

Automobilbaumuseum  
 Automobile Production Museum  
 99817 Eisenach  
 Rennbahn 6-8 (Sparkasse Building)  
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The **Automobile Production Museum** (*Automobilbaumuseum*) was founded in 1967. Since 1994 it has its home in the rooms of the *Wartburg Sparkasse's Administration building* at the street named *Rennbahn*. A select series beginning with the *Wartburg Motor Carriage* (1899) and ending with the *Wartburg 1.3* in the early 1990ies documents over 100 year tradition of automobile production in Eisenach.

Sportscars, Prototypes, and special variations of the cars produced in Eisenach are being prepared for the expansion of the existing exhibition.

<b>Admission prices:</b>		<b>Opening times</b>
Adults:	2,10 €	Tuesday - Sunday <b>10:00 – 17 .00</b> Mondays <b>Closed</b>
Reduced:	1,00 €	
Families:	4,10 €	
Groups (10 or more): per person	1,00 €	
School groups: (10 or more) per person	0,50 €	
<b><u>Guided historical tours in the Eisenacher Automobile Production Museum are included in the admission price.</u></b>		

**Directions:** You will find us by travelling the streets B7 and B84 (Rennbahn) towards the former **AWE – Automobilwerk Eisenach** which is centrally located beside the railway, about 500 meters away from the station.

Parking places in the streets around the mueum.

### **The Museum**

In 1998 Eisenach celebrated “100 Years of Automobile Production in Eisenach”. In this year took the symbolic groundbreaking for the exhibit in the “*Automobile Welt Eisenach*” took place.

The exhibit in this new museum displays innovative style and diversity in development, mobility and technical advances since the automobile was created.

It will be located in one of the original plant buildings (Number 2 - Werksgebäude 02) from 1935 an is going to show the technical history of the *Automobile Plant Eisenach* as well as the cultural, social and environmental impact of the automobile industry.

At this time the exhibit *Automobile Welt Eisenach* is still under construction.

### **Over 100 Years of Automobile Production**

More than a century has gone by since the first automobile has been built in Eisenach and with this a tradition well founded. Because of this predestination Eisenach and its suburbs have maintained a close relationship with the automobile industry, without this it would have been impossible in 1998 to celebrate “100 Jahre Automobilbau in Eisenach” – 100 Years Automobile Production in Eisenach.

In 1896 the entrepreneur *Heinrich Ehrhardt* (1840-1928) founded the **Fahrzeugfabrik Eisenach AG** In the beginning the production was concentrated on bicycles and military vehicles such as transporters for ammunition or livestock feed.

In 1898 began the production of the *Wartburg Motor Carriage*. This marked a prestigious day for the **Fahrzeugfabrik Eisenach AG**, although the look of the *Wartburg* may have been more that of a carriage. Nevertheless Eisenach was now one of three automobile producers in Germany. The others were **Daimler** in Stuttgart-Cannstatt and **Benz** in Mannheim.

In addition to the *Carriage* the production brought with it motorised Bi- and Tricycles, small busses, fire fighting vehicles, electric taxis and delivery trucks. Even with the successful participation and winning of medals in several street races, long distance and 24 hour-races, the French production license was not to be one of profit for the company.

Because of disgruntled stockholders Ehrhardt decided to resign as Corporate President and leave Eisenach in 1903 and thereby removing all of his patents and licenses. 1904 marked the year that the *Eisenacher Werk* acted independently and began development and production of the trademark *Dixi* that opened the door to international export.

The begin of WWI in August 1914 changed once again the production demands of the *Eisenacher Werk*. They now had to produce ambulances, military vehicles and other military articles.

After the end of the war, production was started again; the “**Fahrzeugfabrik Eisenach AG**” went back to its roots: the *Dixi*.

In 1921 the **Fahrzeugfabrik Eisenach AG** and the **Gothaer Waggonfabrik AG** fused, throwing the Eisenacher into a supporting role. It also gave the *Dixi* and 26 different models and 17 different trucks and busses that were produced until 1927 with a new symbol on their cooler grill, the *Centurion*.

Increasing inflation and international competition drove the company into a financial and industrial crisis. It was first possible to reverse this in 1927 when they acquired the license for the *Austin Seven* from the **Austin Motor Co.** from Birmingham/England, which of course meant that once again the production would be refitted to meet the new industrial needs. In the following years the *Dixi 3/13 (DA I)* as the German version of the *Austin Seven* set itself in the heart and minds of the modern society. As the production in Eisenach was marching forward, the **Gothaer Waggonfabrik AG** was still having difficulties and seemed to be falling deeper and deeper.

In 1928 the **Bayerische Motoren Werke (BMW)** contracted the *Eisenacher* as a sister company. The image of high quality, dynamics and sports is backed with a win at the *ADAC-Reichs-und Alpenfahrt*. In the 30ies the *Typ 328* with its 6-cylinder motor was known for its sport success and was nearly unbeatable - the national and international markets could also feel the success of the *Eisenacher BMW*. During WW II *Eisenach* maintained production for **BMW**, but was once again called to produce for the military, such as the tank defence cannon PAK 38.

In 1942 the **BMW AG** moved its entire stock of motorcycles parts from *Munich* to *Eisenach* as well as the production of the military two-wheeler the *Krades R 75* which was built in the *Wartburg City*, Eisenach until 1944. *Eisenach* and its factory as well as other large automobile productions and cities then lay in ruin. Fortunately *Eisenach* was not touched by the allies in their German industry dismantle program.

In November 1945 under Soviet administration the automobile production was restarted with the *BMW 321* and the *R 35 motorcycles*.

In September 1946 the *Eisenacher* plant was integrated into the *Staatliche Sowjetische Aktiengesellschaft, (SAG) Awtowelo* (Soviet State Stock Company). In 1949 the *BMW 340* an advanced development of the *BMW 326* was produced by the newly named **(SAG) Awtowelo Werk BMW Eisenach** and presented at the Leipzig Convention.

The division of Germany and the building of the two German states after the war forced a new orientation in *Eisenach*, the **VEB** or *volkseigenen* (the peoples own) was born. The **VEB IFA Automobilfabrik EMW Eisenach** that formerly had the colours of BMW (blue and white) now was called EMW and had to carry the colours of the state of *Thuringen*, red and white. Again a change in names: In 1955 the *EMW* was to be called **VEB Automobilwerk Eisenach**, with this came the end of production for the 6-cylinder limousine in *Eisenach*. The *IFA F9* that was produced in *Zwickau* until 1953, then moved to *Eisenach* and marked the start of the 2-stroke era.

The debut of the *Wartburg 311* in 1956 stood with its name as an icon for the *Eisenacher* auto production. Until 1965 there were eleven variations of the *Wartburg 311* which had been exported to over 50 countries.

The *Wartburg* production went into series in 1965 with the model 353 and in 1975 with the 353W, the number of produced autos in 1988 from the **VEB AWE (Automobilwerk Eisenach)** was 1,224,662. The motor *Alpha* that was built from the Wolfsburger Volkswagen AG in the DDR, was for the *Trabant* and the *Wartburg*, thus leading to the long awaited debut of the *Wartburg 1.3* with its 4-stroke

motor in 1988. The political and ideological industrial post war developments in the GDR were responsible for the missed chances in the automobile industry. The changing political climate in 1989 marked the end of nearly 90 years of production in the **Automobilwerk Eisenach Rennbahn location**, for in 1991/92 the *West end of Eisenach* became a new production plant from *Rüsselsheim*, and the **Adam Opel AG (part of General Motors)**, with one of the most modern plants for automobile production in Europe. With the **Adam Opel AG** and the return of the **BMW AG** with their plant in nearby *Krauthausen* it has been possible for *Eisenach* to maintain and continue its long tradition in automobile production at the foot of the *Wartburg*.

### Chronological view of the automobile production in Eisenach

(Selected types)

**Automobile    Motorcycle    Production Year    Type**

**Production Year  
Type**

1898 - 1900  
Wartburg-Motorwagen

1942 - 1944  
BMW R 75

1907 - 1913  
Dixi R 8

1945 - 1955  
BMW / EMW R 35

1927 - 1929  
Dixi 3/ 15 (DA 1)

1929 - 1931  
BMW 3/ 15 (DA 2)

1933 - 1934  
BMW 303

1934 - 1936  
BMW 309

1934 - 1937  
BMW 315

1935 - 1937  
BMW 319

1936 - 1941  
BMW 326

1936 - 1941  
BMW 327

1937 - 1939  
BMW 321

1945 - 1949  
BMW 321

1949 - 1955  
BMW/ EMW 340

1950 - 1955  
BMW/ EMW 327

1953 - 1956  
IFA F 9

1956 - 1965  
Wartburg 311

1966 - 1975  
Wartburg 353

1975 - 1988  
Wartburg 353 W

1988 - 1991  
Wartburg 1,3

seit 1991  
Opel Vectra

Opel Corsa

Opel Astra

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