teenagers it is the day you skip.

THE CAMPER

It has its own campsite — the park's Feriendorf, with camper pitches and entry to the park in the morning, ahead of the public. This is where sleeping at the gate pays off most.

FREE

Günzburg has an old centre with the Frauenkirche, and thirty kilometres away is Ulm, with the tallest church spire in the world — 161 metres; the climb has a ticket, the view from below does not.

WHERE TO SLEEP

Campsite · LEGOLAND Feriendorf, Günzburg · GPS 48.42498, 10.31152

Legoland → Ulm → Europa-Park, about 300 km on the A8 and A5 · ~3½ h by camper. The last stage, towards the biggest.

8

EUROPA-PARK

Rust — the biggest park in Germany

THE PARK	Opened in 1975 by the Mack family, who have built fairground rides since 1780 and now build coasters for the whole world. It is Europe's second park after Disneyland Paris, divided into themed quarters by country. Silver Star is 73 metres, Wodan is wooden, Voltron Nevera is the newest and the most extreme. It does not fit into one day; into two, barely.
THE CAMPER	It has its own campsite — the park's Camp Resort, with camper pitches, plus a large overnight area on the car park. Booked weeks ahead in season.
FREE	Rust is a flat-country village, and Taubergießen, the nature reserve on the Rhine, is ten minutes away by boat or on foot. Freiburg is thirty kilometres.
WHERE TO SLEEP	Campsite · Europa-Park Camping & Caravaning, Rheinweg 5, Rust · GPS 48.27229, 7.71541

End of the route. Karlsruhe is 120 km north, Basel 70 km south.

THE ROUTE IN BRIEF

Distance	~1,350 km
Driving time	~18 h in all, without stops
Recommended time	12–16 days
Stage stops	8
Countries	DE
Park days	9–10
Direction	north → south, towards the biggest
Best months	May–Jun · Sep

GOOD TO KNOW BEFORE YOU LEAVE

Phantasialand is the only park on the route where you cannot sleep at the gate — its car park is open by day only — and the one to book ahead.

At several parks you sleep in their car park, with toilets but without water or emptying.

WHEN TO GO

Ideal: May–June and September. The parks are open, the school holidays have not started or have ended, and the queues are half.

Avoid: the German summer holidays, which differ by state and run from July into September. A park on a holiday weekend means an hour's queue at every big ride.

Winter: only two parks open — Europa-Park with Winterzauber and Phantasialand with Wintertraum, from late November until after New Year. The rest are closed from November to April.

With two weeks: skip Hansa-Park and Legoland if you have no small children. Six remain, and each deserves a full day.

TICKETS

Prices are dynamic: the same day costs differently depending on demand. A ticket bought online in advance is always cheaper than one at the gate, and at some parks the gate no longer sells any.

Tickets are the biggest cost of the day; the current price is on each park's website. Two-day tickets bring the daily price down and make sense at Europa-Park and Phantasialand.

Every park has an app with live queue times. Arrive at opening, do the big rides in the first hour, the rest afterwards.

Height limits are real and are measured at the entrance to every ride. The usual thresholds are 1.20 and 1.40 m — with a child of 1.15 m, half of the thrill parks are closed to them.

WHERE YOU SLEEP

Three parks have a campsite of their own, with camper pitches and electricity: Tripsdrill, Legoland and Europa-Park. There you sleep on the grounds, and at Legoland you enter the park in the morning ahead of the public.

Four parks let you sleep on their car park, but a car park stays a car park: toilets yes, water and waste point no, and the night is charged separately. That is Hansa-Park, Heide Park, Movie Park and Plopsaland.

One park does not let you at all: Phantasialand closes its car park at night. What remains is two small places a few minutes away and the campsites around, which fill up at weekends.

Even so, the night costs a fraction of the park hotel, which can come to as much as the entry ticket again. The difference over two weeks pays for the fuel of the whole route.

Book ahead at Europa-Park, Legoland and Tripsdrill — exactly where there is a campsite — and at Phantasialand, where there is not.

WITH CHILDREN, PARK BY PARK

Under 6 Legoland is their park. Europa-Park and Phantasialand have good areas for them, the rest less so. Hansa-Park and Heide Park are endured, not enjoyed.

6 to 12 Movie Park, Tripsdrill, Plopsaland Deutschland and Legoland — the parks where the 1.20 m limit opens almost everything. Europa-Park is good at any age.

Teenagers Phantasialand, Heide Park, Europa-Park, and Plopsaland Deutschland for GeForce. Legoland is a wasted day for them; Tripsdrill is a rest day.

The shape of a day Opening, the big rides in the first hour, an early lunch when the queues are short, then the small areas. The camper at the gate means you can leave at midday, sleep an hour, and go back in.

Can you sleep in a camper at the gate of German theme parks?

At seven of the eight, yes, but in three different ways. Tripsdrill, Legoland and Europa-Park have a campsite of their own, with electricity. Hansa-Park, Heide Park, Movie Park and Plopsaland let you sleep on their car park, with toilets but no water or waste point, and a separate charge for the night. Phantasialand closes its car park at night — there you sleep at one of the two small places nearby or at a campsite in the area.

What do you pay for on a park day, and where do you check the price?

Prices change from one season to the next and vary by day; the current rate is on each park's website. Prices are dynamic, and a ticket bought online in advance is always cheaper than one at the gate.

Which park is best for small children?

Legoland Günzburg, for children of three to twelve. Europa-Park and Phantasialand have good areas for them; Hansa-Park and Heide Park are thrill parks.

Which parks are open in winter?

Only two: Europa-Park with Winterzauber and Phantasialand with Wintertraum, from late November until after New Year. The rest are closed from November to April.

THE RULE OF THE ROAD

*“The park is paid for at the gate, and nobody escapes that.
The park hotel costs the ticket all over again, every night.
The camper sleeps at the gate, and in the morning you are first inside.”*

Documentary check: September 2026. Places, hours and conditions change — check them before you leave.