



HIMMELPFORT - Germany

German's Christmas Village

„Coeli porta!“ – „heaven's gate“, shouted an overwhelming Brother Otto in the year 1299 when he saw this unique landscape. Located in the north of Berlin the village Himmelpfort lies between the rivers Havel and Woblitz in the Fürstenberg Lake District, at the edge of the Uckermark region and the Mecklenburg Lake District. The state-recognised spa of Himmelpfort is the only place in all of the five newly-formed German states that have a Christmas Post Office. Every year it attracts several thousands of visitors in the pre-Christmas period. The first letters arrived in 1984 and today over 200.000 letters are sent to Santa Claus from children around the world. In conjunction with the German postal service (Deutsche Post AG) the Christmas Post Office opens every year for six weeks from mid-November onwards. Santa and his helpers, who man the post office, answer many of the children's letters personally. In 1993, Himmelpfort received a special Christmas post stamp for its Christmas letters to the delight of philatists and post memorabilia collectors. The stamp consists of an angel standing next to an open gate, containing a star. Letters with the date stamp 24 December are obviously coveted collector's item. Santa's parlour can be visited all over the year. Thousands of guests enjoy the cosy atmosphere of the advent market on the monastery site every year.

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