



# THE SKY PATHS

Magic Moments of the Millennia



**PÖMMELTE**

**HALLE (SAALE)**

**LANGENEICHSTÄDT**

**NEBRA**

**GOSECK**

For countless millennia, people have observed the nightly sky, driven by the desire to understand the universe and the secrets of life. Recent excavations in Saxony-Anhalt have provided sensational evidence of this deeply human aspiration. They testify to a time when myths, rituals, and knowledge have been handed down orally for generations. In rare, precious moments, archaeological remains allow us to decipher the messages of this alien world.

The tourist network Himmelswege (Sky Paths) invites you on a journey through the prehistory of Saxony-Anhalt at five selected stations: Travel back in time to bygone millennia and let yourself be whisked away into the world of archaeology and astronomy on the Sky Paths.

# The Nebra Sky Disc



The iconography of the Sky Disc shows the full moon or the sun, the crescent moon and the Pleiades before a symbolic representation of the night sky.

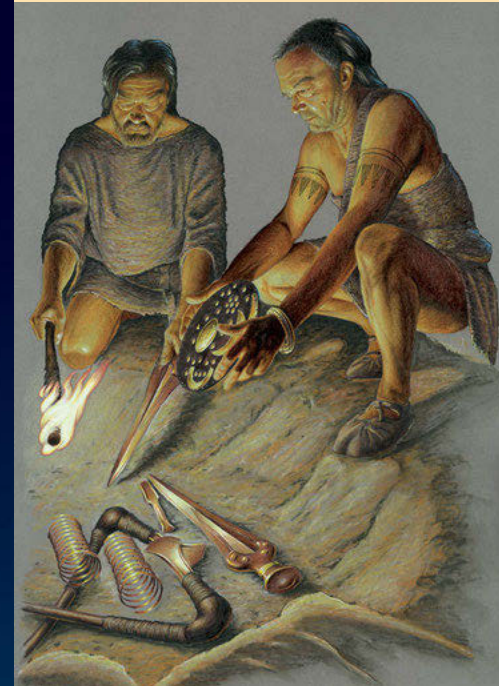
In later phases two horizon arcs, which reflect the sun's annual course, as well as a solar barge were added.

These representations conceal a wealth of information: the endpoints of the horizon arcs are aligned to the winter solstice and summer solstice, while the Pleiades in combination with sun and full moon signal the important dates for harvest and sowing in the farming year.

The deposition of the Nebra Sky Disc coincides with the end of the Early Bronze Age era, which was characterised by massive ostentatious tombs, trans-European trade relations and social changes.

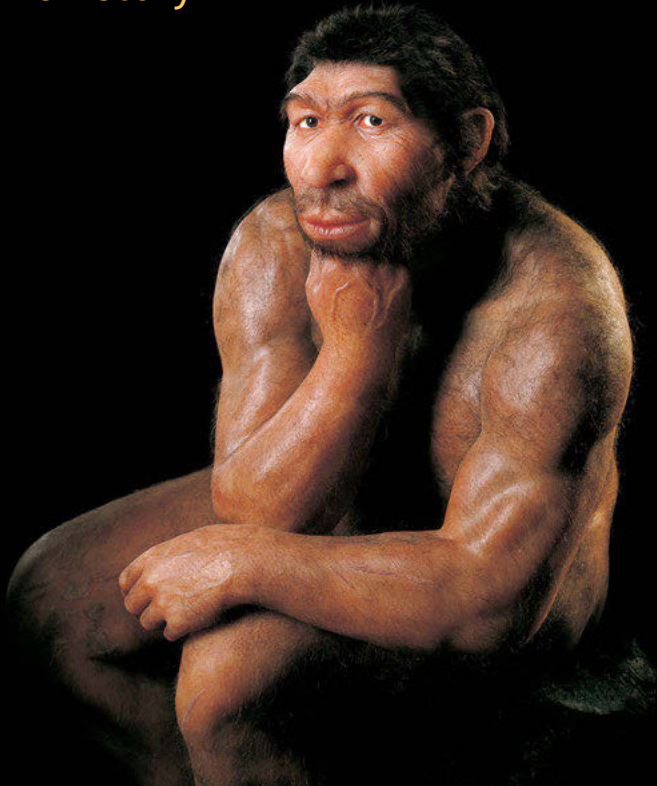
The Nebra Sky Disc is one of the most important archaeological finds of the past century. The bronze disc with gold appliques depicts the so far oldest concrete representation of the cosmos worldwide and thus is a key find not only for archaeology, but also for astronomy and the history of religion.

3,600 years ago, it was buried together with two valuable swords, two axes, two arm spirals and a chisel on the summit of the Mittelberg hill near Nebra.



# HALLE (SAALE)

## The State Museum of Prehistory



### The Museum

The State Museum of Prehistory in Halle houses one of the most important archaeological collections in Europe. Sensational finds are presented in Germany's oldest purpose-built building for prehistoric archaeology in impressive stagings. Embark on the roots of European cultural history and stroll through millennia of human life stories.

### The Nebra Sky Disc

The bronze disc is the oldest concrete representation of the cosmos in human history. Along with the accompanying swords, axes, and arm spirals the find of the century is to be found in a room above which shine thousands of stars. The presentation of the 3,600 year old Sky Disc is flanked by the first princes of central Germany and their golden attributes as well as the great bronze treasures of this time – buried as gifts to the gods.

### Opening hours

Tue – Fri 9 am – 5 pm  
Sat / Sun / public holidays  
10 am – 6 pm  
Mondays by appointment

### Contact

Landesmuseum  
für Vorgeschichte  
Richard-Wagner-Straße 9  
06114 Halle (Saale)  
[www.landmuseum-vorgeschichte.de](http://www.landmuseum-vorgeschichte.de)

### Registration

#### for guided tours

T: +49 (0) 345 - 5247 - 361  
or - 465  
F: +49 (0) 345 - 5247 - 503  
[besucherbetreuung@lda.stk.sachsen-anhalt.de](mailto:besucherbetreuung@lda.stk.sachsen-anhalt.de)



Landesamt für Denkmalpflege  
und Archäologie Sachsen-Anhalt  
LANDESMUSEUM FÜR  
VORGESCHICHTE



Organisation  
der Vereinten Nationen  
für Bildung, Wissenschaft  
und Kultur



Die Himmelsscheibe von Nebra  
eingetragen in das Register  
Memory of the World  
2013



# NEBRA

## The Nebra Ark – Experience the Sky Disc



### The Visitor Centre

The Nebra Ark (Arche Nebra) guides you into the fascinating world of the Nebra Sky Disc. Not far from the findspot of this unique treasure trove the Visitor Centre connects archaeology and astronomy and presents the exciting story of the renowned bronze disc. The centrepiece of the Nebra Ark is the planetarium. The show makes the complex astronomical knowledge, which is encrypted on the Sky Disc, comprehensible. Regular special exhibitions complement the varied programme of events.

### The findspot of the Sky Disc

For 3,600 years, an image of the sky was hidden in the ground – the “celestial eye” on the site connects sky and earth precisely at this point. Here the Sky Disc was put to use. Even today one can observe from the Mittelberg hill, how the sun sets behind the distinctive landmark of the Harz massif with the Brocken mountain on the longest day of the year, the summer solstice. The 30 m high viewing tower, which is designed like the pointer of a sundial, enables this vista.



### Opening hours

April – October  
daily 10 am – 6 pm  
November – March  
Tue – Fri 10 am – 4 pm,  
Sat / Sun / public holidays  
10 am – 5 pm  
The viewing tower is  
open daily.

### Contact and guided tours

Arche Nebra – Die  
Himmelsscheibe erleben  
An der Steinklöße 16  
06642 Nebra  
T: +49 (0) 34461-25520  
F: +49 (0) 34461-255217  
info@himmelsscheibe-  
erleben.de  
www.himmelsscheibe-  
erleben.de

### Public guided tours

Sat / Sun 12 noon and  
1 pm, during special  
presentations also at 2 pm,  
Additional dates in summer  
and on public holidays



# GOSECK

## The Solar Observatory



### The Reconstruction

The circular ditched enclosure of Goseck is the earliest archaeological evidence for systematic observations of the sky. The imposing monument with a diameter of around 70 m was completely excavated and exactly reconstructed on the original site. Just like 7,000 years ago, when the complex was built by Stone Age farmers, the course of the sun can be observed again today from within. In addition to the visual effect of the Stone Age sanctuary the special acoustics inside the enclosure leave a lasting impression on the visitors.

### The Information Centre

Goseck Castle houses the information centre for the Solar Observatory. A friendly, family-orientated presentation illustrates the excavations at Goseck and explains the exciting phenomenon of circular-ditched enclosures.



### Opening hours

Information Centre  
for the Goseck Solar  
Observatory:  
April – October  
daily 11 am – 5 pm  
November – March  
only on registration or  
with a guided tour.  
The Solar Observatory  
is freely accessible all  
year round.

### Contact

Informationszentrum  
zum Gosecker Sonnen-  
observatorium  
Burgstraße 53 /  
Schloss Goseck  
06667 Goseck  
T: +49 (0) 3443-8206110  
brief@schlossgoseck.de



### Guided tours

Verein Gosecker Sonnen-  
observatorium e. V.  
Ms Uta Oelke  
T: +49 (0) 3443-200561  
or +49 (0) 176-40123415  
verein@  
sonnenobservatorium-  
goseck.info  
www.  
sonnenobservatorium-  
goseck.info

### Public guided tours

April – October  
Sun / public holidays  
2.30 pm and 3.15 pm at  
the Solar Observatory

# PÖMMELTE

## The Pömmelte Woodhenge



### The German Stonehenge

To the south of Magdeburg, only a few kilometres away from the Elbe, archaeologists discovered the remains of a more than 4,000-year-old cult site. Pömmelte Woodhenge is the reconstruction of this fascinating find.

The nine-metre high viewing platform offers a perfect overview: The complex structure consists of various timber palisade circles, pits, and earthworks. At the end of the Stone Age and the beginning of the Bronze Age the 115 m large complex was used as a central shrine by different cultures. This is testified by sacrificial pits and ritual depositions. Astronomical aspects also shaped the construction of the enclosure. This is why it is also called the “German Stonehenge”.

### The Salzland Museum in Schönebeck (Elbe)

In the neighbouring Salzland Museum original finds from the complex and its surroundings are on display in a separate exhibition room. They give clues to millennia-old ritual activities and are impressive remains of the cult site on the Elbe.

### Opening hours

#### Woodhenge

The Pömmelte Woodhenge is freely accessible all year round.

### Public guided tours

(no registration required)

April – October

Wed 11 am and

Fri / Sat / Sun 2 pm

[www.ringheiligtum-poemmelte.de](http://www.ringheiligtum-poemmelte.de)

### Contact and guided tours

#### Salzlandmuseum

Pfännerstraße 41

39218 Schönebeck (Elbe)

T: +49 (0) 3471 - 6842560

F: +49 (0) 3471 - 6842819

[museum@kreis-slk.de](mailto:museum@kreis-slk.de)

[www.museum.salzland-](http://www.museum.salzland-kreis.de)

[kreis.de](http://www.museum.salzland-kreis.de)

### Opening hours

#### Salzland Museum

Tue / Fri 10 am – 4 pm

Thu 10 am – 6 pm

Sun 2 – 6 pm



RINGHEILIGTUM  
PÖMMELTE

Steinzeitkult an der Elbe



# LANGENEICHSTÄDT

## The Tomb of the Dolmen Goddess

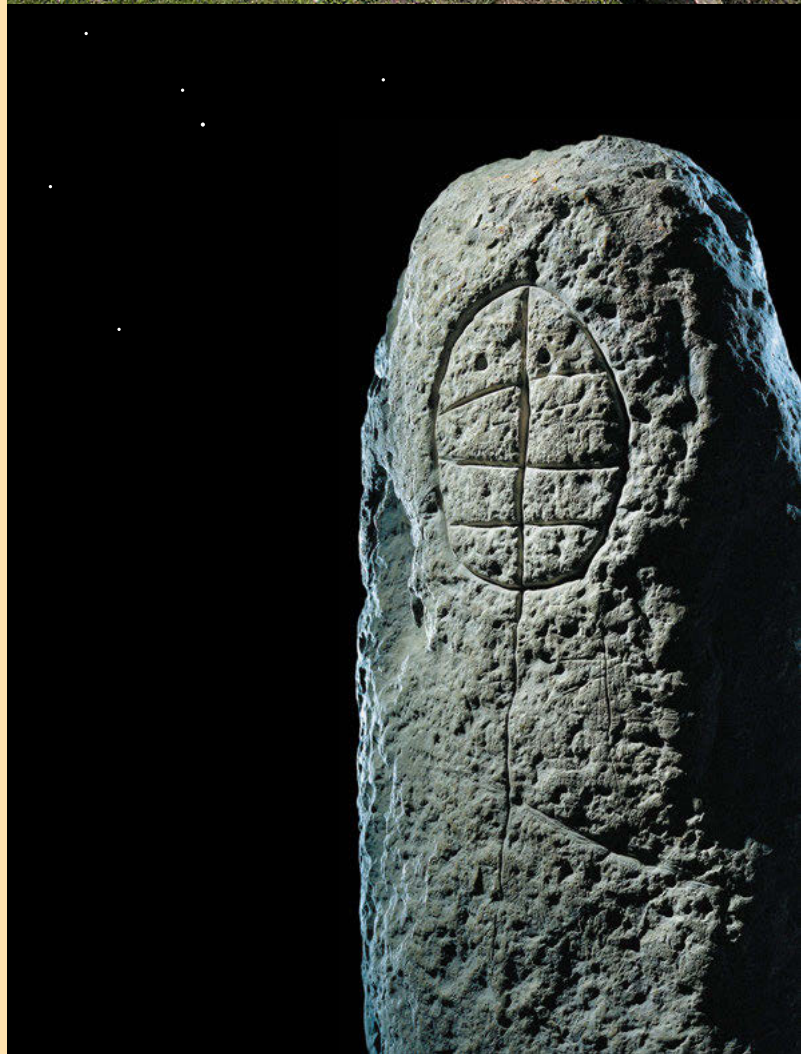


### The Tomb

The stone chamber of Langeneichstädt is almost 5,500 years old and has a total length of 5.3 m. The few finds prove that the chamber was both used by different cultures as well as partially cleared out. Exceptional objects such as a rare small copper coil and several marble and amber beads, suggest that at least one of the former burials was realised for an important member of the community. Also worth remarking is the 1.76 m tall menhir bearing the representation of a “dolmen goddess”. The formerly probably free-standing stone was used in the construction of the chamber as a capstone.

### The Dolmen Goddess

The stone chamber with dolmen goddess stands for another aspect of the Sky Paths, the view into a world beyond. The highly stylised representation with the piercing eyes reveals extensive connections to Western Europe. Generally she is portrayed as the “Great Goddess” and interpreted as a symbol of fertility. The menhir was incorporated in such a way that the image of the goddess faced downwards inside the tomb. Distinct traces of smoothing on the sides of the menhir may well result from frequent touching of the stone.



### Opening hours

The grounds are freely accessible all year round.

### Contact and guided tours

Warteverein e. V.  
Langeneichstädt  
Mr Bernhard Kaminsky  
T: +49 (0) 34632-40168  
[www.himmelswege.de](http://www.himmelswege.de)

# THE SKY PATHS

## How to find us

### World Culture – Cultural World Saxony-Anhalt

Four UNESCO World Heritage Sites are concentrated in Saxony-Anhalt in the tightest of spaces – the half-timbered town of Quedlinburg, the Martin Luther sites in Eisleben and Wittenberg, the Bauhaus and the Masters' Houses in Dessau, as well as the Garden Kingdom of Dessau-Wörlitz.

One arrives in the midst of the Romanesque Age on the state-wide Romanesque Road which connects 88 Romanesque churches, cathedrals, castles, palaces, and monasteries. Highlights are the cathedral treasures in Naumburg, Merseburg, Halberstadt, and Quedlinburg as well as Magdeburg's cathedral. Lovers of historic parks discover 50 parks and gardens in Saxony-Anhalt.

Saxony-Anhalt's south with the wine region Saale-Unstrut is a popular destination for wine connoisseurs, while in the Altmark, in the north of Saxony-Anhalt, visitors are underway on ancient Hanseatic routes to eight historic Hansa towns. The Harz Mountains, with a network of more than 8,000 km of signposted trails, are a true hiking paradise. Unique landscapes such as the Harz National Park and the UNESCO Middle Elbe Biosphere Reserve make Saxony-Anhalt an ideal focal point for active holidaymakers and nature lovers.

[www.sachsen-anhalt-tourismus.de](http://www.sachsen-anhalt-tourismus.de)  
[www.luther-erleben.de](http://www.luther-erleben.de)  
[www.naturfreude-erleben.de](http://www.naturfreude-erleben.de)

**WELTKULTUR  
KULTURWELT**  
SACHSEN-ANHALT

**NATURFREUDE  
AKTIVWELT**  
SACHSEN-ANHALT



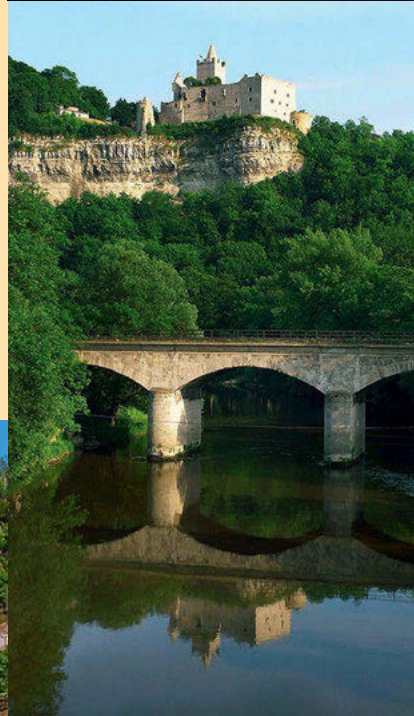
# Saale-Unstrut

## Land of Wine and Stone



Charming and Mediterranean – that is how the Saale-Unstrut region is often described. Letting one's gaze wander will affirm this description: old vineyards with steep terraces and vineyard cottages as far as the eye can see. On the slopes and on the heights above the rivers are enthroned majestic castles, manors, and monasteries. Saale-Unstrut is a cultural landscape still today characterised by the wine-growing established in the Middle Ages as well as numerous surviving buildings of the Middle Ages and recent historical periods.

Four of the five Sky Paths stations are to be found in the Saale-Unstrut region – and prove that this cultural landscape is much older still.



### Discover on the Sky Paths:

- Monastery and Imperial Palace at Memleben, the destination of emperors and kings
- Naumburg Cathedral with its world-famous sculpture of the donor Uta
- Querfurt Castle, the largest and oldest castle on the “Romanesque Road”
- Neuenburg Castle and the Romanesque two-storey chapel with its outstanding ornamental capitals
- Goseck Castle with castle church and crypt
- Bad Lauchstädt with the historic spa complex and the Goethe Theatre
- (Hi)stories and delight in the beautiful towns along the Saale and Unstrut

[www.saale-unstrut-tourismus.de](http://www.saale-unstrut-tourismus.de)



# Halle (Saale)

## Cultural chiefs attract to Handel City



Seven Kulturhäuptlinge (cultural chiefs) are trademarks of the “Handel City” Halle. They crown the birthplace of George Frideric Handel’s cultural stronghold with charm, art, and design.

Halle is centrally located in Middle Germany, in the immediate vicinity of Leipzig-Halle airport. The more than 1,200-year-old city boasts restored town houses, historic places of worship, parks, colourful pub districts, and many picturesque spots along the Saale.

240,000 inhabitants live in Halle, the greenest city in Germany, two-thirds of which are taken up by parks and green spaces.

300 years ago, August Hermann Francke founded an orphanage and school complex according to Martin Luther’s reformatory principles which still exists today. With a cabinet of curiosities and a scenery library, the Francke Foundations remain a living educational cosmos still today.

The Giebichenstein Castle and the Moritzburg Art Museum are home to both the oldest and the youngest castle on the Saale. In addition, the city of Handel is the seat of the more than 500 years old Martin Luther University of Halle-Wittenberg rich in tradition, the Federal Cultural Foundation and the Leopoldina – National Academy of Sciences.



[www.halle-tourismus.de](http://www.halle-tourismus.de)

**hallesale\***  
HÄNDELSTADT



## Salzland district, Elbe-Börde-Heide, and Magdeburg Discover cultural history and nature at its best



The Salzland district, home to the Pömmelte Woodhenge, is part of the Elbe-Börde-Heide regional tourist network, which also includes Magdeburg the City of Otto.

Countless castles, palaces, churches, and monasteries bear witness to the rich cultural history of the region. In Magdeburg you will find them in close proximity to modern architecture like the Green Citadel, a Hundertwasser architectural project directly on the cathedral square.

Other highlights of the region are the numerous stations of the “Romanesque Road”, such as the famous Magdeburg Cathedral or the Jerichow Monastery as the epitome of Brandenburg-style brick architecture. Also noteworthy are the historic spa facilities in Schönebeck-Bad Salzellen with the oldest saltwater spa in Germany or the Renaissance castle at Bernburg in the residence and capital of the formerly sovereign duchy of Anhalt-Bernburg.

This cultural diversity is accompanied by an exceptional experience of nature: in the UNESCO Middle Elbe Biosphere Reserve one finds the largest interconnected alluvial forest complex in Europe. Amongst others, it accommodates the largest rodent of our continent, the Elbe beaver. The Elbe Cycle Route, Germany's most popular long-distance cycle route, passes directly by the Pömmelte Woodhenge.

[www.elbe-boerde-heide.de](http://www.elbe-boerde-heide.de)  
[www.salzlandtourismus.de](http://www.salzlandtourismus.de)  
[www.magdeburg-tourist.de](http://www.magdeburg-tourist.de)



# Explore the Sky Paths by bicycle



## The Sky Disc Cycle Route

The approximately 73 km long cycle route connects the Sky Disc with its findspot: Between the State Museum of Prehistory in Halle and the Nebra Ark cyclists pass the “Mansfeld Lakes” Wine Route, the Sweet Lake, the town and castle of Querfurt, and lastly the extensive Ziegelroda forest.

Most of the Sky Path stations are located on supra-regional, well-developed and signposted cycle routes:

## The Saale Cycle Route

The 403 km long cycle path starts in the Fichtel Mountains, runs through Thuringia and Saale-Unstrut and meets the Elbe Cycle Route at Barby near the mouth of the Saale. Once Naumburg cathedral is reached, Goseck Castle and the Solar Observatory soon follow downstream. Also the State Museum of Prehistory in Halle is located almost directly on the Saale Cycle Route.

## The Elbe Cycle Route

The middle section of the Elbe Cycle Route between Lutherstadt Wittenberg, the state capital Magdeburg and the old Hansa towns of Tangermünde and Havelberg is about 320 km long. In this section also lies the Pömmelte Wood-henge. The turn-off shortly before Schönebeck is signposted.

## The Unstrut Cycle Route

Starting in Eichsfeld in Thuringia, the Unstrut Cycle Route reaches Naumburg on the Saale Cycle Route after 190 km. On the last stage, about 40 km before Naumburg, a detour to the Nebra Ark is recommended. The path branches off in the village of Wangen, Nebra district.



## Information

[www.saaleradweg.de](http://www.saaleradweg.de)  
[www.elberadweg.de](http://www.elberadweg.de)  
[www.unstrutradweg.de](http://www.unstrutradweg.de)  
or at the  
tourist information  
(see last page)





**Investitions- und Marketing-  
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tourismus@img-sachsen-anhalt.de  
www.sachsen-anhalt-tourismus.de

**Magdeburger Tourismusverband  
Elbe-Börde-Heide e.V.**

Domplatz 1b, 39104 Magdeburg  
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info@elbe-boerde-heide.de  
www.elbe-boerde-heide.de

**Saale-Unstrut-Tourismus e.V.**

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www.saale-unstrut-tourismus.de

**Tourismusverband Salzlandkreis e.V.**

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beyer@salzlandtourismus.de  
www.salzlandtourismus.de

**Tourist-Information Halle (Saale) /  
Stadtmarketing Halle (Saale) GmbH**

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touristinfo@stadtmarketing-halle.de  
www.halle-tourismus.de /  
www.nurbeiuns.de

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**SACHSEN-ANHALT**



Landesamt für Denkmalpflege  
und Archäologie Sachsen-Anhalt  
LANDESMUSEUM FÜR  
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**ARCHE NEBRA**  
Die Himmelsscheibe erleben