

Schlossberg-caves Homburg - a tour guide -

1 Dear guests,
please note the following safety regulations underground.

- Wearing a helmet is mandatory!
Its emergency lights may **only** be used in case of emergency (battery reserve)!
- Please do not touch ceilings and walls!
- Do not leave the marked tracks!
- The emergency call system enables you to: **first aid**  **fire department** 
- Taking videos and pictures is allowed.

Please follow the circular route (stations 1-11).
You can find more information in this plan.

2 The Schlossberg Caves are a medieval sandstone mine, a man-made tunnel system. As the sand contains much quartz, it was ideal for glass production (foundry sand) and for cleaning wooden floors (scouring sand). During the French occupation (1679-1714), the caves were further expanded and used as a storeroom. A letter of complaint by an officer, however, describes the high humidity (80-100%) which did not allow the storage of supplies such as gunpowder and food.

3 At the end of the Second World War Homburg was heavily attacked. Parts of the population of Homburg fled from the air raids into the caves. Witnesses report on several thousand people, some of whom found shelter in the caves for weeks.

4 The model shows the state of the Schlossberg and the old town centre of Homburg around 1697 at the time of Ludwig XIV. Vauban's style of building bastions can easily be recognized. (see also tour: **Fortress of Homburg**)

5 Between 2003 and 2007 the Schlossberg Caves were reinforced using the most modern mining technology. A sum of about 3 million euros was invested with the support of the Saarland state.

6 The caves provide a unique insight into the Schlossberg layers of the lower red sandstone. About 250 million years ago, in the early Triassic, this place was probably situated in the area of a desert valley. The mighty yellow sand layers were created by dunes, recognizable by their inner diagonal stratification. The red-banded horizontal layers were formed under temporary water cover, which wave ripples, dry cracks and animal tracks give evidence of. Since the area sank widely at that time, the different layers remained in the original sequence.



7 From here you can reach the upper levels (11 + 12) of the Schlossberg Caves. The passage was probably created as a "corridor" during the French occupation (1679-1714).

Please continue to observe all **safety regulations!** There is also another **emergency exit** on the **12th level**.

8 At the time of the origin of the sandstone, there were no large dinosaurs yet. The animals living at that time left footprints, which we can still see on the ceiling as negative impressions from below. That the impressions have been preserved to this day is unusual.

9 The throne room is the largest hall of the caves. It is 47 meters below the Schlossberg Hotel. Its name dates back to the 1960s, when cave festivals were regularly celebrated in the caves. For each of these festivals, a "cave queen" was elected, who sat right here in the throne room.

10 Here you can see the maximum extent of the caves. A shaft leads 30 meters down to the lowest level, the town level, to the former draft beer cellars of Karlsberg brewery. There you can feel the air circulation through the caves.
A second shaft leads 30 meters up into the basement (kitchen) of Schlossberg Hotel.

11 You are now in the modern part of the caves. This air raid shelter was built from 1952 to 1955 in the caves which had partly been built before. This place was originally intended to serve as a government bunker of the former government under Johannes Hoffmann. The constructions were discontinued, because Saarland was re-affiliated to the Federal Republic in 1957. Here ends the tour and you get back to the starting point of the circular route.

Thank you very much for your visit!

The caves are video-monitored. You agree by entering the caves or buying a ticket.

Further options from here:

Tour of the Ruins
(Homburg Fortress - a historic tour -)

Premium Hiking Trail
(Schlossberg tour 13.5 km (8.9 mi), symbol: ).

Please also note our selection of ice cream, drinks and souvenirs, which are available at the cash desk at the entrance.



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