



Discovery Map
around and about the

Nebra Ark & Dolmen Goddess of Langeneichstädt

Nebra & Langeneichstädt

This Discovery Map takes you to the region around the Nebra Ark and the findspot of the Nebra Sky Disc – a 3,600-year-old bronze disc with the oldest concrete representation of the sky in the world. The Sky Disc is a world-class find, which due to its significance bears the status of UNESCO documentary heritage „Memory of the World“. It was found in the Burgenland district in southern Saxony-Anhalt. This region is shaped by the Unstrut river, an approximately 192 km long tributary of the Saale. The landscape along the river is characterised by protected natural habitats and is particularly accessible by bicycle. Hence there are four different routes that you can comfortably explore either on foot, by bicycle or car. Also a short detour to the Sky Paths station in Langeneichstädt by bicycle or car is certainly worthwhile. There you can discover a Neolithic tomb and a medieval round tower.

In addition to the highlights listed here, the Saale-Unstrut region has long been widely known for its wine and, with its 1,000-year wine-growing tradition, invites you to delightful tastings. Numerous castles, palaces, and churches are accessible via the “Romanesque Road”. An undisputed highlight is the Naumburg Cathedral, which is a UNESCO World Heritage Site since 2018. Also places like Freyburg, Weißenfels, or Zeitz await you with in parts lovingly restored historic centres.



Langeneichstädt

Nebra

Memleben

**Nebra Ark &
Dolmen Goddess
of Langeneichstädt**

Routes

Start and end point is the Nebra Ark car park.



I “Must-see” hiking trail

3–5 km (outbound or circular route),
45–90 min, altitude difference 110 Hm

- 1 Nebra Ark Visitor Centre
- 2 Art installations
- 3 Mittelberg hill

II Cycle tour “Short and Snappy”

25 km, travel time ca. 1.5–2 hours, 200 Hm

- 1 Nebra Ark Visitor Centre
- 2 Art installations
- 3 Mittelberg hill
- 4 Geo-Nature Park Saale-Unstrut-Triasland
- 7 Memleben Monastery and Imperial Palace

III RCycle tour “Outliers”

40 km, travel time ca. 2.5 hours, 280 Hm

- 5 Palaeolithic habitation site
- 8 Dolmen Goddess and chambered tomb
- 9 Eichstädt Watchtower
- 6 Vitzenburg Palace

IV Cycle tour “All-in-one”

65 km, travel time ca. 4 hours, 280 Hm

- 5 Palaeolithic habitation site
- 8 Dolmengöttin and chambered tomb
- 9 Eichstädt Watchtower
- 6 Vitzenburg Palace
- 7 Memleben Monastery and Imperial Palace
- 4 Geo-Nature Park Saale-Unstrut-Triasland
- 3 Mittelberg hill
- 2 Art Installations
- 1 Nebra Ark Visitor Centre

Nebra



1 Nebra Ark Visitor Centre

We recommend you visit the Nebra Ark first and then take an easy hike up the Mittelberg hill to the site where the Sky Disc was found.

The visitor centre at the foot of the Mittelberg, which appears to float above the Unstrut valley, takes up a motif from the Nebra Sky Disc, the golden solar barge. At the same time the large panoramic window of the Nebra Ark is oriented towards the 30 m high viewing tower at the find site of the Nebra Sky Disc. The golden yellow façade of the barge made of anodised aluminium panels offers a subtle play of light depending on the incidence of sunlight. The modern visitor centre was opened in June 2007 and ever since has been showing its extraordinarily designed, multimedia presentation about the story of the Nebra Sky Disc.

Don't miss the planetarium! There the complex astronomy of the Sky Disc will be explained to you in a 22-minute show.

2 Art installations “TONIGHT – THE SKY”, “Forest pavilion” & “Guardians”

Many paths not only lead to Rome, but also to the Mittelberg near Nebra: one of these paths will have three works of art along the way from 2021, which under the motto “Land Art – between World and Cosmos” form a creative connection between the visitor centre and the Sky Disc's findspot. They not only offer excellent photo opportunities, but partly also seating for a short breather.

3 The Mittelberg Findspot of the Nebra Sky Disc

In the middle of a dense forest on the Mittelberg plateau, the Nebra Sky Disc was found in 1999 by two treasure hunters. The aftermath of this discovery reads like an exciting thriller that you certainly have already encountered during your visit to the Nebra Ark.

The “**Himmelsauge**” (Celestial Eye) marks the precise findspot of the Sky Disc with a lightly convex disc made of polished stainless steel, embedded in the ground. To look into the eye is to look into the sky: it serves as a mirror and thus connects heaven and earth at exactly the point where an image of the sky lay hidden for 3,600 years. The striking **viewing tower** enables you to view the horizon as people did at the time of the Sky Disc, when the hill was unfor-
ested. At 30 m in height and inclined by 10 °, the viewing tower is the pointer of an oversized sundial. A vertical cut divides the structure and marks the line of sight to the Brocken Mountain: there the sun set at the summer solstice and here the Sky Disc could be used as a solar calendar. From the viewing tower visual relationships can be established to certain prominent points in the surroundings, such as the Kyffhäuser with the Kulpenberg hill or the Harz massif

with the Brocken. At the summer solstice you can watch the sun set there from the tower. The Mittelberg plateau is enclosed by an Iron Age **circular earthwork** (around 800–600 BC) and bounded by two sectional ramparts. The complex has been partially restored in the form of a grass covered earthen bank. From 2002, the entire summit of the Mittelberg was investigated archaeologically, whereby some other finds were discovered. Concrete slabs mark these find-spots today.

4

Geo-Nature Park Saale-Unstrut-Triasland

The name is derived from the geological period of the Triassic and the location on the lower Unstrut and middle Saale rivers. The best way for you to explore the imposing nature park of around 103,737 hectares is on foot or by bicycle. You will discover a particularly structured landscape with river valleys and rocks such as red sandstone, muschelkalk, and Keuper. Cultivated landscapes with terraced vineyards, dry grassland, and meadow orchards illustrate the interaction between humans and nature.

They also provide a habitat for 18 bat species: the water bat hunts for insects above water bodies, while the lesser horseshoe bat can be found in open areas such as orchards and vineyards. Bechstein's bat and pug bat are adapted to hunting in forests.

The wildcat is also at home here – but nocturnal and always “in cover” we humans rarely see them.

5

Palaeolithic habitation site

The numerous archaeological finds in the Saale-Unstrut region are testimony to thousands of years of human encounters. One of the oldest indications for this is the 15,000-year-old habitation site of a community of Ice Age people. Not only were some of the oldest skeletal remains of *Homo sapiens sapiens* in Saxony-Anhalt found here, but also stylised female figurines made of ivory. They are evidence of an artistic expression that found its way into Europe around 35,000 years ago. Two motifs characterise this Ice Age art: figurative representations of female bodies in partly abstract form or cave paintings with diverse animal representations in true-to-life rendering. They testify to the familiarity of the Ice Age people with their environment and their craftsmanship.

The site lies at the end of Altenburgstraße in Nebra, where today boards with further information are now located.



Querfurt

6

Vitzenburg Palace

Vitzenburg palace towers over the Unstrut valley. In addition to today's neo-Renaissance palace, the extensive area includes a park, a garden pavilion, and vineyards. A tour of the palace is only possible from the outside, but the sight of the vineyards and the view over the Unstrut valley alone are worth a hiking or cycling tour. Viticulture still plays a major role in the region. The palace hill is part of the widely known Saale-Unstrut wine-growing region and is located directly on the Wine Route of the same name. The local winery continues the centuries-old tradition on the Schlossberg and cultivates select wines on this coveted steep slope.

A nice detail on the side: between 2013 and 2016 shooting of the cinema films "Bibi and Tina" took place at Vitzenburg palace, as well as at the Nebra Ark.

Memleben

7

Memleben Monastery and Imperial Palace

In the 10th century the entire Ottonian ruling dynasty came to the Imperial Palace in Memleben. Among them Otto I (*912, †973), later also referred to as Otto the Great, who went down in history as one of the most important medieval rulers. Among other things, he founded the Archdiocese of Magdeburg and initiated the construction of Magdeburg Cathedral. He died in Memleben and was buried in Magdeburg Cathedral, but his heart probably remained in Memleben. Some still hear it beating there today. The famous Benedictine monastery was founded here under the rule of his son Otto II (*955, †983) and his Byzantine wife Theophanu. At this outstanding site of medieval history you can still visit the imposing relics of two monasteries and an idyllic monastery garden.

Langeneichstädt



A short detour by bicycle or car to Langeneichstädt to marvel at a medieval watchtower and a Neolithic tomb is rewarding. The site is freely accessible all year round. On selected days you can climb the tower to a lofty height to let your gaze wander over the high plain of the Querfurt plateau.



Dolmen Goddess and chambered tomb

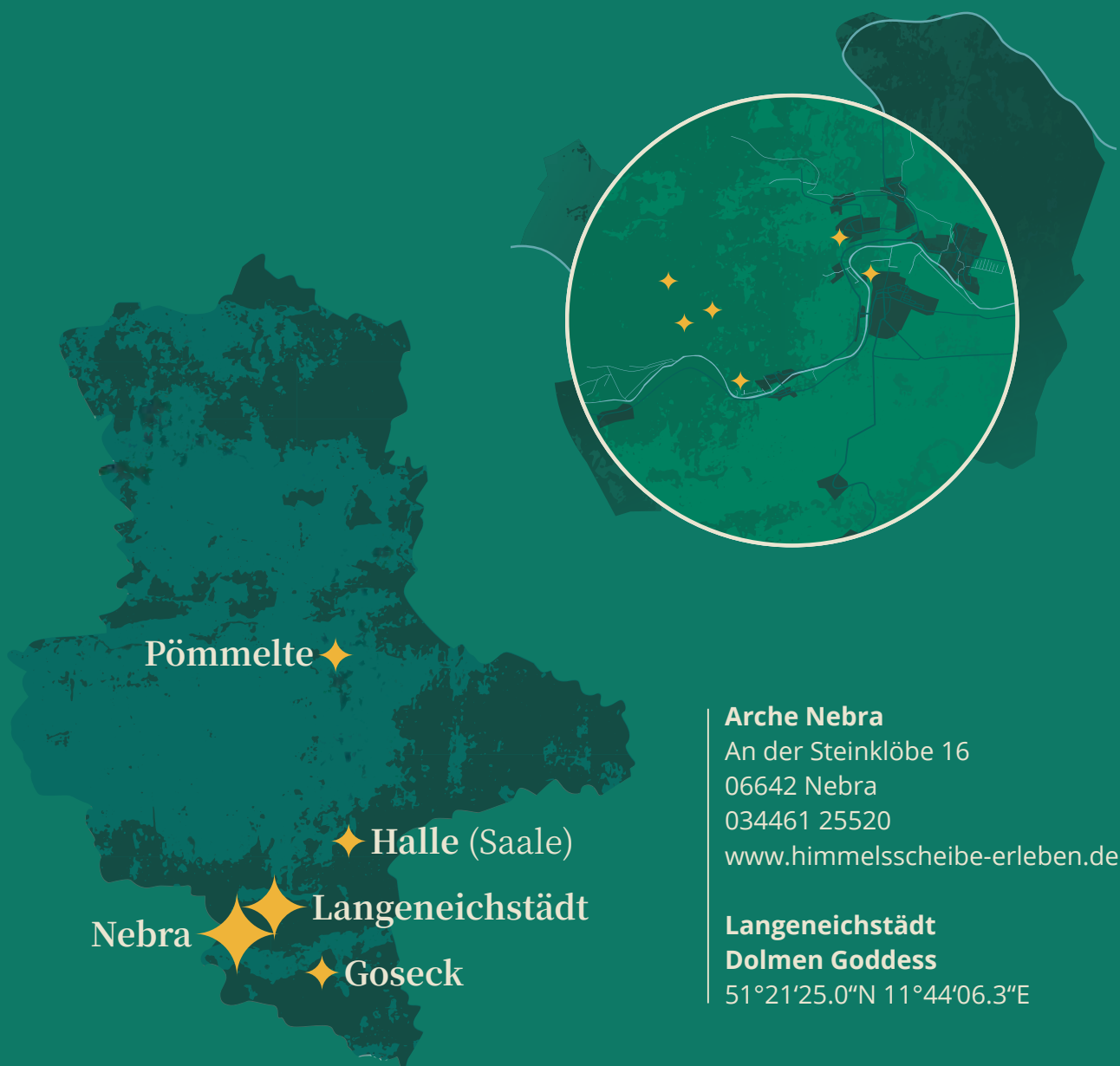
In 1987 a farmer discovered a mighty stone slab while ploughing. The subsequent archaeological excavations revealed an approx. 5,000-year-old stone chambered tomb. One of the covering stones turned out to be an older decorated stone stele that had been built into the chamber structure. It shows the stylised representation of a “dolmen goddess”, which we are more familiar with in Western Europe in connection with the megalithic tombs and menhirs (Breton for long stone).

The menhir stele from Langeneichstädt has a phallic form, which is emphasised by a small cup at the top. The outlines of a crook and an axe are also sketchily incised. The “dolmen goddess”, indicated by an oval with eyes, is interpreted by many scholars as a female deity and symbol of fertility. Wear on the side of the stone indicates that it has been touched here frequently. Thus the menhir stele would unite female and male fertility symbols. Perhaps the carving also symbolises the ancestors themselves and thus provides information about the ideas Neolithic people entertained on afterlife. The stele was installed in such a way that its gaze fell away from the outside world into the interior of the stone chamber. Today a cast of the menhir looks across the landscape at the site. The original is kept in the State Museum of Prehistory in Halle, where it is protected from the weather.



Eichstädt Watchtower

The medieval watchtower made of muschelkalk measures almost 8 m in diameter and, with its distinctive conical roof, reaches a height of 15.6 m. Investigations on the remains of wooden beams suggest that it was built around AD 1483. The building was probably used for observation and signalling. An inscription on the tower tells of a visit by the Saxon Elector Frederick Augustus I: “The 31st day of July in the year 1776 was the great day of honour and happiness for both parishes of Langeneichstädt, on which his electoral Highness, Frederick Augustus our gracious sovereign took a close look at this monument and deigned to climb it. God bless and retain the highest electoral house of Saxony.”



Pömmelte ✦

✦ Halle (Saale)

Nebra ✦✦✦ Langeneichstädt

✦ Goseck

Arche Nebra

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06642 Nebra

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www.himmelscheibe-erleben.de

Langeneichstädt

Dolmen Goddess

51°21'25.0"N 11°44'06.3"E

The Sky Paths in Saxony-Anhalt combine five extraordinary archaeological locations around the Nebra Sky Disc. They invite you on a journey into millennia long past and open up new vistas into the sky.

www.emuseum-himmelswege.com



Die Beauftragte der Bundesregierung
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