




KRAMENBURG



in



real life!





Kranenburg between Rhine and Reichswald

Kranenburg looks back on 775 years of history that left its marks in and around Kranenburg.

Medieval city walls and historical town centre, modern art collections and local history museum, wide panoramic views of fields, meadows and forested ridges, impressive natural features and appealing leisure opportunities, rural character, country atmosphere and close to cities - in Kranenburg, this particular diversity of every-day impressions can be enjoyed almost nowhere else.

Kranenburg lies about 10 km (6 miles) to the West of the district capitol of Cleves („Kleve“) in the Lower-Rhine area, close to the Dutch border. The many scenic beauties which resulted from the interaction between Rhine, the lowlands area of the „Düffelt“ and the Reichswald present the visitor with a unique charm. Kranenburg, with its many bridle paths, walking routes and cycle tracks, offers many opportunities to enjoy the natural beauty and location.

This brochure contains some interesting bits of information which will, we hope, demonstrate the broad diversity of Kranenburg.



Tourism


KRANENBURG

Draisine

Draisine - unique in the lower Rhine region



The border region's „draisine“ (also called „dressin“, „velorail“ or „rail-bike“) is the truly unique and limitless recreational attraction on the railroad tracks between Cleves („Kleve“ in German), Kranenburg and the Dutch town of Groesbeek. On the draisine and ranging from carriages for groups of four to club draisines for up to 14 people, discover the Dutch-German border region from a totally new perspective.

discover the Dutch-German border region from a totally new perspective.

There are two distinct tracks, one between Cleves and Kranenburg, and the other one between Kranenburg and the Dutch town of Groesbeek, with both offering relaxation and fun for all ages groups. You can complement your day out with other attractions in the terminus towns.

The ideal package for company and club outings, and family, anniversary and youth trips.



Further information en bookings

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www.grenzland-draisine.eu

Tourism



Pilgrimage

In 2008, the Kranenburg pilgrimage celebrates its 700 anniversary. In 1308 AD, the Relic of the Cross was discovered, which since then has been worshipped for centuries by believers from far and near.

Since 2003, at the place where once the tree is believed to have stood out of which the Cross fell down, there is now a basalt stele dedicated to this legend, the so-called Holy Cross Stub. Looking through a round opening in the stone, one sees the Kranenburg church.

The Cross pilgrimage brought riches to the city of Kranenburg. In the first half of the 15th century, building was commenced of a late-Gothic church whose tower, however, was never completed with a spire. Only 450 years later did the tower get its characteristic domed roof.

Other pages will give you an extensive summary of the history of the pilgrimage, as well as a calendar of the annually occurring pilgrimage dates.

Groups of pilgrims are hereby cordially invited to join in at the pilgrimage. After an appointment with the Catholic parish, special pilgrims masses can be arranged.

A pilgrimage to Kranenburg would be all the more profound when combined with a visit to the museum Orientalis near Nijmegen (distance 10 km or just over 6 miles), a very interesting religious open-air museum..



Further information

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Tourism


KRANENBURG

Pilgrimage calendar

In addition to the events listed in the pilgrimage programme, there are also the following annually occurring events::

- ▶ On the Sunday before the 4th Sunday of Lent, „Laetare“, the parishers walk from Zyfflich to Kranenburg, by way of introduction to the Cross Pilgrimage.
- ▶ The „Laetare“ Sunday is the contemplation day for politicians.
- ▶ On Good Friday, the liturgy of the Suffering and Death of Jesus Christ unifies the local people and pilgrims in one big church service.
- ▶ On the 8th May, the day commemorating the end of the Second World War, there is an ecumenical service with soldiers from various NATO countries.
- ▶ On the first Sunday in July, and within the framework of the German/Dutch protection of the pilgrimage, a prelate marks the beginning of the actual period of the pilgrimage.
- ▶ On the last Sunday in August, the Brothers of St. Vincent and the Sisters of St. Elisabeth from the Netherlands and Germany hold a pilgrimage to the Relic of The Cross in Kranenburg.
- ▶ The Sunday after the 14th September, the Feast of the Exaltation of the Cross, is the highlight of the annual pilgrimage, with Feast of the Cross when the Cross is born through the town.
- ▶ After the pontifical mass at 10 AM, the members of the Brotherhood of the Cross bear the Kranenburg Cross around in the medieval town. The members of the religious orders of the knights (the Order of Malta and the Order of the Holy Grave in Jerusalem), the brotherhoods and the civic guards, and the pilgrims unite in the procession and turn it into an impressive profession of their belief in the crucified Lord.
- ▶ The sick and the disabled, the old and women have their own days of pilgrimage.



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Futher information

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Tourism



Museums

The museums in Kranenburg

In essence, these museums are represented by the „Mühlenturm“ (Mill Tower), the Museum Katharinenhof and the „Stadscheune“ (Town Barn). All buildings are in the historical town centre and are only 2 minutes' walking distance away from one another.

Opening hours of all museums are
Tuesdays till Sundays from 2 PM till 5 PM



Contact:
Verein für Heimatschutz e.V.
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e-mail: info@museumkatharinenhof.de

Tourism



Mühlenturm (Mill Tower)

As part of the city defence works, the Mühlenturm (Mill Tower) is an important element in the historical town centre and together with the convent and pilgrimage church defines the Kranenburg skyline. Its pointed top carries the creature of the municipality's crest, the crane, and thus signifies an important mark of the town.

The defence tower as well as the tower windmill were built, together with 9 more defence towers, around 1400 AD as part of the city defence works. The windmill and 3 more defence towers have survived till today. After the last miller had already started with demolition works, seven Kranenburg citizens bought the ruins in 1922. For the purpose of the restoration of the tower, they founded and established an association for local history and rebuilt the former mill as a tower on the basis of a design by Theodor Wildemann, the provincial curator, which yielded its current looks. The idea of the founders of the association to establish a local history museum was finally realised in 1932. After damages, which included the inventory, during the Second World War the museum was open to the public again in 1948. From 1970, the Museum Katharinenhof displays religious popular art in the Mühlenturm (Mill Tower) as a token pilgrimage museum.

At the end of the 80-ies of the previous century, it became clear that the time for fundamental restorations and redevelopment had come. From this moment on, the tower was no longer open to the public. In 1999, after intense and thorough preparations, the restoration works commenced.

With its reopening on the 10th July 2004, after a long period of closure, the Mühlenturm took its familiar place again in the widely varied group of museums in the Lower-Rhine region.

Since 2006, the Mühlenturm has regained its original destination. In August, the „History in the Tower“ exhibition was opened. Chronological in design, it starts under the domed roof with proto- and early-historic exhibits and continues, as one descends, with early cultures in the Lower-Rhine region, settlement and lordships, and Church and religion. The ground floor tells the history of the city windmill through the „Von der Windmühle zum Wahrzeichen“ (From Windmill to City Mark) exhibition.



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Museum Katharinenhof

Since the Museum Katharinenhof opened in 1961, the collections of the museum have expanded considerably through gifts, acquisitions and donations.

The art exhibits, from the middle ages till the present, are on display on two floors. On a separate floor, annually changing special exhibitions show modern or older art in an alternating fashion.



For information on current and forthcoming alternative exhibitions, please see the events programme. In particular, it concerns the following main emphasis in collections: a gallery with baroque pictures, baroque sculptures of the Lower-Rhine region, art from around 1800 with a special collection of works by Daniel Chodowiecki, modern art with special emphasis on the (Lower-)Rhine and North-German regions (including works from J. Beuys, E. Mataré, W. Ophey, W. Schmurr, H. Nauen, H. Teuber, W. Herberholz, P. Janssen, E. Heerich, A. Thomkius, G. Wiegand, and many others).

Stadtscheune (Town Barn)

The Stadtscheune is a square-shaped brick building with a hipped roof dating from the 18th century. It is a remnant of some 30 former buildings within the city walls, in which currently old craftsmen's tools and agricultural tools and implements are exhibited.



The area around Kranenburg had and still has a particular emphasis on dairy farming and its economy. Therefore, there is a special exhibition of the production of butter as a cottage industry, with tools and implements as these were used some 50 years ago. In addition, there is an exhibition of arable farming, with displays of 150-year old tools and implements. Highlights are wooden ploughs (including the pointed plough, dig-over plough and sowing plough), as well as flails and a wind-operated threshing-machine. The highlight of this exhibition

is a fully equipped cobbler's workshop originally used by the cobbler Heinrich Kersten. His original workshop was in the Wanderstraße, but was rebuilt detail by detail in the Stadtscheune.

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Historical tour

Roman-Catholic church
Parish and pilgrimage church
of St. Peter and St. Paul



City walls

Evangelical church



**Former
railway station**



**Mühlenturm
(Mill Tower)**



**Museum
Katharinenhof**



**Stadtscheune
(Town Barn)**

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Tourism


KRANENBURG

Historical tour



City walls

The course of the former city defence works with town ramparts and moat are still easily recognisable. At various places, between the Wanderstraße and Rütterswall, restored remains of the city walls from around 1400 AD have survived. Both city gates (the „Klever“ (Cleves) gate and the „Nimweger“ (Nijmegen) gate) have gone entirely; of the erstwhile four towers, only the Mühlenturm (Mill Tower) has survived best.

Stadtscheune (Town Barn)

This building from the 18th century is what remains of a former burgher farmstead, which would be representative of the old buildings and their style and architecture of Kranenburg. The restored „Scheune“ (barn) currently accommodates a museum of traditional crafts.



Evangelical church

This small church is a sober building with prayer hall from 1723 AD. The belfry was added as late as 1903, but after its destruction during the Second World War was replaced by a roof-turret. Remarkable are the pulpit from 1622 AD, making it much older than the church itself, and the modern glass windows designed by Erich John.



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Tourism



Historical tour

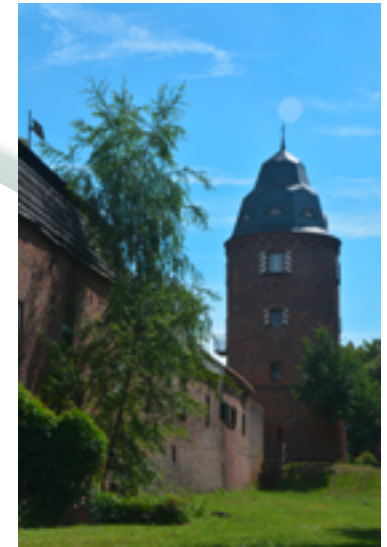
Museum Katharinenhof



In 1446 AD, so-called beguines established themselves in the current Mühlenstraße as an associated community of a Cleves sister convent. Later this worldly community of religious women was converted into a regular monastery of Augustinian nuns. The patron saint of the convent was Saint Catherine. The aptly named Katharinenhof in the Mühlenstraße still has historical architectural features, including a late-medieval arched vault in the cellar.

Mühlenturm (Mill Tower)

The Mühlenturm (Mill Tower) is a former tower, which was part of the city walls and also served as the town mill. Because of its dereliction, it was thoroughly restored in 1927, whereby its outside was given new looks.



Former railway station

Kranenburg was first connected to the national railway network in 1865 when the line from Krefeld via Kranenburg to Nijmegen was completed. The current railway station dates from 1911, and currently houses the Tourist Info Center Alter Bahnhof.

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Tourism



Historical tour



Roman Catholic church Parish and pilgrimage church of St. Peter and St. Paul

When Kranenburg was granted privileges around 1290 AD, there must already have been a parish church (under the patronage of Saint Martin). The current church building dates from the first half of the 15th century and was designed and erected by master builder Gisbert Schairt van Bommel. The discovery of the miracle-working Cross in 1308 AD made Kranenburg into an intensively visited place of pilgrimage which enabled the building of a large church. After the so-called secularisation in 1802, the parish church was given the patronage of St. Peter and St. Paul.

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Tourism



Experiencing nature

Woods, fields and meadows - „naturally“ for miles around

As ever, the river Rhine determines the landscape in the Lower-Rhine region. Its former flood plain in the Kranenburg area is somewhat poetically called the „Düffel“. This flat pastureland is characterised by stubborn pollard willows, ancient orchards, hedges and endless poplar lanes.

This area of land developed and created by man over centuries is the natural habitat of rare animal and plant species. The meadows provide room for living to peewits, black and bar-tailed godwits and curlews. Frogs, toads and salamanders have taken over ponds, pools and ditches. Special „guests“ arrive and relieve one another every summer and winter. From October, some 200,000 arctic wild geese move in to hibernate in the plains of the Lower-Rhine region. From March, numerous storks visit Kranenburg. During the breeding season, they roam the lowlands in their quest for food.

The broad landscape between Rhine and Reichswald offers an attractive backdrop for various leisure activities. Cyclists can roam the flat country roads in the Düffel for hours. Horse lovers find sublime opportunities to explore the Reichswald by using the equestrian village of Frasselt as their base. The area not only boasts wonderful bridle paths, but also a finely branched network of footpaths and bicycle paths.



Experiencing nature

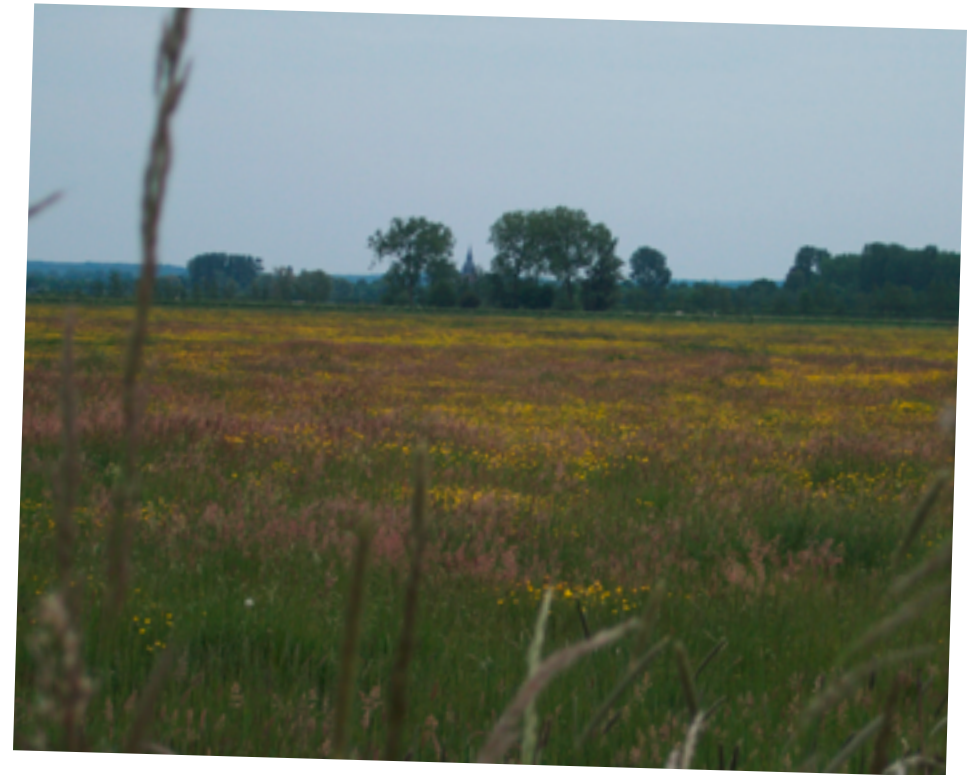
Nature reserve with educational features

As early as 1981, an area of 95 hectares (235 acres) of the Kranenburg marshland (also called „the poor’s marshes“) to the East of Kranenburg was given the status of protected nature reserve. The marshland represents what remains of the originally extensive Lower-Rhine boglands. Today, one finds a mosaic of natural and uncultivated domains with brushwood, scrubs, thickets, undergrowth and both reed borders and watercourses on the one hand, and extensively cultivated and farmed areas that are criss-crossed by hedges. In the latter case, it mainly concerns pasture lands that are cut late in the year for their hay, and meadows in which the robust Highland cattle graze.

In the centre of this nature reserve, a dredge pool was created in the early 70-ies, which later became the responsibility of the Kranenburg angling club.

Today the Kranenburg marshland has returned to being the habitat for many, partially very rare animal and plant species. The birds include nesting-bird rarities such as the water rail, peewit, common snipe, great snipe, bluethroat, and stonechat. Also from a botanical perspective, the Kranenburg marshland has a lot to offer. In addition to numerous marsh and bog plants, also the bladderwort, which is under threat of extinction, and indigenous orchids such as the lesser butterfly orchid (*plantanthera bifolia*) and the orchis (genus *Orchis*) can be found here.

The educational features of the area are a footpath of 3 km (2 m) going round it, with 8 stops (or „stations“) that demonstrate and educate in the many aspects of the Kranenburg marshland. From a nature protection point of view, the area’s responsibility lies with the NABU Naturschutzstation (NABU nature reserve station) and also Tourist Information, which, if so desired, organises excursions with expert guides into the area at expense covering rates, provided such groups register by phone or mail beforehand.



Booking en further information

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Tourism





A portrait of Kranenburg

Medieval city walls and historical town centre, modern art collections and local history museum, wide panoramic views of fields, meadows and forested ridges, impressive natural features and appealing leisure opportunities, rural character, country atmosphere and close to cities - in Kranenburg, this particular diversity of every-day impressions can be enjoyed almost nowhere else.

The core town of Kranenburg and the eight villages belonging to it make up the municipality of Kranenburg. Every village, with its own historic background and specific character, is special in its own right and contributes to the unique diversity of this municipality.

The next pages provide a brief summary of the histories of these villages of the municipality of Kranenburg.



Municipal villages



Kranenburg

The core of the municipality of Kranenburg looks back on nearly 700 years of history. The sources do not reveal a precise date for the founding of the castle and the settlement of Kranenburg. The first reference to a castle with the name of Kranenburg occurs in a document dated 24th March 1270 AD. The settlement near the castle received town privileges before 1294 AD.

Even today, the historical town centre is full of medieval architectural elements. A part of the southern city walls still remain. In those days, the fortifications with moat, two towers at intersections with the Große Straße and several defence towers offered a secure protection to the burghers and other dwellers in the little town. The new castle of the Dukes of Cleves at the north side of the city wall is completely gone, but the late-Gothic convent and



Nütterden

pilgrimage church, the main building of the Augustinian monastery, the current Museum Katharinenhof and the only remaining defence tower, the Mühlenturm (Mill Tower), are frequently visited attractions.

In a document from 720/21 AD, the village of Nütterden is referred to by the name of „Nitri“. The origins of Nütterden lie in the Haus Klarenbeck (Klarenbeck Estate), which was in the vicinity of the „Elsenhof“ and which now goes by the name of Klarenbeek. In ecclesiastical matters, for centuries Nütterden came under the jurisdiction of the parish of Donsbrüggen. It was not until 1841 that the parish of St. Anthony (St. Antonius) was founded. In 1853 the young parish got its own church in neo-Gothic style, which replaced an old chapel dating back from



Schottheide

the 15th century. At the Dorfplatz in the Hoher Weg, the „Forellenbrunnen“ sculpture featuring two boys, from the Nütterden sculptor Dieter von Levetzow, represents the presence and availability of water in Nütterden, which in earlier days enabled the use of three water mills.

Schottheide, the youngest addition to the municipality of Kranenburg, came into existence at the end of the 18th century through the cultivation of the moor with the same name, which appears in a document as early as 1414 AD under the name of „Schoedscheheye“. Village life centres around the village school built in 1953; it only served as a school proper until 1968. Today, the school accommodates the various clubs and associations, and serves as a meeting point for both young and old.

Municipal villages



Mehr

The village of Mehr is mentioned in documents as early as 720/21 AD. The name derives from a lake- or pond-like widening in a stream with a length of almost 3 km (2 miles) and width of 100 meters (110 yards) between two longitudinal ridges of sandy soil between higher dune-like terrain and lowlands. The older, southern settlement row to the east of the church of St. Martin is roughly 2 km (1.25 miles) long, while the younger, northerly settlement row is somewhat shorter. A parish is referenced in documents as early as 1290 AD. The current church building is essentially 15th century. It was extended in the 19th century, with only the two lower floors of the tower being older. The castle of Zelem, which replaced the old homestead of „Saleheim“, dates back from the 15th century. A drawing by Jan de Beyer from 1745 shows the buildings during the Renaissance, which were added by the Palandt family in the 16th century to the castle of Zelem. The current, more sober looks date from around 1800. Frasselt came into existence in the beginning of the 14th



Frasselt

century when the Duke of Cleves had the edge of the Reichswald forest cleared and cultivated for agricultural purposes. This clearing of c. 1297 AD only concerned the easterly section; the westerly settlement zone was opened up from 1331 AD onwards by the Duke of Guelderland. In this way, Frasselt turned into village with a two-ribbon development with plots of privately-owned land immediately behind the houses and the front yards adjacent to the central road. The settlement is named after the old forest (silva Vracene), in which the clearing took place. It was not until the 19th century that Frasselt got its own parish. The parish church of St. Anthony, built between 1860 and 1862 in a neo-Gothic style, was, like the rest of the village, very badly damaged during the hostilities of the war in 1944/45, but was rebuilt quickly in just a few years. Currently, Frasselt has some 500 inhabitants. Frasselt offers horse lovers the best opportunities for equestrian sports and has every right to call itself „the riders' village“. Zyfflich is situated on top of a longitudinal ridge of sandy



Zyfflich

soil between higher dune-like terrain and lowlands, which provides protection from high water. Roman finds demonstrate the then presence of the Romans. The name of the village does not appear in documents until 974/983 AD with a reference to „Safloggi“. At the beginning of the 11th century, Count Balderic and his wife Adela of Hamaland (also Adela of Renkum) founded a convent and chapter and had a church built. Although the convent and chapter moved to Kranenburg in 1436 AD, the church of St. Martin remained the parish church. The former collegiate church, dedicated to St. Martin, is still an important architectural mark. The shape of the originally Ottonic-Romanesque basilica was eventually determined by Gothic and later alterations. Decline, rebuilding and war damages have clearly left their marks. The village of Zyfflich as part of the municipality of Kranenburg is situated at 9.2 meters (27.6 ft) above the Amsterdam Ordnance Datum and is thus the lowest point in the German state of North-Rhine-Westphalia.

Municipal villages



Wyler

The name of the village of Wyler first occurs in a document from 1189 AD, but the many signs of settlement of the village date back much earlier. To the west of the Wyler Berg (the „Wyler Mountain“ near Berg en Dal in the Netherlands), the Romans used an important brick kiln there. A settlement from the time of the Merovingians has been established by a burial ground. As early as 1304 AD, there was a chapel belonging to the Zyfflich chapter and convent. The Romanesque West Tower and foundations of the longhouse, rebuilt in the 18th century, prove that religious life dates back from even earlier times. In 1964-66, and replacing the neo-Gothic church of 1911, a modern church building was erected. Village life has long been determined by the border with the Netherlands. In the Hauptstraße, you can still see the Customs clearing buildings which, like the modern border post on the B9, have in the meantime become obsolete.



Niel

The village of Niel is a very old settlement in the Lower-Rhine lowland area. As early as 891/92 AD, the village is referenced in a document, however, with a different spelling of „Niol“. The old farms were built on artificial mounds called „Polls“ to provide protection against high water. The village is centred around the parish church of St. Boniface. It is presumed that there was a church in Niel as early as around 1100 AD. Remains of a Romanesque church were found in the bottom parts of the church tower. Also the font made out of Blue Stone of Namur from the 13th century proves the existence of a church building at the time. The church portal is marked with the high-water marks from the last 200 years. The name of the smallest village is older than the settlement itself. The oldest proof (an invoice from the county of Guelderland) dates from as early as 1294/95 AD, in which a „curtis Grafwegen“ (the Grafwegen courtyard)



Grafwegen

is mentioned. While in essence there was already also a village with this name in the vicinity of Groesbeek (in the Netherlands) around the 13th century, and in the late Middle Ages a clearing settlement with the same name came into existence, the roots of the current village in the municipality of Kranenburg go back to the 17th century. In a decree from Cleves of 1572 AD, the „waltdienaers op den Grafweg“ (the forest and game wardens on the ‚Grafweg‘) were included in the group performing for the parish of Kranenburg. Thus, the origins lie in a settlement of forest and game wardens who were tasked with preventing illegal felling and poaching. Well into the middle of the last century, the main source of income of these inhabitants was broom-making and basket-weaving. Currently, Grafwegen has about 90 inhabitants. Because of its favourable proximity, Grafwegen has also become a very interesting location for Dutch people.

Tourist Info Center Alter Bahnhof



The Tourist Info Center Alter Bahnhof in the former train station in Kranenburg provides guests with the following pieces of information:

Tourist Information

Maps and guides, books and brochures: in the Visitors' Centre of the municipality of Kranenburg, you will find many pieces of information, facts and interesting objects about and in the region, as well as tips about food and accommodation. We will be happy to provide you with any additional help.

Presentations and field trips

Presentations and field trips, whether on foot, by bike or by bus: our current programme offers an appealing and diverse set of events related to the nature, culture and scenery of the „Gelderse Poort“ region. We will be happy to advise you. For groups, please inquire for separate possibilities.

Booking and further information

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Tourism



How to get here...

The municipality of Kranenburg is situated at the lower course of the Lower-Rhine in the north-eastern part of North Rhine-Westphalia, very close to the Dutch border.

When travelling by car, you follow the A57 to the north till exit number 2 („Goch / Kleve“ (Cleves)). At the end of the exit, you take a right turn onto the B9, after which you take the first exit left in the direction of Kranenburg. After about 200 yards, you take a right turn onto the B504 in the direction of Kranenburg. Follow this road for about 15 kilometres (10 miles), and then turn left into the municipality of Kranenburg.

When coming from the Netherlands, follow the Dutch N325, which at the border becomes the German B9. Follow the B9 for about 1 kilometre, and then turn right onto the K44 (towards the village of Wyler). Once on the K44, keep following this road; after about 5 kilometres (3 miles) you will have reached the municipality of Kranenburg.

When travelling by train, take the Niers Express, which terminates in the district capital of Cleves at about 10 kilometres from Kranenburg. At the train station, you will also find the bus terminal. From here, you take the number 58 bus to Kranenburg.

Even when you take the plane, it shouldn't be a problem. Niederrhein Airport (Düsseldorf-Weeze) is only 25 kilometres away, while the main Dusseldorf Airport („Flughafen Düsseldorf“) is just 100 kilometres away.



Tourism

KRANENBURG

Imprint

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