



EXPERIENCEPLUS!
BICYCLE TOURS SINCE 1972

Cycling Copenhagen to Berlin 16th – 29th July, 2016

Day Five – loop ride through the Holsteinische Schweiz

Highlights: Loop ride, rolling countryside and lakes, Plön

Your loop ride today is in this area of Germany, nicknamed "Holstein Switzerland" since it has some hills. In the 19th century it was very fashionable to go to Switzerland for vacations. We're not sure it quite fits its moniker as the highest "mountain" is only 550 feet! Pedal through an ever-changing landscape of the Young Drift moraines formed during the last ice age. Small woods alternate rapidly with hedged, arable fields and the terrain is characterized by its many lakes nestle amongst low hills. Enjoy Plön and its castle, take a boat ride along the many lakes or, for those not wanting to bike today, relax in town or at the hotel. Distance: 64km (44 miles).

This evening's hotel:

Das kleine Hotel Eutin
Albert-Mahlstedt-Straße 6
23701 Eutin

Tel: +49 4521 858 0441

Tour Leader phone numbers:

Philipp: +49 (0)1577 2721381

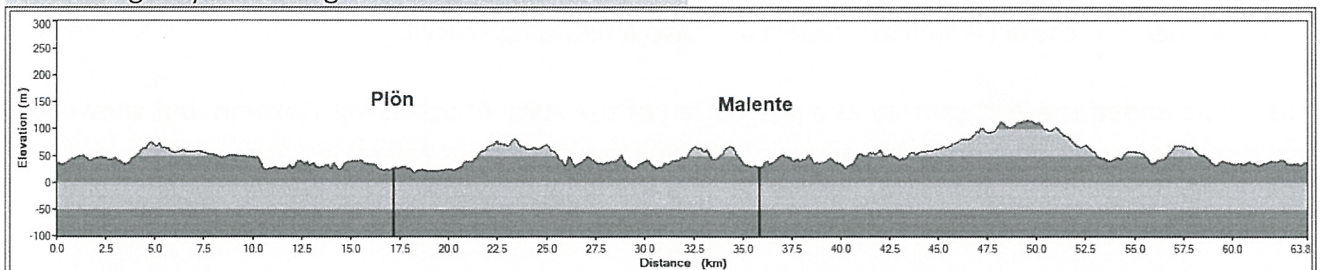
Ilaira: +49(0)1573 854 8988

Jessica: +49 (0)1573 148 6448

77883311

In an emergency call 112

Today's Ride: We'll bike out of Eutin and for the eager riders we have marked a route that will take you to the highest "mountain" of the Holstein Schweiz. Nevertheless, the rest of the ride is continuous rolling hills, too. You have the chance to short cut the ride and leave the hillier bit out. If you opt not to bike today, a great jaunt is a boat ride along the five lakes that will also take you to Plön and give you some great views from the water.



Lunch and Dinner: Plön is a little town with plenty of restaurants and snack places as well as ice-cream joints. Remember, in Germany if you only want to have a sandwich, German bakeries always sell rolls with whatever you wish on them. Dinner will be together tonight.

You Might Like to Know: Singles watch-out! Today we'll pass the The **Bridegroom's Oak** (*Bräutigamseiche*), an oak tree in the Dodauer forest. It is a registered natural monument, which is its less important feature. Its important feature is a hole high in the trunk, reached by a ladder that functions as a dead drop or public letter box for people seeking love partners. The Bräutigamseiche is the only tree in the world that has a postal address. The name of the tree derives from a late 19th century incident. The daughter of the head forester, and the son of a Leipzig chocolate maker, were in love but her father disapproved of the relationship, so they secretly exchanged letters by leaving them in the hole in the tree's trunk. When her father gave in and granted his permission, they were married under the tree on 2 June 1891.



Cycling Copenhagen to Berlin

16th – 29th July, 2016

The history of the oak and word of mouth led to people writing to the tree in the hope of finding a love partner. In 1927, a ladder was set up and later the postal service began to deliver letters to the tree. Letters are deposited six days a week, in the middle of the day. They are from both men and women; a retired postman said in 2006 that he used to deliver four or five a day, from all over the world. It is a public letterbox; anyone can open, read, take, or answer the letters.

At least five, and reportedly more than a hundred marriages, have been brought about by the Bridegroom's Oak. One man from North Rhine-Westphalia on a spa holiday in Schleswig-Holstein found a letter from a woman who lived 20 kilometers from him and wound up marrying her. The retired postman knew of two 25-year marriages brought about by the tree, and he himself met his wife in the 1990s when she wrote directly to him at the tree after seeing him on a television program about the oak.

There is a legend that the tree was planted as a gesture of thanks by the son of a Celtic chieftain after he had been tied to a tree in the forest and was released by a Christian girl. However, historians believe this legend was invented by Christian missionaries to reinterpret pagan worship of oak trees. A service is still held at the tree on Whit Monday. Another custom is for a girl to walk around the tree three times under a full moon, thinking of her beloved and without speaking or laughing; she will be married within the year.

The **Castle in Plön** is one of the largest castles in the north German state of Schleswig-Holstein and the only one located on a hill. The former Residenz of the Dukes of Schleswig-Holstein-Plön was built in the 17th century during the Thirty Years War and has had a colorful history in which it has, for example, been a school for military cadets and also a boarding school.

The castle ended the 20th century as a possession of the state of Schleswig-Holstein, but they could not fund its renovation and so it had to be sold again. Since January 2002 it has been owned privately and, after extensive conversion, serves as a training and qualification center for a branch of optometry. Its new owners have opened it to a limited extent to visitors. (Source: wikipedia)

Bicycle safety tip: Be predictable and communicate with fellow cyclists ESPECIALLY your main riding partner(s). Leave at least a bicycle length of space between you and the next rider. If you would like to socialize or ride together make sure you have adequate visibility front and back for oncoming cars. When a car comes decide which of you will drop back (usually the cyclist closer to the center of the road). When turning or stopping call out, "right turn" or "stopping."

German Lesson of the Day:

I don't speak German: *Ich spreche kein Deutsch*

Do you speak English?: *Sprechen Sie Englisch?*

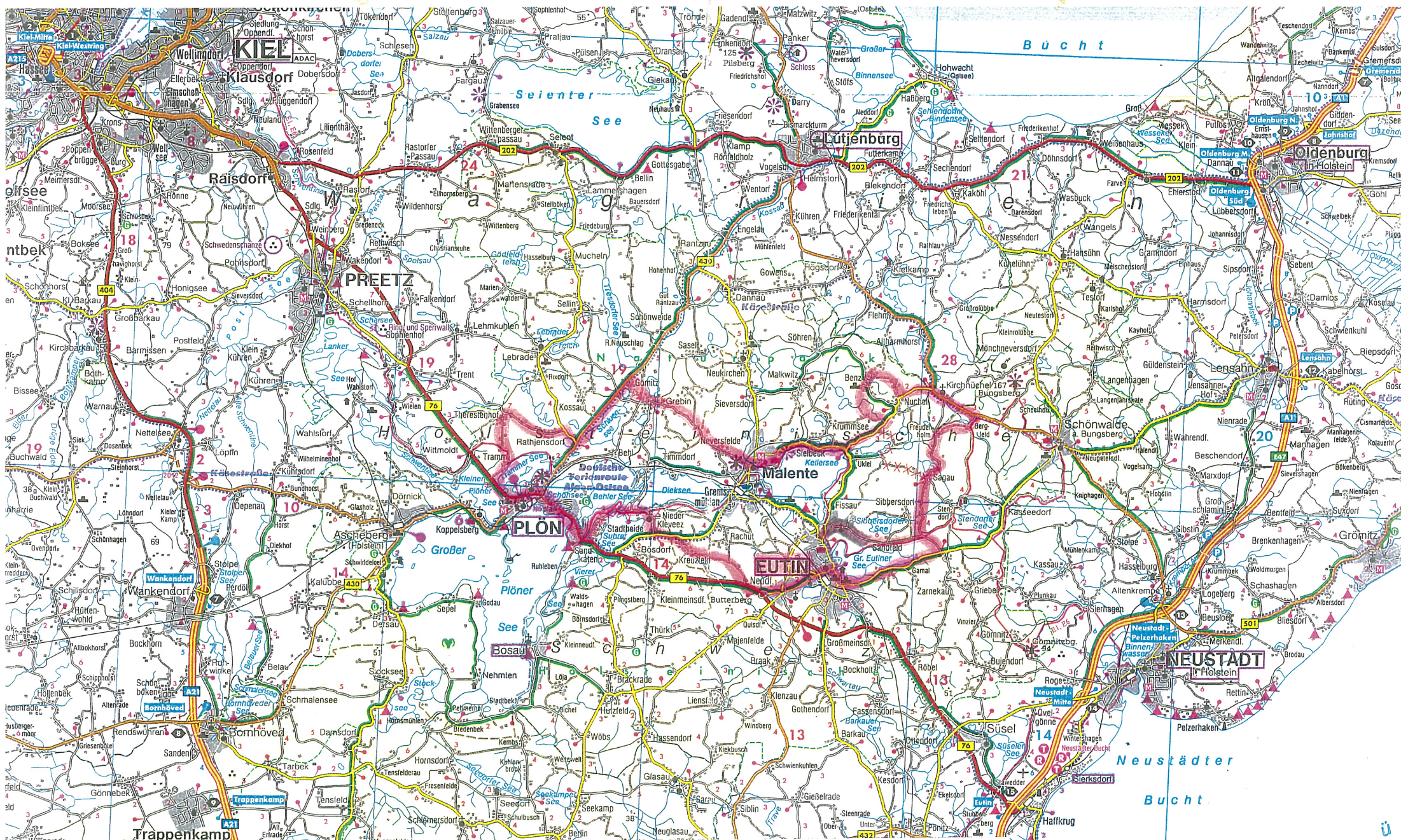
Here some important words to ask for the way:

Can you show me the road to...?: *Wo geht es nach ...?*

Where's the restroom/toilet? *Wo ist die Toilette?*

left / right: *links / rechts*

downstairs / upstairs: *unten / oben*



Cycling Copenhagen to Hamburg
Scale 1:200.000



Day 5 Eutin Loop ride

Towns for Navigation: Bösdorf (9 km), Plön (17 km), Theresienhof (23 km), Rathjensdorf (25 km), Grebin (31 km), Malente (36 km), Benz (48 km), Sagau (58 km), Eutin (64 km).

