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## Germans Bury Like the Egyptians: Want World's Biggest Pyramid



The planned pyramid will be stronger than these sculptures made of sand

**German entrepreneurs have proposed building a massive burial pyramid near the town of Dessau. But the complex would hold not just the bodies of a select few, but of millions of people.**

Granted, Germany is a relatively small, densely populated country. So finding a place to bury the deceased can be a tricky business. Cemeteries often resort to excavating people's remains after 20 or more years to make room for a new casket and headstone.

As a potential way out of the dilemma, several Germans have come up with a creative solution: emulating the ancient Egyptians -- *en masse*.

German entrepreneurs have secured around 90,000 euros (\$122,000) in funding to study the feasibility of building an up to 488-meter tall (1,600 feet) "Great Pyramid" near the eastern German town of Dessau, in the state of Saxony-Anhalt.

Jens Thiel, one of the project initiators, said a burial space within the pyramid could be affordable for most people. Current estimates showed that a tomb could cost up to 700 euros.

Those interested can already reserve their burial space online at [thegreatpyramid.org](http://thegreatpyramid.org).



Unlike Egypt, Dessau could become home to just one huge pyramid

**Pyramid is "open to everyone"**

"Outlasting personal physical existence is something that the Egyptian pyramids could promise only a few, but this pyramid is open to every individual," the Web site said.

"No one should be denied a place just because they can't afford it," Thiel said.

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Thiel, along with the other project initiators Ingo Niermann and Heiko Holzberger, have founded an association called "Friends of the Great Pyramid" to create this "tomb for all people."



It's highly unlikely any world-renown architects have worked on pumpkin pyramids

According to Germany's daily *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, it is likely that the pyramid, should it ever be built, would initially be 150 meters high and increase in size as millions of burial tombs would be added concrete block by concrete block over several decades.

The project initiators proclaim it could become the "largest building in history," generating up to 19.6

million euros in sales of burial spaces.

### Star architect Rem Koolhaas allegedly on board

So outlandish is the proposal that it has caught the attention of famous architects, such as Dutchman Rem Koolhaas. The project initiators said Koolhaas agreed to be on the jury for an architecture competition for the pyramid's creation.

There is a difference between the ancient Egyptians' architectural masterpiece at Giza and the proposed German version near Dessau: the hordes of tourists who are expected to come flocking to pay respects to loved ones, and the money they would likely bring with them.

DW staff (als)

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Anything which helps to reduce the number of deaths through drink-driving must be lauded. But is the urinal driving simulator a credible attempt or are its creators just taking the piss? (13.08.2007)

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