

Thuringia Focus.



The new Familux Resort „The Grand Green“ in Oberhof/Thuringian Forest offers dream vacations for families.
Picture: The Grand Green

World-class hotel shows that Thuringia is also a tourism hot spot

It was a successful end for a huge project: Familux resort “The Grand Green Oberhof”, a hotel that plays in a league of its own, opened its doors in the last quarter of 2022. Its 110 suites, up to 15 luxury chalets and attractive athletic, wellness and children’s areas provide plenty of space for families with children to unwind and have fun in the future. The luxury hotel was launched by the Mayers, an Austrian hotelier family. It is located in Oberhof, the world-renowned winter resort in southern Thuringia that will be hosting the Luge and Biathlon World Championships in the weeks to come.

The new hotel – which is only open to families with children – is high class in every way: excellent amenities, upscale dining and a wide range of facilities so that young and old vacationers can have a fun, exciting stay any time of the year – including an in-house movie theater, an indoor go-kart track, a soft playground, a virtual reality room, a bathing and sauna area (with an outdoor pool) and a ski practice

and bunny ski slope. The hotel did not get its name “The Grand Green” by accident: The hotel’s fittings and furnishings use natural materials, and the adventure and entertainment program includes many activities that revolve around nature and the environment. That makes perfect sense since Oberhof is nestled in one of Germany’s most beautiful natural settings: the Thuringian Forest. “The new hotel has raised the bar for cutting-edge vacationing – the investors’ decision to set up business here shows that Thuringia is a tourism hot spot,” said LEG Managing Director Andreas Krey. LEG aided and assisted the Mayer Group every step of the way, right up to the execution of the project. The project attracted around EUR 65 million in investment, included a grant from the State of Thuringia amounting to around 20 percent in funding. Guests are currently being served by 140 employees; the recruitment process went smoothly since many Thuringians have returned to their home state. (hw)

Hot off the presses

Lufthansa/Rolls-Royce subsidiary expands Thuringia site

Good news from the “Erfurter Kreuz” industrial park: Shortly before we went to press, N3 Overhaul Services announced that it would be significantly expanding its capacity at the LEG site in central Thuringia. N3, a joint venture between Lufthansa Technik and Rolls-Royce, specializes in the maintenance and repair of aircraft engines. The company was recently approved to service engines for the Boeing 787 “Dreamliner” as well. In response, N3 has started preparations to expand its Thuringia site. Work on the expansion of the factory building and the construction of a logistics center is scheduled to begin before the end of 2023. “N3 has been based in Thuringia since 2007 and is tracing an impressive trajectory,” said LEG Department Head and Senior Vice-President Dr. Arnulf Wulff. The company recruited more than 100 new employees last year, bringing its total workforce to 800. The announced expansion is expected to push that number past the one-thousand mark in the future. (hw)

Mechatronics specialist Marquardt expands presence in Thuringia

Three-point program for Thuringian industry

The State of Thuringia has summarized its plans to support companies in crisis in the form of a three-point program. "This is essentially a three-pronged approach consisting of grants, loans and investments aimed at decarbonizing, improving efficiency and reducing energy consumption," announced Economics Minister Tiefensee.

Program for Thuringian companies suffering from the energy crisis: This is a grant awarded for equity reasons to small and medium-sized enterprises whose economic existence is unforeseeably threatened by the energy price increases through no fault of their own.

Securing liquidity: The guarantee guidelines and the consolidation fund have been expanded and strengthened. Another option has now been created: low-interest loans with repayment grace periods of two years.

Programs to support future business investment: In addition to the digitalization bonus, there is now a decarbonization bonus, structured to minimize red tape, that aims to support investments in energy efficiency, energy conservation and the decarbonization of processes, products and services. The Thuringia Invest program has been replaced by the program InnoInvest. (maa)

For details, visit www.aufbaubank.de

Battery specialist LION Smart invests in Thuringia

It's another step on the journey to establishing an e-mobility competence cluster in Thuringia: LION Smart, a subsidiary of Swiss holding company LION E-Mobility AG, is relocating its production line for series production of battery packs from Dingolfing, Bavaria, to Hildburghausen, Thuringia. Employees working two shifts a day can assemble around four million battery cells a year in a 2,500 m² facility; that is the equivalent of 156 battery packs a day or 40,000 packs a year. The new location also maintains a 1,425 m² high-bay warehouse that can hold up to 18,000 battery cells in order to fill customer orders on a large scale. One of LION Smart's big customers is Canadian manufacturer Vicinity Motor. Production is scheduled to start in Hildburghausen in February 2023. (maa)

It's a confident move that expresses a deep commitment to Thuringia as a place to do business: Auto parts supplier Marquardt is making its third investment in four years at LEG's "Erfurter Kreuz" industrial park. The manufacturer of battery management systems is spending a nine-digit figure to build a new company building on a 15-hectare site and create 300 new jobs.

Thuringia's Economics Minister Wolfgang Tiefensee expressed his delight at the expansion: "Marquardt's new investment in Thuringia is a strong sign of confidence given the current global conditions!" The company has been located south of Thuringia's capital city of Erfurt since 2019, when it acquired a vacant 30,000 m²

building complex and began production there. Thuringia plays a central role in the e-mobility operations of the family-owned company, which is headquartered in Rietheim-Weilheim, Baden-Württemberg. "We have been growing very rapidly in e-mobility for years. Our site in Thuringia plays a pivotal role in this business segment. The region's extensive industry expertise and close ties to Erfurter Kreuz reinforce our decision to make long-term investments in this site and create even more secure, attractive jobs," explained Dr. Harald Marquardt, Chief Executive Officer of the Marquardt Group. LEG Department Head Dr. Arnulf Wulff added that LEG's support as a one-stop agency had also played a significant role here. (hw)



The first investment of the Marquardt Group in Thuringia focused on the production of functional light components for the visualization of all warnings in the car cockpit. Photo: Marquardt

Despite difficult conditions: Thuringia attracts many investments

Before we start the new year with fresh momentum, let's take a look back at the results of 2022. Despite the difficult situation worldwide due to war, the energy crisis and restrictions still caused by the pandemic, Thuringia was able to achieve good successes last year in attracting new companies or expanding existing ones and thus creating jobs.

In total, 35 companies have invested 614 million euros and secured or created over 2,600 jobs. These include major investments such as the Premium Hotel in Oberhof or the expansions of the companies Marquardt and N3 (all in this issue), but also many other projects with investments in innovative industries, research projects or with a focus on energy effi-

ciency, energy saving and decarbonization of processes and products. The investors are companies such as Desay SV Automotive (development center for prototype vehicles and 3D antenna measurement chamber), IBMiX (software development) and Papacks (plastic-free packaging), to name just a few. "Thuringia has held its own in international competition even under difficult conditions," explains Dr. Arnulf Wulff, head of department. "Our locational advantages have tipped the scales in many cases, including Thuringia's unique favorable location, its high level of technological expertise in business and research and, last but not least, its high quality of life, which is becoming increasingly important in times of a shortage of skilled workers." (maa)

Global market leader from Thuringia: Funkwerk AG



This technology benefits anyone who takes the train and spends time in European railway stations: Funkwerk AG, based in Kölleda in northern Thuringia, develops communication and information systems for rail transportation that everyone has seen: display systems on the platforms, public address systems for announcements and train radio. Funkwerk AG also provides communication, information and safety systems for other infrastructure areas, including highways and waterways.

In the D-A-CH region alone, over 80 percent of trains equipped with digital GSM-R communication systems use the

company's train radios to maintain contact with their operating centers. This is just one example of the large market shares that Funkwerk AG holds in key segments. Funkwerk has been producing electronic devices in Kölleda for over 70 years. Its current success is therefore based on a long tradition of consistently thinking and working toward the future over the decades. That tradition continues today, too: As the public and private sector redouble their efforts to protect "critical infrastructure", Funkwerk AG has responded by developing, for example, system solutions in the field of cyber security to meet the demand. (hw)



The Swiss Federal Railways in Zurich also use display boards from Kölleda. Photo: Funkwerk

Technology news

200 million euros for new FLI building

Cornerstone for high-level research: A new four-floor state-of-the-art building with laboratory and equipment space for the Friedrich-Loeffler-Institut (FLI) is being built in Jena at a cost of around EUR 200 million; the building should be ready for researchers to use in 2025. The FLI conducts research into farm animal health and welfare and the protection of humans from zoonoses at five sites in Germany. The two FLI institutes in Jena are the organization's premier institutions for researching bacterial pathogens and their resistance to antibiotics.

"Following the construction of new research infrastructure for the FLI's virology-focused institutes at our headquarters on the island of Riems, the new building and add-on in Jena has set us on a forward-looking path to continue our important work on bacterial animal diseases and zoonotic pathogens. This makes the FLI one of the world's most advanced research institutions in this field," said Professor Thomas C. Mettenleiter, President of the Friedrich-Loeffler-Institut. The new building has to meet strict safety and equipment standards. This applies, for example, to the building envelope and all door and window openings, as well as to the building technology. In addition, all sustainability standards are to be met. (gro)

Cutting-edge technology from Thuringia sheds light on the basic principles of life

A new invention from Jena has put a smile on the faces of scientists all over the world: An innovative microscope allows gentle three-dimensional imaging of living cells and thus provides deep insights into the basic workings of life. German Federal President Frank-Walter Steinmeier agrees – and so is awarding the 2022 German Future Prize to three researchers at Carl Zeiss Microscopy in Jena: Thomas Kalkbrenner, Jörg Siebenmorgen and Ralf Wolleschensky.

The researchers, working with their teams, have developed a technology that uses high-resolution fluorescence microscopy to examine living objects without disturbing them with light. To achieve this, they built on an existing technology known as lattice light-sheet microscopy, adding innovative optical elements. They also de-

vised a way to make the complex system easy to use and enabled the broad use of common specimen holders. It opens up entirely new avenues for observing and better understanding cellular processes

– both in basic research and in the search for new diagnostic methods or novel drugs to target many diseases. In short, Jena is once again living up to its name as a high-tech hub of the optical industry. (gro)



Caption: Award-winning: Researchers from Carl Zeiss Microscopy in Jena receive the 2022 German Future Prize. Photo: Deutscher Zukunftspreis/bildschoen

Where Hemingway discovered Thuringia's natural beauty ...

Thuringia offers enchanting countryside and attractive places to stay and dine – one example is the “Saxenhof” in the southwest corner of the state. The Austrian Emperor Franz I, the writer Ernest Hemingway and the GDR politician Günter Schabowski all bedded down in this storied hotel. These big names were drawn to the scenic Rhön, often described as “Germany’s most beautiful low mountain range”.



The historic building was extensively renovated.
Photo: Rhöner Botschaft

The Saxenhof, part of the project “Rhöner Botschaft”, is steeped in history. Originally built in Dermbach in 1623, this historic half-timbered house was extensively reconstructed in 2009. Guests stay in 27 rooms and five large apartments in a quiet outbuilding. A fine dining experience is guaranteed with a Michelin-starred Chef and General Manager Björn Leist, while the wellness

area features amenities such as a Finnish sauna, steam bath, cold plunge pool and Kneipp basin. The region is ideal for hiking, mountain biking or even fishing: Indeed, the extensive fly-fishing opportunities are what originally attracted Ernest Hemingway to this picturesque spot in Thuringia in 1931. (hw)

www.rhoener-botschaft.de

From world championships to mountain biking in a mine – Thuringia gets your heart pumping!

The world looks to Thuringia in winter – or, more precisely, the winter resort of Oberhof: It will soon be hosting the Luge and Biathlon World Championships. Many world-class athletes have stayed in Oberhof, playing in countless World Cups and several World Championships. The town's sports facilities have been modernized just in time for the World Championships. It has a lot to offer tourists, too: from an indoor ski slope for year-round fun on cross-country trails to a mountain biking park with trails of all levels of difficulty to the H2Oberhof spa and water park.

The World Championships and the wide selection of year-round activities in Oberhof are representative of the kinds of

things that active people can do throughout Thuringia. From mountain biking and hiking to climbing and paddling – whatever outdoor fun you enjoy, you'll find a place in Thuringia to do it. And not just in the forest, in the water, on the slopes or on the cycling track, either. In Thuringia, you can get your sports thrills way up high – while soaring through the air skydiving or hiking along the Treetop Trail – or, if you prefer, deep underground, mountain biking in a mine... (hw)

For details about the World Championships and outdoor activities in Thuringia, visit:
www.oberhof23.de
www.thuringen-entdecken/drausspowern.de



The winter sports competitions in Oberhof are always a crowd puller. Photo: Zweckverband Thüringer Wintersportzentrum

Dates

January 29 – February 03

Delegation trip to the U.S.A. (California and Texas) led by Thuringian State Secretary Dr. Katja Böhler

January 30 – February 02

Thuringian joint stand at Arab Health Fair, Dubai

March 01

15th Thuringian Foreign Trade Day, Volkshaus Jena

March 07 – 10

Thuringian joint stand at INTEC in Leipzig (International Trade Fair for Machine Tools, Manufacturing and Automation Technology)

January 23 – 29

Luge World Championship, Oberhof

February 08 – 19

Biathlon World Championship, Oberhof



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