



The Age of the
Technology
meets emotion
Automobile





The 160 large and many small automotive exhibits in the museum are a treat for any automobile and technology enthusiast. The exhibition features a combination of exhibits and installations, as well as multimedia stations and historic documents.



SILBERPFEIL



The new wing of the August Horch Museum in Zwickau opened in autumn 2017, following several years of construction. As a result, the exhibition space has more than doubled in size. Where the museum previously ended, visitors now find themselves in a new restaurant called “August Horch”. It serves as an architectural transition from the old exhibition area, starting with the company’s origins and leading up to the Second World War (1904 – 1945), and the new extension, with 70 major exhibits covering the pre-war era to the present day (1927 – 2017).

The new part of the museum presents technology and vehicles in everyday scenarios, provides information and stirs emotions. The concept blends in-depth facts with entertainment. Visitors can marvel at unique cars, study multimedia displays and information panels, watch short films and multimedia shows, explore hands-on displays, and even try out a driving simulator.

HISTORY IN SITU

The museum is located on Audistrasse, close to the original site where automotive pioneer August Horch began making his luxury cars in 1904. The exhibition now impressively covers the entire history of car-making in Zwickau over more than 110 years. The August Horch Museum is the ultimate tourist attraction in Saxony for car fans from all over the world. They can learn all there is to know about the pioneering spirit and brilliant inventions of Saxon car-makers. Half-way through the tour of the museum, before they enter the fascinating new section of the exhibition, visitors can take a break in the new restaurant. Once refreshed, they continue the tour in the former production building of the Horch factory, which has been restored true to the principle of historic preservation. This is where the Trabant, probably the most famous car of the East German regime, was built after 1957. The August Horch Museum is one of just two automobile museums in Germany built



on the site of a former car factory – a surprising fact in the “land of cars”. The historic buildings have been incorporated into the exhibition, creating a unique and authentic atmosphere.

THE SILVER ARROW SENSATION

The new section of the museum begins with a foray into the history of Auto Union racing cars. It is a proud tribute to the legendary Silver Arrows built at the Horch plant in Zwickau from 1934 to 1939. Head of development in the Auto Union racing division at Horch in Zwickau until 1937 was none other than Ferdinand Porsche.

The sweeping success of the Silver Arrows began with daredevil, amateur racing drivers, and became increasingly professional, with manufacturers forming their own racing teams. The exhibition tells impressive stories of engines, chassis and aerodynamics, of new speed records and intrepid long-distance races. The races

by Bernd Rosemeyer and Hans Stuck against Mercedes Benz vehicles are legendary. Auto Union Grand Prix racing cars were ahead of their time in technical terms. The Auto Union Type A racing car with a 16-cylinder engine was the first mid-engine sports car. The engine was positioned behind the driver, a technical strategy still used in high-end motor racing today.

The highlight at this point of the tour – and for many of their entire visit – is the fantastic, 15-minute multimedia show. Visitors take a seat on the stands with baited breath. The lights go out, and events that took place in the pit lane at the start of a Grand Prix race back in the 1930s are recreated in sound and image. Two original Auto Union Silver Arrows are on the starting line. An unbelievably thrilling spectacle!

In its day, Auto Union was the second-largest car producer in Germany after Opel. The group, founded in 1931/32, encompassed the sports and luxury car brands Audi and Horch from Zwickau, the Wanderer factory in Chemnitz that built medium-sized cars, and the DKW plant in Zschopau, which made motorcycles and small cars.

Beautifully presented vintage cars:

A Horch 12/28 PS from 1911 – a car with a mid-range engine displacement and a modern engine; an Audi 225 sedan from 1935 – an upper mid-range car with front drive; and a Horch 350 Pullman saloon from 1929 – an upper-range car with an eight-cylinder in-line engine.





A RIFT AND A NEW BEGINNING

The tour of the museum resumes through a tunnel that takes visitors back in time: It is 1945. The Second World War is over, Germany and Europe lie in ruins, suffering and destruction are ubiquitous. The year also marked a rift in the history of car-making. Germany was occupied by the Allied Forces, and Saxony was part of the Soviet occupation zone. Factories were dismantled to pay for war reparations and production came to a standstill. Post-war production in the 1940/50s is documented in rare films shown in a 180° cinema. As the tour proceeds, the birth of the Trabant and its various models is presented in street scenes. Unique exhibits have been faithfully reconstructed with loving attention to detail, such as a beautifully restored Sachsenring P240 station wagon, one of only six built for Deutsche Fernsehfunk, the former German broadcasting corporation. It is presented as a commentator's car at the "Race for Peace", a famous bicycle race. With a film camera sticking through its open roof, it cruises ahead of a throng of original Diamant racing bikes.

TECHNICAL AND PRODUCTION HISTORY

Automotive history has always been synonymous with the history of technology and production. The next part of the exhibition is dedicated to a very special topic: Duroplast car body construction. In response to the scarcity of metal as a raw material in the 1950s, Duroplast, a fibre-reinforced plastic, was invented and used to make Trabant cars. Layers of non-woven fibre were joined by phenolic resin and compressed under heat to create an extremely lightweight material for car bodies. The original production line presented in the museum survived the downfall of the East German regime thanks to employees at the factory. It is the only preserved production facility of its kind in the world. The plant has been faithfully reconstructed as a complete production line with the original workflow, and at the original production site. The first prototype produced on this line is also on display: A still-unpainted Trabant P 50, built for a trade fair in 1955.





THE TRABANT: A CHILD OF ITS TIME

The Trabant is also shown in historic comparison with other European car models of the same era. When production started in 1957, the Trabant was not so different from other small cars in Western Europe in terms of its design and technology. But the restrictions of the planned economy and the lack of raw materials under the socialist regime in the 1970s and 1980s caused vehicle production to fall behind international standards. Even though interesting prototypes were developed in Zwickau, they never went into production for lack of funding. The new exhibition recognizes the creativity, inventive spirit, imagination and innovative force of the former East German people. Despite the scarcity of resources in the industry, they put a tremendous effort into constantly improving the cars and production against all odds. Once visitors have learned all about the Trabant, they can test-drive one, at least in the multimedia simulator. But be warned: Anyone who drives too fast will be stopped by the police! A great idea from the creators of the exhibition.



THE FALL OF THE WALL: DAWN OF A NEW ERA

Several years before the Wall came down in 1989, Volkswagen in Wolfsburg, West Germany, began to cooperate with the Sachsenring plant in Zwickau in the east. The Trabant, which had previously been fitted out with a 26 hp two-cylinder, two-stroke engine, was equipped with a stronger, state-of-the-art, four-cylinder, four-stroke engine made by Volkswagen. From today's perspective, this already signalled a turning point, but one most people were as yet unaware of, or at most dreamed of. The history of the Trabant ended with German reunification in 1990/91. East Germans now wanted to finally drive West German cars: Volkswagen and Audi were the most sought-after brands. The last Trabant to be produced in Zwickau is naturally also on display at the end of the historic section of the exhibition. Fortunately, it did not herald the end of car-making in Saxony, but rather the beginning of a new era.



After German reunification, Volkswagen built a new factory near Zwickau for its VW Polo, followed by the Golf and later the Passat. Today, more than 7,000 employees work at Volkswagen Saxony at three locations in Zwickau/Mosel, Chemnitz and Dresden. Visitors to the museum now leave the historic section of the exhibition again through a time tunnel. The last room in the exhibition is dedicated to modern cars and technological developments by Volkswagen Saxony and its suppliers. In November 2017, the Volkswagen Group announced it would be establishing a competence centre for electromobility at the Zwickau site, opening yet another chapter in the history book of car-making in Zwickau.



Motorsports in the late 1920s and 1930s: In the background a video installation on the history of the Silver Arrows.

TRAVELINFO

HOW TO GET THERE

By air: via Dresden and Leipzig-Halle Airports
By rail: regional trains from Dresden, Leipzig and Nuremberg (Bavaria)
By car and coach: via motorways A4 and A72

WHERE TO STAY

Hotel First Inn Zwickau

Set at the heart of the old town on Kornmarkt square, the First Inn hotel is within walking distance of historic sites like St. Marien Cathedral, the birthplace of Robert Schumann and the Priests' Houses, making it the ideal place to stay for culture vultures.

www.hotel-firstinn-zwickau.de

WHERE TO EAT

Restaurant August Horch

The new restaurant in August Horch Museum that opened at the end of 2017 is perfect for a quick snack during a tour of the museum or a proper meal at the end. It serves seasonal and regional specialities.

www.horch-museum.de

Gasthaus 1470

This is the narrowest restaurant in Zwickau. The bar on the ground floor is famous for having 60 different kinds of gin interpreted in numerous different ways, as well as its own beer, an unfiltered light cellar beer with a fine hint of malt. The restaurant spread over three floors serves traditional and Mediterranean dishes.

www.gasthaus1470.de

(in German only)

Restaurant Egghead

Egghead is fun. You can watch the chef at work in its open kitchen. The small menu with an excellent choice of dishes including plenty of fresh and regional produce is not just pleasing to the palate, but also a feast for the eyes. The crepes and pancakes that give Egghead its name are worth coming back for.

www.egghead-restaurant.de

(in German only)