

MARBLE BEAUTY



Miltitz, for most people only a nonsense name for place about 8km away from the city of porcelain – Meissen. Even the sign showing the remains of the mine is being missed by most of the cars passing by. A noteless sign is showing the way under the railway bridge all the way to the parking lot – an old dump. For somebody just a tourist's sight with colorful lighted walls, for the others it could be the place to listen to the mixed choir from Dresden. The acoustic in the entry hall is just right for that kind of performance. Our interest here is not to listen to the choir singing, but an activity less prosaic.

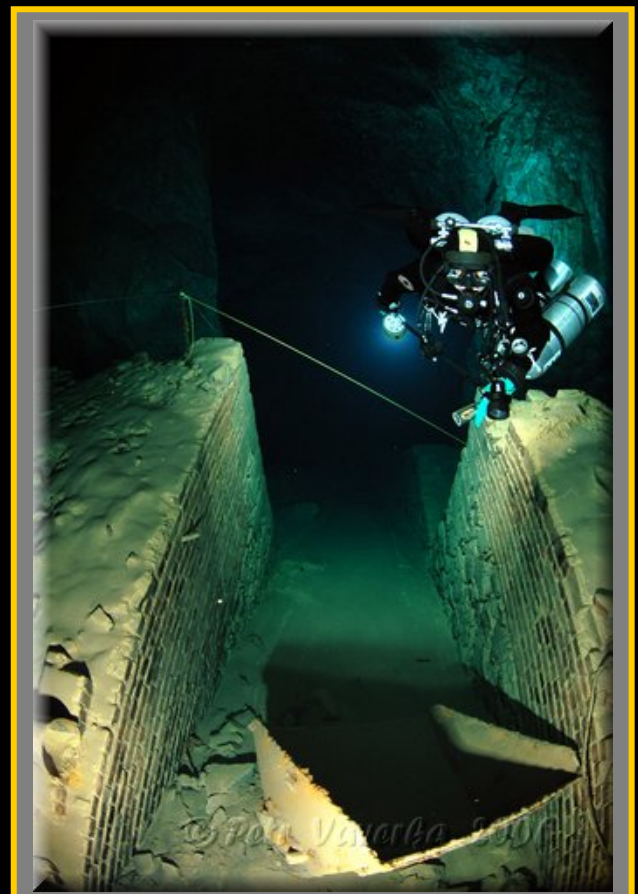
DIVING

Actually this “young” dive site was discovered for the diving community just a couple of years ago. The very first dive on this location was in 1997. Initiative is hold by a group of speleological divers from Dresden. And thanks to their activities this site was open to divers in 1998. A dry part of the mine was opened for visitors as well. In 2000, the main under water line was lined up by Dresden's divers. They were proud of their work which was a 650m of new line. Later on a new water entry and lights were installed as well as a fence around the entry lake. And this was the very first time for us when we visited this unbelievable place called “Miltitz the Marble Mine”.

But it was not that easy to get there. It took us almost a year and the very first diver from the Czech Republic dove there and made his dream real. So many e-mails and visits in Dresden were needed before the first dive in this clear water was realized.....

HISTORY

The limestone mine Miltitz is known since 1400. In the beginning this place was used for its marble. Until 1770 all activities were taken in summer months only. Later on in the year 1810 the work schedule was changed for all the year round. And since 1850 top site works started. When the water fill in the mine stopped in the end of the 19th century the output ended and limestone was used as a material for other use only. The output was since 1924 with a few pauses in process again. During the World War II Miltitz was used as fuel storage. The Ministry of Defense, Armament and Ammunition established here a main storage for gasoline. And this gasoline was for making and producing an avgas. By reason of a very often air-attacks /Allies on German's refineries/ Miltitz, was back then named under the nickname MOLCH 3 and 4. But the refinery even in face of high rate of workers and material support never started. On the other hand, valves and pistons for aircraft engines were produced in a local secret manufactory. This machinery was closed before the WW II ended. After the WW II the mine was grounded-down again and regaled close to the rail way. In 1967 pumps were turned off forever and since that time the abyss was waiting for a new time visitors.



SECRET OF COLORFULL CAVE

When our first day of diving in Miltitz came after a long time of negotiation the whole procedure of that was forgotten. And we were the very first international group of divers standing in front of the mine Miltitz. Only 150km away from our capital city of Czech Republic - Prague. We were luck's way that we have this kind of location not very far away from our city. In the morning on the place – in front of the entry to the mystique mine our friends from Dresden were waiting for us. With our steps into the entry tunnel the day light was slowly disappearing and we could feel the temperature dropping down. Slowly lowering main corridor led us all the way down to the impressive hall with a small entry lake for divers with its crystal clear water.



For dive gear transportation we used a minivan and wheel barrels provided by local speleologists. It is almost impossible to describe our feelings when we saw these underground areas. Water is so clear that you think you can reach the bottom at 6m by your hand only. And it was not only that what was creating unforgettable atmosphere. It was also a great installation of powerful lights emphasizing colors on surrounding marble walls.

We put our gear together and dressed up quickly on place well prepared for it. Strong massive wooden desks for heavy sets and nice concrete walk way into the water makes this procedure easier.

The main line is leading us from the entry lake into the tunnel at the level of 6 meters. That was the place where we put away our deco stages with O2 and slowly were getting into the maze of tunnels. On the mark of -35m our straight descent ended and we decided to use a jump line to penetrate one of the side corridors. This tunnel led us to the main part of the mine Miltitz. A giant underground hall with 25 meters high ceiling and massive pillars in the middle. The main hall is 80m long and you can follow its floor all the way down to -65m. Our dive plan/way was to go to the concrete wall at -45m where brass plate with initials of Adolph von Heynitz is placed. And the main hall is named after the owner as well..... (continuing)

