

Your adventure awaits

Experience winter in Erzberg-Leoben



Experience UNESCO cultural heritage around St Barbara's Day

Around 4 December, St Barbara is celebrated in many regions as the patron saint of miners. In Erzberg-Leoben, however, St Barbara's Day holds special significance. Here, mining traditions have been part of the regional identity for centuries and are kept alive to this day by miners' guilds, associations, brass bands and numerous volunteers.

Since 2018, the customs of the miners and smelters along the Styrian Iron Road have been recognised as part of UNESCO's Intangible Cultural Heritage. This recognition honours a living tradition that extends far beyond individual celebrations and continues to shape the region's history, culture and sense of identity to this day. Around St Barbara's Day, visitors can experience this cultural heritage first-hand through festivals, miners' parades, music, dancing and church services.

Why Saint Barbara plays a special role in Erzberg-Leoben

Saint Barbara is regarded as the patron saint of miners. Whilst in many places Saint Barbara's Day is associated with the cutting of 'Barbara branches', a distinct mining festival culture has developed over the centuries along the Styrian Iron Road. Miners' songs, leather-jumping dances, festive traditional costumes, mining parades and church services are still practised today and passed down from generation to generation. As such, St Barbara's Day is an expression of a living mining tradition that links the past and the present.

St Barbara celebrations 2026 at a glance

Mettenschicht in Leoben

2 December 2026 | Leoben Municipal Theatre

The Mettenschicht marks the start of the series of St Barbara events in Leoben. This traditional miners' celebration commemorates the miners' last working day before Christmas and forms the festive opening of St Barbara Week.

Miners' Torchlight Procession

3 December 2026 | KulturQuartier Leoben

The torchlight procession winds its way through the town together with the Steirerherzen Seegraben Miners' Guild, the traditional costume society and the Leoben-Seegraben Miners' Band. This tour, which traces the history of mining, combines music, history and living traditions.

Tourismusverband Erzberg-Leoben

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St Barbara's Festival in Eisenerz

4 and 5 December 2026 | Innerberger Gewerkschaftshaus

At the historic Innerberg Trade Union Hall (Innerberger Gewerkschaftshaus), the weekend is entirely dedicated to mining traditions. Highlights include the St Barbara's Dance on Friday evening and the St Barbara's Festival with its time-honoured customs on Saturday. Visitors gain an insight into a cultural heritage that remains firmly rooted in the region to this day.

Festive Mass and Devotions in Leoben

4 December 2026 | St Xaver Parish Church and St Barbara's Chapel, Seegraben

The celebrations on St Barbara's Day begin with a festive Mass in honour of St Barbara. This is followed by a prayer service at the St Barbara's Chapel in Leoben-Seegraben. The festivities conclude with the St Barbara's Festival at the clubhouse of the Steirerherzen Seegraben traditional costume association.

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About the Erzberg-Leoben Tourist Board

The Erzberg-Leoben Tourist Board works with local businesses, municipalities and partners to develop and market the region as a destination for experiences. The aim is to bring the region to life for both locals and visitors and to boost regional economic growth. The Board also provides information on places to visit, activities and accommodation, and supports businesses and event organisers in the region's tourism development.

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