Welcome to Gelsenkirchen
Gelsenkirchen is situated in the middle of the Ruhr metropolitan region, after Paris and London the third-largest conurbation in Europe. Over five million people live here. For around 30 million people Gelsenkirchen can be reached inside two hours. Around 40 percent of the population of the European Union live within a 500-kilometre radius of the city.

Gelsenkirchen has over 260,000 residents.

Gelsenkirchen is easy to get to: both by car, via the A2, A42, A52, A31, A40 and A43 motorways, and by local public transport or mainline train.

Within a radius of just 100 kilometres there are four airports.

In Gelsenkirchen and its immediate vicinity you will find three golf clubs, including two 18-hole courses.

One of Germany’s biggest solar power residential estates, comprising 422 flats, is located in Gelsenkirchen. There are also other solar power estates within the city and directly adjacent to the VELTINS-Arena ‘auf Schalke’ the eye is caught by an enormous solar sail.
Gelsenkirchen and the colour blue belong together. Yes. But it is not the royal blue of FC Schalke 04, as many football fans would like to think. Gelsenkirchen blue is ultramarine. That is the colour of the stylised G in the city’s logo. And of the Sponge Relief by artist Yves Klein in the Musiktheater im Revier.

Surprised? The colour blue is encountered frequently in Gelsenkirchen. For example, the swabbed blue shades of artist Eva-Maria Joerssen in the foyer of the machine hall at the long since closed Rheinelbe Colliery. Or the luminescent blue of the artistically arranged pumping station on the site of the former Nordstern Colliery. In Gelsenkirchen even a spherical gas holder gets turned into a work of art, for which artist Rolf Glasmeier could not forgo the colour blue. Artist Markus Lüpertz also picked blue when he created the monumental sculpture of Hercules high up right beside the pithead tower of the former Nordstern Colliery.

Blue is the colour of choice whenever the historic city hall tower, the futuristic science park and
Swabbed, luminescent or shimmering – but always blue.

More on the blue city
www.gelsenkirchen.de/stadtprofil

Many other landmarks get illuminated. The shimmering blue of solar cells is found in many places in and around the city. Visible from afar is the large solar sail next to the VELTINS Arena. The colour that rules here is royal blue, as football is celebrated in one of Europe’s most modern stadia. However, it’s not just the vociferous fans that create a great atmosphere in the arena. Robbie Williams, U2, AC/DC, Bruce Springsteen, Metallica, Herbert Grönemeyer, Helene Fischer, PUR and other stars also thrill audiences here with their voices.

On any journey into the blue there is a lot to discover in Gelsenkirchen. Anyone looking deeper into the history of the city will find out that within ‘Gelsenkirchen blue’ there is indeed a due shot of royal blue. The documentary film ‘Schuss ins Blau’ (Shot into the Blue) shows that in 1958 it was two shades of blue that had the city buzzing with excitement. That year the Royal Blues of FC Schalke 04 won their last German Championship title and French artist Yves Klein created his ultramarine blue Sponge Relief in the Musiktheater. A coincidence? No. In Gelsenkirchen football and art belong together, just like the colour blue belongs to the city.
Once these were huge industrial sites, ‘forbidden towns’ in the middle of the city, surrounded by walls. Heavy freight wagons used to rumble here along a criss-crossing network of tracks.

And now? Structural transformation has seen the walls around the collieries and steel works come down. Nature has reconquered the area, producing industrial woods and parklands. The erstwhile cathedrals of labour are today impressive locations for a multitude of entertainment and leisure activities, enjoyed in especially grand style at the annual Extraschicht.

Very much embodying culture is – as the name suggests – the kulturgebiet.consol. In the shadows of Consolidation Colliery there once stood the birthplace of FC Schalke 04. Today young actors and actresses aspire here to get their big breakthrough, while music groups practice for their next show. The kulturgebiet.consol is the site of a youth theatre for recital evenings, music festivals and the annual kite festival. Things get sporty in the Consol.Park with its facilities for the latest hip sports. The historical heritage is fostered in the colliery’s former machine houses. To be found inside the southern machine house is Europe’s largest steam-driven hauling machine, which is fired up every first Sunday in the month. In the northern machine house the Werner Thiel collection deals with mining in artistic fashion.

More details
www.gelsenkirchen.de/freizeit
www.halden.ruhr/halde-rheinelbe.html
www.kulturgebietconsol.de
www.nordsternpark.info
www.extraschicht.de
www.route-industriekultur.de
The Ruhrgebiet’s largest industrial woods

Today a district forester roams through the woods around the former Rheinelbe Colliery. Covering almost 40 hectares, it is the largest industrial woodland in the Ruhrgebiet. Nature shapes the terrain here with the remains of walls covered in moss, winding paths leading through the woods and the frequent sight of dragonflies and bats. The ‘Emscher Orchid’ feels at home here. Epipactis Helleborine is the botanical name of this indigenous species of orchid.

Renowned artist Herman Prigann created the artistic side of this extraordinary woodland. His sculptures evoke memories of the industrial past and give the place something of a fairy-tale, mystical feel. Towering above everything else, the highpoint in the truest sense of the word is the Himmelstreppe, the ‘Stairway to Heaven’.

Have you ever seen the little sister? Nordstern Colliery in Gelsenkirchen is every bit as pretty as its big sister, the Zollverein Coal Mine Industrial Complex, in Essen.

From over 80 metres up on the visitor platform at the feet of the Hercules statue by Markus Lüpertz right next to the pithead tower, you look out over the former National Garden Show site. Today it is a huge landscaped park right next to the water.

At one of the anchor points of the Industrial Culture Route you can see in a mine tunnel the way things used to be. From the panoramic terrace of the tall Nordstern tower, you enjoy clear views out across the park, the city and the entire region.

Where once coal was loaded, an amphitheatre now invites you to enjoy cultural entertainment. Just a few steps further on it's time to shout: “Cast off!” The White Fleet's passenger ship is already setting off on its trip down the Rhine-Herne Canal.

In addition to the colliery, the red double-arched bridge is a further characteristic feature of the park, which really has a lot to offer: a climbing garden, ‘children's Land’ and a whole lot of nature. The food and drink on offer here ranges from beer garden to candlelight dinner and fine cuisine in a 4-star hotel.
In Gelsenkirchen wherever it says a ‘packed programme’ it truly means it. Month after month artists appear in Gelsenkirchen at numerous venues, including at some very unusual and special locations.

At the amphitheatre beside the Rhine-Herne canal, the Musiktheater im Revier (MiR), the kulturgebiet consol, the summer festival at Schloss Berge and elsewhere Gelsenkirchen offers something for all in a full programme of entertainment every year.

The MiR is probably the most beautiful opera house in the region. Nor is it just a venue for opera and operetta. Ballet and light entertainment music are performed there as well. The opera house’s ballet work has won many awards. The MiR thrills audiences again and again with its dramatisations and creates surprises with sounds that you might not expect to hear there – such as steam punk, for example. The opera house owes its unmistakable character to the integration of architecture and fine arts.
Loud sounds and soft tones

A venue of a very special kind is the VELTINS Arena auf Schalke. It is not just a place of pilgrimage for football fans. Slide out the pitch, close the roof and hey presto: biathlon or boxing can be staged in this football temple. Music fans get a real treat for their ears in the Arena. From Helene Fischer and Coldplay to the international heavy metal elite, all the big names play there.

In Gelsenkirchen even the canal becomes an entertainment venue. The parade of ships at the start of the 'Kulturkanal' series of events attracts thousands of visitors. Where once cargo ships were loaded with coal, today the amphitheatre in front of the backdrop of the old Nordstern colliery is a popular location for all kinds of open-air events.

Even the canal is a place of culture

The kite festival at Consol, chivalric games, story-telling festivals, jazzy sounds in the 'stadt. bau.raum' of the former Oberschur colliery or at the International Jazz Festival in the city centre and at SummerSound, which repeatedly provides new acoustic surprises – in Gelsenkirchen there is always something going on.

Culinary delights alongside music are regularly on offer at the market next to the cathedral. Just one of many offerings that puts a swing into everyone’s step in the city centre.

Gelsenkirchen, you see, knows only one kind of programme: a packed programme!
Travel the world in a day

Alaska, Africa or Asia in the heart of the Ruhrgebiet? That’s the ZOOM World of Adventure! Over an area of more than 30 hectares, Gelsenkirchen Zoo invites you to go on a tour of discovery through the living environment of over 100 species: from the cute red panda in Asia World all the way to the grand Kodiak bears in Alaska World. What makes the ZOOM World of Adventure special is the site’s layout, which is assiduously close to nature. The traditional zoo enclosures of yesteryear have given way here to authentic landscapes modelled on the animals’ natural home. Instead of concrete and steel, spacious compounds are formed here by, for example, rivers and cliffs. Without any visible borders, so that the animals can be experienced close up in their habitats. One of many highlights in this regard is, for example, the tropical hall with an evergreen rainforest – lived in by exotic birds, reptiles, orangutans and other animals. For anyone who simply can’t get enough of adventure, the three themed worlds also offer attractions such as the Alaska Ice Adventure – a simulated ride through Alaska’s different vegetation zones. Or the African Queen. A boat trip featuring a waterfall, baboons and hippos.

Young or old – in the ZOOM World of Adventure everyone goes on a journey of discovery!
The Ruhrgebiet is green. A lot greener than many imagine. Right in the heart of this large European conurbation Gelsenkirchen in particular has a remarkable variety of parks and green spaces on offer. A quarter of the city is an area of natural or landscape conservation and there are numerous open spaces and green touches as a result of the old workers’ estates laid out as garden cities. Perfect conditions, therefore, for outdoor activities.

From parks to piles

Fancy a long hike or a lovely walk? No problem in Gelsenkirchen. Be it in the city woods in the north of Gelsenkirchen, in the Revierpark in the south or the formal gardens around Schloss Berge, there are numerous areas of parkland worthy of a visit. All with a very individual character. Especially appealing: areas where old and new meet, where industrial culture and greenery come together, as in the Nordsternpark, for example. Located directly adjacent to the Rhine-Herne Canal, the park was formerly the site of the Nordstern Colliery. When mining came to an end, the land was revitalised and remodelled into a park. Or how about an excursion up onto one of the Ruhrgebiet’s many piles? Formerly used as areas for waste from the mines, today most are freely accessible green landmarks that provide unique views across the region. They can not only be scaled independently, but can also be discovered on guided tours.
Out and about on two wheels

There are new discoveries to be made elsewhere in the region as well: along the routes of closed-down railway lines, cycle paths criss-cross the Ruhrgebiet, freeing cyclists from the busy roads as they take them from one city to another and to the Industrial Culture Route sites. At the heart of it all: Gelsenkirchen. The Emscher Park cycle path, for instance, which covers 230 kilometres, connects the open spaces of the Emscher countryside park.

From climbing to golfing

Admittedly, the former Ruhrgebiet slag piles are not a patch on the Alps, however anyone who likes things a bit more energetic is nevertheless well catered for in Gelsenkirchen. Facilities on offer such as a climbing wall in the Nordsternpark and two golf courses provide for sporting diversion aside from the beautiful game. Every spring the VIVAWEST Marathon is a special highlight for all running enthusiasts. Passing colliery settlements, old pithead towers and industrial culture, the marathon leads from Gelsenkirchen out through Essen, Gladbeck and Bottrop and shows the region from its sporting side.

Water in sight

Wherever there is so much green, there is also generally blue not far away. In Gelsenkirchen that is primarily the Rhine-Herne Canal, which crosses the city halfway along its course. Whether by canoe or passenger boat, Gelsenkirchen has lots to offer from the water, too. While swimming in the canal is not allowed, anyone looking to cool off in summer will find ample opportunity to do so in Gelsenkirchen’s indoor and outdoor pools.
Smoke-stack barons and coke-fire counts is what industrialists like Thyssen used to be called, because they liked to maintain an aristocratic lifestyle. It was not, however, the arrival of heavy industry that first brought the 'aristocracy' to Gelsenkirchen. There was blue blood flowing in the city long before Thyssen, Grillo and co. And truly aristocratic 'blue blood' at that.

Lüttinghof castle originates from the 14th century. Surrounded by moat and avenues of long-established trees, it is a popular destination for cyclists and walkers. From April to September the pastry garden tempts visitors with all sorts of home-made delights, while from October to March coffee and cake is served inside under the vaulted ceiling. Here in this waterside castle music lovers can also enjoy jazz and chamber concerts.

Schloss Berge is known way beyond the city's borders for its summer festival and much more besides. In particular the stately home's gardens in English and French styles, which enthral both keen gardeners and visitors looking for a spot of rest and recuperation. Alternatively, you can really put your back into it rowing on the nearby Berger See.

Schloss Horst is one of Westphalia's most important Renaissance stately homes. The museum inside enables not only children to delve deep into bygone times, but leaves adults astounded as well. The Schloss has also made a name for itself as a backdrop for splendid chivalric games and festivals in the very heart of the Ruhrgebiet.
Worthy of a museum
High-class art, contemporary history, the beautiful game and more

Paris has the Louvre, London the largest civic museum in the world. And Gelsenkirchen? It movingly sets art in motion. The city’s Art Museum exhibits a collection of kinetic art unparalleled in Germany. Motion becomes here an aesthetic part of the art object – with the visitors right in the middle of it. Many of the objects can be touched or pushed, causing them to change. Optical illusions create the impression of movement. The visitors thus become an active part of the exhibition. Also well worth seeing is the collection of classic and modern art, including, for instance works by Max Liebermann, Emil Nolde and René Magritte.

Another area of focus is the design-led concrete art centred on the work of Anton Stankowski, a designer and graphic artist born in Gelsenkirchen. His works made a lasting mark on graphic design. The Gelsenkirchen Art Museum has since 2010 been one of the RKM Ruhr Art Museums.

Within the imposing industrial setting of the Nordstern pithead tower a further special museum experience awaits the visitor. Set against the back-drop of the historic machinery, you see illustrated on six floors the stages of transformation that the site has been through during its history up to the...
present day – from the days of coal mining, via the 1997 National Garden Show, all the way to the prospering country and business park, which is still continuing to grow today. The listed tower and the surrounding buildings of the former surface-mining plants are the work of famous architects Fritz Schupp and Martin Kremmer. They also built the Zollverein Coal Mine Industrial Complex, now a UNESCO world heritage site, in neighbouring Essen. The way to the museum is indicated by the monumental ‘Hercules’ sculpture that rises high above the Nordstern tower. For panoramic views, a visit to the terrace at his feet is a must.

Where football passions run high

The city’s mining history is the central theme of three museum-like sites and an art installation. A steam-driven hauling machine can, for instance, be seen in the southern machine house of Consol Colliery, history is brought to life through accounts told by experienced miners in the ‘Little Museum’ and at the Rotthausen mining collection, and art and contemporary history are combined in the collection of Werner Thiel.

The museum at Schloss Horst takes visitors way back to pre-industrial times. It is a genuinely interactive museum. On a journey through time to the castle construction site in 1565 the focus is on seeing, hearing and trying things out. Visitors are able to experience with all of their senses life and work in the Renaissance era in one of Westphalia’s most important buildings from that time.

In Gelsenkirchen there is, of course, no escaping the beautiful game. Football fans and especially fans of FC Schalke 04 are totally in their element in the Schalke Museum. From the birth of the ‘Schalker Kreisel’ short passing game to the Champions League, it is all here for football enthusiasts to see and hear. And all in the heart of one of Europe’s most modern football temples: the VELTINS Arena auf Schalke.

13 museums – differing fields

High-class art, mining history, long forgotten times and football legends – yet in Gelsenkirchen there is still more to see: architectural and engineering art, an exhibition of the city’s history in the Hans-Sachs-Haus, an icon of brick expressionism, and a museum that deals with the history of Polish immigration. Visitors can retrace the trail of Jewish life in Gelsenkirchen and a documentation centre tackles the era of National Socialist dictatorship.

In total there are 13 museums that cover off a very varied spectrum
Gelsenkirchen's range of eateries is as diverse and varied as the city's population. The influx of people from Poland, Turkey, the former Yugoslavia, Spain, Portugal, Greece, Italy and many other countries is reflected in the city's array of places to eat. From Mediterranean to Asian-inspired fusion cuisine, there is simply everything. Sometimes simple and down-to-earth, sometimes upmarket and refined. Or perhaps you would prefer one of the many burger variations accompanied by a so-called 'GESöff' or 'GEbräu', which are revitalising Gelsenkirchen's beer-brewing tradition?

Regardless of whether by bike or on foot, coming from a concert or an exhibition, the perfect place to eat or drink is, as it were, just around the corner. Gelsenkirchen's stately homes provide the fitting ambience for appropriate occasions, as do the inns where the chat is all about football. Right next to FC Schalke 04's legendary former stadium, the Glückauf Kampfbahn, is the inn where Schalke legend Ernst Kuzorra supped his beer. Sparkling wine, beer or soda – in Gelsenkirchen no problem!

You can, of course, also get the classic Ruhrgebiet 'Currywurst' in the city and practically every snack bar has its own secret recipe for the curry sauce.

Information on other offerings, such as crime thriller tours and themed trips is available from the City and Tourist Information Office in the Hans-Sachs-Haus.

Gelsenkirchen City and Tourist Information Office
Hans-Sachs-Haus
Ebertstraße 11 · 45875 Gelsenkirchen
Tel.: +49 (0)209 169-3968 or -3969
E-Mail: touristinfo@gelsenkirchen.de
www.gelsenkirchen.de/touristinfo
Monday to Friday: 8:00 - 18:00
Saturday: 10:00 - 14:00
Sunday closed
Overnight accommodation options for weary explorers

Hotels, guesthouses, bed and breakfast and motorhome sites

| Hotels | Guetehaus Hove  
Heegstraße 10  
45891 Gelsenkirchen-Buer  
Tel.: + 49 (0)209 59379  
Fax: + 49 (0)208 598706  
www.hauhoepe.de  
info@hauhoepe.de  
| Gastein Schacht III  
Köststraße 8  
45891 Gelsenkirchen-Horst  
Tel.: + 49 (0)209 57975  
Fax: + 49 (0)209 513875  
www.schacht3.info  
ABZ-Gelsenkirchen@t-online.de  
|
| Reisemobilstellplatz Nienhausen (motorhome site)  
in Gesundheitspark Nienhausen (health & fitness park)  
| Revierpark Nienhausen GmbH  
Feldmarkstraße 201  
45883 Gelsenkirchen  
Tel.: + 49 (0)209 9705275 – Fax: + 49 (0)209 94131-99  
E-Mail: info@nienhausen.de  
www.nienhausen.de  
The Nienhausen Health & Fitness Park also offers attractive sauna and salt water hot tub facilities, plus during the summer months two open air swimming pools, one with a wave machine. The spacious park complex offers diverse options, including going for walks, jogging, power walking, mini-golf and tennis.  
| Outing accommodation options for weary explorers  
| Parks and leisure sites  
| Gesundheitspark Nienhausen (health & fitness park)  
| protein, jogging, power walking, mini-golf and tennis.  
| Electricity and fresh water.  
| 22 births  
| Water supply and effluent disposal station  
| Shops about 1 km away  
| Cafe on site at Feldmarkstraße 201  
| Public transport on the doorstep  
30 Birth per night inclusive of 2 people. Each additional person costs extra. Exclusive of Electricity and fresh water.
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