

The Upper Affenstein Promenade trail



Seal of quality	STANDARD	Length	13.5 km	Difficulty	difficult
Ratings	☆☆☆☆ (0)	Altitude	▲ 925 m	Stamina	★★★★★☆☆
Experience	★★★★★☆☆		▼ 814 m	Technique	★★★★★☆☆
Landscape	★★★★★☆☆	Duration	5:25 h		

Recommended season J F M A M J J A S O N D

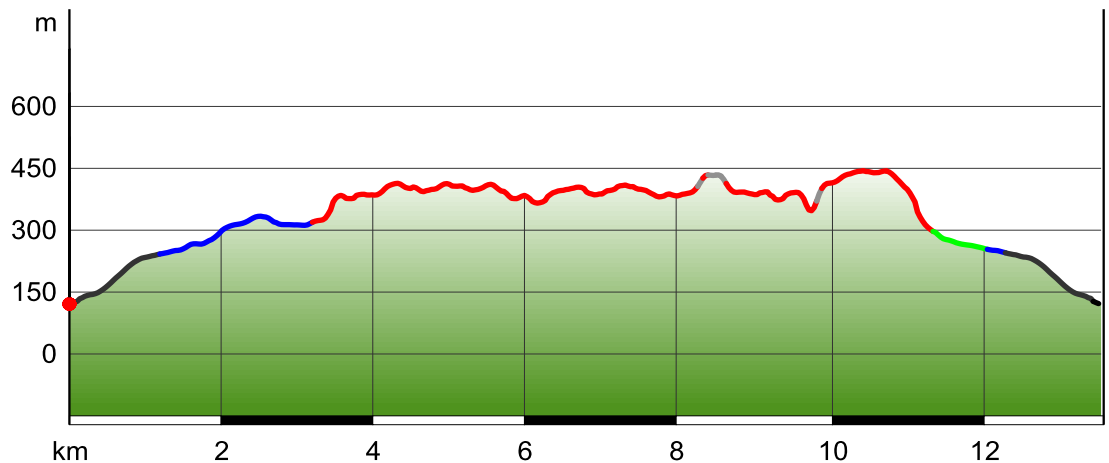


Hiking trail

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Road surface

Asphalt	2.4 km
Gravel	2.2 km
Way	0.8 km
Path	7.8 km
Unknown	0.3 km
Street	0.1 km



Description

Summary

The best route through the Affenstein rock formation is on the Upper Affenstein promenade. This route has only small altitude differences, yet offers spectacular lookout points and places to take a rest. The geological origin of this trail is based on the different rock strengths and the resulting typical erosion.

Description

The best way to hike at the Affensteine rock formation is on the Obere Affensteinpromenade (upper promenade of the Affensteine rocks). It has little altitude changes and yet it has a lot of spectacular lookout points and places to take a rest. The geological origin of this route is based on the rocks' differences in firmness and the resulting typical erosion. The horizontal clay inclusions in the rock are a substantial cause for the today's appearance of it. Along the clay layers are the joint layers which change due to the weather. This process forms layer caves or even rock gates (Prebischtor, Kuhstall). If a hole becomes too large and the weight on the rock structure is too high, they eventually collapse and fall into the valley and only rock terraces remain. These are ideal for creating high elevation trails going through the mountains, like the upper promenade of the Affensteine. For the designation Affensteine you may select the true origin: Option 1: In the middle of

15th century the Wettiner took possession of the robber castle Frienstein. In this place enemies were locked up and tortured in medieval manners. Among them was a young nobleman from Dresden who owed its prosperity from his trade relationship with the Orient. He possessed a tame ape who obeyed him at his word. When it was made public that the nobleman was locked up, his servant hurried with the ape and a long rope of hemp into the Saxon Switzerland Hinterland in order to release him. At night one rope end was tied around the ape who then immediately climbed up the steep rocks to the robber castle. Due to the isolated situation of the dungeon, the guarding was rather poor (or they were already drunk) and the ape arrived unnoticed at the nobleman. The rest was rather simple and the nobleman, who decided to live in Prague from now on, spread his history from the Affensteine rock formation. Option 2: The old German name of the eagle owl (very popular in this region) was "Auf", which over the centuries transformed to the word "Affensteine". The trip starts in the town Schmilka as a half-day hike. At first we leave our meeting point, the tavern "Grenzack" (very popular among hikers for a last refreshment) and then hike uphill through the village until the water source Ilmenquelle. From this point starts the road to the mountain Großer Winterberg which we follow up to the turn-off to the trails Wurzelweg and Elbleitenweg (green circle waymark). Advancing on the Elbleitenweg trail we notice on our right side the climbing rock Rauschenstein. In the Middle Ages the rock

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Rauschenstein, like other exposed and free standing rock formations, accommodated a castle observation post. We walk further and on the right side we see the impressive rock Rauschentorwächter, the eastern tower Rauschenturm and the rock summit Rauschenspitze. The flat trail leads through mixed forests until a sharp left turn. A signpost with the ascent to the lookout point Breite Kluft appears. The following route description onward from the lookout point Breite Kluft also connects to the Schrammsteine hiking trip. We further follow the blue waymark (Zurückesteig) up to the turn-off to the "Obere Affensteinpromenade" (upper promenade of the Affensteine rocks). On our route we also hike past the junction to the ascent over the Rotkehlchenstiege (from Schmilka). Alternatively instead of using the Zurückesteig trail, hikers can also take the highly recommended hiking trail from the Breite Kluft lookout point to the Rotkehlchenstiege. Though this option has a black waymark and is reserved only for experienced hikers and mountain climbers. Following the aforementioned turn-off we first arrive on the Affenwand (cliff) and step slowly toward the edge (nearby the the descent to the cave Sandloch). Here we find a nice picnic area with a good view on the Schrammsteine rock formation Vorderland and the Falkenstein rock. Along the northern rock edge towards east we can admire the impressive double heads of the rocks Domwächter and Rohnspitze. The hike continues and we follow the yellow waymark. We walk for a short while into northwest direction and then pass the small Prebischtor rock gate. After passing the gate we continue toward east until arriving at the first crossroads. From left enters the path from the gorge Nassen Grund (entrance of the Kirnitzschtal valley) and the cave Sandloch. Into right direction runs the Reitsteig path (still for a few meters with the yellow waymark, after the next crossroads with blue waymark) toward the mountain Großer Winterberg. But pay attention at this point! The correct path of the Obere Affensteinpromenade (upper promenade of the Affensteine) continues to the middle without any waymark (on the left the Sandloch, on the right the Reitsteig path). After this crossroads we continue to left direction at the same altitude. The next crossroads offers the following options: 1. To the left

side downhill through the Wilde Hölle into the gorge Nassen Grund and the Kirnitzschtal valley. 2. On same altitude slightly to left direction on the upper promenade of the Affensteine. 3. To the right side the way continues on wood steps uphill to the rock Carolafelsen. Option 3 represents a welcome change for hobby photographers and we will soon return to this crossroads again. After a few metres upward on the wood steps a turn-off leads to the right direction directly to the rock Carolafelsen. At this place is one of the most beautiful views on the Affensteine rock formation. The view reaches from the Domwächter along the north walls of the Schrammsteine rock formation, the rock Hohen Torstein, rock Falkenstein to the rock Lilienstein. We return again to the crossroads and turn right to the Obere Affensteinpromenade trail. With 90 metres height the walls of the Bloßstock are the tallest rock towers of the Saxon Switzerland. Therefore it is very popular among mountain climbers! The high presence of hikers and mountain climbers in the past has led to serious erosions at the foot of the rock. The two descents on the trails Zwillingssstiege and Häntzschelstiege are a real challenge and you should not suffer from vertigo! At first the Zwillingssstiege trail turns off to the left from the normal hiking track and leads quickly to the lower promenade of the Affensteine. Whereas the upper path continues toward the Bloßstock rock, where a lookout point offers a beautiful view on the gorge Große Bauernloch and the walls of the rock Teufelsspitze on the opposite side. From this point also starts a rather difficult descent with climbing-rails and wood ladders to the lower promenade of the Affensteine. Those suffering from vertigo should continue on the upper promenade of the Affensteine until the rock Frienstein. We now leave the Obere Affensteinpromenade trail (upper promenade) and climb upward over metal rods and wood ladders to the top of the rock Langes Horn. Once again, you should not suffer from vertigo and have a secure step in order to pass this section. Children should be secured by a rope all the time. We now move straight into south direction until the track changes to a broader forest hiking trail, and we finally see again the blue waymark of the Reitsteig trail (to the right is a turn-off to the rock Carolafelsen). We follow the blue waymark into the right direction, then continue to the left until we

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certainly reach the impressive descent to the Heringsgrund valley through the "Heilige Stiege". The difficulty of this section is moderate, yet hikers with backpacks coming up will start to sweat heavily! We arrive in the Heringsgrund valley, then follow the yellow waymark until we arrive again on the Elbleitenweg trail and later on the road to Schmilka. Now we really have earned us a refreshment. Hopefully the legendary tavern Grenzeck will be reopened again soon, since it was totally destroyed during the flood in 2013. Alternatively the ice-cream bar is a really good choice too.

Starting point / trailhead

Schmilka

Equipment

You have to walk on stairs a lot of times, so pay attention on secure hiking boots.

Safety information

At the Häntzschelstiege section the climb is secured by iron brackets. You should not suffer from vertigo!

Literature

Wander- und Naturführer Sächsische Schweiz / Band 1 - Felsenlandschaft zwischen Bad Schandau und Hinterhermsdorf von Peter Rölke

Maps

Wanderkarte der Sächsischen Schweiz; Schrammsteine-Affensteine 1:10000 (bestellbar über Onlineshop; siehe Links)

Getting there

By car drive on the road B172 to the parking lot in Schmilka.

Parking

There are a number of parking areas in Schmilka. The biggest parking lot is located at the Elbe ferry port / bus turning area

Public transport

Take the train "S-Bahn" to Schöna and then the ferry to cross the river Elbe.

Tips, hints and links

Hiking maps store:

<http://www.elbsandsteingebirge.de/eshop/kartenshop/>

Webcams in Saxon Switzerland:


<http://www.saechsische-schweiz.info/>

From Lohmen to Cunnersdorf

Point of arrival

Schmilka


Properties

	Nice views	Insider tip
	Round tour	

Points of Interest

-  Berghotel Grosser Winterberg

Auf dem Winterberg 1
01814 Bad Schandau OT Schmilka
 035022-40050
-  Panorama von den Affensteinen - Blick nach Norden
-  Gasthof 'Lichtenhainer Wasserfall'

Kirnitzschtalstr. 11
01855 Kirnitzschtal, OT Lichtenhain
 035971 53733

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Pictures

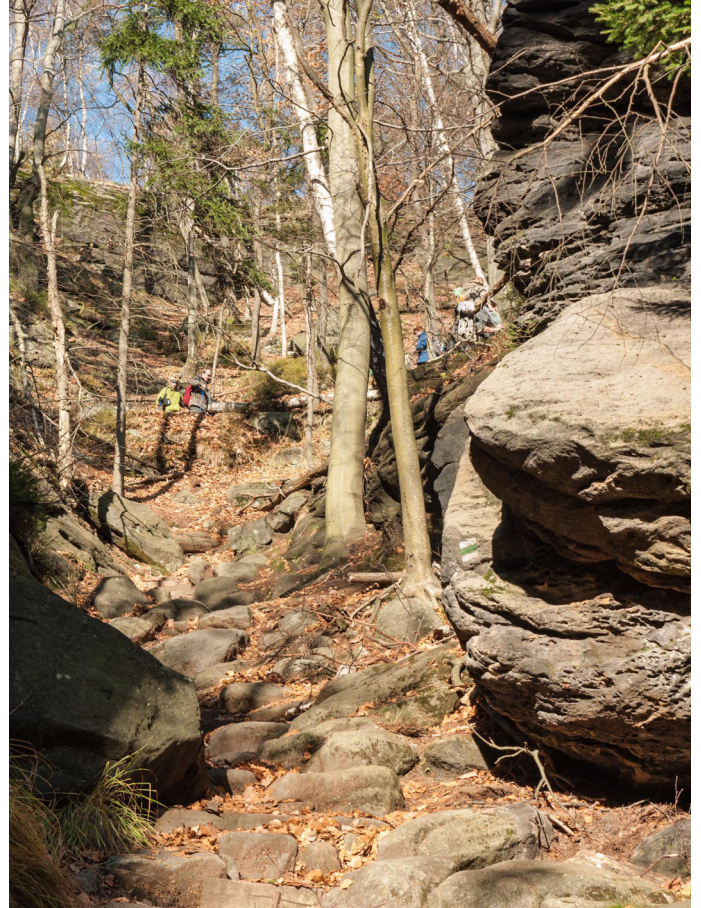
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Carolafelsen
Author Ottmar Vetter
Source www.elbsandsteingebirge.de



Bergsteiger am Rauschenstein
Author Ottmar Vetter
Source Elbsandsteingebirge



Aufstieg zur "Breiten Kluft"
Author Ottmar Vetter
Source Elbsandsteingebirge



Breite Kluft Aussicht
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