

The Giant Mountains

The Giant Mountains are the highest and most visited mountain range in the whole of the Czech Republic and the only range of highland terrain and such diverse nature. To preserve the extraordinary and rich landscape, the area was declared a national park in as early as 1963. The mountain range is situated on the border with Poland and joins the Jizera Mountains to the West. The highest peak of the Giant Mountains and the whole Czech Republic is called Sněžka. The Giant Mountains are attractive not only for its natural wealth and picturesque folk architecture but they also offer many possibilities to spend one's free time in an active and attractive way the whole year round.

The Giant Mountains have a long history of skiing and nowadays there are many modern ski resorts – Špindlerův Mlýn, Pec pod Sněžkou, Rokytnice nad Jizerou, Harrachov, Benecko, Jilemnice, Vítkovice, Paseky nad Jizerou, Vysoké nad Jizerou, Vrchlabí, Janské Lázně, Malá Úpa, Černý Důl, Žacléř, Svoboda nad Úpou, Mladé Buky and others. For fans of cross-country skiing, there are many kilometres of well prepared tracks, so it is possible to crisscross the whole area. There are ski-buses which bring skiers to ski resorts and tracks.

In the summer months, there are ideal conditions for hiking in the Giant Mountains. Fit cyclists can tour the region on bike and use the efficient cyclebuses. A good network of hiking trails brings visitors to the most beautiful and interesting places of the mountains, for example to the waterfall Mumlavský vodopád near

Harrachov, the Labská reservoir near Špindlerův Mlýn, the source of the river Elbe and the view towers Štěpánka, Žalý and Černá Hora.

In addition to skiing or hiking, the Giant Mountains offer a number of other activities. Adrenaline junkies can head to the bobsleigh runs or rope climbing centres in Harrachov, Špindlerův Mlýn and Pec pod Sněžkou. You can also try paragliding, husky safaris, snowmobiling, snowtubing, motocross or quad-biking. As the national park is a protected area, you are only allowed to enjoy these activities at specially designated zones. You can also go bowling, play golf or tennis or do other conventional and non-conventional sports.

The Giant Mountains used to be a distinguished mineral deposit, as you can see when exploring abandoned mines. Some of them were made available to the public following 2003, for example in Harrachov, or in Obří důl just below the highest Czech mountain, Sněžka.

The Giant Mountains offer a wide range of accommodation in all price categories – here you can find hotels, guesthouses and mountain huts. Suitable accommodation according to taste can be found in the tourist resorts or in places further away which offer you plenty of privacy and peace. Tourist information centres, for example in Vrchlabí, Harrachov, Jilemnice or Rokytnice nad Jizerou, will help you with accommodation and all other enquiries.

More information can be found at the websites www.liberecky-kraj.cz or www.krkonose.eu.

