



Europäischer Parkverbund Lausitz
Europejski Związek Parków łużyckich

HISTORIC GARDENS IN LUSATIA

GREEN EDENS





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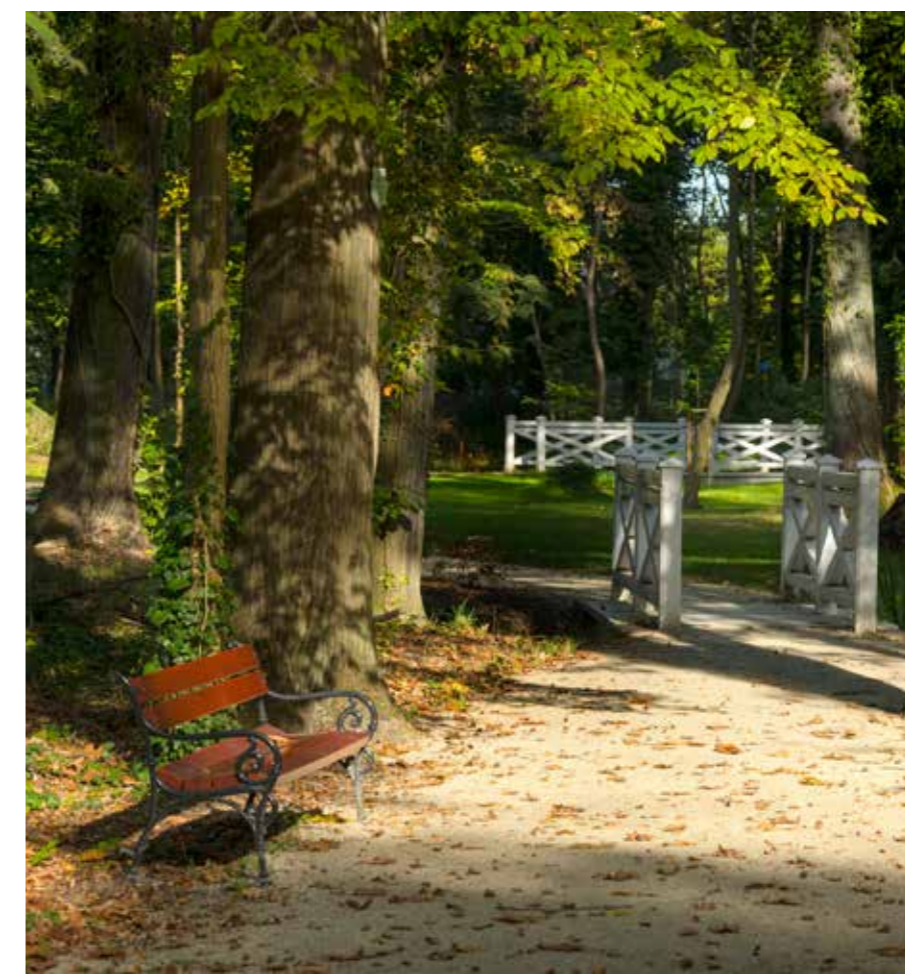
14 // NESCHWITZ

WELCOME TO A STROLL THROUGH EUROPE'S GREEN HEARTLAND

For the past 400 years, the landscapes of Lusatia—in Brandenburg, Saxony, and Poland—have been constantly reshaped by human intervention, destroyed and developed, often in rapid succession. Moreover, the castles and gardens in Lusatia contrast in large numbers and variety with the industrial landscapes undergoing change and transformation. Following the end of brown coal mining, the region has drawn attention as the biggest landscape construction site in Europe, while the wealth of the cultural landscape, including castles and gardens from the Baroque to the early twentieth century, is an ongoing rediscovery. Originally the proud owners of the dominions in former Brandenburg-Prussia, Saxony, Silesia, and Bohemia created small courts dedicated to the muses. Later on cosmopolitan aristocrats and cooperative citizens laid out parks in the region for purposes of prestige and recreation. Architecture and garden design linked the spacious landscapes between the rivers Neisse, Bober, and Spree and created a common cultural landscape in which prosperous textile and industrial cities emerged in the late nineteenth century. Coal mining thoroughly changed parts of this region during the twentieth century; however, in recent decades,

reclamation of the abandoned mining areas has provided new and spectacular landscape projects such as the Lusatia Lake Region in southern Brandenburg. These projects have made Lusatia one of the most diverse landscapes in Europe. The European Park Association of Lusatia, founded in 2010, connects nine of the most outstanding parks and castles originally created by prominent individuals including Count von Brühl, Prince Pückler, the Countess of Sagan, and also the citizens of Forst. Not only do these garden works of art reflect unique charms of the Lusatian landscape on both sides of the Neisse, they also hold wealth of stories of European history. Dorothea von Sagan, for example, was among the most influential women of the nineteenth century and was a pearl of European salon society. The illustrious Prince Hermann Ludwig Heinrich von Pückler Muskau, a cosmopolitan whose extensive correspondence might rival communication on today's social media—was far ahead of his time and is considered among Europe's most significant landscape gardeners. Heinrich von Brühl became a remarkable statesman and opponent to Frederic the Great during Prussia's rise to great power. The park landscapes themselves present living testimony to

European history; this becomes especially apparent in the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Muskauer Park. During the Second World War, the front line moved through the park and when the war ended, the Neisse, an integral part of the park, became an international border. This boundary endured for four decades and only since the end of the Cold War has the park landscape again provided a bridge between eastern and western Europe. In the following pages we welcome you to take a short virtual stroll along many traces of ever-changing European history that have shaped the Green Edens of Lusatia to this day. Then go out into the parks and enjoy a visit to the UNESCO World Heritage Site Muskauer Park; the re-emerging park of Brody (formerly Pförten); the Baroque garden at Neschwitz; the history-laden sites at Żagań (Sagan) and Zatonie (Günthersdorf); the most Saxon of all Brandenburg castles at Altdöbern; the last of the significant landscape parks of Europe at Branitz; the fantastic Rakotz Bridge at Kromlau; and the Rose Garden at Forst, a municipal gem. This summer explore—on foot, by bike, or on the water—these nine parks and castles, gems in a European landscape that has been undergo constant change.



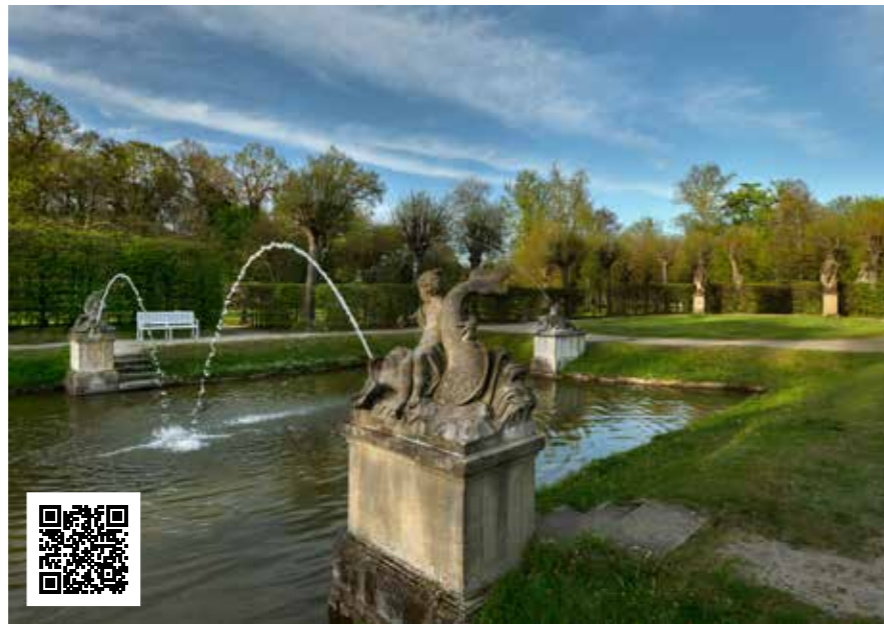
In landscape gardening we are not in a position to produce a fixed, finished work as the painter, sculptor, and architect do, for our work is a living thing, not an inanimate object, and like the objects of nature, as Fichte says of the German language, it is always becoming not just being; never standing still, never fixed and left to itself.

Prince Hermann von Pückler-Muskau, Hints on Landscape Gardening, translated by John Hargraves

SCENES FROM A REGION “IN-BETWEEN”

Although the word “turbulent” may be overused, there is hardly one better suited to apply to the relationship between Saxony and Brandenburg-Prussia. “Prussia and Saxony. Scenes from a Neighborhood” was the heading for the year-long Kulturland Brandenburg, a cultural endeavor undertaken by the federal land of Brandenburg in 2014; this title certainly alludes to nice and not-so-nice Scenes from a Marriage: in this case, wars were fought, borders re-drawn, mechanisms of rule were learnt, cooperation summoned forth, and quite a lot of culture was generated.

If there is any place where these scenes become comprehensible, it is the castle at Altdöbern. Numerous owners came and went, and each of them sought to have an impact on its structure and design. Today, the condition of the castle and the park reveals the close connection of castle owners with the development of Lusatia, a region that has always existed between Saxony and Brandenburg Prussia. The region also bears witness to the German Empire, the Second World War, brown coal exploitation, the GDR, and the revitalization after 1990. Originally the site featured only a moated castle at a ford, first recorded in 1377. In the course of German settlement of Slavic Lower Lusatia, Altdöbern was founded. The core of today’s three-winged castle dates back to 1570. The castle flourished under the lavish care of Carl Heinrich von Heineken (1707-1791). The park reflected this period in its French-style garden and the guest lounges of the castle. Heineken was a confidant of Count Heinrich von Brühl (1700-1763) and as an administrator, he commissioned the best artists from the Dresden Court to work on the design of Brühl’s castle at Pförten and subsequently brought the artists to Altdöbern under favorable conditions. He helped the village to economic success by founding and attracting enterprises and by increasing the number of market days. One of Heineken’s successors was Heinrich von Witzleben (1854-1933), a Prussian business man and politician.



Witzleben, with close ties to the German emperors Wilhelm I and Wilhelm II, took over the estate in 1879. As of 1886 he had the refuge remodeled in prestigious style. The court facade was given a sandstone facing in Neo-Baroque fashion and plans were made to turn the Baroque park into a landscape garden. However, an old part of the park remained and thus the castle and park at Altdöbern became a symbol for Saxon-Prussian confrontations. Between the eras of Heineken and Witzleben, the year 1815 marks a significant change for the region as large parts of Lower Lusatia became Prussian. For some regions this meant the loss of administrative functions and thus of significance. As for Lower Lusatia : it remained a

borderland and an in-between area—even more so, when, following the Second World War, a part of it became Polish territory. Still, when looking more closely today at the in-between nature of the region, Lower Lusatia appears as a cross-border region of great vitality in the middle of Europe. The sum of more than 16 million Euros that have been invested in the conservation of the castle and park at Altdöbern may be seen as a symbol for the future of the castle and of Lower Lusatia. Although the breath of history seems omnipresent in Altdöbern’s historic park, visitors today may relax in the café located in the Orangery (built between 1880 and 1890) and enjoy coffee, the flowering potted plants, and the small souvenirs.

ALTDÖBERN CASTLE AND PARK Am Park, D-03229 Altdöbern

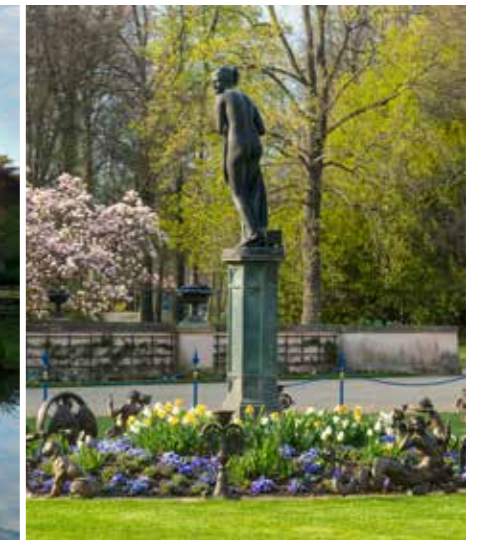
The park is open to the public at all times, admission is free. A festival during the summer months features exhibitions, guided tours, live music performances, and other impromptu events. Café Schauwerk located at the Market Square near the Orangery offers sweet and savory specialties.

Altdöbern Municipal Office
Bau- und Ordnungsamt, Markt 24
D-03229 Altdöbern, Tel.: +49 35434 600 13
bauamt@amt-altdoebern.de

www.ami-altdoebern.de



ON THE PATH OF KNOWLEDGE – PÜCKLER’S MASTERPIECE



It is probably thanks to the powers of persuasion of his great love Lucie that Prince Pückler—at almost 60 years of age—summoned the passion to create his last masterpiece at the old Branitz family location. Shortly before, having spent his wife’s and his own assets, he had to sell his extensive park at Muskau. Branitz had been more of a burden than a pleasure to him and he would have sold it long before in order to keep his beloved Muskau—but his clever forebears had contractually ruled out the sale of the Branitz estate. Moreover, Princess Lucie felt a much greater obligation to the Branitz heritage, which had housed generations of Pücklers. So it came about that the 60-year old bon vivant allowed his seventy-year old muse to convince him to lay out yet another landscape park.

What Pückler creates on Lusatia’s sandy soil in the remaining 25 years of his life, brings together all the genius of this most creative landscape designer of his epoch. When in the late 1840s, the first efforts in the park became apparent, the town of Cottbus, only a stroll away from the park, is in the grip of an intense industrialization. Textile factories and chimneys rise and the cradle of the city’s textile industry is set up. Perhaps this is why Pückler prefers to travel to Italy, from where he sends letters to Lucie at home and lovingly calls her as “Sand Worm, Branitzka, and Desert-ta.” Finally, however, the heart of the garden artist is kindled once again. He plans his Branitz as a seductive attraction. What he has learned in England and tried out at Muskau, he brings to perfection at Branitz. Skillfully he expands the park by letting it flow into the surrounding landscape. Artful paths lead visitors through the outer park and into the interior park, so that through a play of views and plantings, the rose-colored castle reveals itself only partially, disappearing from view repeatedly, secretly, until it advances to become almost gigantic. The ground around the castle is transformed into a detailed centerpiece with colorful flowerbeds, various sculptures, and a paradise of fruit trees. For the redesigning of the terrace, Gottfried Semper sends his student Adolf

Hohlfeldt to Branitz. However, the actual masterpiece unfolds in the green surroundings. Pückler brings tall, native trees to his park and sensitively coordinates foliage color and growth height. Paths and waterways lead from the castle to the tumulus, the pyramidal landmark of the park landscape. From there the view extends to the factory chimneys and church towers of Cottbus. The tumulus, Pückler’s burial site, is the height of his self-portrayal projected far beyond his death. A deep symbolism is woven into the artfully designed beauty of this garden paradise. It is not overpowering, although to decipher it enriches the enjoyment of Pückler’s work. Within the castle, the center and heart of the park, the Prince commemorates love as the mainspring of all life. Spanning the park is a path of knowledge that extends and can be followed from sunrise to sunset, from east to west, from the smithy to the tumulus through the park. Additional insights are provided in the castle at Branitz, which displays the objects of everyday use, documents, and books of the princely couple.

BRANITZ PARK AND CASTLE Kastanienallee 29, D-03042 Cottbus

The park is open to the public all year. Opening hours for the Fürst Pückler Museum (inside the castle):
Summer season: April 1 to October 31, from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.; closed on Tuesdays
Winter season: November 1 to January 2, from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.; closed on Tuesdays

Fürst Pückler Museum Foundation
Robinienweg 5, D-03042 Cottbus
Tel.: +49 355 75150
info@pueckler-museum.de

www.pueckler-museum.de



A PARK FOR EVERYONE

A park for everyone—that is the vision behind the Rose Garden at Forst. The origins of the park date back to 1900 and were part of an effort that spread throughout Germany to create green areas for the general population. The workers from the textile town were meant to get out of their small apartments and move around in the open. Such a “park for all” was for civic society also a symbol of economic, social, and political independence from the old feudal social structures. In contrast to the parks of the nobility, these parks were to provide sports, games, and fun for everybody. The fact that the city of Forst did not own significant plots of land was both a curse and a blessing. In spite of the scarcity of land, a wonderful terrain was found around 1900: it lay on an artificially

created island in the Neisse River. An English-style landscape garden was laid out there, similar to that of the neighboring parks at Pförten (Brody), Muskau, and Branitz. It included a tennis court, playgrounds, and a restaurant, which remained a popular destination in Forst for eighty years. During the hot summer of 1911, large sections of the park suffered from drought. This was the hour for the Forst Gardeners and Friends of Gardening Association, whose members came up with the idea of carrying out a rose and horticulture fair in 1913. The fair was a success and the Forst municipality decided to install a permanent park on this site. The rose, the queen of flowers, promised to be an irresistible attraction. In 1914, the German Rose Lovers Association conferred on the park the honorable title

of “East German Rose Garden.” The park also increased in size. Since that time, the park’s main entrance has been set at the northern end, where it has remained until today. Flora, the goddess of flowers, whose statue is surrounded by putti, greets the visitors from a tall pedestal. After WWI, the roses gradually moved into the so-called “bird area” away from the island. For this section formal garden elements were chosen that remain characteristic for the park to this day. Approximately 40,000 roses growing in the garden in 1938, were no longer meant to be grown only for the pleasure of rose lovers, but they also were to serve the discovery of the cultural and economic aspects of rose-growing. Forst became a rosarium, that is, a collecting and research site for old rose varieties and for observing and monitoring new species. At the end of the Second World War the rose garden was reduced to burnt hedges, splintered trees, and destroyed rose bushes. With great participation from local people the garden was rebuilt after the end of the war. The old layout was retained including the functions of a people’s park on one side of the central canal (Wehrgraben), and those of a rose garden on the other side. For its 50th anniversary in 1963, the rebuilding of the park was celebrated, and with a quantity of around 40,000 roses, the pre-war levels had been reached again. As one of the most beautiful and well-known gardens in eastern Germany today, the Forst rose garden again carries the title of “Ostdeutscher Rosengarten.” Cross-border cooperation with nearby Polish municipalities has begun. The tall rose arches, under which roses can be closely seen at eye level, smelt, and marveled at, are especially beautiful today, and it’s worthwhile to linger in the rose garden until everyone has found his or her favorite rose.



**EAST GERMAN ROSE GARDEN
FORST (LAUSITZ)**
Wehrinselstr. 42, D-03149 Forst (Lausitz)
Visitor parking: Ringstraße 41

The park opens at 9 a.m. throughout the year. From May through September an entrance fee is charged for the rose garden.

Touristinformation
Cottbuser Str. 10, D-03149 Forst (Lausitz)
Tel.: +49 3562 989 350
info@forst-information.de

www.rosengarten-forst.de



WHERE SAXONY, POLAND, AND PRUSSIA ENTERED AN ALLIANCE

BRODY CASTLE PARK (PFÖRTEN)
Pl. Zamkowy 9, PL-68-343 Brody

The park is open to the public at all times and admission is free. During the summer months, the court of honor and the castle restaurant are open all week until 10 p.m.

Municipal Office Brody (Pförten)
ul. Rynek 2, PL-68-343 Brody
Tel.: +48 68 3712155, gmina@brody.pl

www.brody.pl
www.pfoerten.wordpress.com



Brody (Pförten) lies among forests, meadows, and water. Like Muskauer Park, it represents the traditional role of Lusatia as a connecting link at the heart of Europe. First recorded in 1389, the Polish name, Brody, as well as the German, Pförten, suggest a ford that facilitated safe passage over boggy terrain. Indeed an important trading route between east and west has led across this firm ground since Medieval times. In the fifteenth century the area was ruled by the kings of Hungary and Bohemia and at their commission, the aristocratic Bieberstein family held the town and toll charter for two centuries, without developing

the location in any significant way. A manor was built by the succeeding rulers of Promnitz, followed in the second half of the seventeenth century by a magnificent castle with a huge park next to a lake. When August the Strong was elected King of Poland in 1697, the seemingly inconspicuous Pförten gained sudden significance because, as Poland and Saxony formed a union, they remained separated by a small strip of Silesian territory. The young Heinrich von Brühl recognized the significance of the disconnection, purchased the Pförten dominion along with huge landholdings in the surroundings and became

the second biggest land owner of Lusatia after August the Strong. Brühl then developed Pförten to become a political center, confirmed the Polish lineage of one family branch, and became the central mediator between the Principality of Saxony and the Kingdom of Poland. He shaped the park and town as a complete and unified work of art. In order to create a Baroque garden, the landscape was changed according to the predominant and typical absolutist ideas of power and nature. The existing line of the main path through the garden was extended beyond the lake across a newly built canal and a very huge pheasantry, so that the line continued far into the countryside. For a short time in the eighteenth century, the park around the castle was regarded as the most beautiful in Lusatia. The conversion of the castle and garden was so successful that August the Strong visited Pförten several times and stayed twice for extended periods. At that time the most precious porcelain dinnerware set ever made at Meißen, the Swan Set, consisting of 2,200 pieces, had already arrived at Pförten. When Prussia conquered the area around Pförten in the mid-18th century, Frederic the Great had the castle burnt down. However, Pförten remained in the possession of the Brühl family, who then lived in one of the still undamaged guesthouses and gradually transformed the Baroque garden into a landscape park with typical tree clumps, meadows, and gently curving paths. The Brühl family’s decision to rebuild Pförten was carried out from 1919 to 1924. The castle and park were again destroyed as a consequence of the Second World War. Today, visitors to Brody, now in Poland, can again discover the many traces of different historic eras. Whereas the castle still shows the wounds of history openly, year by year the park is slowly recovering from the historical fluctuations. An important contribution to that healing process are the park seminars that have been taking place since 2009. They present an opportunity for the Friends of the Park to come together and carefully reintroduce formative features and a breath of life into the park.





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Europejski Związek Parków Łużyckich



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A VILLAGE LIVES AND BREATHES WORLD HISTORY

The small, inconspicuous village of Zatonie (Günthersdorf) lies where, for centuries, the borders were moved between Lusatia and Silesia, Bohemia and Saxony, and Austria and Prussia. The village entered the stage of world history on June 13, 1840, with the new owner, Dorothea von Biron (1793-1862). As if under a magnifying glass, her life focussed all significant epochs of the nineteenth century. Born as Princess of Courland, she was the daughter of the last ruler of the absolute state in the Baltics. As a child she played together with the Prussian royal children in Berlin. The Russian Czar, Alexander I, arranged her wedding in Paris in 1809 to the nephew of the French foreign minister, Charles Maurice de Talleyrand-Périgord (1754-1838). As Countess Périgord she was a member

of French high nobility and became companion and confidante of Talleyrand, the French foreign minister. As one of the most famous diplomats of world history, he conducted the Congress of Vienna, along with Dorothea and her equally influential sister, Wilhelmine. At the Congress, the powerful of Europe established a new world order, which also affected Lusatia in many ways. Dorothea became a legendary figure in France. Finally, she wanted to escape pre-revolutionary Europe and in June 1840 found "a safe refuge in this world-enraptured corner," as she called Günthersdorf, "amidst all the turmoil that threatens western Europe more or less at all times." There, the Countess especially enjoyed the park around the Baroque castle. By 1844 she had expanded it to the east to a size of 32

hectares and had connected the lowland of the small river with a knoll and a grotto. There, from the Rose Temple, one had a distant view of the castle. A visit to Günthersdorf by Frederick William IV of Prussia, her friend from childhood days, has been historically documented. The idea to remove the enormous saddle roof of the house and to replace it by a flat terrace probably originated then. Dorothea spent a few summers in the castle, by then converted to a building in classicist style; the winters, however, she spent in France far away from cold Prussia. The Countess was highly esteemed in Lower Silesia because she had successfully re-organized her estates and was involved in numerous charitable institutions. Those who encountered her during this period praised Dorothea's worldly wisdom and friendly warmth as well as her grace and kindness. After Dorothea's death in 1862, her second son, Alexandre Edmond Talleyrand-Périgord (1813-1894), further expanded the estate. He built a new orangery in classicist style and brought sculptures to the park. In 1879 he moved to Florence and sold the family property. At the end of the Second World War, the castle burnt down to the walls. Again, the village was marked by a border—now between Poland and the GDR. Now identified by its Polish name, Zatonie, the castle and park fell into oblivion. Only in 2015, with the beginning of extensive clearing work, was the great amount of history surrounding the Countess rediscovered. Today, the castle, park, and village, now part of the city of Zielona Góra, seem to have undergone a metamorphosis. Thanks to the involvement of a local history association and support by the city of Zielona Góra, the former splendor of this small, yet extraordinary place can be fathomed again, especially through walking tours and most spectacularly at night, when the most significant elements of park architecture are lit.



ZATONIE DUCAL PARK
ul. Zatonie – Księżnej Doroty 3
PL-66-004 Zielona Góra

The castle ruin is open to the public at all times. Admission is free; the site is lit at night.

Tourist Information at the Zatonie Ducal Castle
Open from March to October:
Wednesday to Sunday
10 a.m. to 6 p.m.
From November to February:
Wednesday to Sunday
8 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Tel. +48 780 576 841
parkzatonie@visitzielonagora.pl

www.visitzielonagora.pl/de/top10/park-zatonie-de/



FROM LUXURY ESTATE TO MUNICIPAL CASTLE FOR ALL

A gigantic, four-winged castle building dominates the historic castle park at Zagań (Sagan), appropriately for the seat of an ousted Duke: Peter von Biron (1724-1800), the Duke of Courland, was deposed in 1795. The Zagań castle, which he purchased in 1786, served as a replacement for his previous residence. The original building had been under the vassalage of the Bohemian crown since 1549. As a vassal of the emperor, the famous commander Albrecht von Wallenstein (1583-1634), also known as Wallenstein, made a plan for a residence between a bend of the Bober River and the town, but the plan was realized only in 1646 under the successor, Prince Lobkowitz. What was finally built, followed plans by the Italian master builder Antonio della Porta (c. 1631-1702). The gigantic castle that resulted was to represent the power of the Austrian vassalage. In 1741, Silesia became a part of Prussia and the Duchy of Sagan continued to enjoy rich privileges. Peter von Biron apparently regarded the dominion as an "empire in the small," and thus an ideal replacement for the lost Duchy of Courland. A corresponding luxury was the rule at his court. Hunts and festivities, theater and opera performances sweetened the life at the castle. However, the hereditary princesses, Wilhelmine (1781-1839) and Pauline (1782-1845), who one after the other became Countess, preferred to live somewhere else. Their sister, Dorothea, resident at the nearby Günthersdorf (Zatonie) estate, complained about the condition of the Sagan property. She decided to purchase the productive dominion of her father and re-establish it as the

most important family residence. When she finally became Countess of Sagan, the heyday began for the residence, park, and town. Later on, when bourgeois revolutionary activities brought social upheaval, the Countess reshaped her 230-hectare park at the bend of the Bober River. Prince Pückler offered Dorothea "his services as a gardener," and was enthusiastic about her energy for the task at hand. In order to connect the castle to the park, river, and landscape in two broad sweeps as in Muskau, a large ramp was added to the castle court as of 1847. An empire of flowers became the lavish passion of the Countess and a unique feature of Sagan. In 1847, an orangery and a magnificent terrace were built, following an idea of Frederick William IV of Prussia, who as of 1851 stayed at Sagan almost every year. The king valued the resulting residential ensemble of special beauty that was regarded as greater than at Windsor, according to Alexander von Humboldt. When social unrest broke out in Sagan in 1848, Dorothea stayed with the

townspeople because she believed she was needed and was regarded as Sagan's beneficiary. Thousands of people filled the park. In 1907, because of complex restorations, the property was put under forced administration. In 1935, the National Socialists wanted to confiscate the "Sagan forest estate" as state property. After a period of serving as a military hospital and storage for loot during the Second World War, the park and castle were devastated in 1945. In 1948, a compensation payment to the Talleyrand-Périgord family marked the beginning of a new era at Zagań, which now belonged to Poland. As of 1962, the castle was restored and as of 1983, has become a cultural and academic center for the public. It accommodates a municipal library, a cinema, and a theater hall and features exhibitions, banquets, weddings, and lectures. Today, the castle and park form an ensemble that has become an important landmark in the cityscape. Its rich history can be traced best by taking a guided tour of the castle.



ZAGAN CULTURAL CASTLE
ul. Szprotawska 4, PL-68-100 Zagań

The park is open to the public all year. For visiting the castle an official tour guide is mandatory.
From April through September:
Open Tuesdays through Sundays
From October through March:
Open Tuesdays through Fridays,
11 a.m. and 3 p.m.
Individual visits (with tour guide) are possible.

Tickets are available at **Tourist Information**
Opening hours:
From April through September:
Tuesdays through Fridays, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Saturdays and Sundays, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.
From October through March:
Tuesdays through Fridays, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Tel.: + 48 68 477 10 01
it@um.zagan.pl

<https://urzadmiasta.zagan.pl/turystyka/zabytki/>



PÜCKLER'S GREAT WORK



The Muskauer Park turned the young Count, later Prince Hermann von Pückler-Muskau, into one of the greatest park designers of Europe—a visionary, a bankrupt, and a creator of world heritage. Pückler, the European and cosmopolitan, ventured a great work in Muskau that is today—on both sides of the Neisse—the most beautiful landscape bridge between eastern and western Europe. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, when he was 26 years of age, Pückler inherited the huge domain at Muskau. To him it was an “ugly inheritance,” and he began immediately to tear down walls and buildings around the old castle. However, world history temporarily stopped his drive for action when Napoleon decided to conquer Russia in 1812. Soldiers of various nations moved through Muskau and destroyed fields and meadows. Pückler participated in the wars of liberation as a lieutenant-colonel in the entourage of the Russian czar and in 1814 was among those celebrating victory in Paris. What followed was a journey to England and his first park studies, in the course of which he resolved to lay out an extensive park around his original family seat along the shores of the Neisse. Muskau provided optimal conditions for that: in otherwise barren and flat Lusatia, his domain was located in the middle of the geologically exciting Muskau Coal Crescent. The glacially formed terrain with its mountains and valleys, deep gorges, and extensive river meadows provided an ideal background. Pückler’s vision reached far beyond his own property, as he acquired land on

both sides of the Neisse at great expense. In his park, as he imagined it, you should be able to travel by carriage at least one hour without treading on the same path more than once. It was his marriage to Countess Lucie von Hardenberg, daughter of the Prussian state chancellor that enabled Pückler’s great work. When barely eight years later, the money was scarce, Lucie and her “Lou” separated, so as to free him to find a new lucrative partner to facilitate completion of the park. Although five years later, Pückler returned without a new wife, his travel logs that he had published made him a bestselling author. His park studies in England and the completion of the Muskau park also made him a sought after expert in landscape gardening. However, constant financial worries made the prince eventually lose his interest and pleasure in the Muskau park and led in 1845 to the sale of the entire property and a new beginning at the old family seat at Branitz. Neither the succeeding owners nor the future generations of gardeners changed Pückler’s style-defining masterpiece. Only in the Second World War did Pückler’s green heaven come down to earth. As the front moved through the park, both the landscape and the castle were severely damaged. The Neisse was finally declared a border, and Pückler’s legacy was politically carved up. After the end of the Cold War, the castle and park were restored on both sides of the Neisse. In 2004, the park became a shared German-Polish world heritage site. Pückler’s vision can be best re-traced today by taking a walk along

the Panorama Path on the eastern side of the Neisse, in the direction of the Pückler Memorial. Every turn of the path offers new views of tree clumps, and diagonal vistas allow visitors to view distant hills. “Who looks at my park, looks into my heart,” Pückler once said. Today, visitors can indeed seek Pückler’s heart in the beauty of the park.

MUSKAU PARK BAD MUSKAU / ŁĘKNICA Neues Schloss, D-02953 Bad Muskau

Tourism Center in the Castle Tower
Special exhibitions are open daily from
10 a.m. to 6 p.m. during summer.
The park is open all year.

Fürst Pückler Park Bad Muskau Foundation
Orangerie, D-02953 Bad Muskau
Tel.: +49 35771 63100
info@muskauer-park.de

www.muskauer-park.de
<https://parkmuzakowski.nid.pl>

FLORAL ABUNDANCE AND CIVIC INVOLVEMENT

Because of their sensitivity, the flowers of the rhododendron have come to represent the fragility of love. They take on their most beautiful form in the blissful month of May: magnificent, filigree flowers in deep red and lilac hues. Each year thousands of visitors are drawn to the floral abundance of the Kromlau Rhododendron Park as well as to numerous romantic decorative features formed from boulders and basalt stelae. These images, the best known of which is the Rakotz Bridge spanning the eponymous lake, are an integral part of a spacious landscape park that originally covered 172 hectares. The park was laid out in the mid-nineteenth century and is of civic origin, in contrast to most other landscape parks of that size. The initiative goes back to Hermann Friedrich Roetschke (1805-1893), a visionary individual from the bourgeoisie. Roetschke saw in the landscape of the Muskau Coal Crescent the potential for laying out a park that he would commission himself and realize according to his own ideas. A native of Lusatia, he became wealthy through clever entrepreneurial activities. In addition, he appeared to have a dazzling personality, who always gathered many people around himself and obviously enjoyed having affairs. He acquired the old feudal estate in 1842 and soon began work on the park, integrating the glacial ravines of the Muskau Coal Crescent. Long vistas from selected look-out points, colorfully effective plantings of tree clumps and specimen trees formed a landscape that was complemented by numerous, mostly Baroque sculptures. The mighty effect of the Rakotz

ensemble is unparalleled. Depending on the season, the light changes at various places, ranging from a dark, melancholic effect to a cheerful, earthly mood. In 1875 Roetschke sold his Kromlau property and laid out another park at his new residence in Bärwalde. Meanwhile a second great stage of development began for the Kromlau park when it was purchased by the Egloffstein family. Thousands of rhododendrons and azaleas were planted and they thrived on the peaty terrain of the Muskau Coal Crescent and contributed considerably to the economic return of the estate. Kromlau became known even outside the region as the “Rhododendron Park.” Yet, despite all efforts to make the park profitable, the family was forced to reforest park meadows and to convert parts of the park into arable land. The Second World War and its aftermath ultimately led to a slow decline of the park. In the course of subsequent land reform, large parts of it were handed over to local and resettled farmers, and park maintenance was stopped. In the mid-1950s, the grotto in the lake collapsed. The park began to be valued more highly again in the mid-1960s, when development began on the recreational area of Kromlau Gablenz. With admirable civic involvement by the local population, which has continued to this day, initial restoration work could be carried out; the highlight so far has been the restoration (2018-2021) of the Rakotz ensemble. Even though there is an abundance of images of the famous bridge, there is nothing more precious than taking a personal photo of the Rakotz Bridge.



KROMLAU RHODODENDRON PARK Altes Schloss 11, D-02953 Gablenz

The Kromlau Park is open all year.
The manor house restored in 2015 is home to the Kromlau Tourist Information Center as well as an elegant room for weddings, a vacation apartment, and other pleasantly furnished rooms, all open to the public.

Tourist Information:
From May to October, Mondays through Fridays, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Saturdays, 10 a.m. to noon.
From November to April, Mondays through Fridays, 8 a.m. to 2 p.m.
Tel.: +49 3576 222828, info@kromlau-online.de

www.kromlau-online.de



ABOUT WAR AND LOVE

The Baroque garden of the castle at Neschwitz is three-hundred years old and despite all the volatile history that has taken place here, it remains to this day a remarkable work of garden art in its basic structures. It is both a testimony to love and to war, as well as to the turbulent history of European nobility. The chronicle of the castle at Neschwitz and the history of its many owners begins in the thirteenth century with a moated castle that in the fifteenth century was converted to a castle in the Renaissance-style. With the beginning of the eighteenth century, the estate entered an era of splendor as the property passed through the hands of various houses of nobility. Prince Friedrich Ludwig von Württemberg-Winnental bought the estate in 1721. It served as a dowry to his future wife, the beautiful Princess of the Holy Roman Empire, Ursula Katharina von Teschen, who previously had been the mistress of August the Strong, Elector of Saxony and King of Poland. The Prince, ten years younger than the Princess, had to court her for several years and with the purchase of the castle and the Baroque, French-style garden in Neschwitz, he hoped to gain her favor, which he indeed finally won. To that end he had the castle converted to the latest fashion. A hall extending over two floors and well suited for great festivities became the centerpiece of the building, situated at an elevation of five meters. The characteristics of the old moated castle remained visible in the surrounding canals, which to this day create pleasing reflections of the architecture. From the elevated castle the Baroque garden comes into full view. In the early days, paths led out of the strictly geometrical garden to the extensive forested area, where guests were entertained by perforce hunts and coursing. More than a decade later, following the death of August the Strong, the Polish war of succession began. The Prince took on the command of the field army stationed in northern Italy and was killed at the Battle of Guastalla in 1734. A few years



later, the lovely Katharina sold her Neschwitz possessions to Count Alexander Joseph Sulkowski, then Saxon-Polish Minister of the Exterior. Shortly after that the Seven-Year War broke out and Sulkowski sold all of his possessions in Lusatia. It was a case of good luck that the court banker, Baron Wolfgang von Riesch, later bought the castle and park despite its war-damaged surroundings, and expanded it to create a summer residence. He enlarged the garden area by creating an extensively laid out park in the English style that had just become fashionable, and built a new, much bigger castle. The former residence, no longer inhabited, was turned into a museum for the extensive private collection of the

Riesch family. At the end of the nineteenth century, the Neschwitz estate passed to the distantly related Vietinghoff-Riesch family. Baron Arnold von Vietinghoff-Riesch modified it in the late 1920s following ecological principles: he set up a bird sanctuary and a model enterprise for agriculture and forestry. All of that came to an end in 1945, the last year of the war, when the new castle burnt down and was destroyed. However, the old castle (that had been a museum), the Baroque garden, and the adjacent park with its rare trees remained and today are in the care of the municipality of Neschwitz. The ensemble is part of the Upper-Lusatia Garden Cultural Trail and is an excellent starting point for its exploration.

NESCHWITZ BAROQUE CASTLE AND PARK Park 1-4, D-02699 Neschwitz

Baroque Castle
(From May through October):
Wednesdays and Thursdays
from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m.
Fridays and Saturdays, from 10 a.m.
to noon and from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m.
Sundays and holidays, from 10 a.m.
to noon and from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m.
The park is open to the public all year
and admission is free.

Tourismusbüro der Gemeinde Neschwitz
Park 4, D-02699 Neschwitz
Tel.: +49 35933 32669 oder 3860
tourismus@neschwitz.de

www.neschwitz.de



NINE IDYLIC PARKS – FOUR OUTSTANDING INDIVIDUALS



Prince Hermann Ludwig Heinrich von Pückler took on the Muskau domain from his father in 1811. Pückler laid out a classic landscape garden beginning in 1815 with the Baroque Castle as his starting point and inspired by his visits to gardens in England. Two years later, he married Anna Lucie Christine Wilhelmine (née Hardenberg-Reventlow). Much later, following the sale of Muskau, he converted the so-called "desert" of his old Branitz estate to create a masterpiece. According to his own wishes, this outstanding landscape artist, traveler to the Orient, and writer, Pückler was buried inside the lake pyramid at Branitz Park in 1871.

Prince Hermann von Pückler-Muskau,
1785-1871



Dorothea of Sagan was born in 1793 into the Ducal Biron family and became one of the most influential women of nineteenth century Europe. She participated actively as a confidante of the French minister of the exterior, Charles Maurice de Talleyrand, at the Congress of Vienna. After Talleyrand died, she expanded the Castle at Günthersdorf (Zatonie) in classicist style. In 1842, she acquired the Duchy of Sagan from her sister. Under her rule the Duchy flourished. Encouraged by Pückler, she had the park redesigned with support from Pückler and established among other things, a hospital and a school. Dorothea was buried in the Holy Cross Church at Sagan in 1862.

Countess Dorothea von Sagan
1793-1862



During his service to the Prince Elector of Saxony, August the Strong, and his son, Friedrich August II, Brühl became Elector of Saxony and Royal Polish Prime Minister. Among his cultural achievements are the expansions of the Dresden art collections and of the Meissen Porcelain Factory. Today he is especially commemorated by a terrace in Dresden that bears his name. Brühl acquired Pforten (Brody) in 1740 and the neighboring town of Forst in 1746. He set up a textile factory in Forst, which used to be regarded as the centre of a significant textile industry in the city. He was buried in Forst's municipal church in 1763.

Count Heinrich von Brühl
1700-1763



Carl Heinrich von Heineken is among the most important art scholars and art collectors of the eighteenth century. As a confidant of the Saxon Prime Minister, Count Heinrich von Brühl, Heineken took on the direction of the Dresden Gallery of Prints at the court of the Prince Elect Friedrich August II of Saxony and oversaw its enlargement and attainment of international ranking. With the end of the Brühl era in 1763, his responsibilities for the Gallery of Prints ended and Heineken dedicated his time to intense art scholarly research, writing, and the promotion of agriculture at his Altdöbern estate.

Carl Heinrich von Heineken
1707-1791

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