

Travel by streetcar to a recreational area



Pure experience: MAN rail car 5 and trailer car 12 have been operating for more than 90 years in the Kirnitzsch Valley in Saxon Switzerland. The LGB streetcar train, item 23363, celebrates the Kirnitzschtal streetcar.

The streetcar in the Kirnitzsch Valley has endured many things: Fire, floods, rock falls and recurring periods during which operations were shut down entirely. However, the streetcar operates today on its 1,000 mm (3743.4-foot) narrow-gauge tracks much as it did in the early days of the railroad 120 years ago – bringing hikers and tourists from Bad Schandau on the Elbe River to the picturesque Kirnitzsch Valley.

The route which runs for slightly over eight kilometers (five miles) starts in the spa town of Bad Schandau. The yellow and white streetcar train follows the winding course of the little Kirnitzsch river through the bizarre rocky terrain of the Elbe Sandstone Mountains. Its destination is Lichtenhain Waterfall, whose artificially dammed flow gushes forth ev-

ery half an hour.

The history of the little streetcar railroad, which consists of a single line, dates back to the late 19th century. At the time, Saxon Switzerland was experiencing a boom as a destination for excursions and vacations. To make the Kirnitzsch Valley more attractive for sightseers and spa guests, a railroad was installed, and a power plant constructed to supply the necessary electric power. The era of the Kirnitzschtal Tramway began at Pentecost 1898. Even on the opening day, several journeys took rather longer than planned due to repeated derailments along the route. This was a recurring problem during the months that followed, which is why the six rail cars always carried winches and wooden blocks with them. However, this had

very little impact on the streetcar's popularity. A total of 80,000 passengers traveled during the first year, rising to more than 200,000 per year during the 1920s, despite the fact that the Kirnitzschtal Tramway only operated from Easter to October up until 1938.

A railroad with many highs and lows

The first major setback occurred during the night of July 26 and 27, 1927 when a major fire destroyed the car depot and the entire fleet of cars. Despite these adversities, the operators of the Kirnitzschtal Tramway continued. A new car depot was constructed, and new streetcar trains ordered. On March 1, 1928, five rail cars and six trailer cars built by Maschinenfabrik Augsburg-Nürnberg



(MAN) commenced service. These cars ran until the end of the 1970s, when they were replaced by Erfurt rail cars from the former Lockwitztal Tramway.

Between 1992 and 2007, Kirnitzsch took possession of five Gotha type bidirectional rail cars, which were previously in service in Jena, Plauen and Zwickau. They were accompanied by Gotha trailer cars. Following a comprehensive modernization, they commenced scheduled services on the Kirnitzschtal Tramway as a Gotha three-car train in 1994. Since the 1960s, operations were subject to repeated and increasingly long interruptions, such as in July 1969, after a rail car was involved in a serious accident due to faults in the track. Faults in the track layout resulted in further interruptions to operations in 1985 and 1993 followed by repair works lasting several months.

However, the forces of nature, such as the historic flooding of the River Elbe in August 2002, the flood wave in the Kirnitzsch Valley in August 2007 and the rock fall in September 2014 ►



Picturesque: The little streetcar rolls gently alongside the little Kirnitzsch river, taking it ever further into the Kirnitzsch Valley.

The history of the Kirnitzschtal Tramway

Dec.1893: Permission is granted to construct and operate a railroad in the Kirnitzsch Valley.

May 1898: The railroad is opened with six rail cars and six summer trailer cars.

1926: The Kirnitzschtal Tramway gets its name. Modernization of rail cars and commissioning of additional rail cars.

July 1927: The car depot along with all rail cars and trailer cars are destroyed by fire.

1928: The new car depot is completed. MAN delivers five rail car and six trailer cars.

April 1928: Operations resume with a trio of MAN three-car trains.

1945: Operations resume after the war.

May 1969: An accident and the poor condition of the track cause operations to be suspended.

1972 to 1973: Part of the route and subsequently the entire route are reopened.

Dec. 1977: Five Erfurt rail cars are taken over from the Lockwitztal Tramway.

March 1979: The final scheduled service for the MAN rail car 5.

1979: Rail car 9 is taken over from the Lockwitztal Tramway.

1981: Old-timer operations commence. The first old-timer car: Rail car 9.

May 1983: The MAN rail car 5 is unveiled as an old-timer car.

1985: The railroad is shut down due to the poor condition of the track.

1986: Operations resume along sections of the route.

1990: The entire route is opened.

1992: Founding of the OVPS, Oberelbischen Verkehrsgesellschaft Pirna-Sebnitz mbH.

1992 to 2007: Five Gotha rail cars and two Gotha trailer cars are taken over.

Since 1997: Operations using a trio of Gotha three-car trains.

1998: Kirnitzschtal Tramway celebrates its first centenary.

2008: Rail car 5 and trailer car 12 appear in a movie.

Aug. 2010: Flooding in the Kirnitzsch Valley devastates infrastructure and fleet.

Dec. 2012: Full scheduled services are resumed.

Sept. 2014: A huge rock fall collapses onto the Kirnitzsch Valley route. Railroad operations resume in late October.

2018: Plans for an extension of the railroad route begin.

2019: Oberelbische Verkehrsgesellschaft and Regionalverkehr Dresden merge to form the Regionalverkehr Sächsische Schweiz-Osterzgebirge GmbH (RVSOE).



Old-timer trip: The “5 + 12” streetcar, which is more than 90 years old, is still used today for old-timer excursions.

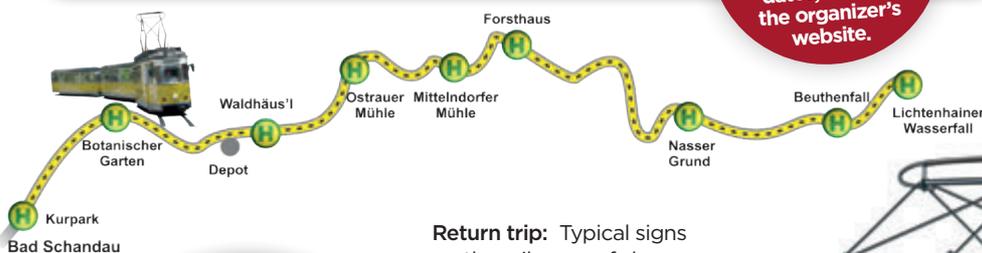
also shut down the streetcar line. Nevertheless, the little railroad in the Kirnitzsch Valley continued despite these calamities. After the infrastructure and cars were repaired, operations were resumed to bring spa guests, tourists and hikers to the beautiful valley in Saxon Switzerland.

If plans by the operator of the Regionalverkehr Sächsische Schweiz-Osterzgebirge GmbH (RVSOE) come to fruition, streetcar passengers can look forward to traveling to the beautiful valley in even greater comfort in the future. An extension to the route is planned. In Bad Schandau, there are plans for the Kirnitzschtal Tramway to pick up passengers at the train station and to carry them several miles further into the Kirnitzsch Valley than previously.

Old-timer excursions in 2020 with the “5+12” streetcar train

May 1 “Fahrt in den Mai” (May excursion)
May 30 to June 01 Pentecost excursions
July 25 to 26 Old-timer excursions for the Kirnitzsch Valley Festival
October 03 “Fahrt in den Herbst” (Fall excursion)

Planned events at the time of going to press. For up-to-date information about the dates, refer to the organizer’s website.



Return trip: Typical signs on the rail car roof show the journey’s route.



True to the original: Rail car 5 and trailer car 12 display the paint scheme and lettering of their prototypes as they appear in operation today.



Rail car 5 and trailer car 12

After the devastating fire in the car depot in 1927, the operators of the Kirnitzschtal Tramway ordered five rail cars and six trailer cars from Maschinenfabrik Augsburg-Nürnberg (MAN). These were delivered the following year and included the rail car Tw 5 and trailer car Bw12. Equipped with the new rolling stock, the Kirnitzschtal Tramway was able to form

three-car trains, which commenced operations on April 1, 1928. The MAN streetcars continued to operate virtually unchanged until the end of the 1970s. After taking possession of five rail cars from the Lockwitztal Tramway when it closed down, the venerable cars were gradually replaced.

Four MAN rail cars were scrapped, but rail car Tw 5 received a new lease of life. After operating its final scheduled service on March 31, 1979, it was renovated and rejoined the Kirnitzschtal Tramway fleet on 28 May 1983 as part of the tramway's 85th anniversary celebrations. Since then, it has operated as a historic rail car in the Kirnitzsch Valley. It was followed eight years later by the MAN trailer car Bw 12, with which it since then has formed the historic MAN train "5 + 12", which can now be seen operating as an "old-timer Kirnitzsch Valley tram" on excursions and on the old-timer running days on the narrow-gauge tracks in the Kirnitzsch Valley.

For anyone who plans to attend the Kirnitzsch Valley Festival at Pentocost on May 1 or to travel to Bad Schandau on October 3, don't miss the opportunity to take a trip down memory lane on the old-time streetcar train. This is also train that made it onto the silver screen

during its long history. In the movie "The Reader", it made a brief cameo appearance together with Kate Winslet, who played the role of conductor on the old streetcar.

Old-timer streetcar as a model

To satisfy the demand among LGB fans of historic streetcars, LGB presented the old-timer streetcar with a trailer in the design of the Kirnitzschtal Tramway at this year's International Toy Fair in Nuremberg, Germany. The Kirnitzschtal Streetcar Train (item 23363) features the prototypical paint scheme and lettering of the historic rail car 5 and of the historic trailer car 12, as they can be seen today operating on old-timer excursions between Bad Schandau and Lichtenhain Waterfall. A bearing-mounted Bühler motor powers the two wheel sets of the rail car.

For the first time, an LGB streetcar is fitted with a latest-generation mfx/DCC decoder. It provides many light and sound functions such as headlights, interior lighting, running sounds, braking sounds and a bell. The alternating headlights for both directions of travel as well as the running sounds are also fully functional in analog operation. Two sound functions can be activated via reed contacts – both in digital as well as in analog operation. The streetcar train, which measures 70 cm (27.6 inches) long, will be delivered in the next few months. This means that streetcar fans can look forward to putting this old-timer on the tracks of their garden railroad, a streetcar that is sure to make them want to take a relaxing train ride in the beautiful valley in Saxon Switzerland.

Powerful: A bearing-mounted Bühler motor powers both axles of the rail car.



HIGHLIGHTS

Kirnitzschtal Streetcar Train, era VI, item 23363

- 1 Old-timer rail car and trailer car train featuring the motif of the Kirnitzschtal Tramway.
- 2 Prototypical paint scheme and lettering from era VI.
- 3 A powerful Bühler motor powers both wheel sets of the rail car.
- 4 Integrated mfx/DCC decoder with many light and sound functions.
- 5 Alternating headlights for both directions of travel also function in analog operation.
- 6 Running sounds as well as triggering of two sound functions also available in analog operation.
- 7 Length over coupler: 70 cm (27.6 inches).

