

Destination Munich

and **Bavaria**



"A groovy guide to a great city."

A few words of introduction...

Hi, and thanks for deciding to buy this copy of Destination Munich and Bavaria.

I think it's one of the best guides available to this region, but hey, I wrote it, so I would say that 😊. I want you to make up your mind and if you're not totally satisfied, remember, you can just ask for a refund.

This book has about a dozen sections worth mentioning, so here goes:

1. The **city maps** are at the back of the book, but they'll probably be the part you want to look at first. There are two public transportation maps and six full-age city maps starting from **Page 276**
2. The **Table of Contents** starts on **Page 3**. This lists every story in the eBook and you can click on the titles to go directly to any given story.
3. The **Backstory** section starts on **Page 14**. You probably know a little about Munich and Bavaria already. Do lederhosen, giant beer mugs and BMW ring any bells? This section is where you can learn a whole lot more about the history, traditions and people that have made the region both famous and infamous.
4. The **Attractions** section starts on **Page 61**. Munich boasts a plethora of museums, monuments, palaces and other highly see-able sights. The best ones, over 60 of them, are reviewed here. The attractions are grouped by area, there are sections on: the



Wiener Platz (Vienna Square) in Munich.

Spotlight: Munich and Bavaria

Lederhosen, laptops and fairy-tale castles. State-of-the-art cars and age-old traditions. Golden beer, white sausages and rolling green hills all the way to the Alps. Sweet dreams are made of these and so is Bavaria, Germany's most enchanting corner and a must on any European tour. Have yourself an absolute blast exploring it!



Southern

and Northern Parts of the Old City, the Art Precinct, Schwabing and the Park, Along the River Isar and Further Afield.

5. The **Day-Trips** section starts on **Page 141**. Like to get out of the city? Here are ideas for day-trips diverse as “must-sees” like Neuschwanstein Castle to out-of-the-way places like the little, romantic town of Amberg.

6. The **Oktoberfest** section starts on **Page 170** and has all you ever wanted to know about the world’s biggest festival.

7. There are also plenty of **Other Festivals** in Munich and Bavaria worth checking out, to read about a few of the best turn to **Page 186**.

8. The **Dining and Drinking** section starts on **Page 206** and has recommendations of top beer gardens, pubs, clubs and restaurants.

9. The **Things to Do** section, starting on **Page 219**, offers a wealth of info on shopping, city tours cinemas, where to go with kids in Munich and more.

10. The **Accommodation** section starts on **Page 234**. Hotels, hostels, and even campsites are reviewed.

11. The **Practical Travel Info** section starts on **Page 248** and has tips n visas, the weather, public transport and a bunch of other topics.

12. And finally the **Index**, where you can look up keywords and go exactly where they’re mentioned in the book with a simple click, starts on **Page 273**.

OK, got all that? Remember you can also go straight to any given section by clicking on the links in the headings above. This won’t work if you’re printing the book out, of course!

So, that’s the formalities done with. Pull up a chair and make yourself comfortable. Please enjoy reading about, and hopefully coming to, the city they call Europe’s biggest village.

Not your average guidebook

This isn’t the most traditional guidebook you’ll ever encounter. Then again, it hasn’t been created in the most traditional way. Destination Munich and Bavaria is the result of over four years of sweat, toil and tears spent building up

www.destination-munich.com, an original online guide to the corner of the world I’ve come to call home. To read more about me and this project, turn to the back of the book, before the maps.

Enjoy Munich and travel well,

Stuart

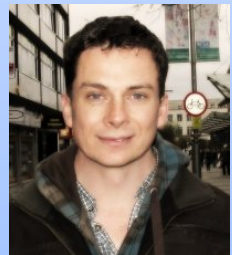


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Welcome to Munich!

To introduce this beautiful part of the world let's join a virtual "tour of the city centre...

"First time in Munich? Then welcome, and as we say here, *servus!* Let's start the tour, shall we? We're standing in Marienplatz, the beating heart of the city.

Directly front of you is the Neues Rathaus. That's our neo-gothic City Hall."

"Impressive, don't you think?

"In the middle of the tower is the famous Glockenspiel. It jumps into action three times a day. Over there to your right is the Fish Fountain.

It's the city's favourite meeting spot so if anyone gets lost on the tour just head back here and we'll find you. But don't let anyone throw you in like they used to do to the butchers.

"Now look up there to your left. See the two towers with the onion domes? That's the Frauenkirche, our cathedral. We'll go inside later and see the Devil's footprint.

"I think you'll like the story behind that. One of the towers is a little bit higher than the other, can you tell which?

"Have a look around here but please don't take too long. There are heaps to see in this city and we're just getting started. So come along now, the Hofbräuhaus is right around the corner..."

Munich in a nutshell

- **Status:** Capital of Bavaria, the biggest and richest state in Germany.
- **Population:** 1.4 million
- **Known for:** Oktoberfest, lederhosen, BMW, Olympics in '72, birthplace of the beer garden.
- **Language spoken:** German and a local dialect called Boarisch.
- **Useful phrases:**
 - *Grüss Gott* (formal hello), - *Gut schaust du aus* (you look great),
 - *Servus* (informal hello, goodbye), - *Noh a Moss, bitte!* (One more mug of beer, please!)
 - *Hast du 'was Klopapier?* (Have you got any loo paper?)
- **Famous past residents:** Vladimir Lenin, Lola Montez, Freddie Mercury , Joseph Ratzinger (the Pope), Lou Bega.
- **Currency:** € Euro. 1€ equals about 1.4 US dollars, 0.88 British pounds, 1.6 Australian dollars and 208.7 Kazakhstani Tenge.
- **Common souvenirs:** Beer steins, lion dolls, Oktoberfest hats.
- **Quote:** "Today is the good old times of tomorrow" –Munich comic Karl Valentin.

Munich Loves You – introducing the city

Munich has survived more identity swaps in the last 850 years than I change beer mugs in a session at the Hofbräuhaus. I thought I'd try to explain what makes this city unique by looking at its many names...

Harsh as it sounds, Munich was born through an act of terrorism. All there was in the city centre 900 years ago was a community of monks, toiling their little gardens, praying six times a day and generally being pretty pious. Downstream the Isar River was a city called Freising, run by a bishop who was getting fat off a toll bridge that serviced the salt trade route through Bavaria.

Burn a bridge

Enter Henry the Lion. An ambitious noble with money on his mind, Henry decided to burn down the bishop's bridge and build a new one near the monks. The salt carts had to cross his bridge now! As Henry's bridge-side village began to boom he called it "*Apud Munichen*", meaning "near the monks".

Ludwig's love

Shoot forward to the 1800s and the time of another randy empire builder, King Ludwig I. He went on a spree of classical construction and called Munich the "Athens on the Isar River".

Many of the city's modern-day landmarks like Ludwig Strasse, Königsplatz and the Bavaria statue are thanks to him. About the only thing Ludwig was better at that building seemed to be bedding beautiful women, check out the *Schönheitengalerie* at Nymphenburg Palace to see what I mean!

Facing the sun

Munich locals have long favoured facing the sun and fancy theirs is "Italy's Northernmost City". Think leafy boulevards, Florentine architecture and languid street life. Locals prefer the laid back Mediterranean lifestyle over the typically tepid northerners from Prussia of old. Even today many Munich locals feel closer to Austrians, and sometimes even Italians, than to northern Germans.



The rather dashing Ludwig I.

Nazi names

Munich was, sadly, a Nazi spawning pool and Hitler had a few special names for the city too. In 1933 he named it the “Capital of German Art” although he labelled most contemporary artists “degenerate” and had their works either destroyed or sold off.

Two years later Hitler called Munich the “Capital of the (Nazi) Movement”, which did the city no favours when the Allies began to bomb the crap out of the place in World War Two.

Post-war boom

After the war Germany was split into two, with East Berlin the capital of the communist East and Bonn the capital of the democratic West. Bonn was a strange choice.

It was little more than a village and didn't rise above an administrative centre, a place for the politicians to hang their hats on workdays before scooting off back home on weekends. Munich on the other hand, was booming, a magnet for economic immigrants and big business alike, spawning the slogan “Germany's Secret Capital”. As the city limits grew out close-by communities were “incorporated” into Munich.

These localities kept their small-town atmosphere despite becoming part of a metropolis, and many old-timers are still more proud of their district than they are of the city as a whole. Thus, when it passed the million-mark in 1957 Munich became the “Village of a Million People”.

Kicking goals

The 1972 Munich Olympics were tremendously important for the city's self-esteem. Only three decades after the war reduced it to rubble, Munich was back in the spotlight, confident and ready for the world to take notice. Local cinema secretary Dorit Lindner dreamt up the nickname “World City with Heart” for the occasion.



"The fair Coletta", waitress in old Munich Tracht, by Toni Aron, 1885.

Sport also birthed the city's current slogan. "Munich Loves You" came about for the 2006 Soccer World Cup: Interestingly enough it was reduced to "*München mag Dich*" – Munich Likes You in German because locals thought the term *Liebe* (love) was a little too full on for their fellow Germans.

Different faces

Munich has always been a man of contrasts. He'll wear lederhosen and toast tradition at the turn of a hat. Then he'll whip out his laptop to blaze the info superhighway quicker than you can say "BMW". His face is as conservative as the Neues Rathaus but his liberal streak is as long as the Englischer Garten. He'll drink and dance with the best of 'em and then go along to the opera. I think poet Heinrich Heine summed him up the best when he said the city "sits like a village between the hills of art and beer"!

Where is Bavaria?

Here are 8 fast facts on the geography of Germany's prettiest province.

1. Size of Bavaria

Bavaria is Germany's biggest state (*Bundesland*) with an area of 70,548 square kilometres (27,200 square miles). That's about a fifth of Germany's total land mass. It's in Germany's south-eastern quarter and has a population of about 12.5 million people.

2. Co-ordinates of Bavaria

Munich sits at the co-ordinates 48 8' 0" N, 11 34' 0"E, putting it at a similar longitude to Paris in France, Quebec in Canada, Seattle in the USA, Ulan Bator in Mongolia and Vienna in Austria.

3. Alps

Bring up Bavaria and many people will think of Alpine glory a la *The Sound of Music*.

Actually only a small part of the state's surface – the "deep south" – is alpine.

It's nonetheless a glorious area. The Bavarian Alps include Germany's highest peak, the Zugspitze at 2962 meters (9718 feet). Popular mountain getaway areas include Obersdorf, Garmisch-Partenkirchen and Berchtesgaden.

4. Rivers of Bavaria

The largest rivers that flow through the state are the Danube and the Main. The Danube (German: Donau) cuts a jagged line across Bavaria from Ulm/Neu-Ulm in the west to Passau in the east. The Main flows further north. Both rivers are occasionally dubbed the "Weisswurst Equator" – the imaginary northern frontier of Bavarian culture and all it

entails (including the famous white sausages). Where this border really is depends on who you ask – vehemently traditional southern Bavarians will say it starts further south!

5. Time

The whole of Germany is one hour ahead of Greenwich Mean Time and sits in the Central European Time (CET) time zone. This means that it's normally six hours ahead of New York, eight hours

behind Melbourne, an hour ahead of London and the same time as Cape Town. Between the last Sunday of March and the last Sunday of October it falls under Central European Summer Time (CEST), two hours ahead of Greenwich Mean Time.

6. Neighbours

Bavaria borders on the German states of Baden-Württemberg to the west and Hesse, Thuringia and Saxony to the north. Directly to the west lies the Czech Republic and Austria, and to the south is the Austrian province of Tyrol. Bavaria has a maritime border with Switzerland on its south-western corner, across Lake Constance (German: Bodensee).

8. Cities

The largest cities in Bavaria after Munich are Nuremberg (Nürnberg), Augsburg, Würzburg, Regensburg. The suffix “berg” comes from the German word for mountain, and “burg” means fortress or castle, as they were all historically well-fortified cities.



The hills are alive, with the sound of Griswold!

7. Regions

Bavaria is divided into seven administrative regions, these being:

- Lower Franconia (*Niederfranken*),
- Middle Franconia (*Mittlefranken*),
- Swabia (*Schawben*),
- Upper Franconia (*Oberfranken*),
- Upper Palatinate (*Oberpfalz*),
- Lower Bavaria (*Niederbayern*) and
- Upper Bavaria (*Oberbayern*).

Perhaps surprisingly, Upper Bavaria is actually south of Lower Bavaria. It gets the name from its higher altitude.

Backstory

As far as European cities go, Munich still has a slingshot hanging out of his short pants. It's young. In 2008 locals celebrated the city's 850th birthday. "That's not young" you say? Consider that London and Paris go back 2,000 years, and cities like Rome and Athens were founded much, much earlier. But what's amazing about Munich is its depth. In under nine centuries it's developed a unique culture that's recognised all over the world.

This section is where we explore the city's society, traditions and history.

It's where you can go behind the scenes and get a little under the skin of this beautiful, folkloric city of monks, beer and art.

20 Facts on Germany

Sooo, you think you know Germany. Here's a quick primer to fill in those gaps in your knowledge of the nation famed for efficiency, supermodels and bratwurst.



1. INTERNATIONAL: Instead of saying "rare" for a steak the Germans say "English". What we know as normal sandwich bread is known as "American toast" and if you want to say something seems weird you can say *Das kommt mir spanisch vor*, meaning "that seems Spanish to me"!

2. BREAD: Ask a German expat what they miss most about home and they'll probably say: "the bread". Germany has over 600 main kinds of bread and 1200 types of pastries and rolls, including my favourite, the delicious *Nussschnecke* (literally: "nut snail").

3. PEE: Only 71 per cent of German men stand to take a pee. They're known as *Stehpinkler* (standing pee-ers). The other 29 per cent prefer to sit (the *Sitzpinkler*).

4. CHEAP: Germany's capital, Berlin, is a surprisingly cheap place to live. It's less expensive than cities like Hamburg, Düsseldorf and especially Munich, which is Germany's most expensive city. Housing in Berlin is at least 45 per cent cheaper than in London, Paris and New York.

5. INVENT: Germans are inventive people. The printing press, glockenspiel, automobile, motorcycle, X-ray, diesel engine, special relativity and jet aircraft were all German ideas. They also came up with the helicopter, ballistic missile, morphine, the Z3 (first programmable computer), tachometer, coffee filter, Christmas tree, mp3 and (this is just

a new one) sticky tape with serrated edges so you can rip off sections with your fingers alone – now why didn't I think of that?!

6. SURPRISING: Ferdinand Porsche designed the Volkswagen Beetle and Hugo Boss designed the SS Nazi uniforms.

8. RELIGION: Although Germany is rightly known as the birthplace of Protestantism it's not an overwhelmingly Protestant country. The religious breakdown goes: Atheist (no religion) 34.1%, Catholic 30%, Protestant 29.9%, Muslim 4%, orthodox Christian 1.6%, Jewish 0.2%, Buddhist 0.2%. While the south is more catholic the north tends to be protestant. The states of the former East Germany are more atheistic.

9. DOUGHNUT: John F. Kennedy didn't call himself a jelly doughnut when he declared "Ich bin ein Berliner". It's true that in German you usually leave off the "ein" when you talk about where you're from or what your job is. But Kennedy's "ein" meant that he felt like "one" of them. The West Berliners understood this show of solidarity and despite the myth, nobody laughed.

10. NAME: The word "Germany" dates back Julius Caesar, who dubbed the lands east of the Rhine River "Germania". The name's root isn't exactly clear, but it's theorized it could mean "neighbour", "noisy", "spear men" or even "greedy men"!

11. CHURCH: The Cologne Cathedral took 632 years to build. It's the largest Gothic Church in Germany and is houses what are said to be the 2000-year-old remains of the Three Wise Men. It was the tallest building in the world for four years until it was surpassed by the Washington Monument in 1884.

13. MISCONCEPTIONS: Hitler didn't invent the Autobahn, most German men have never strapped on a pair of lederhosen and Germans know how to party with the best of them.

7. NUDE: Nudist beaches, lakes, thermal baths and just generally being nude are quite popular in Germany. They call it "FKK" or *Freikörperkultur* (Free Body Culture).

12. WORDS: German nouns can be tacked together to make mega-words verging on the absurd. Though there's technically no longest German word an oft-quoted chestnut is *Donaudampfschiffahrtsgesellschaftskapitän* (Danube steam-ship company captain).

14. FANTA: Fanta was created in Germany during World War II when Coca-Cola imports were banned. Its name comes from the word *Fantasie* meaning “imagination”. The Germans also drink a sickly sweet cola/orange soda mix called Spezi.

15. SNACK: Germany’s most popular snack is the Döner kebab and the best ones can be found in Berlin. This folded sandwich with chicken or turkey, salad and garlic sauce arrived with Turkish immigrants in the 1970s. Annual Döner sales amount to €2.5 billion a year!

16. KIDS: Germany has one of the lowest birth rates in the world with just 1.38 babies per mother. Critics blame the country’s poor state-run childcare system for the ensuing population shrinkage.

17. POLICE: German cops are sometimes nicknamed *Schnittlauch* meaning “chives” because they wear green and always show up in bunches.

18. ECONOMY: Germany is Europe’s powerhouse and has the world’s fourth-biggest economy after the US, China and Japan. Germany pips the US to be the world’s second-biggest exporter after China.

19. SCHOOL: For most pupils school finishes at 1pm – a leftover from the days when kids had to help out on the farm or with the family business. Pupils take a test when they’re 10 or 11 which determines what kind of secondary school they can attend. This can mean the difference between being able to go to university or having to enter the workforce at 17, so the test is quite a responsibility for such a young age!

20. SOCCER: Germany’s Bundesliga soccer league has some of the highest attendances of any professional sports league in the world. Bayern Munich is the most successful club in the country and has won 35 national championships and cups and four European Championship titles.

German Dirndl

Is any other traditional dress as feminine, elegant and downright sexy as the Bavarian Dirndl? Any man or woman alive who has visited the Munich Oktoberfest would have to answer with a resounding no! There’s even a song about the dress with the line “Whether he’s a doctor, farmer or a Sheikh – Dirndls can make any man turn weak”. So what’s the real story behind the dress that launched a thousand ships?

Dirndl origins

The word *Dirndl* had meant just “girl” in the Bavarian dialect, now it can mean either a girl or the dress. The old name for the dress is *Dirndlgewand*. Servant girls started

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wearing dresses resembling today's Dirndls in the 1800s. In those days they were modest affairs, plain in colour and, of course, light on the cleavage.

There were different styles to match the seasons. The winter Dirndl was heavy and often dark, with long sleeves and a thick apron to keep the wearer warm. The summer Dirndl had short sleeves. Towns and regions developed individual styles which bore the local colours or emblem.

Some of the women in the Gallery of Beauties (*Schönheitengalerie*) at Munich's Nymphenburg Palace were painted wearing Dirndls. One of the most famous beauties, Helene Sedlmayr, was painted in 1831 wearing an old Munich style Dirndl. The nobility adopted the Dirndl along with lederhosen in the late 1800s and turned them into high fashion.

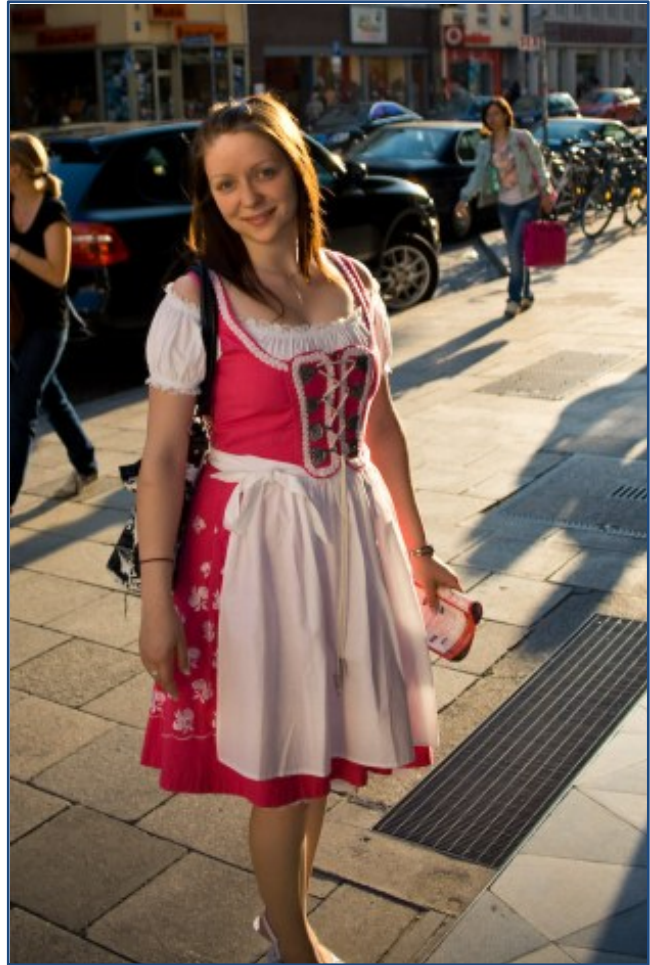
The operetta *Im weißen Rößl* (The White Horse Inn) gave the Dirndl's popularity another shot in the arm after it premiered in Berlin in 1897. The operetta was a comedy of love and hijinks set at an Austrian hotel.

The Dirndl was continually "pimped up" throughout the 1900s until we arrived

at what we have today. The contemporary mini-Dirndl only came into existence about 30 years ago.

Dirndls today

Munich fashion designers including Lola Peltinger are continuing to put new spins on the dress. Peltinger's designs fuse tradition with expensive fabrics and have been worn by Paris Hilton and Salma Hayek. Other designers are taking the Dirndl in new directions. A Berlin "metropolitan Dirndl", an Anglo-Bavarian design with English-style tweed, and Dirndls with Indian sari patterns have all been produced in recent years.



A Columbian designer has even gone so far to make a bulletproof Dirndl, perfect for parties in downtown Bogata! Dirndls are worn more commonly in everyday life than their counterpart, the lederhosen. The dresses are everywhere at Oktoberfest and other Bavarian beer festivals and they're also regularly worn by waitresses at Bavarian restaurants and by guests at weddings. Older women still wear Dirndls every day in Bavaria's deep south.

German Dirndls cost a minimum of €70 and from there, the sky's the limit. The most expensive Dirndl ever was made

of pure wild silk and took 300 hours to embroider. It was adorned with 150,000 Swarovski crystals and cost €100,000. You'd want to be careful with that one in a beer tent!

Parts of a Dirndl

Modern Dirndls consist of a bodice (*Mieder*), blouse (*Bluse*), a skirt (*Rock*) and a Dirndl apron (*Schürze*). The skirt can end above the knee (the mini), below the knee (the midi), or go all the way down. Traditional colours are black, blue and soft pink, but today anything goes from silver and gold to electric pink and toxic green. The blouse is almost always white. Dirndls are worn with a special bra (in German: *BH*) to highlight and give extra support to the bust. Locals here call cleavage the "*Décolleté*", or even the *Balkon* (balcony). The apron is tied with a large knot (*Schleife*).

Two-piece dresses inspired by Dirndl design are termed *Landhausmode*, or Country House Fashion. As it says in the main Oktoberfest story, the knot's position reveals the wearer's availability. If the knot is on the left the wearer is single, so that's the green light to flirt city. If it's tied on the right, she's taken. If the knot is square on the front she's probably a virgin. If it's dead on the back the wearer is a widow or perhaps a waitress.

Dirndl accessories

- **Jewellery** – Necklaces, earrings and chains all commonly accompany the Dirndl.
- **Shoes and socks** – Dirndls can be worn with pumps or flat, ballerina-type shoes. Knee-length socks are common, but socks are often skipped altogether in favour of tights.
- **Coats** – Women's Trachten jackets (called *Janker*) are long-sleeved woollen numbers, usually without a collar. Knitted shawls are another option if it's a bit on the chilly side.

Traditional German Lederhosen

Want to catch a few eyes at your next social event?

Slap on a pair of traditional German lederhosen and you'll be the life of the party. Love it or laugh at it, the leather pants worn by Bavarian men

Note: Lederhose is the singular form, which Germans use to refer to one pair of Lederhosen.

(and sometimes women) are one of the world's most striking costumes. Lederhosen are traditionally southern Bavarian and Austrian clobber. Up until a few years ago Germans from Berlin or Cologne wouldn't have been seen dead in a pair except at the Munich Oktoberfest, where they're manly *de rigueur*.

But how did lederhosen become so popular? Let's look at the story behind the shorts.

Lederhosen history

The history of using fur or animal hide for pants goes all the way back to Otzi the Iceman, the 5,300-year-old frozen mummy of whom was found near the Alpine Austro-Italian border in 1991.

But lederhosen as we know and love it today first took shape in the 1700s. It had been reasonably common across Europe for peasants to wear leather pants for farm work, horse riding and hunting. But it was the Bavarians who invented the drop-down flap at the front. The French even dubbed it *à la bavaroise*, meaning in "in the Bavarian style".

In those days Europe's aristocracy liked to dress up as peasants for fun, and so lederhosen became popular across all strata of society.

Poorer folk dyed goat or sheep skin black for their pants, which were either short or full length

"*Bundhosen*" style. It was the nobility who started wearing the soft, brown lederhosen made from deer or chamois skin that's the most common variety today.



Revival

Lederhosen fell out of fashion for a while in the 1800s as pants made from cotton or cloth started to take over. An upstart called Joseph Vogel led a revival in 1883, when he and his mates from the pub gathered to protest a decline of Bavarian values. The six of them started the first Tracht preservation society and even wore their short-length lederhosen to a church service in the town of Bayerischzell. The priesthood condemned the shorts as an affront to decency and tried to have them banned.

But Bavarian King Ludwig II professed he was a fan and that was that. Farmers and aristocrats alike started donning lederhosen again. But it was another Bavarian who really dealt the death blow to lederhosen being widely worn in everyday life.

His name was Levi Strauss. Strauss hailed from a town near Nuremberg in northern Bavaria (a staunchly non-lederhosen wearing area) and migrated to San Francisco during the California Gold Rush. His blue "jeans" took over as the world's most popular pant and the rest is history.

Among the most memorable lederhosen advocates in the 1900s was Bavarian writer Okskar Maria Graf who fled to New York during the Third Reich days. Graf wore his lederhosen around Manhattan until his death in 1967.

These days lederhosen are usually reserved for beer festivals like Oktoberfest and other cultural events. But you can still see Bavarians wearing lederhosen as everyday garb in *über*-traditional towns like Garmisch-Partenkirchen.

Lederhosen are being worn by more and more women as well. They're cut differently to men's lederhosen, are often short and are often very appealing. Some people think women wearing lederhosen are just being trendy and they should get back into Dirndl dresses.

But that's not fair, because although girls in leather shorts are a new addition to the Oktoberfest, female farmhands and milkmaids have worn lederhosen for centuries.

Different styles of lederhosen

Many styles of lederhosen have a long history so there's no one type that could be considered really traditional German lederhosen. Lederhosen in Germany can cost anywhere from €100 for the cheapest, imported stuff up to thousands of euros for a top of the range, tailor-made pair. In Munich they're often sold as a set, coming with a shirt, socks and leather shoes. Lederhosen can be either long or short: ending above the knee, below the knee or going all the way down to the ankles. Full-length lederhosen are often worn without suspenders. Colours range from black, different shades of brown through to light

tan and grey. There are also two types of suspenders, the “V”-style and the “H”-style, which often have a colourfully embroidered pattern on the cross piece (*Stegträger*).

A few special styles...

- **Bruno-style** – Don’t worry, the type of lederhosen worn by Sacha Baron Cohen’s gay Austrian fashion guru Bruno doesn’t really exist, not in traditional Bavarian society anyway!

Leave it for the stag parties, guys, this style is definitely *not* Oktoberfest-worthy.

- **Schuhplatter Lederhosen** – *Schuhplatten* is the thigh-slapping Alpine dance immortalized by Chevy Chase in the film *European Vacation*.

The traditional Schuhplatter style of lederhosen is black, tight, and has rich green or white embroidery.

Lederhosen accessories

Lederhosen accessories

- **Shoes** - Do not wear sneakers with your lederhosen unless you want to stand out like a chicken suit in a church. Traditional Bavarian shoes, *Haferlschuhe*, are usually brown and their design is said to have been inspired by a goat’s hoof.

- **Socks** – Are usually cream or grey and can be knee-length, ankle-length or *Loferl*-style. *Loferls* are ankle-length with an extra band around the calves.

- **Shirts** – worn with lederhosen are usually plain white or have blue or red checkered patterns. White or cream shirts are often adorned with embroidery and buttons made of bone.

- **Jacket** – Traditional German lederhosen jackets are called *Janker* and are usually green, brown or grey have a thin green collar.

- **Jewellery** – A chain, called a *chiavari*, is sometimes worn with lederhosen across the top of the flap. *Chiavari* can be decorated with old coins, animal teeth or other lucky charms. A small pocket knife or *Trachtenmesser* is sometimes carried in a side pocket.

- **Hats** – Older men often wear green or black felt hats, sometimes decorated with badges, or more notably, a *Gamsbart*, the beard of a chamois (Alpine elk).

Munich Glockenspiel

Every day Munich's central Marienplatz square is crammed with onlookers with their chins aimed skywards. They're watching one of the city's most loved oddities, the Glockenspiel, or carillon.

At 11am and midday (and 5pm between March and October) the Munich Glockenspiel recounts a royal wedding, jousting tournament and ritualistic dance - all events which have etched a mark on Munich's popular folklore. The show lasts about 15 minutes and concludes with the golden bird up the top emerging and chirping three times.

Different tunes are played on the clock's 43 bells. To get a better view of what's going on head up to the third or fourth floor of the Hugendubel bookstore across the square. The Glockenspiel was added to the tower of the Neues Rathaus (New Town Hall) the year the building was completed in 1907.

Topside

The top level recounts the 1568 wedding of Duke Wilhelm V (1548-1626) and Renata of Lorraine (1544-1602), one of the most expensive and downright decadent weddings of the Middle Ages. It was a huge dynastic deal, the Austrian archdukes arrived in a train of over 1500 horses and more than 600 oxen were carved and cooked up for the revellers.

On the day of the nuptials the bride was collected from the nearby town of Dachau by no less than 3500 mounted riders. The whole party lasted about two weeks.

The crowd highlight was the *Kröndlstechen*, or crown joust, which took place right on Marienplatz and is now a big part of the Glockenspiel show.

A well-named bloke called Caspar Nothhaft von Wernberg zu Alhaming was declared the overall winner. He'd reportedly "injured several fingers on his left hand, but not before unhorsing four riders". The Munich Glockenspiel shows a Bavarian knight battling a French joustier and as you'd expect the Bavarian always wins. The groom, Wilhelm V, became famous as the man who founded the famous Hofbräuhaus, and rather infamous for leading massive witch hunts across his domain.



Down below

On the lower level you can see the red-coated city's coopers (barrel makers) do a ritualistic jig known as the *Schäfflertanz*. The dance is popularly thought to have begun in the devastating plague year of 1517, but it actually dates back further.

Legend says the coopers started the dance to give Munich's residents the all-clear that the plague was done and dusted. The Bavarian duke Wilhelm IV ordered the dance be re-enacted every seven years to keep the deadly disease in the collective memory. The next *Schäfflertanz*, performed by guys in the same old-fashioned get up, will be in February 2019! You can see a couple of cooper statues in more detail at the entrance to Schäffler Strasse, west of the Marienhof park at the back of the Neues Rathaus.

There's also a mini-show at 9pm, when two figures appear from the bays below the clock face. On one side there's the Angel of Peace blessing the Münchner Kindl, the Munich's child-monk mascot. On the other side a night watchman appears, sounding the city curfew on his horn.

Surfing Munich

One of the oddest memories people take away from Munich is from watching surfers ride the swells in the Englischer Garten park. They jump in, manage a few turns back and forth, might get in a trick or two and are then dumped into the water, left to pull themselves out a little further downstream. It's fantastic to watch and there's usually a healthy crowd of onlookers marvelling at the sheer quirkiness of it all. But how did it start? Is it safe? And how cold is that water, exactly? Let's take a look.



How it started

The wave, which breaks 1m high, was created in 1972 after authorities added submerged concrete blocks under the bridge to break up the current. If you look below the bridge you'll see a couple of ropes with submerged planks trailing through the water - they were added by the surfers to bolster the height and shape of the wave.

Cold rush

The temperature of the water ranges from a chilly 8C (46F) in October to a frigid 4C (39F) in April and down to 1C (34F) in the depths of winter. Nonetheless, surfers don wetsuits and keep at it throughout most of the year.

Is it for you?

If you're crazy enough to be travelling through Europe with your surfboard give it a go by all means. But take heed, it's recommended just for experienced riders.

It's a tough wave to ride and the stream is shallow in parts, and your insurer probably won't cover you if you bang your head on the bottom and end up in hospital. No-one's ever died there, though.

Be polite, too, if you don't want to piss off the locals. The wave's only wide enough for one rider at a time so you'll have to line up and wait for a bit. The surfing was officially forbidden but ignored by the police until 2010. It's now legal, and a new sign next to the wave warns: "Due to the forceful current, the wave is suitable for skilled and experienced surfers only".

Opposition

Surfers are now fighting a new push to destroy the wave after an Australian tourist drowned in the stream in 2007 (although he was nowhere near the surfing area). The surfers also have to contend with an increasing band of "playboaters" – guys in small kayaks – who want to share the wave.



Second wave

Believe it or not, this isn't the only place to surf in Munich. A second standing wave forms down at the Floßlände, near the Flaucher beer garden in Thalkirchen in Munich's south. It's wide enough to take a few surfers at a time and is a better bet for board-beginners wanting to get their feet wet in Munich.

It's a much more chilled-out setting with fewer spectators, but the wave here only typically only breaks from April to September when the Alpine snow melts pumping extra water into Bavaria's river system.

Comp surfing

Riding the standing waves of Munich's waterways has become such a cult pastime that it's even spawned an annual surf-off, The Munich Surf Open in July. It's been running for about 10 years, not in the Englischer Garten, but at the Floßlände in Thalkirchen.

Organisers claim it's not only Germany's biggest surf event, but the world's most famous freshwater surf festival – nice claims to fame but when you think about it, there can't be too many others out there.

The comp attracts Germany's best surfers as well as wave riders from across Europe and the USA. There are Open, Women's and Juniors' competitions and you can register at www.grossstadtsurfer.de.

Helene Sedlmayr – the “Munich Beauty”

A beauty by any measure, this humble and hard-working country maid caught a king's eye and was immortalised forever. Josef Stieler's portrait of Helene Sedlmayr is a major draw card at the *Schönheitengalerie* (Gallery of Beauties) at Munich's Nymphenburg Palace.

But who was this girl, actually? How did she become known as the seminal *Schöne Münchenerin* (Munich beauty) a stereotype that espouses the good looks of Munich's womenfolk?

From the village...

Helene was born in 1813 in the village of Trostberg near the Chiemsee, a lake in eastern Bavaria. Her dad was a well-known and respected shoemaker. She worked as a maid the small city of Altötting until 1828 and then moved to Munich to do the same job.

...to the city

Records attest Helene was an extremely trustworthy and hard-working girl. From 1830 to 1831 she was a store assistant in a fashion and toy store called Auracher's. She also moonlighted as an escort girl, I guess one of the respectable kind. The king of Bavaria was Ludwig I (1786-1868). He was a true pants man. Ludwig's architect and confidant Leo von Klenze kept a dossier of the king's conquests which lists the names of over 50 girls.



Ludwig even had scouts fan out across the kingdom to search for models for his Gallery of Beauties, a collection of portraits of the foxiest ladies he could find. Helene crossed the king's path after his wife, Queen Therese, bought toys from Auracher's for her princes. Helene was charged with delivering the goods to the royal Residenz, where she ran into the regent himself. Ludwig, struck by her doey-eyes and jet-black hair, decided she'd be a perfect fit for his gallery of gorgeous dames. Stieler painted the 18-year-old Helene wearing a Munich-style Dirndl dress in 1831.

Ludwig is said to have wooed her with the words "Don't have such a searching and inquiring glance. You cheeky, loveliest beauty, look at me and trust me." Ludwig's heart ran so hot for Helene it was feared the affair would embarrass the royal court. After all, she was a mere shoemaker's daughter.

Helene's fate

To protect Ludwig's reputation Helene Sedlmayr was betrothed to the king's valet, with the surname Miller. Though it was a forced marriage, it was a happy one and the couple had 10 children – nine sons and one daughter. Though that would be a huge brood by today's standards it was quite normal in the 19th century. Helene died in 1898 aged 85 and her grave can be found in Munich's Alter Südfriedhof cemetery. Her great, great grandsons, Ernst and Peter Miller, are today the owners of the hotel Vierjahreszeiten (The Four Seasons) in Berchtesgaden in southern Bavaria.

On the small screen

Public broadcaster *Bayerisches Fernsehen* (Bavarian Television) produced an adaption of the pivotal events in Helene's life in 2008 called "*Die schöne Münchnerin*".

It was filmed in front of a studio audience and dubbed "a not quite true" story of the encounter between the beauty and the king.

There's tongue-in-cheek humour galore and a surprise twist in which Helene becomes the de facto long-term mistress of the king, only marrying Miller to for appearance' sake.

Her brood of rowdy sons, all with Ludwig's long, red locks, show up in an epilogue at the end.



Communist Munich

Before the fascists came the reds - Behind Communist Munich

It's pretty common knowledge that Munich was a main breeding ground of the Nazi Party, but were you aware it was also the capital of the world's second communist nation, after Russia? Few visible signs remain of the short-lived *Räterepublik* (Bavarian Soviet Republic), whose anti-royal ideals ended in one of the biggest bloodbaths of Munich's history.

The exception is the comic/tragic "pavement memorial" on Kardinal-Faulhaber Strasse near Promenadeplatz in Munich's old town. It shows the steel silhouette of a fallen man outlined as if it was a crime scene. The man was Kurt Eisner (May 14, 1867- February 21, 1919), a Jewish socialist who was gunned down at this spot after a few mere months in office as the first prime minister of the Republic of Bavaria. Why was Eisner shot? And how did it help the Nazi's gain a foothold in Munich?



Breakaway

You could say the story started in 1918 when Germany was copping a beating and on the brink of losing World War One. Eisner, a former journalist, led a strike of ammunition factory workers, calling for Bavaria to break out of the war and away from Prussia, the northern German empire. He was charged with treason and thrown in jail for his efforts, but re-emerged later that year.

Just days before the war ended Eisner led a socialist revolution which unseated the Bavarian monarchy. Bavaria's unpopular King Ludwig III (1841-1921) was deposed and died a year later. On November 8, 1918 Eisner declared Bavaria a republic, ending 700 years of royal Wittelsbach rule.

Bavarians still use Eisner's tag for the state, "*Freistaat Bayern*", today, but usually to distinguish Bavaria from the rest of Germany and not from the monarchy as was intended.

The cracks show

Eisner, no communist, wanted to respect property rights. But he wasn't able to allay upper-class fears that he'd follow the Russian Bolsheviks and seize their land. Although he was a charismatic leader his support quickly disintegrated.

Munich author and commentator Thomas Mann (1875-1955) predicted Eisner's demise with the words "Munich, like Bavaria, ruled by Jewish literati. How long will it put up with

that?" Eisner took the rough end of a landslide in the February 1919 elections. He was shot dead, ironically when on his way to resign, by right-wing radical Anton Graf Arco-Valley. Bavaria fell into lawlessness, paving the way for communists and anarchists to step and declare the communist Munich Räterepublik in April of that year. Its flag was totally red. Soviet granddaddy and one-time Munich resident Vladimir Lenin telegraphed his congrats. But the Räterepublik leaders were in chaos and the regime collapsed within a week.

Reign of terror

The power vacuum was filled by mob of even more hard-core communists led by Russian-born Eugen Levine (May 10, 1813 – July 5, 1919). Levine assembled a 60,000-strong *Rote Armee* (Red Army) and started executing men they labelled "right-wing spies" including the well-respected Prince Gustav von Thurn und Taxis. The response was quick and brutal. A coalition of Prussian and Bavarian troops combined with *Freikorps* (volunteer armies from around Germany). They marched on Munich and fought a vicious house-to-house battle against the Rote Armee in May 1919. Together, the anti-communists were known as the *Weisse Garde* – White Guard or White Terror.

Over 1000 Rote Armee soldiers were killed, and about 700 of their supporters were executed after the communists lost the fight. Thomas Mann wrote "The corps consists of Prussians and South Germans, in steel helmets, good-looking, highly disciplined. Munich's communist episode is over."

Power shift

The reaction against communist Munich meant a swing to the right and an increase in support for the right-wing German Workers' Party, which transformed into the Nazi Party in 1920.

So now, if you have the chance to walk over the silhouette of a fallen man on Munich's Kardinal-Faulhaber Strasse, be aware that you're walking over a bloody lot of history.

Sophie Scholl and the White Rose

They dared to challenge Nazi Germany from within, facing death for what they knew was right. Who were Sophie Scholl and the White Rose?

Shortly before I moved to Germany I saw a film that's stayed with me for years. *Sophie Scholl: The Final Days* recounted a group of German students in Munich in World War II.

They non-violently opposed the Nazi regime, were caught distributing leaflets, were tried and executed.



Hans Scholl (left), Sophie Scholl and Christoph Probst, three "inner circle" members the White Rose.

It's an incredibly moving story that brought tears to my eyes. These guys had the most incredible bravery to stand up to a system they believed was rotten to the core, all the while knowing that the slightest blunder could lead to their deaths.

In this story there are questions and answers about Sophie Scholl and the White Rose and short biographies of some of the group's "inner circle" members.

Questions and answers about the White Rose

What was the White Rose?

It was one of the very few German resistance movements to Adolf Hitler and Nazi rule during World War II. The White Rose was fought not with guns, but words. They tried to spread opposition to the Nazis through graffiti and the distribution of leaflets.

Who was in the movement?

There were never more than about 20 people involved in the White Rose. Medicine student Hans Scholl founded the movement among his group of friends at the Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich. Other members included fellow students Christoph Probst, Willi Graf,

Alexander Schmorell, their philosophy professor Kurt Huber and Hans Scholl's younger sister Sophie.

What did they get up to?

The White Rose wrote, printed and distributed leaflets condemning Hitler and the war and calling others to actively resist the Third Reich. They were mostly written by Hans Scholl, Alexander Schmorell and Kurt Huber.

Thousands of copies were made using a hand-operated duplicating machine and distributed via a network of supporters in cities including Berlin, Hamburg, Cologne, Vienna and Munich. Copies were also mailed to professors, doctors and pub owners.

Over three nights in February 1943 Hans Scholl, Schmorell and Graf graffitied the messages "Freedom!", "Hitler mass-murderer", "Down with Hitler" and crossed-out swastikas onto walls around Munich.

Although the group's aims were political its members were, to different degrees, also friends, who enjoyed mountain hiking, swimming and going to concerts together.

The sixth White Rose leaflet made it into Allied hands after being smuggled out of Germany. The Allies reprinted it with the title "The Manifesto of the Students of Munich" and dropped millions of copies over German cities in July, 1943.

How were they caught?

Hans and Sophie Scholl and Christoph Probst were the first White Rose members to be arrested, on 18 February, 1943. On that day Hans and Sophie went to the university with a suitcase full of leftover copies of the sixth White Rose leaflet. They went into the atrium (Lichthof) a grand hall rising over three storeys.

Behind some of the doors on each of the three storeys were lecture halls and classrooms. While classes were in session, Hans and Sophie Scholl hurriedly dropped small stacks of anti-Nazi leaflets around the atrium. The Scholls left the Lichthof and then noticed that there were still some leaflets left in the suitcase.

Thinking it would have been a waste not to leave them too, they hurried back inside and went up to the third floor of the atrium, where Sophie, on a whim, tossed them over the balustrade so they would float down to the main floor.

They once again started to leave but they had been seen. As students and professors were beginning to flood out of their classes, university custodian Jakob Schmid approached the pair and declared "Ich verhafte sie!" (I arrest you). The police soon took them away. Witnesses remarked on how peaceably the Scholls went.

What happened next?

Hans and Sophie Scholl were taken to the Gestapo headquarters. Hans was carrying a draft copy of the White Rose's seventh leaflet implicating Christoph Probst, who was then also brought in for questioning.

Hans Scholl was apparently the first to confess his involvement in the group, and afterwards Sophie tried to assume full responsibility for the leaflets. The trio were interrogated and faced a show trial four days after their arrest on 22 February 1943. They were found guilty, sentenced to death and executed by guillotine the same day.

What was the reaction to the executions?

Sophie hoped their deaths would disgust Munich's student population and stir them into action. Instead the executions were applauded by most students. The prevailing public attitude was that Hitler was the only chance for peace and that surrender would entail the utter destruction of Germany.

What was the fate of the other White Rose members?

Almost everyone associated with the White Rose was gradually found out, arrested and interrogated (some of them named names). The second White Rose trial took place on 19 April, 1943 and as a result Willi Graf, Kurt Huber and Alexander Schmorell were later executed. Others escaped with their lives, but faced jail terms.

What were the motivations of the White Rose?

Some of the White Rose members had strong religious beliefs which they considered incompatible with the totalitarian rule of Nazi Germany and its persecution of the Jews.

Some members must also have been influenced by their parents. The Scholls' father, Robert, was openly critical of the Third Reich and even spent four months in jail for calling Hitler the "scourge of God". Christoph Probst's father also had anti-Nazi leanings.

The members also reacted against how Germany had changed since the Nazis came to power in 1933. Sophie Scholl saw exclusion of the Jews, including some of her friends, from schools and clubs. Hans Scholl disliked the growing cruelty and conformity being drummed into the Hitler Youth while he was a member of that group. Hans, along with other adolescent Scholl siblings Werner and Inge, were arrested and spent a few days in jail for

Rise Up!

"The name of Germany is dishonoured for all time if German youth does not finally rise, take revenge, and atone, smash its tormentors, and set up a new Europe of the spirit." – **From the sixth White Rose leaflet**

taking part in a banned youth group in 1938.

Prof. Huber saw the Nazi's gradual degradation of the arts and education system. Hans Scholl, Will Graf and Alexander Schmorell had all spent time on the Eastern Front as army medics. There they witnessed firsthand the cold-blooded treatment of the Nazis to Russian civilians and prisoners of war, who were often executed and buried in mass graves. The young students also learned of mass killings of Jews, the Third Reich's "Final Solution to the Jewish Question".

What is the legacy of the White Rose?

After the war the White Rose members became heroes of the new Germany. Today there

A Call to All Germans!

"Germans! Do you and your children want to suffer the same fate that befell the Jews? Do you want to be judged by the same standards as your corrupters? "Are we to be forever a nation which is hated and rejected by all mankind? No. Dissociate yourselves from National Socialist gangsterism. Prove by your deeds that you think otherwise.

"A new war of liberation is about to begin." – **From the fifth White Rose leaflet**

are streets, schools and monuments named after the White Rose or the "Geschwister Scholl" – Scholl siblings. Germans aged under 40 voted Hans and Sophie Scholl fourth in a TV poll of "The Greatest Germans of All Time", ahead of luminaries like Albert Einstein, Goethe and Willy Brandt.

Alexander Schmorell was even glorified as a "New Martyr" by the Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russia in 2012.

Although she was a relatively minor member of the White Rose, Sophie Scholl has become particularly popular. Busts of her are on display in the Munich University atrium where she and her brother were arrested, as well as at Bavaria's Walhalla temple. Sophie was even voted the "the greatest woman of the twentieth century" in a German women's magazine poll. A wax figure of Sophie is on display at Berlin's Madame Tussauds. Popular books and films including the one mentioned in the introduction to this article have also contributed the cult of Sophie Scholl.

Sophie was undoubtedly very brave, a quality she showed by not only distributing the leaflets but also by trying to take responsibility for the group after their capture.

But more than anything I think the impression of such a small, young woman pitting herself against a huge, formidable enemy in a Joan of Arc kind of way has a certain kind of resonance that little else can match.

More biographical information on the White Rose's "inner circle" members

**Sophie Scholl, student of biology and philosophy
(09.05.1921 - 22.02.1943)**

With a sharp mind a carefree attitude, Sophie Scholl was brought by Lutheran parents in and around the city of Ulm.

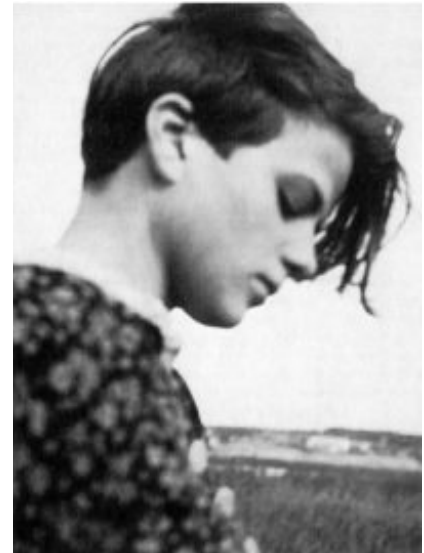
She chose to join the League of German Girls (the female version of the Hitler Youth) when she was 12. Sophie even had a leadership role in the League and enjoyed the opportunities it gave her to go camping and spend time with other girls. She lost her enthusiasm for the group when its anti-Jewish stance became clear.

Sophie had a few Jewish girlfriends who weren't allowed to join and she landed in trouble for reading aloud a passage from the "Book of Songs" by German-Jewish author Heinrich Heine.

She withdrew from the League in 1938. An avid reader, the more Sophie learned about philosophy and Christianity the more her anti-Nazi resolve stiffened. She worked as a kindergarten and nursery teacher through 1940/41 before being allowed to join her brother in Munich in 1942, studying biology and philosophy.

Sophie got engaged to her long-term boyfriend, Fritz Hartnagel, and the couple had a holiday on Germany's northern coast. Hartnagel was then sent to the Eastern Front where he witness the killing of Soviet prisoners and learned of the genocide against the Jews. Hartnagel's letters to Sophie were just another factor pushing her to active resistance against the Nazi regime.

Hans Scholl initially wanted to keep his sister out of the White Rose to protect her, but she was eventually accepted and became a valuable asset. Sophie didn't write any of the leaflets but was able to act as a courier. As a woman, she was far less likely to be stopped and searched by the Gestapo. After their arrest Sophie and Hans were interrogated separately. Sophie initially claimed she had been showing her brother a room on the third level of the



university atrium where she had classes when the custodian saw them. After she was told her brother had confessed, Sophie tried to assume all responsibility for the White Rose to protect the others.

During the trial she reportedly said to the head judge Roland Freisler "Somebody, after all, had to make a start. What we wrote and said is also believed by many others. They just don't dare express themselves as we did"; and "You know as well as we do that the war is lost. Why are you so cowardly that you won't admit it?"

Sophie was executed by beheading at Munich's Stadelheim Prison on 22 February, 1943. Prison guards remarked at how bravely she went to her death.

Hans Scholl, student of medicine (22.09.1918 - 22.02.1943)

Sophie's older brother Hans joined the Hitler Youth shortly after the rise of the Third Reich in 1933. Hans was an enthusiastic member at first and even became a group leader.

But disillusionment came through little incidents: he was banned from playing certain "un-German" folk songs on his guitar and his group was reprimanded for having emblazoned their swastika flag with a dragon.

Disliking the conformity and cruelty he started to see in the Hitler Youth, Hans joined another boys' youth group, but he was arrested in 1937 because this group had been banned by the Nazis.

Later that year he was conscripted into the army and after two years national service was able to start studying medicine in Munich. Hans served as a medic in the campaign against France in 1940 and during the summer campaign against the Soviets in 1942.

In between he founded the White Rose movement with a few like-minded medicine students. Hans was arrested along with his sister Sophie and sentenced to death by beheading on 22 February, 1943. His last words were "Es lebe die Freiheit!" which means "Long live freedom!"



Christoph Probst, student of medicine (06.11.1919 - 22.02.1943)

His father, Hermann, was a well-off intellectual and he passed on the ideals of cultural and religious freedom to Christoph as he was growing up. Probst became friends with the Russian-born Alexander Schmorell in 1935, and he started learning the Russian language.

After doing military service before the war Probst started studying medicine in Munich in 1939. He got married to Herta Dohrn when he was 21 and they had three children, Michael, Vincent and Katya.

After meeting Hans Scholl, Probst became involved in the White Rose but stayed mostly in the background in order to protect his family. He was executed along with Hans and Sophie Scholl on 22 February, 1943.



White Rose walking tour

A suggested self-guided White Rose walking tour. Explore the traces of the resistance movement at your own pace.

Although there are some organized “Third Reich” walking tours of Munich, there aren’t currently any dealing specifically with the White Rose. I’ve put this guide together for visitors wishing to make their own self-guided walking tour/pilgrimage to White Rose related sites. Count on 3-4 hours to do this tour at an easy pace.

The Scholls’ student digs

First take the underground train U3 or U6 to Gisel Strasse, then walk north to Franz Joseph Strasse and turn left. Walk up until you find a plaque on the wall of No.13 on the left hand side. This is where Hans and Sophie Scholl lived while they were studying at Munich’s university. It was from here that the Scholls carried a suitcase full of anti-Nazi leaflets to the uni on the day they were arrested, 18 February, 1943. The plaque reads: “Sophie und Hans Scholl – die unter dem Zeichen der ‘Weissen Rose’ aktiven Widerstand gegen das Dritte Reich geleistet haben wohnten von Juni 1942 bis zu ihrer Hinrichtung am 22 Februar 1943 hier im Rückgebäude”. In English, this means: “Sophie and Hans Scholl – Who gave resistance to the Third Reich under the sign of the “White Rose” lived here in the back building from June 1942 until their execution on 22 February 1943”.

Walk their path

Go back to Leopold Strasse and head south. You'll pass the Siegestor triumphal arch and soon come to a broad square spanning both sides of the street with a couple of fountains in the middle.

This is the heart of the Ludwig Maximilian University, where the Scholls and other members of the White Rose were students. The square to the east of Ludwig Strasse (on your left) is named Professor-Huber-Platz, in memory of the philosophy and musicology prof Kurt Huber, who was also a member of the resistance group. The square to the west of Ludwig Strasse is called Geschwister Scholl Platz (Scholl Siblings Square) Stop outside the main entrance of the building on Geschwister Scholl Platz and look down to find a unique pavement memorial to the White Rose. Looking like they've been dropped onto the cobblestones is a group of ceramic tablets depicting the White Rose leaflets and brief biographies of Hans, Sophie and Christoph Probst.



The scene of the “crime”

Now go through the main doors into the central atrium (Lichthof) of the university. It was here that the Scholl siblings hurriedly stacked their anti-Nazi leaflets while the classes were in session, and the top floor from where Sophie flung another stack, only to be seen by a custodian and arrested.

Today there is a bronze bust of Sophie on the far right corner of the atrium which is usually garnished with a few flowers. Go down the steps to the right on the far side of the atrium to get to the Denkstätte Weiße Rose (White Rose Memorial) a small museum with displays, drawings, original books and possessions of the White Rose members.

A scar of the past

Once you're finished at the museum, leave the building and continue south along Ludwig Strasse. Stop at Schelling Strasse and have a look around the corner and you'll find another unusual memorial – a red wall pockmarked with damage from World War II bombs. This is one of three “Wunden der Erinnerung” (Scars of Remembrance) memorials around Munich in memory of the war.

A stone of resistance

Now cross back over Ludwig Strasse and continue south to Galerien Strasse. Then turn left and at the end of the building on the left bounding the former Royal Hofgarten you'll find

another White Rose memorial, a large cube of black granite inscribed with words from the resistance movements' leaflets.

The inscription reads: "Zum Erinnern zum Gedanken – Wir wollen hier nicht urteilen über die verschiedenen möglichen Staatsformen, die Demokratie, die konstitutionelle Monarchie, das Königtum usw. Nur eines will eindeutig und klar herausgehoben werden: Jeder einzelne Mensch hat einen Anspruch auf einen brauchbaren und gerechten Staat, der die Freiheit des Einzelnen als auch das Wohl der Gesamtheit sichert Freiheit der Rede, Freiheit des Bekenntnisses, Schutz des einzelnen Bürgers vor der Willkür verbrecherischer Gewaltstaaten."

In English, this means: "For remembrance, for contemplation – We don't want to judge the different possible forms of government, democracy, constitutional monarchy, kingdom, etc. Only one thing should be stressed loud and clear: Every single person has the right to a workable and just state in which the freedom of the individual as well as the good of the whole community guarantees freedom of speech, freedom of association and protection of the individual from the despotism of criminal and violent regimes."

Where Hitler fought the law and the law won

Now go diagonally across the Hofgarten, past the Diana Temple and Café Tambosi onto Odeonsplatz. Walk south along Residenz Strasse until you're about level with the side of the Feldherrnhalle loggia. At this spot on 9 November, 1923, Hitler and other budding Nazi thugs were involved in a shootout with police after attempting to seize power. Four police and 16 Nazis were killed in the incident which has become known as the "Beer Hall Putsch". The attempt failed and Hitler went to jail, where he dictated his manifesto Mein Kampf to a colleague. After the Nazis rose to power they place a memorial here to their 16 dead "martyrs". It was manned constantly by two SS guards and passers-by were obliged to give the "Hitler salute".

Dodger's Alley

Now continue a little further south to find Viscardigasse, a narrow alleyway, on your right. During the Third Reich this was known as "Dodgers' Alley", as those who wanted to avoid giving the Hitler salute would duck down here instead. There's a trail of bronze cobblestones in salute of the dodgers. I imagine the White Rose members were among them.



Flame burns on

After dodging down Viscardigasse yourself, loop back up to the right past the yellow Theatine Church and make a left down Brienner Strasse. Just before a busy intersection you'll find a grassy area on the left, this is the Platz der Opfer des Nationalsozialismus (Square of the Victims of National Socialism).

In the center of the square is another memorial, an eternal flame (representing the victims) burning inside a cage atop a large plinth.

Where they were kept

Now cross over Brienner Strasse and again over the Oskar von Miller Ring to the north-west corner of the intersection. Now the site of a nondescript grey building housing the Bayerischer Landesbank, this address (No. 20) was once the site of the Wittelsbacher Palais. This grand building was a residence and offices of the old Bavarian Royal Family. During the Third Reich it became the Gestapo headquarters and this was where Hans and Sophie Scholl and Christoph Probst were interred and interrogated after their arrest. The Palais was heavily damaged by Allied bombs in 1944 and demolished in the 1960s. There is a memorial plaque to the White Rose somewhere on the current building that occupies the site.

Place of the trials

Cross back over Brienner Strasse and follow Otto Strasse south-west until you get to the imposing Justizpalast (Palace of Justice) at Prielmayer Strasse 7. This is where Hans and Sophie Scholl and Christoph Probst faced their show trial on 22 February 1943. At that time the building was called the Volksgerichtshof (meaning People's Court), where people accused of political offences against the Nazi State were tried. The trial of the Scholls and Probst took place in the Schwurgerichtsaal (Assizes Court Hall).

Less than two months later on 19 April 14 more accused White Rose members faced their own trial in room 253. Among this group were medicine students Willi Graf and Alexander Schmorell and Professor Huber, all of whom were later beheaded. Room 253 is now a memorial for the White Rose members and it's open to the public from 9am-4pm weekdays (except 10 April-31 May and 10 October-30 November when the room is used for law exams).

End station

Now it's time to bring your White Rose tour to an end at the place where the movement's three biggest heroes also ended their journey. After leaving the Palace of Justice cross over

Prielmayer Strasse and go past the entrance of the Hotel Königshof. Go to the tram stop and catch tram 17 to the end station Schwannseestraße. There's a florist just across from the stop called Rutz Christina where you might like to call in to collect some flowers. White roses, perhaps?

Pay a final tribute

Cross over Stadelheimer Strasse and head south-west about 50m to get to the entrance of the Perlacher Forest Cemetery (Friedhof am Perlacher Forst). Further down past the cemetery is Stadelheim Prison, where the White Rose members were executed. Head into the cemetery and you'll see the grave is marked on a plan at the entrance, it's number 73-1-18/19.

When you get to the graves of Sophie, Hans and Christoph lay your flowers and indulge in a few minutes contemplation. Maybe you'd like to think about how young these people were and how much courage they had to speak out against a system that enveloped their entire society. Perhaps you could imagine the lives they would have had, had they not been caught on that wintry day in 1943, the children they might have had, the careers the men might have had as doctors healing and saving lives.

Or maybe you could think about the part of them that lives on, the legacy of the White Rose. It's an enduring symbol, indomitable spirit, of having the audacity to stand up for the ideals of peace and freedom, knowing the inevitable cost would be the ultimate price.

Map of the White Rose walking tour

Here's a map of the sites connected to the White Rose movement mentioned in these pages. I recommend you start at the top of the "line" which is the former Scholl student residence. The line ends at the tram stop you need to get to if you want to continue on to the cemetery where Hans and Sophie Scholl and Christoph Probst are buried.

The Munich Massacre in 1972

An in-depth look at the Munich Massacre, a terrorist attack that cast a dark shadow over the Olympic dream.

This was billed as the "carefree games", the "serene games" and the "peaceful games". Less than 30 years after the devastation of Europe and the fall of the Third Reich Germany was back on the world stage. Munich, sometimes called the "secret capital" of West Germany, was to host the 1972 Summer Olympic Games.

Here was a new Germany: optimistic, democratic, progressive and out to impress the world. This peaceful vision was shattered when a group of Palestinians brought terror into the Games leading to what has become known as the Munich Massacre.

On 5 September in the second week of the Munich Olympics these terrorists took most of the Israeli Olympic team hostage. After a tense standoff at the Olympic Village and a shootout at a nearby airfield 11 Israeli athletes and coaches, five terrorists and one West German policeman were left dead.

Who were the terrorists and what did they want?

Eight Black September members took part in the attack. They were Palestinian militants known as fedayeen and had at least partly grown up in refugee camps in Jordan, Syria and Lebanon. The most visible member was the leader and spokesman, Luttfif Afif. Known as "Issa", he wore a white hat and his face was blackened by shoe polish during the negotiations.

Black September was an offshoot of Yassir Arafat's Palestinian Liberation Organization and the Munich terrorists were trained in Libyan desert camps before travelling to West Germany.



Figure "Issa" talks to a negotiator. From contemporaneous footage shown in *One Day in September*.

A step-by-step account of the Munich Massacre

▪ **A PLEASANT EVENING** – On 4 September the Israeli athletes and coaches enjoyed a night out Munich, attending a performance of Fiddler on the Roof starring Israeli actor Shumel Rodensky. The Israelis later returned to the Olympic Village and went to sleep.

▪ **OVER THE FENCE** – At 4.30am the next morning the Black September terrorists entered the Olympic Village by jumping over a two-metre chain-link fence. They had the assistance of some unwitting Canadian athletes who were returning from a night out. The terrorists were wearing tracksuits and carrying duffel



Site of the hostage crisis: Connolly Strasse 31 today.

bags, which, unbeknownst to the athletes, were stuffed with assault rifles, pistols and grenades.

- **ROOM INVASION** - The terrorists entered the building housing the Israeli apartments at 31 Connolly Strasse. They forced their way into Apartment 1 where the Israeli coaches were quartered. Wrestling coach Moshe Weinberg decided to fight back, attacking one of the terrorists but was shot through the cheek.

- **ON TO APARTMENT 2** – The terrorists ordered Weinberg to help them find more hostages. He led them past Apartment 2, which housed the Israeli track and field athletes, to Apartment 3 where the weightlifters and wrestlers were staying. Weinberg must have reckoned that these strong men would have a better chance of overpowering the terrorists. But the athletes were surprised in their sleep and were not able to put up much resistance. But wrestling referee Yossef Gutfreund thrust himself against the door as the terrorists were entering, holding them up for a few precious moments. This gave weightlifting coach Turvia Sokolovsky time to escape by breaking a window jumping out. The terrorists led six hostages back to Apartment 1.

- **FAILED FIGHTBACK** – As Zabari escaped Weinberg and weightlifter Yossef Romano tried to overpower the attackers. Weinberg knocked one of them unconscious and slashed at another with a fruit knife. Both athletes were shot and killed. The track and field athletes in Apartment 2 were able to hide in the building and later escape, so the terrorists were left with nine hostages.

- **DEMANDS** – By 5.10am news of the hostage crisis started to spread around the world. A note was dropped from the apartment window demanding the release of 234 inmates from Israeli prisons and far-left wing German terrorists Andreas Baader and Ulrike Meinhof from German prisons. The terrorists also asked for a plane to take them to Egypt and set a 9am

The surviving terrorist speaks

Jamal Al-Gashey, one of the three terrorists who survived the attack, was interviewed for the 1999 documentary One Day in September.

Al-Gashey said he underwent “special training” for the Munich attack.

“I did a few tours of duty in training camps in Lebanon, and then the leadership sent us to Libya for special training. The training was hard and advanced. We were there for about one month. It seemed to me we were getting special training. “We began to get a feeling that something big was underway.”

deadline for their demands. Weinberg's body was thrown out the apartment block's front door so the terrorists could show they were serious.

- **REFUSALS** – Israeli Prime Minister Golda Meir refused to negotiate, and offered to send a Special Forces team to Munich to deal with the crisis. That offer was rejected by the German Government, which falsely believed its forces would be able to handle the situation.

- **DISCUSSIONS** – The Games themselves continued until international pressure forced Olympic organizers to suspend events that afternoon. Negotiations took place throughout the day and the terrorists' deadline was extended first to 12pm, then 1pm, the 3pm and then 5pm.

- **STORMING ABORTED** – Later in the afternoon a team of German police dressed as athletes and carrying assault rifles took up positions on the roof of and around the building where the hostage crisis was unfolding. This proposed storming of the apartment was codenamed "Sunshine", but the attempt was thwarted because every Olympic Village apartment had a television.

TV crews stationed on the roofs of nearby buildings filmed the preparations and the footage was broadcast live. The terrorists were able to watch on TV what the police were up to and where the team would be coming from. Issa threatened to kill more of the hostages and the police team withdrew.

- **A WAY OUT?** - Eventually the terrorists realized that their demands would not be met. Issa agreed to a plan where the kidnappers and the hostages would be taken by bus to two military helicopters nearby. The helicopters would then take them to the NATO airbase at Fürstenfeldbruck outside Munich, and from there a small jet was to take them to Cairo.

- **A TRAP IS SET** – The Germans' plan, however, was to ambush the terrorists at the airfield. Three sharpshooters were stationed on a control tower and two more were on the ground around the airfield. Five or six more police were waiting inside the jet posing as crew and maintenance staff. The idea was to overpower the terrorist leaders when they came on-board to inspect the plane. The sharpshooters would then shoot the rest of the terrorists and the hostages could be freed. Things, however, didn't go at all according to plan.

- **ABANDONMENT** - Just seconds before the helicopters landed at around 10.30pm the police on board the jet voted to abandon their posts. They fled the plane and took cover around the airfield.

- **MISTAKES** – Throughout the day the Germans thought there were no more than five terrorists in total, but when the group left the apartment authorities correctly identified eight

of them. This info wasn't passed onto the team at the airport so the snipers were facing a larger and much more heavily armed group unawares. In addition, the helicopters landed at Fürstenfeldbruck Air Base facing the wrong direction, so instead of providing the snipers a clear shot into the cabins the terrorist had extra cover.

▪ **SHOOT-OUT** – When Issa and his deputy boarded the plane they found it empty, realized the trap and ran back to the helicopters. The police sharpshooters opened fire and manage to kill two of the terrorists. The helicopter pilots fled their aircraft, but the tied and bound hostages were unable to escape. A stalemate then developed as the terrorists were unwilling to leave the cover of the helicopters and the police were ill-equipped to confront much more heavily armed group.

▪ **MASSACRE** – Armored personnel carriers were finally called in but were delayed by traffic (media, onlookers, etc) heading to the airport. When the APCs got there around midnight, the terrorists realized their time was up.

Issa and another of the terrorists raked the Israelis with machine-gun fire, and Issa threw a hand grenade into one of the helicopters, incinerating the bodies.

All of the hostages and five of the eight terrorists were dead. German policeman Anton Fliegerbauer, stationed in an airport building, was killed by a stray bullet. One of the sharpshooters, who was stationed on the ground directly in the line of fire of his compatriots on the tower, was injured by friendly fire.

Devastation: The remains of the helicopter which "Issa" lobbed a grenade into on the tarmac at Fürstenfeldbruck Air Base. Pic: from an info board at the Olympic Stadium, Munich.

More questions and answers

How was the news of the massacre reported?

Initially falsely. At midnight a German Government spokesman announced that all the Israelis were safe and the terrorists had been killed. The next morning the world was greeted by newspaper headlines like "8 HOSTAGES FREED IN GUN BATTLE" and "THEY'RE FREE! Olympic hostages all safe after gun battle". It was only later that the real state of affairs became known.

US television reporter Jim McKay summed it up memorably with the words: "When I was a kid my father used to say our greatest hopes and our worst fears are seldom realized. Our worst fears have been realized tonight. They have now said there were eleven hostages;

two were killed in their rooms yesterday morning, nine were killed at the airport tonight. They're all gone.”

What happened to the three surviving terrorists?

Mohammed Safady, Adnan Al-Gashey and Jamal Al-Gashey were arrested by police at Fürstenfeldbruck Air Base and incarcerated in different Bavarian prisons. Then, on 29 October, barely two months after the Munich Massacre, a Lufthansa jet flying back to Munich from Syria was hijacked by Black September terrorists. They demanded the release of the three remaining Munich terrorists.

The German authorities acted quickly. It took only one hour for the prisoners to be located and transported from the separate prisons to Munich Airport, where they were put on a plane and flown off to Libya.

Many newspapers considered this hijacking suspicious. There were only 11 passengers on board the Lufthansa flight, all men. It turns out the incident was part of a secret deal between the German government and the Palestinian extremists: the Munich Massacre terrorists could go home and Germany would avoid being a target in the future.

The three terrorists received a hero's welcome in Libya and went into hiding. Mohammed Safady and Adnan Al-Gashey were probably killed by the Israeli secret service, Mossad. Jamal Al-Gashey, interviewed for *One Day in Munich* in September in 1999, is likely still alive. Al-Gashey said he held no regrets about his role in the Munich Massacre.

A reasonable choice?

Simon Reeve, author of *One Day in Munich* said there was no doubt the hijacking was a setup. “We have to remember at the time European governments who were trying to deal with the terrorist problem dealt with it in their own individual ways. The French Government paid off some terrorist groups, the German Government tried to talk to them and did deals with them. The German authorities presumably felt they were doing the right thing. They felt that they'd been approached by Palestinian groups who said ‘unless you release them then we'll launch terrorist attacks against Lufthansa and against German targets.” - Simon Reeve in *Our Greatest Hopes, Our Worst Fears: The Tragedy of the Munich Games*.

“I’m proud of what I did at Munich because it helped the Palestinian cause enormously. Before Munich the world had no idea about our struggle but on that day the name of ‘Palestine’ was repeated all over the world.” - Jamal Al-Gashey in One Day in September

Did the West German authorities know about the attack?

Yes. In 2012 German news magazine Der Spiegel revealed that German authorities did know beforehand that such an attack was planned. On August 14, 1972, three weeks before the Olympics, a German embassy officer in Beirut was told by an informant that “an incident would be staged by from the Palestinian side during the Olympic Games in Munich”. Although this intel was passed onto the Bavarian authorities they failed to increase security for the Olympics.

Three days before the attack Italian newspaper *Gente* also claimed Black September was planning a “sensational incident during the Games”.

Additionally, West German forensic scientist Georg Sieber correctly predicted a scenario where Palestinian terrorists invaded the Olympic Village, took Israeli hostages and demanded the release of prisoners and a plane to leave Germany. Sieber’s “Scenario 21” was one of 26 terrorism scenarios he created for the Olympic organizers to help with security planning. Organizers refused to prepare for the scenarios however, as this was supposed to be the security-lite “Carefree Games”, shaking off the shadow of Germany’s role in World War Two.

Did the German authorities cover up the mishandling of the massacre?

Yes. In 2012 Der Spiegel also revealed the German Government denied responsibility for the mishandling of the massacre for over 20 years. Der Spiegel said the government had hid tens of thousands of documents about the tragedy, including evidence the German authorities knew the kidnapping was planned.

Der Spiegel also revealed in a separate 2012 report that the West German Government had links to the PLO and the masterminds of the Munich Massacre for years after the tragedy, apparently to prevent Germany from being targeted in future attacks.

Did the Black September terrorists have any help from neo-Nazis?

Yes. It was previously thought that German left wing extremists helped the terrorists. Instead, Der Spiegel revealed that neo-Nazis helped the terrorist prepare for the attack. German neo-Nazi Willi Pohl had been in contact with Abu Daoud, one of the main planners of the attack, up to seven weeks before the Munich Olympics.

“I chauffeured Abu Daoud back and forth across Germany, where he met Palestinians in various cities,” Pohl told Der Spiegel.

How did Israel respond to the massacre?

Firstly by bombing PLO bases in Syria and Lebanon, killing up to 200 people. Then the Israeli Government directed Mossad to track down and kill those who were (or were claimed) to be involved in the hostage-taking. The operation, called Wrath of God, allegedly lasted more than 20 years and dozens of Palestinian terrorists and suspected conspirators were killed. In April 1973 Israeli special forces attacked PLO targets in Lebanon, killing up to 100 people including three of the organization’s leaders. This was called Operation Spring Youth and was depicted alongside the Munich Massacre and Wrath of God in the 2005 Steven Spielberg film Munich.

Were the athletes who helped the terrorists into the Olympic Village really Canadian?

Yes. It was long thought the Black September members had met a group of US athletes sneaking in after a night out, but in 2012 it was revealed the athletes were part of the Canadian team. Jamal Al-Gashey said in One Day in September: “As we were climbing over the fence, we ran into a group of American athletes who were sneaking in after a night out. The funny thing is we actually helped each other to climb over.”

Canadian water polo player Robert Thompson was interviewed about the incident in 2012. Thompson said he had been watching a broadcast of a hockey game outside the Olympic Village. He was with a group of about 30 athletes who decided to take a short cut to their apartments by jumping over the fence into the village.

The Looking for justice

Ankie Rekhess-Spitzer, widow of one of the Israeli victims, Andre Spitzer, said Israeli Prime Minister Golda Meir told her and the other victims' families they would be “avenged”. According to Rekhess-Spitzer the families responded with shock.

“We said look, we don’t ask for revenge because this will not bring back my husband, and not her husband, and not their son. We don’t want revenge, we want justice.”

– Ankie Rekhess-Spitzer in The Tragedy of the Munich Games

Beer – a Munich love affair

Former Munich resident Karl Marx wasn't kidding around when he declared beer to be the "staple food of Munich". The Germans even classify beer as food for tax purposes making for wonderfully reasonable prices – beer is actually cheaper than cola or bottled water just about everywhere you go. Beer is usually served in half-litre glasses, but the one-litre *Maß* is also very common.

At most beer festivals including Oktoberfest it's all they serve. Quarter-litre glasses do exist, but tend to be reserved for grandmas. Draught beer is termed "*vom Fass*". Munich beer is best enjoyed in a beer garden with a few good friends, pretzels, quality banter and a few laughs.

Beer to the core

Brewing used to be an ad-hoc affair, with nasties like tree bark, moss and animal fats often thrown in the mix for want of quality ingredients.

Duke Albrecht IV put paid to that nonsense in 1487 by introducing the Bavarian Beer Purity Law (*Bayerische Reinheitsgebot*) decreeing only barley, hops and water as the only ingredients allowed in beer. Yeast and wheat were later allowed into the mix.

The *Reinheitsgebot* is the world's oldest and (probably) most famous food law, setting Bavarian and Munich beer apart with a seal of quality.

Halleluiah, it's raining beer!

I'm not pulling your leg when I say that it rains beer in Munich. No kidding. It's called the "*Sog*". It occurs when the mercury drops below zero and the waste air from the breweries condenses in the lower atmosphere. White, snow-like particles form up and nose-dive onto Munich's streets and rooftops. So if the wallet is empty after an all-night

Average beer consumption per person per country:

France:	35.5L
Canada:	68.3L
USA:	81.6L
UK:	99L
Australia:	104.7L
Germany (total):	116L
Ireland:	131.1L
Czech Republic:	158.9L
Bavaria:	170L

And the clear winners are: the Bavarians!

Well, everyone's gotta be the best at something, right?

carouse but you find yourself thirsting for more, just look up and walk around with your mouth open. You might get lucky.

The breweries

Believe it or not, the state of Bavaria holds just shy of half the breweries in the entire German nation. Its oldest brewery is also the world's oldest – the Weihenstephan monastery-brewery has been tapping the amber fluid the local bishop granted it a licence in 1040. Munich had over 70 breweries by the end of the 1700s.

A gradual consolidation process reduced the ranks to the “big six” still alive today - Augustiner, Paulaner, Hacker-Pschorr, Spaten-Franziskaner, Löwenbräu and Hofbräu.

Augustiner is the clear favourite Munich beer and, along with Hofbräu, the only one not to have been taken over by international brewing conglomerates.

Smaller breweries abound in the countryside and almost always have a good restaurant and beer garden attached. Much day tripping fun can be had making a pilgrimage out to popular spots like the monk-inhabited Kloster Andechs monastery/brewery and the royal Schlossbrauerei Kaltenberg.

Hands off our brew!

Since the city's founding fathers discovered “*pir*” was taxable have Munich's poo-bahs occasionally tried to stand between Munich locals and their beer, usually with disastrous results. Tensions flared most notably in 1844, when the otherwise-popular King Ludwig I tried to raise the price of beer to two *pfenning*, sparking the so-called “Beer Revolution”. Thousands took to the streets and over 50 breweries were burned down before Ludwig was forced to back down.

Another failed try at beer regulation took place in 1995, when a court ruling declared al beer gardens had to close at 9pm. 25,000 riled-up Munich locals stormed *en masse* onto Marienplatz to protest, and the decision was promptly reversed, lesson well learned.

Tablesides traditions and pub pastimes

▪ **Frühschoppen**

The German equivalent of brunch is really an excuse to enjoy a few beers before midday. In Munich *Weisswurst* (white sausages) usually accompany the brews. Munich pubs and beer gardens often have live music (folk or jazz) for that seminal *Frühschoppen* atmosphere.

▪ **Guten!**

Before tucking you traditionally wish someone a nice meal with the words “*Guten Appetit!*” Other people at the table can reply with an easy “*Guten*”, so simply dig in.

▪ **Stammtisch**

You’ll sometimes see a sign saying this above a table in pubs – it means the table’s reserved for a regular group of drinking buddies.

▪ **Pull my finger!**

Fingerhackeln is the form of “table warfare” whereby two participants hook their fingers through a small leather band and attempt to pull each other over the table. Used to be a way Bavarian farm boys would settle their disputes rather than punching on.

▪ **Schafkopf**

A popular card game played in pubs, it most closely resembles *Scat* or the North American game *Sheepshead*. You can train your skills online here. www.sauspiel.de

▪ **Almdudler**

This is a lemonade made in the Bavarian woods using herbs for the flavour.

Oktoberfest history

When Bavarian Crown Prince Ludwig I chose to wed Princess Therese in 1810 it’s unlikely he knew the size of the beast he was about to unleash. To celebrate the October 12 nuptials he organised a public horserace five days later on the site of today’s Oktoberfest, then a humble meadow outside the city of Munich.



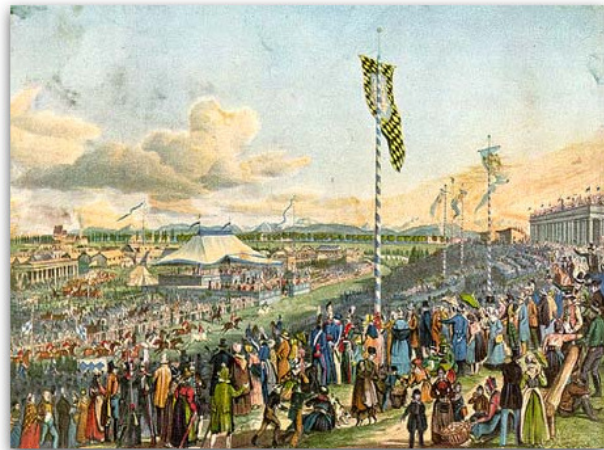
Ludwig was a classical history freak and so modelled the day on the ancient Olympic Games.

There were other sporting events held too and, to a degree, the event inspired the modern Olympics we know today. Everyone had such a great time they decided to do it again the following year and a tradition was born.

Princess Therese lives on in the name of the Oktoberfest field, Theresienwiese, although it's usually abbreviated by Munich locals to Wiesn. As Munich grew so did the festival, with carousels and stands selling lottery stands joining the fray over the decades.

The party gets bigger

Two indelible Munich landmarks, the Bavaria Statue and the Ruhmeshalle (Hall of Fame) were added to the Wiesn about 1850. The suds didn't start flowing until 1881 when the city council opened the door to beer sales and the



A horseback race in the early days of the festival.

first grilled chicken stand. Stalls and booths, some thrown up around trees

which you climb for a pint, spread across the meadow like wildfire. The first Oktoberfest opening procession took place in 1887. Towards the end of the 19th century someone had the great idea of bringing the fest forward a little to take advantage of the friendlier weather.

But it's still known as Oktoberfest, of course, even though most of it takes place in September. The maze of small stands gave way to large beer tents in 1896. The tents were set up by wealthy landlords with the backing of Munich's breweries and contained room for bandstands. Carousels and stalls took up the remaining space and the Oktoberfest as we know it today really started to take shape.

Twentieth century

The biggest beer tent that's ever been, the Bräurosl, opened in 1913 with enough space to fit 12,000 guests. The Bräurosl's still there but now has about half that capacity. Today's biggest tent is the Hofbräu-Festzelt which fits about 10,000. The traditional opening ceremony started in 1950. Munich's Lord Mayor got festivities underway by banging a tap into the first keg and yelling "*O'zapft is!*" (It's tapped). Though the horse races ended in

1960, an agricultural show is still held every three years. It's called the Bayerisches Zentral-Landwirtschaftsfest.

About 7.1 million visitors came in 1985, making it the busiest Oktoberfest ever.

Bomb attack

September 26, 1980 must be the saddest day in Oktoberfest history. A bomb attack near the main entrance killed 13 people and left over 200 injured. Some victims needed both legs amputated. It was one of the two deadliest terror attacks on German soil since the World War Two. Right-wing extremist Gundolf Köhler, who died in the attack, was named as the only culprit. But a debate has raged for decades over whether or not he really acted alone. The Oktoberfest wasn't cancelled that year after the bombing, a move for which the organisers coped a lot of stick for. A small memorial was unveiled at the site of the attack in 2008.

Oktoberfest today

The Munich Oktoberfest kicks on strong as a hippo on Red Bull. An average Wiesn pumps about €1 billion through Munich's cash registers and money belts.

One recent debate has been whether or not to ban smoking in the tents. Bavaria passed a law in 2008 that banned smoking in all closed spaces open to the public – this should have included the Oktoberfest tents.

Fierce opposition followed. The law was whittled back and many pubs and clubs were allowed to become smoking venues again. Opponents of the ban claimed making thousands of smokers leave a tent for a quick puff every half hour constituted more of a fire hazard than letting them smoke inside. After a couple of years of toing and froing the non-smokers won out and smoking has been banned inside the Oktoberfest tents since 2010.

Trouble in beer paradise

There have been 24 cancellations in Oktoberfest history – here's why:

- 1813 – First cancellation due to war against Napoleon
- 1854 – Cholera epidemic
- 1866 – Bavaria fought alongside Austria in a war against Prussia (now Northern Germany and parts of Poland)
- 1873 – Another cholera epidemic
- 1914 to 1918 – World War One
- 1919 to 1920 – Recovery from the war, a small “autumn festival” with only (Doh!) two per cent beer, was held instead

- 1923 to 1924 – Hyperinflation strikes Germany, no-one could afford it
- 1939 to 1945 – World War Two
- 1946 to 1948 – Recovery from the war, more piss-weak autumn festivals held instead
And let's hope it's never cancelled again. Prost!

Münchener Kindl

First a monk, then a boy, then a gender-neutral child, a girl, and finally a young woman on a horse leading the way to Oktoberfest. The Münchner Kindl sure has evolved since it first appeared on Munich's coat-of-arms over 800 years ago. The symbol stems from Munich's first inhabitants, an order of monks who lived around the St Peter's Church in Munich's center. The original coat-of-arms is more or less unchanged, a black-and-yellow-robed monk holding a book in one of his outstretched hands.



But through the centuries the Kindl has taken dozens of different incarnations, including many where the book is given up for a much more appetizing mug of beer and a radish.

Some speculate the Kindl was the inspiration for the Munchkins in *The Wizard of Oz*, which makes sense. Keep your eyes open and you'll see the coat-of-arms everywhere in Munich - on trams and underground trains, manhole covers, beer steins and at the very top of the Neues Rathaus tower.

A leading lady - The Münchner Kindl today

A young Munich woman traditionally dons the robes to play the role of the Kindl at two events for Munich's Oktoberfest:

1. The *Einzug der Festwirte* (Grand entry of the Oktoberfest Landlords and Breweries) on the first day.
2. The *Trachten - und Schützenumzug* (The Costume und Riflemen's Procession) on the second day.

She sits "high to horse" and is followed by a few carriages carrying Munich's lord mayor and other honchos. The women anointed Kindl typically do the job for a few years before the role is passed onto someone else.

Some recent Kindls

In 2010 a new young dame took over the reins – 17-year-old Maria Newrzella. She's the daughter of Manfred Newrzella, the director of the Munich Breweries Association (selection of the Kindl seems to operate mostly on nepotism).

But she's Munich born and bred and lists her hobbies as dancing, sailing, skiing, swimming and drawing. Now you can add "embodying Munich's official mascot" to the list, lass!

From 2006 to 2009 the Kindl was played by 19-year-old Stefanie Krätz, the daughter of Sepp Krätz, the proprietor of the Hippodrom beer tent, which well explains how she landed the job ;-).

52 Ways to act like a local

How do you act like a real Munich local? Munich's best broadsheet newspaper, the *Sueddeutsche Zeitung*, has published a list of 52 things every Münchnener should do, at least once in their lives, to feel like they're really a part of the place. I thought this would be of interest to visitors wanting to get off the main tourist tracks and a little under the skin of this grooviest of cities.

1. Get naked in the Englischer Garten

"Naked people," says the, belong to the Englischer Garten just *Sueddeutsche* as the pigeons belong to Venice's St Marcus Square. The newspaper recommends it to every Munich local at least once – and let themselves be photographed by gaping Japanese tourists.

2. Climb the Bavaria Statue

Make a trip down to the Theresienwiese (Oktoberfest Field) and climb up inside the bronze statue that represents the state. Think Statue of Liberty – Bavarian style.

4. Prepare a real "Brotzeit"

One of the best things about Munich's beer gardens is that you can bring your own food and have a mini-picnic on the benches. It's called *Brotzeit*, a bread-based light meal. Head to the market and pick up some *Breze* (pretzels), *Obazda* (a cheesy spread), *Wurstsalat* (sausage salad) and *Radi* (radish). Bung them in your backpack, make for

3. Order a "Schnitt"

A *Schnitt* (meaning "cut") is 250ml of beer – half the volume of a regular Munich beer glass. It's not on any menu, but every good watering hole will serve you one on request.

Many Münchneners like to put one away just before they go home for the night.

your favourite beer garden, order a litre of beer in the mid-afternoon and you're living like a true local.

5. Spend a night in the Englischer Garten

Though it's supposed to be patrolled by police in the twilight hours, one *Sueddeutsche* reader recommends spending a night in the northern sections of the city's biggest park. Just watch out for the deer.

6. Daydream in the Asamkirche (Asam Church)

Munich's divinely designed church is a prime place for contemplation and daydreaming. It's a Rococo masterpiece built by the brothers Asam, and your eyes sure won't run out of things to look at inside.

8. Go to the Wiesn *before* the Oktoberfest

In the days and weeks before Munich holds the world's biggest party, an army of workers sets up the stalls, rides and, of course, the beer tents at the Theresienwiese. It's a spectacle in its own right, and best enjoyed from the temporary Augustiner Kantine stand. It's yet to be seen if this one will be doable in the future though, as the Wiesn has been off-limits to the public during the build-up in the last few years.

9. Watch the sunset from the Hackerbrücke bridge

S-Bahns whizzing by, a forest of electricity posts and cables, train tracks gleaming red in the descending sun. A unique spot for sunset watching, to be sure. The Hackerbrücke is one stop west of the Hauptbahnhof (Main Train Station).

10. Set up a Maypole

Blue and white-striped maypoles (German: *Maibaum*) are raised in many Bavarian towns and villages on May 1 to celebrate May Day. It's done with much fanfare at Munich's Viktualienmarkt market near Marienplatz. Lots of dancing and drinking goes on afterwards, one a hell of a party.

11. Wash out your own Maßkrug

Those one-litre beer-bearing glasses, the *Maß*, rank among many a traveller's fondest Munich memories. You can wash your own before having it filled with the amber fluid at the Hirschgarten. That's Europe's biggest beer garden in Munich's west.

7. Cruise the Isar River in a rubber dinghy

Jump in somewhere south of the Old Town and let the melted mountain snow push you gently up through the city. Popular with groups of guys with beer supplies.

12. Be stymied by Munich's public transport pricing system

Which ring am I in? How many zones do I need? Not just tourists scratch their heads over the pricing system of the Munich Transport Authority (MVG). One *Suedutsche* contributor contends

that every real Münchener has been caught riding without a ticket at least once, not on purpose, but out of sheer confusion.

14. Enjoy a big-name concert for nix from the Olympiaberg

From Madonna to AC/DC, when the really big names play Munich they play at the Olympic Stadium. Since ticket prices are usually equally huge, many locals climb the nearby Olympiaberg hill to take in the tunes for free.

16. Buy a monthly public transport ticket

If there's one thing you don't need in Munich it's a car. To make up for it, get yourself a monthly MVV ticket, a bike and strong lock!

17. Wash your wallet/purse in the Fish Fountain at Marienplatz

This is an old Munich tradition meant to make you richer. It's

usually the Lord Mayor who leads the charge on Ash Wednesday (*Aschermittwoch*), in February or March.

18. Drink an espresso at Café Tambosi

There aint many Munich cafes with a better view than Café Tambosi in the north-east corner of Odeonsplatz. Scramble for a seat, order a cuppa and soak up the city.

19. Stroll through the Viktualienmarkt in the early morning

As the sun rises over Munich's famous market the vendors get busy setting up stalls, arranging fruit and veg and preparing for the day ahead. Take it in and enjoy.

20. Take a dip in the Müllerisches Volksbad

This enormous public bathing complex is a jewel of Munich's Art Nouveau

13. Break a bench at the Oktoberfest

When things heat up inside the Oktoberfest tents the long, wooden benches rattle under the weight of dancing revellers. Boogie too hard and they can give out underneath you.

15. Buy something at Kustermann

One of the most famous shops at Munich's Viktualienmarkt market, Kustermann has been dishing out fine cutlery and kitchenware since 1798.

(*Jugendstil*) era. The design gleams just as it did when it was opened in 1900, so bring your togs and take a dip.

21. Lick back an ice-cream from Sarcletti

Munich's favourite ice-cream shop sells over 70 flavours so it could take a while to find you're your favourite. It's at Rotkreuzplatz in the suburb Neuhausen.

23. Skate on Munich's frozen ice

If locals need an excuse to get outside in the depths of winter then this is as good as any. The Klienhesslohersee lake in the Englischer Garten and the Nymphen-burger Canal are the best places to strap on the ice skates.

22. Have someone think you're "Schickimicki"

This is Munich's breed of yuppie and in such a wealthy city they aren't exactly thin on the ground. One *Suedutsche* contributor says every Münchener has to have wrinkled a few non-local noses for their disgustingly rich, obnoxious behaviour.

24. Make friends with Charles Schumann

Germany's most famous barkeep, this guy runs the famous Schumann's American Bar at Odeonsplatz 6-7. It's a high society hang out and Schumann has himself become an institution, having concocted cocktails such as the Swimmingpool.

25. Watch the TV series *Kir Royal*

A dose of classic 80s soap, this still much-loved show revolves around the life of tabloid society hack Baby Schimmerlos.

27. Cavort in a fountain

Anita Ekberg did it in Rome in *La Dolce Vita* and one *Suedutsche* contributor says you should try it in Munich, too. The fountains at the University or Marienplatz's Fish Fountain will do just fine – take off your shoes, step on in and kick about.

28. Tell someone off for standing on the wrong side on the escalator

26. Host visitors during Oktoberfest

If you meet a travelling Munich local anywhere in the world make sure to get their email address so you can keep in contact and (maybe) get free accommodation for the Oktoberfest. More than a few locals have given up their couches during the annual party.

Germans love order, especially on the subway escalators. The hard and fast rule is that you should stick to the left to walk up or down the steps, and stand on the right side if you just want to stand there. Find an infringer and tell them off with a curt "*Links gehen, rechts stehen!*"

29. Take a dachshund for a walk in the Englischer Garten

These ridiculous little dogs are as much a part of Munich as *Weisswurst*, so what finer way to declare yourself a local than taking one for a walk through the city's vast park?

31. Bop with the locals at the Fraunhofer Schoppenstüberl

The lively watering hole at Fraunhofer Strasse 41 is renowned for its chilled-out tone, hip-swinging piano accordion music and for serving warm food until 4.30am!

32. Swim in the Eisbach stream and take the tram home

An officially illegal but much-practiced summer pastime. Take the No. 17 to Paradies Strasse and float down the stream in the Englischer Garten for a proper Munich christening.

33. Shoot some pool in the Schelling Salon

Lenin, Brecht and even Hitler have had a tippie at the pub at Schelling Strasse 54. It's over 130 years old, the beers are cold and the pool tables are almost even.

34. Watch all 10 episodes of Monaco Franze

This cult 80s TV comedy crime series starred Helmut Fischer as Munich detective Franz Münchinger and still puts bums on seats today.

35. Watch a game of football at the Grünwalder Stadion

The whole world knows the Bayern Munich squad and the Allianz Arena, but the Grünwalder suburban stadium is where true Munich football fans cheer on their lower-rang clubs.

36. Dance at the Kocherlball

When the cooks and servants of Munich's aristocracy wanted to party, they had to do it when their masters were asleep at 6am in the morning. This became known as the Kocherlball (Cooks' Ball), and involved a lot of old-style dancing around the

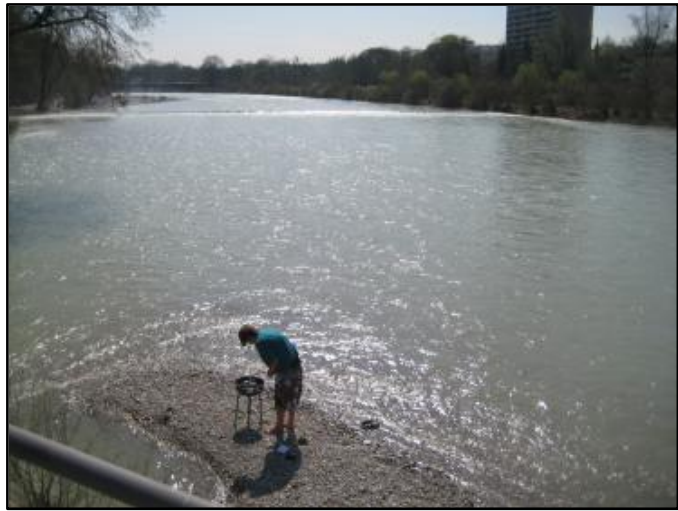
30. Get a headache and blame the "Föhn"

When a Munich local gets a headache, it's more often than not the *Föhn* that takes the blame. This is a hot wind blows up over the Alps from Italy and known for producing clear skies and cranky moods.

Chinesischer Turm (Chinese Tower) in the Englischer Garten. The custom was banned in 1904 and resurrected in 1989.

37. Have a barbecue at Flaucher

Along the Isar River south of the Old Town is an area known as Flaucher which has plenty of rocky river beaches – great spots for a grill on a lazy summer afternoon.



38. Cycle with the Lord Mayor on his way to work

Munich’s mayor leads the way in this most cycle-friendly of cities.

The *Suedutsche* recommends getting a bike and joining the “*Oberbürgermeister*” Christian Ude as he rides south from Schwabing along Leopold Strasse to his office in the Neues Rathaus (New Town Hall).

39. Count the steps of the “Alter Peter”

He soars 306 steps into the Munich sky, but you won’t really know unless you count them. The Church of St Peter is Munich’s oldest church and its tower, affectionately known as the Alter Peter, offers the city’s sweetest views. Climbing it is a Munich must.

40. Drink a Maß of beer at 11am in a beer garden

“I always has one at 11” goes an old beer slogan and in Munich, many always does. Best done on a weekend and accompanied by a *Breze* (pretzel) and *Weisswurst*.

41. Surf in the Eisbach stream

It’s slightly daring, a bit nutty and thoroughly fun to watch – but why not join the famous surfers in the Eisbach stream? Like many, you may only last 10 seconds before being swept off, but you’d have a great story for the rest of your life. Takes place at the southern end of the Englischer Garten.

42. Go jogging in the Alten Nördlichen Friedhof (Old North Cemetery)

Not every city has one but Munich does – a cemetery that’s become a jogging track. You can contemplate life and death as you weave through the gravestones.

43. Down a glass of champagne in the P1 nightclub

Call it famous or infamous, P1 is hard to ignore.

It's Munich's pseudo-celeb hangout, known for attracting the likes of Paris Hilton when she's in town. It's underneath the Haus der Kunst in Prinzregenten Strasse. Make sure you dress well to make it past the bouncers.

44. Listen to the Glockenspiel from start to finish

Hundreds stand with lifted chins as the Glockenspiel swings into action. As it chimes away figurines replay scenes from Munich's history from their perch in the tower of the Neues Rathaus (New Town Hall).

45. Cycle to the Waldwirtschaft beer garden

This beer garden sits a good half-an-hour ride south along the Isar River. Here began the 1995 "Beer Garden Revolution", an attempt by the government to force beer gardens to close at 9pm. The locals, of course, had none of it.

46. Lean one of Karl Vanentin's sketches by heart

Valentin was Munich's answer to Charlie Chaplin, a funnyman with a thousand talents.

The *Suedutsche* suggests learning one of his side-splitting routines to laugh like a true Munich local.

47. Dial the number 32-16-8

This comes from a line in an old song, *Skandal in Sperrbezerk*, by Munich band the Spider Murphy Gang. Most locals know the song, but how many have actually dialled the number? Try it and see who answers.

48. Visit the Deutsches Museum

Every Munich school kid goes there and so do most of its tourists – the Deutsches Museum will simply blow you away. This temple of technology and science is on an island in the Isar River.

49. Catch a film at the world's oldest cinema

The Neues Gabriel cinema has shown flicks on the silver screen since 1907 – the world's oldest cinema! A true "hidden gem" of Munich.

50. Drink a beer with "Manila"

The dark and dirty Schwabinger 7 pub was built from World War Two debris and is known for its cruisey tone. The colourful barkeep is Manila, apparently just as ready to serve you as a beer as tell you his life story.

51. Go to the opera

Just the domain of fur coats and penguin suits? Munich's National Theater opera attracts the schick and rich, but who's to say you can't join in? This is a European cultural capital, so do as the Romans do and go to the opera.

52. Stoke the Residenz lions

A line of lion statues guard the entrances to the Royal Residenz on Residenz Strasse. As you walk by, reach up and give one a stroke for luck – no local can resist it!

Attractions in the southern part of the Old City

Munich's three remaining city gates serve as bookends to the southern part of *Altstadt* (Old Town). This is where a group of monks founded a settlement over 850 years ago which eventually gradually grew into the metropolis we know today. Munich's main shopping axis runs from Karlsplatz (Stachus) with its Karlstor gate to the west, all the way through the Isartor gate in the east.

Things to see in between include Marienplatz, the Viktualienmarkt market and the mighty Frauenkirche church. Another pre-eminent shopping strip runs south towards the Sendlinger Tor, another old city gate.

Top priority sights in the southern part of the Old City

Marienplatz

Münchenerers call Marienplatz the *Guten Stube*, the "front room" of their city. It's a constant hive of activity usually crammed with people coming and going. Many come to watch the Glockenspiel, an animated clock in the tower of the square's dominant Neue Rathaus (New City Hall). Others are meeting friends, bopping to buskers, open-air dining, shopping or simply passing by.

Timeless

Marienplatz has always been the city's main focal point and had annual jousting competitions and public executions throughout the Middle Ages. The square forms the eastern end of the central shopping axis that runs through to Karlsplatz-Stachus. Munich's main Tourist Information Office is on the ground floor of the Neues Rathaus.

Thanks

The *Mariensäule* (Mary's Column) has towered over the centre of Marienplatz since 1638. It



was built as a holy “thank you” after the Catholic-versus-Protestant Thirty Years War, when Swedish Protestant troops occupied the city. Munich and fellow imperial residence Landshut had made it through the conflict virtually unscathed.

Angels and demons

Crowning the column is a gold dame they call the *Patrona Bavariae*, a version of the Virgin Mary originally made for the Frauenkirche high altar. When they took her down for a clean-up in 1960 they found a wooden casket underneath that’s said to have contained shards from the Jesus’ crucifix. You never know, it might even be true. At the column’s base are four “puttos” (in Italian: putti) little cherub-type fellows frequently found in Renaissance art. They’re engaged in mini-battles, fighting a dragon (representing hunger), a lion (war), a snake (the faithless) and an evil reptile with a chicken’s head called a basilisk (the plague).

Frat boy forerunners

On the eastern side of the square near the Neues Rathaus sits the Fischbrunnen (Fish Fountain). It’s Munich’s most famous and oldest fountain - some believe it goes back as early as the 1300s.

Fishmongers kept their fish fresh in the fountain when this was the piscatorial part of the old market. It was the site of bizarre initiation ceremony called the *Metzgersprung* (Butcher’s Leap) which took place regularly until 1900 and continues in an altered form to this day. To round off their schooling, young apprentice butchers were sheathed in nothing but a sheepskin and a calf’s penis hanging from their necks, spun around three times and thrown into the fountain.

Only after suffering through this potentially neurosis-inducing ceremony were they allowed to work as fully fledged butchers. It’s now the city’s most-loved meeting point.

The details (Tourist Information Office): Phone 089 23 39 65 50

Location In the arcade at the bottom of the Neues Rathaus, in the middle.

Directions Take any S-Bahn or U-Bahn 3 or 6 to Marienplatz.

Frauenkirche

A symbol of the Devil lurks within Munich’s greatest church. This cathedral’s two onion-domed towers are so much a part of Munich’s image that they’ve become the symbol of the city. In fact, no building is allowed to be built higher than their 99m for fear of ruining the city’s skyline.

Lucifer's leftovers

The church was built by Jörg "Ganghofer" Halspach in the then record time of 20 years (1468-1488) and the towers were added 30 years later.

The story goes that the devil agreed to finance the church, provided Halspach built it without windows running down the aisles. When the work was done Halspach led the Devil to a point near the entrance where none of the side windows could be seen – the view was blocked by 22 inner columns. The Devil threw a tantrum and stamped his foot real hard, leaving a mark that remains to this day.



There always seems to be a wind blowing around the church and that's said to be Satan himself, circling around looking for the side windows.

The Two Towers

By the way, the southern tower is just a little higher than the northern one.

There's a rumour that the two 99m-tall towers were supposed to be even higher and actually connect at their peak, but the local poo-bahs realised they were running out of money and decided on a slightly less ambitious construction.

Where dead kings rest

Though it's gothic by design, the church's interior is shockingly Spartan and looks nothing like the more overtly gothic Neues Rathaus. There are 21 chapels lining the aisles.

Sovereigns from Bavaria's ruling Wittelsbach clan are interred here, including Ludwig the Bavarian and the last king of the line, Ludwig III, who died in 1923.

The 20th century

Much of the Frauenkirche had to be rebuilt after it was bombed out in

Why?

For the life of me I can't understand how stories like the one about the devil got started, or why someone would choose to put a fake Satan footprint in a church. Perhaps it was all just a brilliant marketing ploy, whatever, if you step inside only one of Munich's churches it should be this one.

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World War Two. The church has been an archbishop's seat for almost 200 years. Joseph Ratzinger had the job from 1977 to 1982 before becoming Pope Benedict XV. You can climb the south tower, but frankly, the views are a lot better from the Alter Peter tower at the Peterskirche.

The details: Location Frauenplatz 1 **Phone** 089 2 90 08 20 **Open** The south tower is open to climb May to October, Monday to Saturday 10am to 5pm. **Cost** Entrance to the south tower: €2

Directions Take any S-Bahn or U-Bahn 3 or 6 to Marienplatz, scan around when you emerge from the tube, and head for those soaring domes!

German Hunting and Fishing Museum

Here the dying art of taxidermy is showcased in all its glory. This museum (in German: *Deutsches Jagd- und Fischermuseum*) has over 500 stuffed animals, hunting memorabilia and what it claims is the "largest fishing collection the world".

Animals R.I.P.

This always fascinating, occasionally disturbing ensemble has been housed in Munich's former Augustiner Church since 1966. It's a great one for kids, animal lovers, and those who like killing them.

Showcases of stuffed animals line the halls of the ground floor. There are birds, bunnies and deer, but my favourites are the big wild boar with grins frozen on their hungry faces.

Just plain silly are the "Wolperdingers", Bavaria's addition to the cryptid world of created critters. They're roughly equivalent to the Australian Bunyip but smaller and less angry looking.

Hook, line and sinker

Stone-aged fishing rods are part of the fishing display further up. It's part of an interesting section with schools of extinct and fossilized fish. Also up here is an interactive "children's world", where kids can stroke the fur of different animals and learn about their eating habits.

Tally ho, old boy!

The top-floor hall is lined with antlers and stars a skeleton of a giant deer. Hunting exploits are depicted in paintings that would better suit an old earl's den. At the back is a collection of Rococo hunting sleighs. Ah-ha, so this was how the rich amused themselves before the Nintendo Wii was released!

The details: Location Neuhauserstrasse 2. It's on the main pedestrian drag between Karlstor and Marienplatz. Look for the statue of wild boar out front! **Cost** €3.50 **Open** 9.30am to 5pm, Thursdays to 9pm. **Phone** 089 22 05 22 **Website** www.jagd-fischerei-museum.de.

Other landmarks in the southern part of the Old City

Neues Rathaus

The big daddy of Marienplatz is the splendiferous Neues Rathaus, a structure with the power to turn people who don't give a damn about architecture into ardent fans.

It's simply a feast for the eyes. There's something new to notice in virtually every square metre of the neo-gothic edifice.

Even though I must have seen it 100 times I still swing by Marienplatz whenever I can just to gawk.

All in the details

The Neues Rathaus was built from 1867 to 1908 out of a simple need for more civic offices. Its elaborate façade rises over a grand arched arcade at ground level.

There are statues-galore on the upper storeys – paupers, gargoyles and dragons hustle for attention with kings, dukes, and prince electors. Turrets line the gables and a grand clock tower, adorned with a world famous Glockenspiel, soars above it all.

Seat of power

Officially, the Neues Rathaus is where Munich's Lord Mayor grinds away for the benefit of the citizenry. Since 1993 that's been Christian Ude from the left-of-centre Social Democratic Party (SPD). He's known as a progressive with a satirical sense of humour who occasionally moonlights as a comedian (no kidding!). The building has other uses – there are shops and a Tourist Information Centre in the ground-floor arcade. Wander into the central courtyards to find the *Ratskeller*, a traditional restaurant where you can sample typical Bavarian fare.

Just like old times

The Glockenspiel (the official English word for this is "carillon") springs to life at 11am and 12pm (and at 5pm from March to October). The Carillon re-enacts scenes from Munich's history as more than 40 bells chime away.

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There are two levels to it - the top one shows the 1568 wedding of Duke Wilhelm V and Renata von Lorraine. It features a French jousting fighter fighting a Bavarian one. No prizes for guessing the outcome. Wilhelm and Renata's was one of the most expensive weddings of the Middle Ages where, among other things, over 500 oxen were eaten! On the bottom level the "Schäfflertanz" is played out, that's a jig traditionally performed by Munich's red-coated coopers (barrel makers).

The city's real coopers repeat this dance every seven years to celebrate the end of the Plague which devastated Munich in the 15th and 16th centuries. The next Schäfflertanz is due in 2019.

To the top

At the very top of the 85m tower stands a small statue of the Münchener Kindl, the monk-child symbol of the city. From April to November you can take an elevator to a viewing platform on the ninth floor of the tower.

The details: Location Marienplatz 8 **Phone** 089 2 33 00

Open Tower viewing platform open November to April, Monday to Friday 10am to 5pm. May to October open daily from 10am to 7pm. **Directions** Take any S-Bahn or U-Bahn no. 3 or 6 to Marienplatz.

Altes Rathaus (Old City Hall)

Munich's Old City Hall was designed by Jörg "Ganghoffer" Halspach and built 1470-1480, then overlooking the old Munich market. Halspach was also responsible for the Frauenkirche's design. The Rathaus counts as one of the cutest buildings in the city centre because of its little turrets and tower.

The structure's face has changed to suit the mood of the times - renaissance, baroque, late gothic, you name it.

The Old Town Hall was rebuilt in its original style after copping a beating in World War Two. The tower, too, had been given a new look seven times over before being completely destroyed in the war and rebuilt to the original plans. It now houses a toy museum. The building's main hall often doubled as a ballroom.

The details: Location Marienplatz 15, eastern end

Phone 089 23 39 24 **Directions** Take any S-Bahn or U-Bahn 3 or 6 to Marienplatz.



The Altes Rathaus

Juliet Statue

We all know the story: Boy meets girl, they fall in love, girl fakes her own death and then does it for real after finding out boy has done the same thing. The bronze statue of Shakespeare's heroine from Romeo and Juliet was a gift from the city of Verona in 1974. She's on the southern side of the Altes Rathaus (Old Town Hall).

There's another Juliet across the Isar River on Shakespeare Platz, and of course there's one in Verona as well. In Verona you're supposed to touch Juliet's breasts for a chance at undying love. Here you're meant to place some flowers in her hand. I'm sure she appreciates both treatments.

Museums in the southern part of the Old City

Munich City Museum

I'm both a history nut and a Munich freak, so the Munich City Museum had me jumping around like a pig in a mud pit. Since 2008 the museum has hosted an extensive exhibit tracing Munich's footsteps from tiny monk enclave to metropolis. Unfortunately most of the descriptions are only in German but there are audio guides on hand and English-language booklets to help you along.

Typisch München! (Typically Munich!)

Starting with a box in the floor containing ancient monks' relics, this exhibit meanders through more than 850 years of Munich's history. The ground floor centrepiece is a model of 1570 Munich showing how it looked with the city walls intact.

Also here are the *Morriskentänzer* (Morris Dancers, 1480), figurines made to adorn the ballroom of the Altes Rathaus. Sculptor Erasmus Grasser received 150 pounds for the 10 little fellows, enough in those days to buy himself 1000 sheep. Also here is a bust of Max I from 1650, knights' armour from medieval jousts on Marienplatz and reproductions of four "puttos" (1640) from the platz's Mariensäule.

Dishy exhibits

Up the stairs there's a mini conveyer belt spinning favourite Bavarian food but don't try to eat them, they're all chemically preserved (there's a restaurant back on the ground floor if you're hungry). There are also old clothes including a traditional Dirndl dress that shows how they looked before cleavage was in (or more accurately, out!).

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Close by is a portrait copy of seminal Munich beauty Helene Sedelmayer (by Joseph Stieler, 1831). It's virtually identical to the painting of her in the *Schönheitengalerie* (Gallery of Beauties) at Schloss Nymphenburg. The original was given to Helene's family and her descendants still have it today. To the right is a house-coat worn by King Ludwig I almost every day for over 60 years of his life. Also on this floor are paintings of Munich including one of the horserace that gave birth to Oktoberfest and examples of delicate Nymphenburger porcelain.

The story so far

The exhibits further upstairs take Munich through to the modern age. The early 1900s *Jugendstil* artistic movement is covered, as is the Great Depression, the Third Reich and post-war rebirth. Regalia from the 1972 Munich Olympics and a model of the Allianz Arena pay tribute to the city's sporting heritage.

Don't miss the recreation of a modern Oktoberfest scene, with "invisible" partygoers dancing on the benches in typical Wiesn gladrags. I loved the details like the cigarette pack dangling out of someone's pocket and mobile phone stuffed into a pair of lederhosen.

The Munich City Museum has other exhibitions on topics as diverse as photography, fashion and weapons. They're presented on a rotating basis, so what you saw here a year ago could be sitting in storage, replaced with something else today. Here are a few I saw:

Dark days

Munich was a spawning ground of the Third Reich, and named the *Hauptstadt der Bewegung* (Capital of the Movement) by Hitler. The dark days are documented in **Nationalsozialismus in München** (National Socialism in Munich), an exhibition on the ground floor just to the left of the entrance.

On display are old propaganda posters and signs with Orwellian regulations, postcards, uniforms and other memorabilia. I found the photos of the Jewish persecution deeply disturbing, and I was moved by the painting *Das Brennende Karlstor* at the end of the circuit, showing Munich ablaze at the end of the war.

Miniature magic

Get ready to have the bejeseus scared out of you on the third floor. The first thing that greets you is a life-size clown figure called Grimbaldi. Think Stephen King's *It* with a dog, goose and sausages spilling out of his pants and you'll know what I mean.

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This floor is devoted to puppets and marionettes, and there are occasionally puppet theatre performances for the kids. There are figurines from mermaids to crusades and glass cabinets with thousands of little wooden heads.

Music jamboree

Music lovers will feast their senses on the fourth floor, stocked with over 2000 musical instruments from around the globe. A highlight here is an enormous cannon-like drum from Northern Thailand that looks more like a weapon of mass destruction than something for keeping the beat. Also striking a worthy chord are the gold-gilded drums from the Chinese court. A large auditorium space hosts regular live performances.

The details: Location St. Jakobs Platz 1 Phone 089 23 32 23 70 **Website**

www.stadtmuseum-online.de **Cost** €4, concession €2, families €6. Entry is free to the permanent exhibitions on Sundays and public holidays. **Open** Tuesday to Sunday 10am to 6pm **Directions** From Marienplatz, stroll south two blocks along Rindermarkt Strasse. The Munich City Museum is on a corner to your left.

Beer and Oktoberfest Museum

So you're not the kind of traveller who usually goes into museums? You might reconsider for the house dedicated to Munich's favourite golden drink and the biggest excuse there is to drink it.

The Bier und Oktoberfest Museum traces the history of beer from its origins in ancient Egypt and its arrival in Munich, to the monastery breweries and Munich's current six big breweries.

A treasured relic is the wooden chest they call the "Brewer's Ark". It's basically a rotting old box that plays a role in a Munich brewers' initiation ceremony. The upper floor traces the evolution of the Oktoberfest from its beginnings as a horserace/royal wedding in 1810 to the world's biggest folk festival.

There is a short film to watch and a great collection of old Oktoberfest posters - looking at those the fest doesn't seem to have changed much at all over the years. There's also a collection of antique beer krugs and a cartoon exhibition.



This is one museum that'll make you thirsty

You'll find the **Museum Stüberl**, a small bar, on the ground floor. For a bargain 4€ you can combine your museum ticket with a voucher for a beer and a snack and the Stüberl. The museum is located in Munich's oldest surviving residential house (1340), a worthy tourist attraction in its own right.

It's a multi-storey rabbit warren with low ceilings, exposed brickwork and rickety stairs. The staircase on the right of the house is one of a kind. Dubbed the "Stairway to Heaven" it's narrow, straight and reaches right to the top of the house.

The details:

Location The Beer and Oktoberfest Museum (German: Bier und Oktoberfest Museum) is at Sternecker Strasse 2. It's down a side street between Marienplatz and Isartor. **Phone** 089 24 23 16 07 **Website** www.bier-und-oktoberfestmuseum.de **Cost** 4€, concession 2.50€, family ticket 6€. Tickets for groups of six or more are 3€ each. **Open** The museum is open Tuesday to Saturday from 1pm to 5pm, but can stay open later if there's a group reservation. The bar/restaurant is open Tuesday to Saturday from 6pm to midnight. **Directions** It's a 10min walk from Marienplatz or a 5min walk from the Isartor S-Bahn station.

Places of worship in the southern part of the Old City

Michaelskirche

The Church of St Michael is topped with a wide barrel-vaulted ceiling that holds up alright despite its lack of supporting columns. The only ceiling of its kind that's bigger is at Rome's St Peter's Cathedral.

The church's crypt is the final resting place of Bavaria's fairy-tale king Ludwig II and other ruling Wittelsbachs, as well as the son of Napoleon's wife Josephine. The church was built 1583 to 1588 by Duke Wilhelm V as part of the Counter Reformation movement. This was a Catholic-led effort to battle the wave of descent started by Martin Luther.

He'd declared the Catholic Church rotten to the core and paved the way for the creation of the Lutheran and Protestant churches. There's a statue of Archangel Michael battling the Devil (love the hooved feet!) between the two entrance portals. Further up on the façade are more bronze statues.

The details: Location Kaufingerstrasse 52 **Phone** 089 2 31 70 60 **Open** Open daily from 7am to 7pm. The crypt Monday to Friday 9am to 1pm and 3pm to 4.30pm, Saturday 10am to 3pm. **Directions** Take any S-Bahn or U-Bahn 3 or 6 to Marienplatz. It's a 10min walk west through the pedestrian zone.

Jewish Centre on St. Jakobsplatz

Seventy years after the Holocaust of World War Two practically wiped out Munich's Jewish population, the community once again has a cogent presence in the city.

This resurgence is mainly thanks to decades of Jewish immigration from Russia and Eastern Europe. A trio of buildings on Jakobsplatz form the community's hub:

A Gemindehaus (community centre), a Jewish Museum and a stunning new synagogue.

Brilliant design

The centrepiece is the Ohel Jakob (Jacob's Tent) Synagogue, in which a massive glass brick rises out of a jumbled-up oblong wall of stones.

The stones are travertine, a kind of limestone deposited in hot springs, and the glass "brick" represents the tent, a symbol of Moses' 40 years of wandering the desert. The massive main door was



The Jewish Centre on Jakobsplatz.

built in Budapest and lists the 10 Commandments in Hebrew. Inside there's space for about 550 worshippers.

The synagogue is connected to the community centre via an underground "Hallway of Remembrance" in which the names of 4500 Munich Jews killed during the Third Reich are listed.

Rough past

The Hallway of Remembrance is located underground partly because of security concerns. In 2003 German police had already thwarted a Neo-Nazi attempt to bomb the cornerstone laying ceremony for the building.

The synagogue opened on 9 November, 2006, the 68th anniversary of the Nazis' *Kristallnacht* (Night of the Broken Glass) pogrom. This dark day in Germany's history saw synagogues burned to the ground, Jewish businesses attacked and thousands of Jews

arrested, beaten and killed. The former Munich synagogue (also called the Ohel Jakob) was close to the site of the new but has since been turned into an underground parking lot.

Time to eat?

Also at the site is the Restaurant Einstein, which is, of course, named after one of Southern Germany most famous Jews. Here you can enjoy kosher and/or vegetarian meals in elegant surrounds, lunch menu offers start at €6.90.

The Details:

Location St. Jakobsplatz, Munich. It's a few hundred metres south-west of Marienplatz.

Tours of the synagogue are given Monday to Thursday at 12pm, 4.30pm and 6pm. On Sundays there are tours at 12pm, 2pm and 4pm. **Phone** 089 202 400 100 **Website** (in German) www.ikg-m.de **Directions** Take any S-Bahn to Marienplatz and walk south-west for 5m past the Rindermarkt square and the Stadtmuseum.

Asamkirche (Asam Church)

The Asamkirche sticks out like a sore thumb. Wandering down the mega-commercial Sendlinger Strasse you wouldn't expect to see a rococo masterpiece melding in among the shops, but it's there, and you do.

I almost had a sensory overload in this place – so much decoration in such a little space! Sure is a long way from the little weatherboard churches we have in rural Australia. Try to go in the morning when the sun streams through the yellow stained-glass window above the altar and lights the room up like a birthday cake.

Fraternal effort

Brothers Cosmas Damian and Egid Quirin Asam built the church (1733 to 1746) in the highly stylised, gold-gilded rococo style. The ceiling fresco shows the life of church patron Johann Nepomuk. The story goes that he was thrown from Prague's St. Charles Bridge because he refused to reveal the confessions of the Bohemian queen to the king.

Nepomuk also features as a wax figurine in a glass shrine on the high altar. The altar is framed by four winding columns and there are portraits of the Asam brothers to either side. The Asamhaus, where the brothers used to



live, is to the left of the church, a priest's house built later is on the right.

The details: **Location** Sendlinger Strasse 32 **Phone** 089 23 68 79 89 **Open** Daily 8am to 5.30pm **Directions** Take the U-Bahn 3 or 6 to Sendlingertor. It's a 10min walk back up Sendlinger Strasse.

Bürgersaalkirche (Buergersaal Church)

The pint-sized Bürgersaalkirche is pretty well dedicated to the memory of Rupert Mayer, who you'll see from the posters looks like a sterner version of actor Robin Williams.

Mayer was a Jesuit priest and anti-Nazi who kept getting thrown in concentration camps during the 1930s. For most of the war he hid out at Ettal Monastery in southern Bavaria and died in 1945. Mayer was beautified in 1987.

The shopfront-like church consists of two parts. You enter into a low vaulted cellar lined with statues of the crucifixion and a small chapel. The more impressive "Upper Church" is upstairs. It's done with plenty of gold leaf and is only open 11am to 1pm.

The details:

Location Neuhauserstrasse 14. It's on the main pedestrian drag between Karlstor and Marienplatz. **Phone** 089 2 19 97 20 **Website** www.mmkbuergersaal.de.

Other attractions in the southern part of the Old City

Viktualienmarkt

I've got a sociological experiment for you to try out at Munich's famous marketplace. I want you to browse through some of the market's 140 stands.

Take a look at the cheeses, the fine meats, the flowers and the bakeries. Then, I want you to go to the fruit and vegetable stands – pick up a potato, toss a tomato from hand to hand, smell strawberries one by one. Don't push it too far, just scout about like you're an insatiable connoisseur looking for the perfect peach.

See how the shopkeepers steam up as you play with their produce, and time how long it takes before one blows his top and lets fly with a string of insults. Then write in and let me know how long you last. You see the market vendors are renowned for being grumpy as hell, particularly when it comes to potential customers handling the goods. Once, an

American tourist copped such an ear-battering it made the daily newspapers along with an official's plea to the vendors to be "a little nicer". Let's see if the stereotype holds true.

That said, an amble through the village-like market, a long-time focal point, easily makes it most people's "things to do in Munich" list.

Haute cuisine

It's a cornucopia of gastronomic delights. Expensive, but high quality, and from the world's four corners. Everything from sushi to sandwiches to souvlaki gets a run. Centre point is the beer garden, the only one in Munich that serves a variety of city's beers on a rotating basis. During winter the big Maß beer glasses are traded for smaller cups of *Glühwein*, a hot, spicy wine best enjoyed in a thick jacket and a huddled group.

More food is dished up in the glass-encased *Schrannerhalle* at the southern end of the market. This hall is a popular venue for soccer fans – you can enjoy a glass of Prosecco while following the on-field action on a big screen. The *Schrannerhalle* was opened in 2005. Its name comes from an old grain-hall on the site which burned down decades ago.

Dance around the maypole

Rising from the centre of the market is the blue-and-white striped maypole (German: *Maibaum*).

Maypoles can be found in village squares across Bavaria and once served as a kind of medieval Yellow Pages for travellers – the attached signs indicate the goods and services available nearby.

The Viktualienmarkt maypole bears symbols of a beer-cart, carousels, dancers, musicians, and near the top a lonely little fruit lady.

The pole is raised by a bunch of Lederhosen lads with a fair share of fanfare on May 1. Another highlight of the Viktualienmarkt calendar is Shrove Tuesday (*Fashing Dienstag*) in February or March.

This is part of the official wind-up of Germany's Karnival season – up to 20,000 people flock to the market to drink champagne and party the day away. The main event is a colourful and plainly ridiculous dance by the women who work at the market, the so-called "Tanz der Marktfrauen". Other events include the opening of asparagus season in April, a brewers'



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day and gardeners' day. Keep your eye out for the fountains spread around the market – each immortalizes a famous Munich comedian or entertainer.

The market was relocated to its position, just south of St Peter's Church in 1807 by King Maximilian I from its original spot on the Marienplatz. The name "Viktualien" is an old Latin word for groceries.

The details: Location Am Viktualienmarkt, just south of the Marienplatz. **Phone** (Beer garden) 089 29 75 45 **Open** Food stalls are generally open Monday to Friday 7.30am to 6pm, Saturday 7.30am to 1pm, closed Sundays and public holidays. The Schranerhalle is open 24/7, but the businesses inside keep their own hours. The beer garden is open 9am to 10pm, closed Sundays. **Directions** Take any S-Bahn or U-Bahn No. 3 or 6 to Marienplatz, then head south-east of the square, past the St Peter's Church (Peterskirche).

Sendlinger Tor

The Sendlinger Tor used to be the gateway to rolling hills, farms and villages. Now it's the gateway to a trendy cultural centre and a thriving gay scene.

The times, they are a'changin'.

The gate marks the southern tip of the Altstadt and connects to the Isarvorstadt and Glockenbachviertel. Leading up north is the shopaholics' dream-street Sendlinger Strasse.

The gateway was built in 1813 as part of the second effort to build a wall around medieval Munich.

It used to have a large, central tower which was done away with in 1808. Two smaller towers flanking a wide archway remain. There's a few interesting shops built into the old city walls.

The details: Directions Take U-Bahn No. 1, 3, 6 or 8 to Sendlinger Tor.



Attractions – the northern part of the old city

Pomp and grandeur abound in the northern section of the Altstadt. This was the powerbase of Munich's high and mighty, defined by the former imperial palace, the Residenz and its forerunner the Alter Hof.

Other grand as gold attractions include the Hofgarten, Odeonsplatz with its adjutant Field Marshall's Hall and the National Theatre. On the other side of the cultural spectrum sits the world's most famous watering hole, the Hofbräuhaus.

Top Priority! – The northern part of the Old City

Hofbräuhaus

If Munich is the capital of the beer-drinking faith, this is where pilgrims come to pray. It's not Munich's best beer-hall but it has simply got to be done. I always take friends or relatives here when they pay me a visit. I even took my mum here for a beer or two. It started raining hard so we stayed and got well tipsy together.

There's a famous anthem about the Hofbräuhaus which has become an integral part of many great Bavarian beer-swills, it goes "oans, zwoa, gsuffa" meaning "one, two, chug" – you get the idea.

Secretly proud?

Most Münchenerers claim to hate the Hofbräu but I think they're secretly as proud as punch. Could there be a more famous pub than this? The ground-floor tap room is called the **Schwemme**, with space for over 1000 drinkers.

Here you can watch barmaids bear 10 litres of amber fluid and listen to old guys in Lederhosen play oompah music. But that's not your only option. There's also a lovely beer garden with traditional chestnut trees and a big old fountain, a perfect setting for a few summer beers.



Friends enjoy a meal at the Hofbräuhaus.

There are a few other interesting rooms upstairs including the **Bräustüberl**, which has a nice view over the square outside, called Platzl. On the second floor you'll find the cavernous **Festsaal**, lined with the flags and standards of the various dominions once belonging to Bavaria. That's where, incidentally, Hitler founded the Nazi Party in 1920. Now it's also home to the **HB-Ausstellung** (Hofbräuhaus Exhibition) where you can learn about the establishment's 400-year history, going back to the days of Duke Wilhelm V.

The duke founded the Hofbräuhaus in 1589 because he wasn't happy with the beer from Munich's other breweries. The royals kept the liquid gold to themselves until 1828 when they finally pulled out the cork for the public.

Odeonsplatz

Step off your Vespa and order an espresso, when you hit Odeonsplatz you know you're really in – Munich? Or was that Italy? This area is so replete with street life and Italian architecture you could be forgiven for thinking you were south of the Alps. On the square's southern side sits the **Feldherrnhalle** (Field Marshals' Hall), a copy of Florence's arched Loggia dei Lanza.

The west side is hemmed in by the Italianate church **Theatinerkirche**, and in the north-west corner the latte crew sip drinks alfresco outside **café Tambosi**. Behind the eastern wall is the formal Italian garden **Hofgarten**, where old men play *boccia* and buskers play music in a temple to the gods. This is the reason they call this city Italy's northernmost bastion, so slow down a little, smell the roses and enjoy La Dolce Vita – Munich style!

Failed power-grab

The pair of lions watching over the area from the Feldherrnhalle bore witness to one of Munich's most infamous incidents. On November 8, 1923 the then still small-time rabble-rouser Adolf Hitler tried to take over the government at a nearby beer hall in an incident that's known as the "Beer Hall Putsch".

He and his supporters kept 3,000 people hostage for an entire night before realising the attempt wasn't going places. Then his mob of about 2,000 armed brutes marched down to the square to be met by a force of 100 policemen. A fire fight broke out leaving 16 Nazis and four policemen dead. Hitler ended up in a Landsberg prison over the attack, where he penned his manifesto *Mein Kampf* (My Struggle).

Nazi-era temples that one stood on the square have long since been removed but there's still a small plaque on the pavement in tribute to the murdered policemen.

Classical gas

For a few special evening each summer, the square is filled with rows of seats, powerful speakers and floodlights and the Feldherrnhalle becomes Munich's most unique stage for classical music. Shows take place in mid-July, visit www.klassik-amodeonsplatz.de for more details and reservations.

The details: Directions Take U-Bahn No. 3, 4, 5 or 6 to Odeonsplatz.

Munich Residenz

The Residenz is the big, fat, shiny jewel in Munich's majestic crown. It's easily up there with the best of Europe's great palaces. It's home to the Wittelsbachs' gold-filled rooms, elegant courtyards and the crown jewels of Bavaria.

History of the Munich Residenz

The palace was built in three major stages starting in 1571 with the model of a Florentine palazzo in mind.

To get a sense of just how God-damned big this place is just check out how much space it consumes on a city map compared to say, Marienplatz. It's on the site of the former imperial Neuveste building (1385), making this place the royal perch for over 500 years, up until the end of the monarchy in 1918.

Location and scope

The palace complex faces onto Max-Joseph-Platz, just across from Munich's opera house. The western side faces Residenz Strasse, lined with bronze lions that you're supposed to rub for luck. To the north is the geometrically unassailable Hofgarten (Royal Garden). The Residenz houses four museums which you have to visit individually. Most of the old royal rooms are now part of the main Munich Residenz Museum.

There's also the *Schatzkammer der Residenz* (Residenz Treasury), the Cuvilliés-Theater (also called the Old Residenz Theatre) and the *Staatliches Museum Ägyptischer Kunst* (Egyptian Art Museum). Reserve three or four hours to soak up just the Residenz Museum and the Treasury.

Around the Munich Residenz Museum

Some sections of the Residenz are closed in the morning, other in the afternoon so you won't get to see the whole museum unless you stick around a while. The highlights, like the Antiquarium above, are open all day. Here's a peek into what you'll see.

Ground Floor

- Old Boys' Cub

Near the entrance is the Rococo *Ahengalerie* (Ancestor's Gallery), its walls lined with 121 portraits of the Wittelbachs. Charlemagne and a few other nobles pictured here weren't really in the family, but were added to thicken the image of the Wittelbachs' blue blood.

- Off with her head!

Just further along is the enclosed *Grottenhof* (Grotto Court), where you'll find a grand fountain topped with a rather grotesque statue. It's Perseus, who stands sword in hand atop the freshly beheaded statue Medusa (her head is in his other hand). The grotto itself seems like artefact from the ocean floor and has an organic statue of the god Mercury that looks like it could burst to life at any moment. It's made up of thousands of crystals, tuff and coloured shells. The shells were collected by beachgoers in the 1950s and given to the museum.

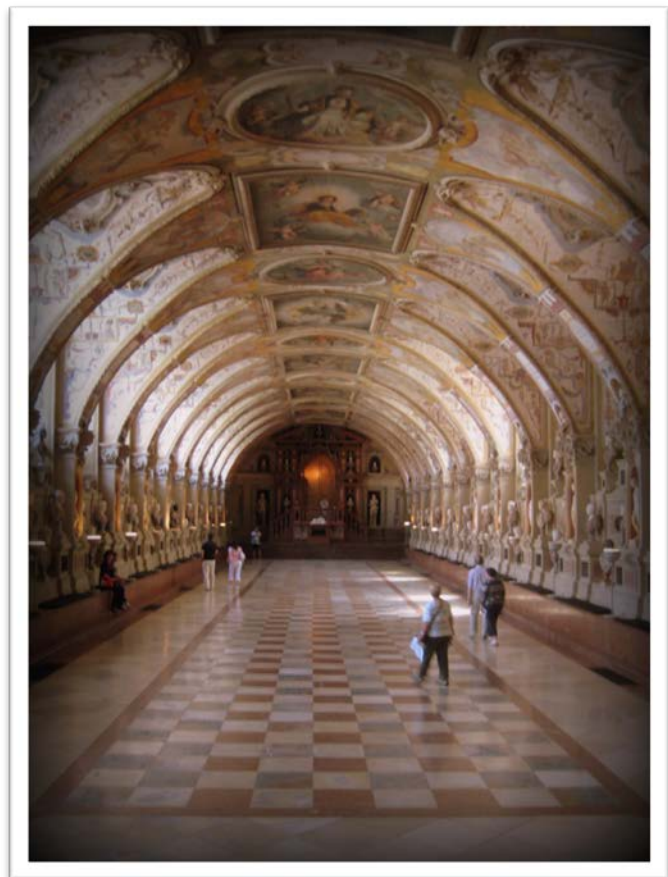
- Hall of splendour

Next door is the *Antiquarium* (1750), to my mind among the most beautiful spots in the whole city. This huge Renaissance hall features on most Munich Residenz promotional material.

This was where guests of state were wined and dined at long, delicacy stuffed benches. It's adorned with Christian-allegorical paintings and more busts than the Playboy mansion. The boot on the wall Romantic Italy takes the stage in the

Kurfürstenzimmer (Elector's Rooms). Venice and the Italian countryside are depicted in about 30 paintings by Bernardo Bellotto and Carl Rottmann.

First Floor



The Antiquarium, one of the standout rooms at the Residenz.

Upstairs you'll find the **Schlachtensäle** (Hall of Battle) with 14 murals depicting the Napoleonic Wars. Next door is a collection of European porcelain from the 1800s. Perched over the **Grottenhof** are the **Reiche Zimmer** (Rich Rooms) - elaborate Rococo spaces (including a throne room) adorned with gold, pomp and splendour. You can't miss the nearby **Kabinetts**, a series of small rooms displaying mirrors and miniatures. Also worth seeing up here are the **Hofkirche** (Royal Church), **Reiche Kapelle** (Rich Chapel) and a display of silverware to make your old granny green with envy.

Other highlights

- Schatzkammer der Residenz (Residence Treasury)

Here you'll find all that glitters is truly gold, or something else bloody expensive. If you want to see the family jewels, or you're a grubby little goblin hunting treasure, this is the place to come. The collection spans 10 halls and a millennium of treasures. Showpieces include a Cross of Queen Gisela (1000AD), a delicate statuette of dragon-slaying knight St George (1599) and a beautiful boxed travel kit that belonged to French Empress Marie Louise (circa 1820).

Not too far in you'll come across the **Bavarian Crown Jewels**, commissioned after Napoleon gave Bavaria the status of kingdom in 1806. At the end of the circuit is a room displaying treasures from around the globe, including examples of Chinese porcelain and captured Turkish daggers.

- The Coin Collection

The Residenz also houses one of the world's most valuable coin collections with over 300,000 pieces. It's fascinating to go through a few of them and check out the amazing detail under the in-built magnifying glasses.

- The Cuvilliés-Theater

This gleaming red-and gold auditorium (1751-1755) is touted as one of Europe's finest Rococo theatres. Belgian architect (and one-time court jester!) François Cuvilliés designed it. The theatre was originally reserved for the royal court and it's now open for inspection. You can even still catch a concert. Perhaps an opera?

- The Hofgarten (Royal Garden)

This formal garden was once the private strolling grounds of Bavarian royalty. Various rulers have added their touch to the garden through its 400-year lifespan and it's now a popular spot to drink coffee, play boules or just sit about and listen to music.

- Egyptian Art Museum

Venture way, way back in time to the Kingdom of the Nile at this fascinating museum on the north side of the Munich Residenz

The details:

Location Residenz Strasse 1. **Phone** 089 29 06 71 **Website** residenz-muenchen.de **Open** Residenz Museum and Treasury: April to October 15 open daily 9am to 6pm. October 16 to March open 10am to 5pm. Cuvilliés Theatre: April to October open Monday to Saturday 2pm to 6pm. On Sundays and public holidays 9am to 6pm. October 16 to March open Monday to Saturday 2pm to 5pm. On Sundays and public holidays 10am to 5pm.

Cost *Residenz Museum* €7, concession €6 / *Treasury* €7, concession €6 / *Cuvilliés Theatre* €3.50, concession €2.50 / *Combination Munich Residenz Museum and Treasury ticket* €11, concession €9 / *Combination Residenz Museum, Treasury and Cuvilliés Theatre ticket* €13, concession €10.50.

Directions Get any S-Bahn or U Bahn no. 3 or 6 to Marienplatz and take the street on the right side of the Neues Rathaus north for a few hundred metres.

More at the Residenz – The northern part of the Old City

Hofgarten

Where's the perfect place to make a move on a would-be lover? If you're in Munich the answer is clear – the Hofgarten oozes breezy, romantic charm. Take that guy or girl by the hand and stroll through the archway on the eastern side of Odeonsplatz.

You're in the west arcade, filled with frescos showing the history of Bavaria and its royal Wittelsbach clan. Keep moving towards the centre, past broad, sandy pathways where old men playing *boccia* add to the Mediterranean mood.

Now you're in the garden proper, filled with fountains, flowers and hedges. Prince Elector Max I had it designed in the formal Italian style around 1613. Head towards the **Diana Temple** in the centre, which might be occupied by a string quartet or tangoing twosomes.

Take a moment to watch the goings-on before withdrawing to a quiet park bench. Could there be anywhere more idyllic for that first kiss?

One killer statue

Near the arcade is a beautiful woman sitting on a fountain – don't let her be the death of you! It's a **statue of Loreley**, a mythical German dame. In times gone by she'd sit on a rock

by the river Rhine, combing her hair and singing mournful melodies. River sailors would be so distracted by her singing that they'd come a kipper on the rocks and meet watery graves.

Temple to the stage

Theatre-buffs should gravitate towards the **Deutsches Theater Museum** (German Theatre Museum), on the northern side of the arcade.

Its quirky collection of costumes, mask and stage props spans centuries of stage shows in Germany, Austria and Switzerland. There's also a museum archive and library with hundreds of thousands of manuscripts, reviews, and other theatre-related documents. The museum is actually a great place to find out what's happening in Munich's theatre scene.

Seat of power

Bavaria's political chiefs hang their hats at the **Staatskanzlei** (State Chancellery), to the Hofgarten's east. It's nicknamed the "Bavarian Kremlin" and has an impressive 200m-long glass façade. It's essentially an office building where new laws are drafted and the nitty gritty of running a state goes on. The classical middle section is what's left of the old Royal Bavarian Army Museum, which occupied the site before the Chancellery was finished in 1992. The **Bavarian Parliament** (Maximilianeum) is a fair hike away, at the eastern end of Maximilian Strasse.

The details: Location Odeonsplatz. The Deutsches Theater Museum is at Galerie Strasse 4a. **Phone** Museum 089 21 06 91 28 **Open** The museum is open Tuesday to Sunday 10am to 4pm **Cost** The Hofgarten is free. The museum is €4, concession €3 **Directions** Take U-Bahn No. 3, 4, 5 or 6 to Odeonsplatz and stroll through the gateway on the eastern side of the square.

Did you know?

The Hofgarten is referenced in T.S. Eliot's classic poem *The Wasteland*?

"With a shower of rain; we stopped in the colonnade,

And went on in sunlight, into the Hofgarten,
And drank coffee, and talked for an hour.

Bin gar keine Russin, stamm' aus Litauen, echt deutsch."

Egyptian Art Museum (Staatliche Sammlung für Ägyptische Kunst)

A trove of treasures from the Kingdom of the Nile is located around the back of the Residenz, facing the Hofgarten. The lion's share was picked up by German explorers dispatched from the 16th century onwards.

It's amazing to think about just how early Egyptian society flourished. They had a fully functioning kingdom over 5000 years ago, when Munich was just a twinkle in some barbarian's eye.

They lived in d'Nile

There are mummies, amulets and statues galore as well as everyday items such as pottery and ancient textiles. The collection spans the Egyptian civilization from the Early, Middle and Late kingdoms through to the Hellenistic, Roman and Coptic (Egyptian Christian) eras. There's lots of fascinating stuff to be learned here, from how the ancient Egyptians handled death to how they applied makeup and brewed the world's first beer.

A children's education program is available in English.

It includes a "treasure hunt" where kids have to explore the museum and answer questions based on the artefacts.

In 2013 curators plan to move the collection to a new building opposite the Alte Pinakothek in Munich's Art District.

The details: Location Hofgarten Strasse, just off Odeonsplatz. Phone 089 29 85 46

Website www.aegyptisches-museum-muenchen.de **Open** Tuesday 9am to 9pm, Wednesday to Friday 9am to 5pm, Saturday and Sunday 10am to 5pm. Mondays closed.

Cost €5, concession €4, kids up to 16 free. **Directions** Take U-Bahn No. 3, 4, 5 or 6 to Odeonsplatz and duck through the archway on the eastern side. The museum is on your left!

Around Odeonsplatz – The northern part of the Old City

Feldherrnhalle (Field Marshalls' Hall)

Two whopping lions guard the entrance to Feldherrnhalle (1841-1844). If you've ever been to Florence this one may ring a bell. The hall was designed with the Tuscan capital's Loggia dei Lanza in mind. Like many of the buildings around it the Feldherrnhalle was commissioned by King Ludwig I as the southern bookend to Ludwig Strasse, the grand

boulevard he hoped would rival Paris' Avenue des Champs Élysées. Those who preferred not to ducked down an alleyway behind Odeonsplatz then dubbed **Drückebergasse** (Dodgers' Alley).

Famous failures

I find the choice of statues in the hall mildly baffling. The hall was built to honour Bavarian generals but holds statues of a pair of military whack-jobs. On the left we have Johann von Tilly (1559-1623) commander of the Catholic League who was known for brutality. He surrendered Munich to Protestant Swedish forces during the Thirty Years War. And he wasn't even from Bavaria.

On the right is Karl Phillip von Wrede (1767-1838) who wasn't a general, but a lawyer and had a habit showing up to late to the few battles he was ever invited to. Between them at the back is a memorial for the Bavarian army, added by Prince Regent Lutipold in 1892.

Cats with a view

Stand on the steps in between the lions for a great view all the way down Ludwig/Lutipold Strasse. There's an equestrian statue of King Ludwig I a few hundred metres up on the left. Further up is the **Geschwister Scholl Platz**, a fountain-crowned square and the heart of Munich's main uni. The two towers to the right mark the **Ludwigskirche**.

The **Siegestor** triumphal arch is dead centre and beyond you can make out the outline of Munich's tallest skyscraper (146m) **Uptown München**.

I don't like what the Feldherrnhalle stands for - to me it just seems to have been built to glorify war. I find the Italianate structure pretty cool though and it's just impossible to imagine Odeonsplatz without it.

The details: Location Odeonsplatz **Directions** Take U-Bahn No. 3, 4, 5 or 6 to Odeonsplatz.

Theatinerkirche St Cajetan

I like mustard on my sausages, my chips and my toasted ham and cheese sandwiches. After seeing the Theatinerkirche, I like it on my churches too. This magnificent late-rococo designed church defines Odeonsplatz and brings a great deal of Italian flair.

This has got to be my favourite church in the city, just for the incredible detail of the interior and the sheer presence it has on the space around it.

With thanks to above

Prince Elector Ferdinand Maria and his wife Henriette Adelaide funded the church as thanks to the big guy upstairs for giving them a son, heir to the throne Max Emmanuel. Work started shortly after he arrived in 1662 and when completed in 1690 the church became the headquarters of the Italian Order of Theatiner monks.

Inside it's a wash of white, but unlike the similarly pale Frauenkirche here there's an explosion of intricate Rococo decoration. Angels, stucco flourishes and flowers garnish the walls in stark contrast to the deep black pulpit.

Over and under the altar

The high altar holds a fresco from Caspar de Crayer (1646) showing an enthroned Mother Mary above an assortment of babies and holy men. Leading luminaries of Bavaria's ruling Wittelsbach clan are buried underneath in the Fürstengruft (Royal crypt). Among them are Prince Elector Karl Theodor, King Max II, King Otto of Greece and Crown Prince Rupprecht.

Birth and rebirth

Italian architects Aostino Barelli, Enrico Zuccalli and Munich rococo master Francois de Cuvillies all had hands in designing the church. Zucalli added the twin 70m towers almost as an afterthought to complement the green dome of the cupola, which rises above the church's "crossing" section in the middle. Most of the church (including the high altar) was destroyed in World War Two bombing and rebuilt through the 1950s.

The details: Location Theatiner Strasse 22 **Phone** 089 2 10 69 60 **Directions** Take U-Bahn No. 3, 4, 5 or 6 to Odeonsplatz.

Literaturhaus

If you're an author, journalist, writer or just a very keen bookworm, here's the place in Munich you may feel most at home. Munich's House of Literature was opened in 1997 and is the perfect place for a torrid debate about anything from Socrates to Satre to Stephen King.

The ground floor café has exhibitions. Upstairs there's a program of book readings from published authors, concerts, workshops, discussions and comic conventions.

Conveniently close at Salvatorplatz 2 is an English-language branch of the Hugendubel bookstore chain.

Cappuccino with the "Lederhosen narrator"

The buildings' showpiece café honours vivacious Munich author Oskar Maria Graf (1894-1967). Graf was one of many German artists who went into voluntary exile during the Third

Reich. He moved to New York in 1938 and lived there the rest of his life, but he never gave up his Bavarian identity. He was vehemently anti-Hitler and took offence when his works were not included in the Nazi book burnings of the 1930s, protesting "Burn me!" in a Viennese newspaper. Graf was known as the "Lederhosen narrator" who wrote prolifically, wore leather shorts and emptied more than his fair share of beer steins. The cafe, **Brassiere OskarMaria**, features a digital installation saluting its namesake, put together by American artist Jenny Holzer.

The tableware, napkins and coasters bear the lively wordsmith's quips including *Mehr Erotik, bitte!* – More erotica, please!, *Mehr Sexualität, die Herrschaften!* – More Sexuality, Gentlemen!, and *Friß nur! Mensch, friß und sauf! Wir hängen sowieso schon halb am Galgen* – Eat, man! Eat and drink! We're practically hanging in the gallows already anyway.

The café is great for whiling away rainy days. The mezzanine level is the place to sit unobtrusively with a coffee and your favourite book.

I think it's great that Munich has an institution like the Literaturhaus. After all, this city has one of Europe's biggest publishing industries, don't you know! There is a fine view of Munich's mustard-yellow Theatinerkirche church from the top floor.

The details: Location Salvatorplatz 1 **Phone** 089 2 91 93 40, Brassiere OskarMaria 089 29 19 60 29 **Website** www.literaturhaus-muenchen.de, www.oskarmaria.com

Cost Some events are free, some you have to buy tickets for. Check the website. **Open** Monday to Friday 11am to 7pm, weekends 10am to 6pm, Brassiere OskarMaria Monday to Saturday 10am to 1am, Sundays and holidays 10am to 7pm. **Directions** Take U-Bahn No. 3, 4, 5 or 6 to Odeonsplatz then duck down Salvator Strasse past the Feldherrnhalle to your right. The Literaturhaus is on your right after the first intersection.

Other landmarks – The northern part of the Old City

Alter Hof

The Alter Hof (meaning "Old Court") was Munich's first royal residence and now renown for tall monkey tales. It was built in 1255 by Ludwig the Stern, an early patriarch of the Wittelsbach dynasty which ruled Bavaria for 700 years.

Another namesake, this one known as Ludwig the Bavarian, was in charge from 1328 to 1347. He ruled the whole Holy Roman Empire from the Hof after he became Kaiser

(Emperor) in 1328. The Hof continued to be the main royal seat for 150 years until Wittelsbachs moved their powerbase to the nearby Residenz in 1474.

You can't tour the Alter Hof - it's been used for government administration since the 1800s - but you can walk through the courtyard. In summer it's a scene for open-air concerts and theatre performances.

Monkey business

On the southern side of the courtyard you'll see a neo-gothic bay window known as the "Monkey Tower". There are various stories about how it got its name, usually revolving around the baby Ludwig the Bavarian and an excitable primate.

One version says the monkey was a royal pet and saved the future Kaiser from a berserker pig that careered into the room.

Another story says the monkey kidnapped Ludwig and spirited him up into the window. His nanny apparently had to talk and tempt the monkey down with bananas. How these tales came about is anyone's guess as the windows in question didn't even exist in Ludwig's time.

The details: Location Burg Strasse 8 **Directions** Take any S-Bahn or U-Bahn 3 or 6 to Marienplatz, then walk around to the right of the Neues Rathaus. It's then a quick walk down Altenhof Strasse on your right.

Nationaltheater (National Theatre)

Munich's imposing high altar to opera dominates Max-Joseph-Platz like Pavarotti dominated a tuxedo. It's grand, Greek, has Corinthian columns out front and can seat more than 2000 culture vultures. On the *Platz* itself there's a statue of theatre founder King Max Joseph I. The national theatre was built 1811 to 1818 and hosted premier performances of many of Richard Wagner's operas including the mythological "Tristan und Isolde" in 1865 and "The Valkyrie" in 1870. This was during the reign of Wagner mega-fan and financier King Ludwig II.



The Nationaltheater.

The theatre is the epicentre of Munich's annual Opera Festival in July. Call ahead or see the website for tickets to performances or theatre tours.

The details: Location Max-Joseph-Platz 2 **Website** www.bayerische.staatsoper.de

Directions Take U-Bahn No. 3, 4, 5 or 6 to Odeonsplatz and walk south past the Residenz, or make your way to Marienplatz and walk north for 5min.

Attractions – The Art Precinct

Munich's artistic treasures rival Paris or London – no kidding. The greatest concentration of museums and art galleries is in the Kunstareal in the Maxvorstadt, just north of the Main Train Station. King Ludwig I first ticked the public's artistic senses here.

He envisaged the area as a "forum of art", building Greek temple style museums on Königsplatz and two art galleries, the Pinakotheks, nearby.

A third, the **Pinakothek der Moderne**, was added in 2002 to pick up where Ludwig left off. Another highlight is the **Lenbachhaus Art Gallery**, in a brilliant mustard-yellow villa featuring artists from the edgy *Blaue Reiter* group which stirred up sensibilities from 1911 to 1914.

Top Priority! – The Art Precinct

Königsplatz

Tribute to Athens, Nazi parade ground, massive car park, summer concert turf. Munich's grand Königsplatz has played many roles. Stepping onto this huge, grassy square I can't help but feel just a wee bit too small.

It's anchored by three classical buildings:

The **Propyläen**, a symbolic entrance, the

Antikensammlungen (State Antiques

Collection) and the **Glyptothek** (an ancient Greek and Roman sculpture collection).

Original idea

King Ludwig I said he wouldn't rest until Munich looked like Athens, and with Königsplatz he pretty much got his wish. His favourite architect Leo von Klenze designed the space in



1812 to look like an ancient Greek square, a “forum of art” to compliment the “forum of science” on Ludwig Strasse.

Gateway to the future

The Propyläen (built 1846-1862) archway was meant to connect the Old Town with a new passage of development leading to Nymphenburg Palace. It was modelled and named after a similar structure at Athens’ Acropolis.

Above its Doric columns is a relief showing Greece’s war of independence against the Ottoman Empire.

Darker days

Hitler loved the monumentality of Königsplatz and renamed it the Akropolis Germaniae. He and architect Paul Ludwig Troost had it transformed into a parade ground for goose-stepping soldiers. Trees were cut down, granite pavement was laid and a pair of “temples of honour” was built to house the Nazis killed in a failed coup on Odeonsplatz known as the “Beer Hall Putsch”. The temples were blown up after the war as part of de-Nazification.

The square was used as a car park for decades after the war, and was eventually grassed over restored to King Ludwig’s original vision. Now it’s a dramatic stage for outdoor opera and theatre performances in summer.

Traces of a painful past

The only Third Reich traces left is the pair of almost identical buildings on the eastern side of the square.

Their harsh edifices give you an idea as to what the Nazis wanted to do with Munich. On the left is the former *Führerbau* (Führer’s Building), which served as Hitler’s Munich headquarters.



The former "Führerbau", now a music college.

This was where British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain wrote himself into history books as the biggest appeaser of all time by signing the “Munich Agreement” in 1938.

The so-called “peace accord” paved the way for the German invasion of the Czechoslovakian Sudetenland and the outbreak of World War II. The building is now the *Hochschule für Musik* (College of Music).

Drawings together

On the right is a former Nazi administration building that now houses the Staatliche Graphische Sammlung (Bavarian Collection of Graphic Arts). It's open to the public. Inside are over 400 000 printed and handmade drawings going back 500 years including works by Vincent van Gogh and Raffaello Santi.

The details: Directions Königsplatz is a 10-minute walk north of the Hauptbahnhof along Luisen Strasse.

Neue Pinakothek

This is my favourite of Munich's three big art galleries (Pinakotheks). Inside is a collection of masterful European paintings from the 18th and 19th centuries, many collected by King Ludwig I. The works are housed in a post-modern building (1981) built to replace the original gallery (built 1853) which was destroyed in the Second World War.

Tip: Watch the shoes!

Try and avoid wearing sneakers at the Neue Pinakothek. They squeak like a pair of pregnant mice on the museum's parquet floors. I learned this lesson the hard and embarrassing way.

It's impossible to list everything on display here, and since viewing art is a subjective thing I'd like to take you through what stood out for me on a tour of the Neue Pinakothek.

King and countries

One of the first gems I came to was Friedrich Overbeck's *Italia and Germania* (1828) in **Room 4**, with two European nations take serene female forms.

They were locked in a loving little embrace that warmed my heart and made me a tad melancholy at the same time.

Franz Ludwig Catel's *Country Festival near Pozzouli* (1823) cheered me up no end in **Room 5**, maybe because I can relate to country bumpkins dancing like idiots. King Ludwig I himself keeps watch over **Room 8** from the seminal portrait of him in his coronation robes by Joseph Stieler (1826).

Huge scopes and sea creatures

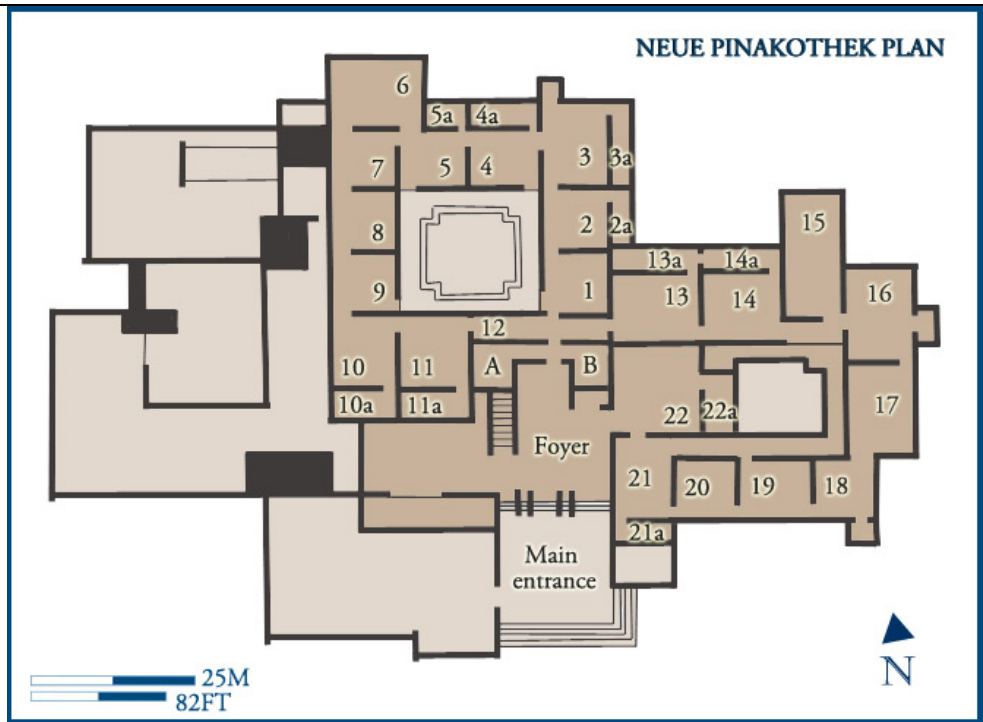
Paintings which rival squash courts for size are what you'll find in **Room 13**, including Wilhelm von Kaulbach's epic *Destruction of Jerusalem by Titus* (1846). The centrepiece of

Destination Munich and Bavaria ~ 91 ~

Neue Pinakothek

plan key

A, B.
 Reconstruction
 1, 2. Art around
 1800
 2. Painting in
 Munich around
 1800
 3. English
 painting from
 Hogarth to
 Turner
 3a. English and
 French Painting
 around 1800
 4, 4a. German
 artists in Rome
 5. Landscape
 Painting in Rome



5a. Views of Rome	11, 11a. French Painting from Romanticism to Realism	15. Hans von Marées
6. Greek Landscapes	12. Genre and Landscape Painting from the collection of Ludwig I.	16. Arnold Böcklin, Anselm Feuerbach, Hans Thoma
7, 8. Art at the Court of Ludwig I	13. Carl Theodor von Piloty and History Painting	17. Adolph von Menzel and German Realists
9. Early Romantic Art in Dresden and Berlin	13a. Painting in the period of industrial expansion in Germany from 1871 on	18. Edouard Manet and French Impressionism
10, 10a. Biedermeier and Early Realism	14. Landscape painting of the Munich and Hague School and masterpieces by the Leibl Circle	19. Vincent van Gogh, Paul Gauguin, Paul Sérusier
	14a. Wilhelm Leibl, Carl Schuch, Wilhelm Trübner, Adolf Hölzel	20. Post-impressionism and Symbolist Landscape painting
		21. Paul Cézanne and Auguste Rodin
		21a. Symbolist Painting
		22. The New Century
		22a. The New Style

Room 16 is Arnold Böcklin's darkly seductive *Playing in the Waves* (1883), showing ocean-going brutes making off with fair maidens amid a stormy sea.

Vincent and friends

Room 18 bears witness to French impressionists including Edouard Manet, whose bourgeois *Luncheon in the Studio* (1868) is a major draw card. Vincent van Gogh's immortal *Still Life: Vase with Twelve Sunflowers* (1888) hangs in Room 19 alongside more works from the man who cut off his ear to spite his face.

Late impressionists like Claude Monet are at home in **Room 20**. This was the group of painters crafting their work from an intricate series of dots. Monet's *Water-Lilies* (1915)

still puts bums on seats and Edvard Munch's *Woman in Red Dress (Street in Aasgaardstrand)* from 1903 had me yearning for the Dutch countryside.

Steeds and sinful scenes

I was impressed by the power of Walter Crane's *The Steeds of Neptune* (1892) in **Room 21a**, showing the ocean god crashing to shore atop a wave of storming horses. Also here is Ludwig von Hofmann's *Notturmo* (1877), with a trio of luscious ladies languishing by a stream. More famous, but less gratifying is the version of Franz von Stuck's *Die Sünde* (The Sin) (1912) in **Room 22a** showing a moody young lady exposing her milky white flesh wreathed in a black serpent. Back in the day she caused more commotion than Janet Jackson's tit bearing at the 2004 Super Bowl, but I find her strangely shallow and overrated. Nice frame though.

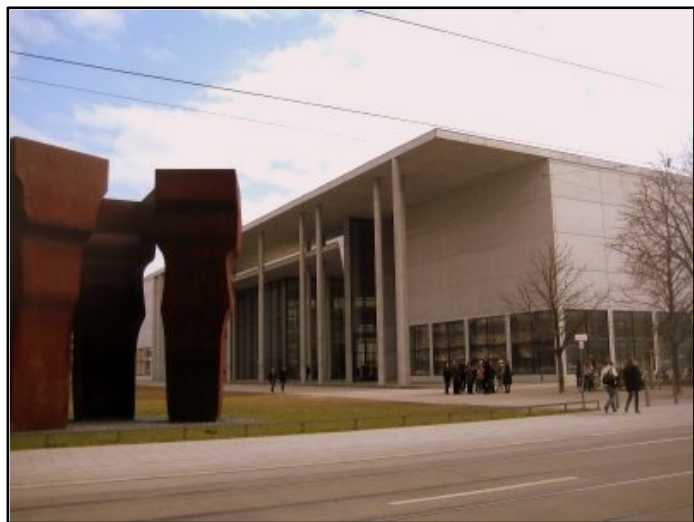
About the last you see is Ferdinand Hodler's *Tired of Life* (1892), with its row of depressed old gents reflecting how your feet may be feeling after your tour.

The Details: Location Barer Strasse 29 **Phone** 089 23 80 51 95 **Website** www.neue-pinakothek.de **Cost** €7, concession €5 including audio guide, Sundays €1 **Open** Daily 10am to 6pm, Wednesdays to 8pm, closed Tuesdays.

Directions Take U-Bahn No. 2 to Theresienstrasse and walk west two blocks. By tram take No. 27 from Karlsplatz-Stachus to the stop Pinakothek. Or you can take the "Museum Bus" line No. 100 from the Hauptbahnhof (Main Train Station).

Pinakothek der Moderne

This is where the fresh, the edgy, the controversial and the downright confusing artworks come to play. The Pinakothek der Moderne (built in 2002) is the newest and brashest of Munich's three big art galleries. Although the building doesn't look like much from the outside its circular floor plan and minimalist design will have you darting around like you're in a post-modern Alice in Wonderland.



There are four focus areas: Art, Architecture, Design and Works on paper, but staff are quick to point out that nothing here is static. "Permanent" exhibitions often make way for visiting shows relegating renowned works to the back rooms. That said, here's a rundown of works regularly featured, and an account of what I saw when I visited.

Impressions

I know very little about art, so forgive me if my impressions come over as a little naïve. I first ran into the Classical Modernism collection of paintings, on the first floor to the right of the entrance.

The first room hosted Sofie and Emanuel Fohn's bold bunch of expressionist works. I liked the bright, unashamed use of colour in these paintings, as if each one is celebrating the joy of life along with telling another story. My favourite was *Tanz um das Goldene Kalb* (Dance around the golden calf) by expressionist Emule Nolde, 1910, with its group of young women dancing joyously.

Baleful dames

I found myself wondering whether to laugh or cry at Heinrich Maria's *Davinghausen's Dirde* (1921). Say what you will, she sure looks happy to see him! She was in a room full of off-beat females including Alexander Kandolt's divinely despondent and weighty lady in *Halbakt* (1912).

Curiouser and curiouser

Then there were some surrealist and post-modern works, which frankly gets a bit too much for me. I found Georg Baselitz's neo-expressionistic *Der Trommler*, with a black mass washing over a solitary yellow figure, a bit wacked out.

Joseph Beay left me similarly confused with his *End of the 20th Century* in **Room 20**. It's a bunch of busted basalt columns thrown around an empty white room. I guessed it was supposed to represent the end of civilization as we know it, but really, what's up with that? Just what was Mr Beay smoking? And how, oh how, do I get mine? I was disappointed to find the works of Andy Worhol, Pablo Picasso and others were off the shelves due to a visiting collection of modern German and American art and headed down to the design section.

Art in the everyday

The design exhibit at the Pinakothek der Moderne starts at the base of board staircase to the right of the entrance, which opens up into a huge viewing room.

What's on show?

An eclectic mix of design icons on an enormous Ikea-style bookshelf, of course. There's a red-lip sofa, coffee machines, a toboggan, kitchen chairs and a wooden car chassis.

I think it's there to make you realise that everyday objects are also art, just in the mass-produced manner. These are the designs that defined generations, folks, so it's time to ante up and pay a little tribute.

Designs that can "move" you

On special display down here is an old Panda, a beat-up Italian auto icon. It's early eighties chick and the child of "Car Designer of the Century" Giorgetto Giugiaro.

He started the 'folded paper' era which introduced straight lines to cars and continues today in the form of my family's old Volvo. A sign said this particular model was driven all the way from Sardinia, which might explain how it got so rusty. It is an island, after all.

There are more magic motors in the next room, among them early model Porches, motorbikes, and a silver 1937 Tantra from the Czech Republic with a wicked shark's fin tail.

A cornucopia of classics

I moved onto the later-day laptops, Japanese robot dogs and Macs PCs so bulky and ancient they'd give today's iPad owners the shivers. There are all kinds of cool designs here, from desktop fans and record players, to accordion-style retractable tables, bent-wooden armchairs and sneakers. Then I found the jewellery another level down.

Among the temporary exhibitions I saw was a big pool of drawings borrowed from New York's Morgan Library and Museum. Honestly, it failed to float my boat. Ditto for the only mildly moving Multiple Cities display in the architecture section. This consisted of models, drawings, maps and photographs of varying cities concepts, including 'Destroyed Cities', 'Patchwork Cities' 'Cities on the Move' and 'Megacities'.

Final verdict

Overall, an interesting collection, and well worth a few hours of your time, especially if you're in town on a Sunday when admission is next to nothing. I've never toured New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art or but I imagine it's akin to Munich's Pinakothek der Moderne. The fact they change displays every so often is a good reason to keep coming back.

The details:

Location Barer Strasse 40 **Phone** 089 23 80 52 60

Website www.pinakothek-der-moderne.de, www.die-neue-sammlung.de (current exhibition program details)

Cost €10, concession €7 including audio guide, Sundays €1 (but some special exhibitions have an additional admission fee). **Open** Daily 10am to 6pm, Thursday to 8pm, closed Monday **Directions** Take tram 27 from Karlsplatz-Stachus to the stop Pinakothek. Or you can take the “Museum Bus” line No. 100 from the Hauptbahnhof (Main Train Station).

More art and sculpture galleries – The Art Precinct

Antikensammlungen

Going into museums like this gives me a sense of solidarity. Browsing its treasures, like a fourth century Roman goblet made of network glass, makes me think the ancients weren't that different from us after all.

The reason being that the glass, found in Cologne, bears the Latin inscription “Bibe Multis Annis” or “drink many more years!”. I think I had the same thing written on a stubby holder at uni.

Ancient treasures

The Antikensammlungen holds thousands of pieces of ancient jewellery, gold, silver, glass and bronze work and one of the world's best collections of ancient Greek ceramics besides. There are hoards of old vases depicting scenes of battle and daily life from over 2000 years ago. Exhibits stem from the ancient Etruscan, Roman and Greek regimes. The collection is housed in a Greek temple style building on the south side of Königsplatz, directly opposite the Glyptothek.

Must-sees

You'll find that Roman goblet downstairs. Other draw cards include a bronze statue from northern Greece called the “Girl from Beroia” (400BC) and a golden funeral garland from the Italian town of Armento (400BC).

The details: Location Königsplatz 1 **Phone** 089 59 83 59

Website www.antike-am-koenigsplatz.mwn.de **Open** Tuesday to Sunday 10am to 5pm, Wednesday till 8pm **Cost** €3.50, concession €2.50, Sundays €1 **Directions** Take U-Bahn No. 2 to Königsplatz. Or you can take the “Museum Bus” line No. 100 from the Hauptbahnhof.

Glyptothek

“What we do in life will echo throughout eternity!” This quote doesn’t apply to everyone perhaps, but Russell Crowe’s character Maximus could have had Munich’s Glyptothek in mind when he shouted those words at the start of *Gladiator*. Talk about old. Some of the treasures here go back over 2,500 years...and still scrub up nicely today.

Tomb raiders

The Greek-style Glyptothek blocks up the northern side of Königsplatz. It was built for booty brought back by King Ludwig I’s band of tomb raiders who were out digging up Italy and Greece as far back as 1811.

Many of the most famous finds came from the Aphaia Temple (500BC), on the Greek island of Gai. Munich’s oldest museum Master Builder Leo von Klenze built the Glyptothek 1816 to 1830 from designs by Karl von Fischer. It houses one of Europe’s most important sculpture collection – the name stems from the Greek word *Glyptik*, meaning sculptor. The tympanum (that triangle section outside above the Corinthian columns) shows the goddess Athene surrounded by artists.

Do a lap

Turn left at the lobby to start your circuit of the exhibition halls arranged around a central courtyard. The collection is in chronological order, starting with Greek statues of Homer and youthful figures in **Hall I**.

A museum highlight is the marble *Barbarini Faun* statue (220bc) in **Hall II**. This erotic piece was taken from Rome’s Barbarini Palace. Also here is an antique copy of the Medusa Rondanini.

In **Hall III** you’ll find the head of the goddess of heroic endeavour Athene and a statue of the Homeric warrior Diomedes. **Hall IV** contains a tomb relief of the beautiful courtesan Mnesarete and an ancient woman’s tomb.

Hall V has a statue of the Greek goddess of peace Eirene, and there are more tomb reliefs in **Hall VI**.

Hall VII features gables from the Aphaia Temple showing the second siege of Troy, and **Hall VIII** has a sphinx from the roof of the temple.

There are more Aphaia Temple gables in **Hall IX**, these ones showing the first siege of Troy. **Hall X** is home to the orator Demosthenes, an ancient copy of an Aphrodite’s head and a bust of Alexander the Great looking like he wants to go and sow his wild oats somewhere.

Hall XI holds a bust of Roman super-Caesar Augustus, a relief showing the marriage of Poseidon, and a floor mosaic from a Roman villa in Sentinum. **Hall XII** features a colossal statue of the god Apollo, called the “Apollo Barberini”, and a statue of the Emperor Domitian

Hall XIII has antique copies of Greek statues, including the “Boy with the Goose” and some Roman sarcophaguses.

Drama central

The central courtyard has a café and bronze statue of Emperor Hadrian of British wall-building fame. It's a cute setting for Greek tragedies in summer, and bread and wine are laid on at performances. Shows start at 8pm and tickets can be bought an hour beforehand. Call 3 00 30 13 for more details.

The details: Location Königsplatz 3 **Phone** 089 28 61 00

Website www.glyptothek.de, www.antike-am-koenigsplatz.mwn.de **Cost** €3.50, concession €2.50, Sundays €1 **Open** Tuesday to Sunday 10am to 5pm, Thursday till 8pm **Directions** Take U-Bahn No. 2 or 8 to Königsplatz.

Alte Pinakothek

If you're not a serious art fiend, I recommend giving this one a miss in favour of Munich's two other big art galleries, the Neue Pinakothek and the Pinakothek der Moderne.

The paintings are a tad dull for those without an untrained eye and it's simply not as accessible as the other collections. If you do, however, prefer your Dürriers and van der Weydens to your Manets and van Goghs you'll have a field day.

A king's heart for art

Hailed as one of the world's greatest collections of European “Old Masters”, the Alte Pinakothek's collection spans the 14th to the 18th centuries.

Most were collected by the classics-loving King Ludwig I, who built the gallery from 1826 to 1836. The building was pretty much bombed to smithereens in World War Two and there's an interesting photo-essay near the lobby showing the damage and subsequent rebuild.

Highlights of the collection

- *Alexanderschlacht* (The Battle of Alexander at Issus), 1529, Albrecht Altdorfer. German Altdorfer's signature work is a turbulent battle/landscape showing Alexander the Great's 333BC victory over Darius III of Persia.

Destination Munich and Bavaria ~ 98 ~

It's thought to reflect the age-old conflict of east versus west, which at the time meant Europe's struggles with the Ottoman Empire (modern Turkey).

- *Selbsbildnis* (Self-Portrait), 1500, Albrecht Dürer. German Dürer's direct, full-frontal self-portrait stirred critics' tempers with its likeness to a Christ-depiction. An

inscription over Dürer's shoulder reads, in Latin, "I Albrecht Dürer of Nuremburg portrayed myself in paint aged 28 years".

- *Die Vier Apostel* (The Four Apostles), 1526, Albrecht Dürer. Dürer's last master work depicts apostles John, St Peter, St Mark and St Paul on a larger-than-life scale.
- *Madonna mit Kind* (Madonna with Child), 1614, Hendrick Goltzius. An example of this Dutch painter's "exuberant", Michelangelo-inspired religious works.

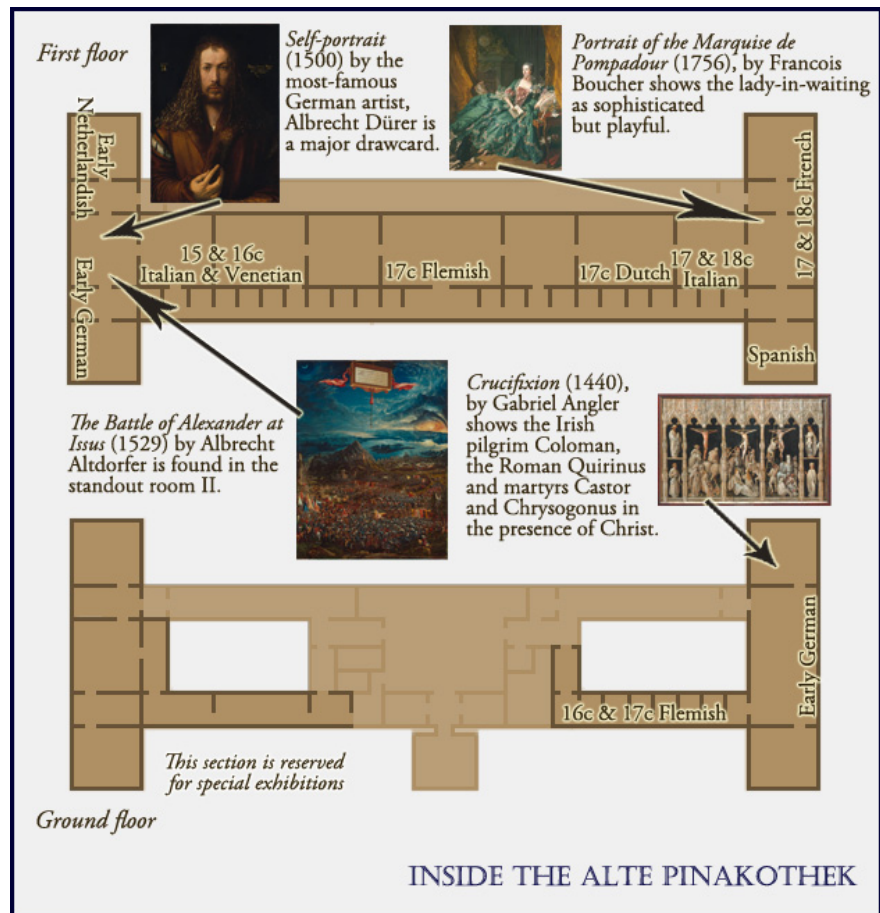
Works are grouped into national schools:

German painting: The biggest section, works here are late Gothic, Renaissance or Mannerist. Artists represented include Albrecht Dürer, Albrecht Altdorfer, Matthias Grünewald and Adam Elsheimer.

Netherlandish Painting: The highlight here is Rogier van der Weyden's *Adoration of the Magi* from 1455. Other artists include Hieronymus Bosch and Jan Gossaert.

Dutch Painting: Paintings from the golden age of Dutch art in the 17th century include Rembrandt's "Passion" scenes and a self-portrait of artist Carel Fabritius.

Flemish Painting: Baroque works of artists like Peter Paul Rubens and Isabella Brandt take centre stage here.



Italian Painting: Giotto's *Last Supper*, Leonardo da Vinci's *Madonna with Child* and Raphael's *Madonna dei Tempi* are among the standouts in the collection of Italian works.

French Painting: Claude Lorrain's *Banishment of Hagar* and Jean-Baptiste Greuze's *Grievance of Time* are among the gallery's small collection of French artworks.

Spanish Painting: A relatively minor part of the collection, El Greco's *Disrobing of Christ* heads up this section.

The details: Location The Alte Pinakothek is at Barer Strasse 27 in Munich's Art District (Kunstareal). **Phone** 089 23 80 52 16 **Website** www.alte-pinakothek.de **Cost** Cost €7, concession €5, price includes an audio guide, all tickets are €1 on Sunday but an audio guide is €6 extra. **Open** Tuesday 10am to 8pm, Wednesday to Sunday 10am to 6pm, closed Monday. **Directions** Take U-Bahn No. 2 to Theresienstrasse and walk west two blocks. By tram take No. 27 from Karlsplatz-Stachus to the stop Pinakothek. Or you can take the "Museum Bus" line No. 100 from the Hauptbahnhof (Main Train Station).

Staatliche Graphische Sammlung

This is the Bavarian Collection of Graphic Arts. This old Nazi-era administration building houses drawings by masters including Vincent van Gogh, Paul Cezanne, Michelangelo and Leonardo da Vinci.

They're part of 400 000-piece collection of printed and handmade drawings going back half a millennium. The focus is on centuries-old German and Dutch works, German drawings from the 19th century, Italian Renaissance drawings and international graphic works from the 20th century to today. The centre has limited exhibitions of the works (most of the pieces can be viewed on request) and further temporary exhibitions are to be seen at the Neue Pinakothek.

The collection is moving to the Pinakothek der Moderne on Barer Strasse after the second phase of its construction is finished.

The Details: Location Meiser Strasse 10. It's on the eastern side of Königsplatz. **Phone** 089 28 92 76 50 **Website** www.sgsm.eu **Open** The study hall is open Tuesday and Wednesday from 10am to 1pm and 2pm to 5pm, Thursday from 10am to 1pm and 2pm to 6pm, Friday from 10am to 12.30pm. **Cost** Admission is free **Directions** A 10-minute walk north of the Hauptbahnhof along Luisen Strasse.

Other landmarks – The Art Precinct

Karolinenplatz

You'll know you're in the right place if you see a massive, Egyptian-style obelisk directly in the middle. This is Caroline's Square, a broad, circular "square" surrounded by grand houses and filled with flowers in the summer. It was modelled on Paris' Place de L'Étoile where the *Arc de Triomphe* stands.

Monument for the fallen

The 29m tall obelisk pays respects to 30,000 Bavarian troops who were part of Napoleon's ill-fated Russian conquest. It's made of metal plates from melted down Bavarian cannons and was designed by Leo von Klenze. The Amerikahaus, the USA's foot in the door of Munich's cultural life, is in the south-western corner.

The details: Location A short stroll south-east of Königsplatz, north of the Hauptbahnhof.

Amerikahaus

The USA's cultural link to Munich, this centre dishes out a full program for US visitors and expats wanting to stay connected with life across the Atlantic. Events include theatre performances, concerts and book readings by successful North American authors.

The centre holds monthly literary evenings, lectures on topics such as climate change, and election night parties. Changing exhibitions showcase photography and other artwork from the USA. A library stocks English-language books, magazines and videos.

The centre has regular info sessions and assessment tests for Germans wanting to study or work in the States. Check out the Amerikahaus website for a program of upcoming events.

The details: Location Karolinenplatz 3 **Phone** 089 05 52 53 70 **Website** www.amerikahaus.de **Open** The library and exhibitions are open Monday to Friday from 12pm to 5pm, Wednesdays to 8pm. **Cost** Free entry to the library and exhibitions, and



many other events are also free. **Directions** A short stroll south-east of Königsplatz, north of the Hauptbahnhof.

Museum Brandhorst

Munich's brash new art gallery has shaken things up like a James Bond martini. The Museum Brandhorst's striking painterly façade has made at least as much of an impression as the works contained within it, but that's no reason not to step inside. Just don't expect anything traditional here. Like its exterior the works within the Brandhorst are all about flights of fancy, experimentation and going against the grain.

What's behind the name?

Opened in 2009 at a cost of US\$64 million, this art gallery has a mega-rich lover of modern art to thank for its existence: Annette Brandhorst. She was heir to the Henkel business empire which made billions selling the likes of Persil soap powder and Schwarzkopf hair care goods. Brandhorst's husband, Udo Fritz-Hermann, donated her collection to the state of Bavaria in 1999, with the condition the government provided a fitting home of the works.

Highlights of the collection:

- American artist **Cy Twombly** is the star of the show. The Brandhorst has over 60 of Twombly's works including the monumentally confusing *Lepanto*, a 12-part splurge of colour housed in its own room 12-sided room. Twombly rose to prominence in Bavaria when his works were shown here during the 1972 Olympics.
- **Andy Warhol** – The Brandhorst has one of the largest Warhol collections in Europe with over 100 of his works. Crowd favourites are his "Self-Portrait" (1986) and "Natalie Wood" (1962).
- **Waste (Twice)** – British artist **Damien Hirst** is no stranger to controversy. He has encased a dead shark in formaldehyde and created a skull dripping with jewels – practically everyone has an opinion on his work. Hirst's contribution at the Brandhorst is somewhat tame in comparison: *Waste (Twice)* (1994) comprises two steel and glass cabinets brimming with medical waste.

Other artists featured include the "magician of silence" James Lee Byars, Bruce Nauman and Mike Kelley

The Details: Location Theresien Strasse 35 A, 80333 Munich **Phone** 089 2380 513 21

Website www.museum-brandhorst.de **Open** Tue-Sun 10am – 6pm (till 8pm on

Thursdays), closed Mondays. **Cost** €7, concession €5, Sunday admission €1, day-pass for Munich art museums €12 **Directions** Take the U-Bahn line 2 to Theresienstrasse and walk 10min east, or take the “museum bus” line No.100.

Justizpalast

Munich’s old “Palace of Justice” has archways, statues on the roof and a massive glass dome. Soaring above the perpetual traffic free-for-all of Karlsplatz (Stachus) it reminds you of another time, another Munich when classical elegance was admired and getting around meant a horse and buggy.



A teddy bear poses in front of the Justizpalast.

History and infamy

The neo-baroque structure was designed by Friedrich von Thiersch 1890-1897. This was Germany’s Golden Age; the Thirty Years’ War and Napoleonic Wars were ended, German scientists and businessmen were the world’s shrewdest and the middle class was booming. This era is remembered as the *Gründerzeit* or “Founder Epoch”, when Kaiser Wilhelm and Chancellor Bismarck gave Germany a formidable presence on the world stage.

Flash forward 50 years and we see a much different picture. In 1943 German armies were fighting an increasingly futile war to hold onto the newly conquered Nazi empire.

Dissenters to the regime were still uncommon in Germany, but they were there. *Die Weiße Rose* (The White Rose) was a group of political resisters operating in Munich. Three of the group’s central figures, siblings Hans and Sophie Scholl and Christoph Probst, were discovered and thrown before a court at the Justizpalast on 22 February. Just a few hours after the sham trial, they were beheaded.

Worth a visit?

Have a look inside the building if you want to see the impressive central atrium and duck up to courtroom 253, which houses a permanent exhibit about the White Rose trial.

The Justizpalast is still in use and known as the Bavarian Department of Justice and the District Court I.

Just behind it there’s a red stone building, the Neue Justizpalast (New Palace of Justice), which houses the Bavarian Constitutional Court and the Higher Regional Court.

The Details: Location Prielmayer Strasse 7. It's on the north-west corner of Karlsplatz (Stachus) **Cost** Free admission **Open** Weekdays 9am to 4pm.

Attractions – Schwabing and the Park

Schwabing is to Munich what Soho is to London or Greenwich Village is to New York – or at least it used to be.

Up to the 20th century it was little more than a village on Munich's northern outskirts where the well-to-do kept mansions within easy reach of the Englischer Garten. Then it became a haven for artists and the avant-garde and ground zero for Munich's

communist uprising of 1919. It's remained the city's most trendy address and despite a gradual gentrification that's pushed housing prices through the roof. The Ludwig-Maximilian University (LMU) and a thriving pub scene help to keep the area somewhat in the scope of the common folk.

For an ideal Munich afternoon stroll down the main drag of Ludwig/Leopold Strasse before sauntering over east to the Englischer Garten, the world's largest city park. Then hit the bars as the sun goes down for a few lively cocktails.



Top Priority! – Schwabing and the Park

Englischer Garten

I've whiled away some of my most contented hours here, lying shirt off besides a summer stream, listening to the sounds of nature and the chatter of other delinquent timewasters in the distance.

The Englischer Garten is a wild but well-tended green corridor that rolls right into the heart of Munich. The park is the world's largest within a city and a prime place to relax, stroll, ride, drink, flirt and about anything else you can think of.

This is where Munich locals come to relax when they couldn't be stuffed getting out of the city. They sit about in the sun, fry up on barbecues, ride bikes, horses and waves. They walk along the river, float along on rafts, dip in the streams and smell the roses.

Viva la Munich

Prince Elector Karl Theodor and his architect Friedrich Sckell created the Englischer Garten in 1789. This was the same year the French stormed the Bastille starting their revolution. The park's name comes from its wild style, imitating untamed expanses around England's grand estates. There are meadows, forests, streams, ponds and a big old lake in the middle.

The surf's that way

You're a soldier on assignment in Munich from your Californian hometown. You want to ride the breakers like you did in the old days but the nearest beach is a long, long way. What do you do? Find an artificial wave created by a bridge and surf on it, of course! Near a bridge over the Eisbach stream on Prinzregent Strasse there's surfing to be had. It's crazy but there are wave-catchers there all year round.

Munich-based GIs started the trend after World War Two. It's officially forbidden but police turn a blind eye these days. In stricter times surfers dug narrow trenches along the stream banks and buried their boards when the cops approached.

Danger in paradise

Head downstream to a series of small waterfalls where the young and the restless often jump in for a wild ride. In summers' heights it's carefree scene, but beware the currents if you decide to dive in. Swimmers can be swept into submerged rocks and now and then don't resurface.



If you don't feel safe stay on the dry side.

The "T" in Garten

On an island in the stream is the dainty **Japanische Teehaus** (Japanese Teahouse). Japan bequeathed the cottage to Munich for the 1972 Olympics.

You can join in a Japanese tea ceremony here from April to October on every second and fourth Saturday and Sunday of the month at 3pm, 4pm and 5pm. **Phone** 089 22 43 19

Chinese Cake

A helluva lot of toasting, drinking and dancing goes on around most wedding cakes and this one is no exception. The **Chinesischer Turm** (Chinese Tower) is the Englischer Garten's most-loved meeting point and looks like an "I do" dessert.

A Bavarian band blows out tunes from the upper tiers while dozens relax at benches in the beer garden below. The tower was built in 1790, burned down in 1944 at the height of World War Two and rebuilt 1951-1952. A popular Christmas market takes place here in December.

Roll-your-own temple

Like something out of a Greek tragedy is the **Monopteros**, built in 1838. It's a circular temple crowning an artificial hill and offers views all the way to the Old Town. This was a favourite spot to smoke a few joints in the 1960s, now it's just a nice place to gad about.

Yet more beer gardens

Munich's best-placed beer garden is the Seehaus on the edge of the park's lake. It pulls a lot of celebrities and the uppity breed they call "schicki-micki" here in Munich. A bit expensive but worth it. You can rent a paddle-boat and go for spin around the islands on the lake, called the Kleinhesselohsee.

If you really want to stretch your legs you can walk 3km up into the northern section of the Englischer Garten along quiet, leafy paths to the former royal hunting cottage of Aumeister. It's now more famous for pouring the amber fluid for those who have made the trek.

Nuding up

Many Germans like to get naked. Those in Munich often do it here, especially in the southern section between the Monopteros and the Schwabinger Bach stream.

Nudism has a long tradition in Germany and they call it *Frei Korper Kultur*, meaning Free Body Culture. There's a club that's even organised nude bike rides through the park. The sight of dozens of people starkers can be a tad cringe-worthy, particularly if they're oldies with more fault lines than the Pacific Rim.

On the other hand I think it's a tradition that radiates equality and acceptance, so don't be afraid to go with the flow.

The details: Location Englischer Garten, Schwabing **Open** It's a park, so it's open all the time, but technically it's forbidden to spend the night here. **Directions** Take the U-Bahn No. 3 or 6 to stations Universität, Giselastraße or Münchener Freiheit (depending on how far north you want to go!) then stroll west for a few hundred metres.

LMU (university)

Munich's grandest university makes me wish I was a student again. The uni (known as LMU) has a little under 45,000 students of which two thirds are women and over 6,000 are from other countries. This uni and Munich's technical uni, the Technische Universität München, consistently rank



in the top three of all German universities, making this a prestigious place to study indeed.

LMU was founded in Ingolstadt in 1472 and shifted to Munich in 1826. King Ludwig I wanted it in Munich to turn Ludwig Strasse into a "Forum of Science" to counterbalance the "Forum of Art" at Königsplatz.

The uni has a history of churning out Nobel Prize-winning geniuses, including quantum theory founder Max Planck (1858-1947) and chemist Gerhard Ertl (born 1937).

Act of defiance

Take a peek into the multi-storey atrium, through the main entrance on the eastern side of the square. The top tier is where student Sophie Scholl let a stack of anti-war flyers fly in 1943 while lectures were in session. She was arrested along with friend Christoph Probst and her brother Hans, who founded *Die Weiße Rose* (The White Rose) non-violent resistance group.

There's a bust of Sophie on the far side of the atrium. It was unveiled by actress Julia Jentsch on February 22, 2005, 62 years to the day after the trio were executed by a Nazi court.

Jentsch took the lead role in the most recent film adaptation of the story, *Sophie Scholl – Die letzten Tage* (the last days). Around to the right is a small museum, the **Denkstätte Weiße Rose** (Memorial of the White Rose). It contains letters, belongings and photos of the White

Rose members. Unfortunately most descriptions are only in German but it's definitely still worth a look.

Tribute

The square outside was named Geschwister-Scholl Platz in Hans and Sophies' honour. Its two bowl-shaped fountains are traditional student meeting spots. There's an outdoor café in the north-eastern corner where students sit to sip Segafredo and soak up the sun.

More to the story

I saw *Sophie Scholl – The last days* in a Bangkok cinema shortly before moving to Germany in 2005. I'm not ashamed to admit it was one of the few movies where I've actually shed a tear. The story of this small group of individuals stood up for what they knew was right despite a brutal and seemingly universal opposition is deeply moving. I hope the renamed Platz and reminders of the White Rose always remind people that even if you can't succeed in ending war and tyranny, the very act of resisting is still worth a hell of a lot.

The details: Location Geschwister-Scholl-Platz 1 **Phone** 089 2 18 00, White Rose museum 089 21 80 30 53 **Website** www.bayerische.staatsoper.de **Open** White Rose Museum 10am to 4pm **Cost** Free admission **Directions** Take U-Bahn No. 3, 4, 5 or 6 to Odeonsplatz and walk south past the Residenz, or make your way to Marienplatz and walk north for 5min.

Siegestor (Victory Gate)

The commanding Victory Gate (1852) has seen war and seen peace. Now it mostly sees a lot of traffic from its focal location at the busy Ludwig-Leopold Strasse interchange.

The design is based on Rome's Arch of Constantine and atop rides a bronze Lady Bavaria in an unlikely chariot led by four lions.

I think it adds a nice final touch of Rome to the top of Ludwig Strasse.

King Ludwig I commissioned and paid for the archway out of his own pocket at a cost of 420,000 florins – about €767,000 in today's money. It was built to commemorate



Bavaria's role in kicking Napoleon out of Germany, and was often featured in Third Reich propaganda as a symbol of German strength.

The archway became a peace memorial after copping a blasting in World War Two which left Bavaria and her lions strewn about the ground below. The inscription on the north side reads "*Dem Bayerischen Heer*" - For the Bavarian Army.

The inscription on the south side was added after the war and reads "*Dem Sieg geweiht, vom Kriege zerstört, zum Frieden mahnend*", which means "Dedicated to victory, destroyed by war, urging peace".

The details: Location Ludwig Strasse **Directions** Take U-Bahn No. 3 or 6 to Universität and stroll north past the university.

Haus der Kunst

The massive triumphalist architecture of this Munich art museum seems like something out of a megalomaniac's daydream - and it is. None other than Nazi dictator Adolf Hitler had the blueprints for the museum drawn up shortly after he came to power in 1933.

Today it survives as one of the world's pre-eminent institutions of *avant garde* and modern art, just the kind of stuff that sent Hitler round the twist. Exhibitions are always changing, so check out the website to see what's current.

Dark days

The 160m-long museum with its Doric colonnaded facade was finished in 1937. Though Hitler and his fascist mates preferred paintings of strong, blond heroes doing strong, blond deeds, surrealist and expressionist exhibitions were allowed. The works were generally to be spat upon before being burned or sold off overseas.

New beginnings

The museum came away from the bombing of Munich unscathed - the Allies wanted to use it after the war, when it became an officers' mess for the Americans called P1.

P1 lives on as a posh nightclub underneath the museum, infamous for its expensive drinks and celebrity pulling power.

The details: Location Prinzregenten Strasse 1 **Phone** 089 21 12 71 13 **Website** www.hausderkunst.de **Open** Monday to Sunday 10am to 8pm, Thursday 10am to 10pm. **Directions** Take U-Bahn No. 3 or 6 to Universität and stroll north past the university.

Ludwigskirche (Church of St Ludwig)

This washed-white house of worship hides a great artistic treasure within its bowels. The Church of St Ludwig (built 1829 – 1844) is home to the world's biggest altar fresco.

It's Peter von Cornelius' interpretation of the Last Judgement (1840), intended to be even more impressive than Michelangelo's Last Judgement in Rome's Sistine Chapel.



The church was designed by Friedrich von Gärtner in the neo-romanesque style. Its twin towers are a nice counterweight the yellow numbers at the Theatinerkirche further down Ludwig Strasse.

Above the front portal are statues of Jesus and the four Evangelists. Golgotha, an abstract white upside-down crucifix by Wilhelm Breitsameter takes over the transept to the left of the altar. The Ludwigskirche was undergoing major reconstruction work in 2009 including a retiling of the now almost psychedelically bright yellow, green, blue and red roof.

I love the quiet and tranquillity in inside this church just a stone's throw away from the roaring traffic of Ludwigs Strasse. The Last Judgement here sure is big and impressive but I don't think it cuts the mustard with Michelangelo's interpretation.

The details: Location Ludwig Strasse 20 **Directions** Take U-Bahn No. 3 or 6 to Universität and look for the twin towers.

Bayerische Staatsbibliothek (Bavarian State Library)

This lordly red and yellow brick building (built 1830s) looks like it's been yanked off a piazza in Florence and carefully set down in the middle of Munich. The collection of 7 million books and 40,000 magazines includes much material on history, ancient sciences, music and literature from south and Eastern Europe as well Asia.

There's plenty more besides including maps, famous autographs and book plates from the pioneering days of printing. Duke Albrecht V started the collection all the way back in

1558. Greeting visitors at the front entrance are statues of deep Greek thinkers Thucydides, Homer, Aristotle and Hippocrates.

The building's design is by Friedrich von Gärtner which accounts for its Italianesque look. I think you'd love this place if you're on an academic research mission, otherwise there's not too much to see inside.

The details: **Location** Ludwig Strasse 16 **Phone** 089 28 63 80 **Website** www.bsb-muenchen.de **Open** Monday to Friday 9am to 7.30pm, Saturday 9am to 4.30pm (August and September closed on Saturdays) **Cost** Entry is free

Directions Take U-Bahn 3 or 6 to Universität and then walk south along Ludwig Strasse.

Potato Museum (Das Kartoffelmuseum)

One of only a handful of museums worldwide devoted to the humble spud, Das Kartoffelmuseum is a surprisingly good if quirky-as-heck find. The museum is split into eight areas tracing the history of the potato from its origins in South America. Spuds were brown gold to the Incas for a long time before King Frederick the Great of Prussia introduced them into Germany in the 1700s.

The standout room has an exhibition called "*the Multi-Talent Kartoffel*" which bears witness to dozens of unexpected uses of the potato. The talented tuber is used in jelly babies, sausage, bread, wine, schnapps and soap, and that's just the tip of the iceberg.

Rounding off the museum is a gallery of art works connected to spuds. Included, funnily enough, is a reproduction of a poster of Marilyn Monroe posing in the middle of a potato field wearing nothing but a skimpy dress made of burlap. The US potato state of Idaho engaged Marilyn for the ad. Ah, the stuff stars do to make a buck before they become famous!

The Details: **Location** Grafinger Strasse 2, 81671 Munich **Phone** 089 404 050 **Website** www.kartoffelmuseum.de **Open** Tuesday to Thursday only after arrangement, Friday 9am to 6pm, Saturday 11am to 5pm, closed Sunday **Cost** Free **Tours** Available for €3 (€1.5 for children/concession) **Directions** Take any S-Bahn or U-Bahn line 5 to Ostbahnhof. Exit on the south side, it's a 5m walk past the Burger King to Grafinger Strasse.

Attractions – Along the Isar

The mighty Isar River flows all the way from the Bavarian Alps and right through the heart of Munich. Most of the attractions along the Isar can be found between the Deutsches Museum (itself on an island in the river) and the Lutipoldbrücke (Lutipold Bridge) further north. Visitors usually stick to the west bank because that's where the Old Town is, but there's no lack of things to do and see across the water in the increasingly trendy suburb of Haidhausen.

East bank highlights include the fortress-like cultural complex Gasteig, the venerable Müllersches Volksbad swimming pool and the stylish Villa Stuck art gallery.

Party people will want to check out the clubbing scene at the Kultfabrik and Optimolwerke, a haven of over 40 pubs and clubs near the Ostbahnhof S-Bahn station. A couple of wacky little museums can be found around the Isartor, including the Beer and Oktoberfest Museum and the Valentin-Karlstadt Musäum. Munich's golden shopping mile, Maximilian Strasse, reaches across the river to the Maximilianeum (Bavarian parliament) on the east bank.

Top Priority! – Along the Isar

Deutsches Museum

The Deutsches Museum imprints itself onto Munich's landscape like an enormous, crazy scientist with oversized goggles, sitting in a duck-shaped boat he's trying to launch into space. Want to see the bench where the first atom was split? This is where it's at! Ditto for the first automobile, U-boat and diesel engine. There are rocket planes, a planetarium, ships, satellites and an underground mine. And believe it or not, that's just for starters.

Superlative

Opened in 1925, this is the world's largest science and technology museum. Of Munich's many museums this is the biggest (55,000 square metres) and most popular (pulls about a million visitors a year). There's 17,000 objects displayed and they say you'd have to walk about 100kms to see everything. This sounds like fuzzy science to me, but it's damned big no matter what.

Six personal highlights:

#1 When wings take dream...

Maybe it's a guy thing but the aircraft section blows me away the most. The hall is crammed with things that fly and some that probably shouldn't have.

There's a section of a Lufthansa airliner, a slick F104 Starfighter, a 1930 Junkers cargo plane, World War Two era Messerschmidts and the Third Reich's wacky attempts to build a manned rocket. It starts on the ground floor, towards the back and then goes up, up, up.

#2 The shipping news

"Sorry, but I'm married to the sea." That's not just a handy break-up line but also what you may be saying after a visit to the shipping section. Here you'll find not only models but real, full-sized ships ranging from sailing ships, passenger liners, warships and the first U-Boot German submarine. It's on the ground floor and basement levels.

#3 Can ya dig it?

It's mine, it's all mine! Good times are to be had weaving your way through the underground tunnels of the mining exhibit. Coal mining propelled Germany into the 20th century and here you can learn how they did it. It starts off explaining the early era of mining and leads up to modern techniques, with truck-sized drilling monsters straight out of a bunny's nightmare. Go down, way down.

#4 Space...The final frontier

Who hasn't dreamt of soaring space in a silver suit, the Earth a pebble from yesterday and the cosmos at your command? Probably not so many

people actually, but that doesn't mean you won't enjoy the Planetarium. Lie back inside the dome on top of the museum and be beamed into the galaxy as you've never seen it. It's been shooting people into the abyss since 1960.

#5 Electric avenue

They don't call it the Power Hall for nothing. Everything to do with electricity is lit up here in brilliant detail. The highlight comes when a museum shock-jock steps inside a globular Faraday Cage, is hoisted into the air and hit with 222,000 volts of lightening. Shocking, simply shocking. It's on the ground floor, to the right of the shipping section.

TIP: Kids will love it...

The Deutsche Museum caters well for juniors. Here, they can hit it, switch it, spin it or crank it, many displays are interactive. There's also a special section on the basement floor called *Kinderreich* (Kids' Empire) that should have them begging you to stay longer.

The details: Location Museuminsel 1. The Deutsches Museum is on an island in the Isar River. **Phone** 089 2 17 91 **Website** www.deutsches-museum.de **Open** Daily from 9am to 5pm **Cost** Adults €8.50, children and students €3. Kids under six go in free. A combination ticket costing 17€ will also get you into a separate vehicle museum and an aircraft museum across town. **Directions** Take the S1 or S8 to Isartor. Or take tram 18 and get off at Deutsches Museum.

Friedensengel

She's grand, gold and there in the name of love. Munich's Friedensengel (built 1895-1899) lords over the Lutipold Bridge at the eastern end of Prinzregenten Strasse. The angel was built to mark the 1871 Treaty of Versailles ending the Franco-Prussian War, and as thanks to the Bavarian army for fighting on the Prussians' side.

Just do it

The statue glides atop at 23m Corinthian column soaring above a classical fountain. She's modelled on Nike, who's not only a popular brand of sports shoe, but also a Greek goddess of some repute. The angel holds a statue of the goddess Pallas Athene in one hand and a "twig of peace" in the other. The



Lutipold Bridge itself features four figures representing the various Bavarian tribes of Bavaria, Franconia, Swabia and the Palatinate.

The details: Location Prinzregenten Strasse **Directions** Take U-Bahn 4 or 5 to Lehel. Then walk 5min east to Widenmayer Strasse. Then go north along the Isar River to the Lutipold Bridge and look to your right.

Further Sights – Along the Isar

Isartor

The Isartor is the only one Munich's three remaining gothic city gates which still has its main tower intact.

The site really gives you a sense of just how much Munich has grown over the years - though it now struggles to stand out amid a mass of inner city traffic the gate used to mark

Munich's eastern city limit. Today its towers are home to the Valentin-Karlstadt Musäum (Museum), a wacky little dedication to Munich's most famous comedian and his stage partner. Stroll over to the eastern side of the gate to see the battle fresco above the archways (Bernhard von Naher, 1835).

Shown is a triumphant Ludwig IV of Bavaria and crew after cleaning the royal clock of Austrian Frederick the Handsome at the Battle of Ampfing in 1322. Speaking of clocks, check out the one on the west (city) side of the main tower. It's all backwards, a silly salute to comedian Karl Valentin. The Isartor was built in 1337 as part of the second effort to build a wall around the city. The gate was damaged during World War Two bombing.

Inside the museum you can see an photo of the gate from 1945, after the American troops took over. They hung a sign from the tower reading "Death is so permanent – Drive carefully". The other surviving city gates are the Karlstor and Sendlinger Tor.

The details: Location Im Tal 50. It's a 15min walk east of Marienplatz. **Directions** By subway, take any S-Bahn to Isartor.

Valentin-Karlstadt Museum

The door-sign says "99 year-olds with their parents get in free". And it doesn't get any less wacky from there on. Inside the Isartor's towers is a temple to Munich's answer to Charlie Chaplin, the bombastic Karl Valentin (1882-1948) and his partner-in-crime Liesl Karlstadt (1892-1960). The full-as-your-grandma's-salon spaces are packed with props, posters and curiosities from the days the couple was the toast of the town.

Exhibitions range from the profound to the downright silly – There's satirical quotes on the walls, masks, a crazy mirror, photos galore and a mini-cinema screening Valentin films.

"The truest of them all"

Valentin was Munich's "man of the century" – the guy that defined the city as Mozart defined Salzburg and James Joyce defined Dublin.

Exiled author Oskar Maria Graf even called him "the truest Munich native of the all". It was his sheer versatility as a musician, comedian, filmmaker and satirist that still fascinates people today. Valentin first became known on Munich's folk-music scene and mastered more than one instrument in the bars around the suburbs of Haidhausen and Au. He started making films as early as 1913, becoming one of the first onto Germany's silver screen.

He then teamed up with Liesl Karlstadt and the pair had a 25-year reign as the darlings of the arts scene, not only in Munich but in Berlin and Vienna. Valentin was considered a “living sculpture” both on stage and in real life.

Across the way

The tower on the opposite side is connected via a walkway with a photo essay of Munich through the ages. This tower holds temporary exhibitions, most recently a political cartoon collection of Norwegian artist Olaf Gulbransson.

Gulbransson drew for the Munich magazine *Simlicissimus*, a subversive magazine that stirred up the establishment throughout the early 20th century. Below this room is a space devoted to Munich's folk singers who took the first steps towards Munich's current "pop culture".

A sweet and cheap café called the Turmstüberl, a great place for a couple of morning *Weisswurst*, is at the top of the first tower. This museum dishes up a fascinating slice of history, but the displays and everything else are in German only. That said I can't recommend this one unless your *deutsch* is up to scratch.

Museum Villa Stuck

This villa was once the home of Franz von Stuck, one of Munich's great master artists of the *Jugendstil* (Art Nouveau) era. Much of Stuck's artwork is on display but perhaps the greatest piece of art is the villa itself, built in 1898. Stuck did a fine job of kitting out the place with wood-panelled walls and self-made furniture.

The museum has recently undergone a major renovation, and it's now possible to see Stuck's entire private domain, living rooms and a statue-filled garden. Sinfully good Stuck's most popular paintings on display have got to be the *Wächter des Paradieses* (Guards of Paradise) and *Die Sunde* (The Sin). Works from modern artists and Stuck's *Jugendstil* contemporaries are also on display. Try to go on a Sunday when you won't pay a dime for entry.

The details: **Location** Prinzregenten Strasse 60 **Phone** 089 4 55 55 10 **Website** www.villastuck.de **Open** Tuesday to Sunday 11am to 6pm **Cost** €9, concession €4.50 (to see the entire house), €4, concession €2 (just the historic rooms). Sundays free entry. **Directions** Take the U4 to Prinzregenten Platz, then walk or jump on bus 100 for a few hundred metres west down Prinzregenten Strasse.

Attractions – Further Afield

On your bikes! There's plenty more to see out the city centre, and much of it can't be ignored. What would a trip to Munich be without soaking up the glory of Nymphenburg Palace, for example?

It's about four kilometres west of the Main Train Station, near the Botanical Gardens and Europe's biggest beer garden, the Hirschgarten. North of the centre lies the Olympic Park and the BMW complex, further out still, Allianz Arena and Dachau Concentration Camp Memorial. South west of the centre starts the idyllic Fünf Seen Land (Five Lakes District) full of great day-tripping opportunities.

Top Priority! – Further Afield

Nymphenburg Palace

Before visiting Nymphenburg, you need to get yourself into a “think big” frame of mind – so just take a moment, close your eyes and imagine: King Kong, monster trucks, Oktoberfest beer mugs, America's deficit. You there yet? If yes, you may be ready to confront the Triple Quarter Pounder of palaces, Munich's Nymphenburg.

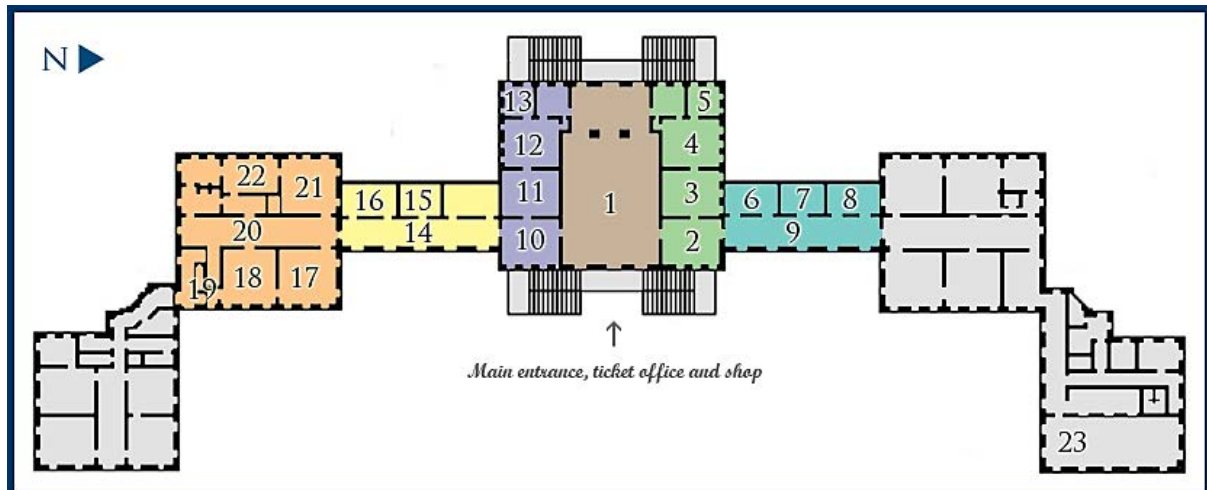


Think of the grandeur!

As you approach, imagine that you're a visiting head-of-state in days of old. Your royal carriage cracks down the road alongside a swan-filled canal and 'round a powerful fountain.

The palace is now right ahead of you, no, make that all around you! Royal footmen are standing by to open the carriage door. You step out to the sound of tooting trumpets and bow your head to the king and queen at the top of the staircase. “First a tour, my lord and lady?”

Nymphenburg Palace Plan



Key to Nymphenburg Palace Plan

1. Stone Hall

North Wing

2. North Antechamber

3. Antechamber

4. Bedroom

5. North cabinet

6. Max Emanuel's Great Gallery
of Beauties

7. Coat of Arms Room

8. Karl Theodor Room

9. North Gallery

South Wing

10. South Antechamber

11. Antechamber

12. Bedroom

13. Chinese Lacquer Cabinet

14. South Gallery

15, 16. Elector Karl Theodor's

Writing Cabinet and Antechamber

Southern Pavilion

17. Former dining room /

King Ludwig I's Gallery of Beauties

18. Queen's Study

19. Cabinet

20. Small Gallery

21. Queen's Audience Room

22. Queen's Bedroom

Second Northern Pavilion

23. Palace Chapel

In the beginning

The lobby/gift shop is on the ground floor of the central pavilion. This is the oldest part of the palace, built (1664) as a gift from Elector Ferdinand Maria to his wife Adelaide of Savoy. She'd just given birth to future ruler Max Emanuel I and apparently deserved something special. Young Max himself added the north and south pavilions about 40 years later.

Most of the Wittelsbachs used the palace as a summer residence, then outside the city of Munich but now

surrounded by suburbs.

The main structure is over 650m long, and about twice that if you count the Rondells (rounds) that curve around at the front.

Random unsolicited suggestion

Combine your trip to Nymphenburg with a visit to the nearby Hirschgarten, the world's biggest garden.

The brew is fresh, the pretzels delicious and there's even a deer enclosure.

Have a ball

First stop on your tour is the **Steinerer Saal** (Stone Hall), a massive Rococo ballroom with chandeliers bigger than some Soviet-era automobiles. This is one of those rooms where you can get neck cramps because you're compelled to walk around looking up at what's above you. The ceiling is consumed with an elaborate fresco by Johann Zimmermann and his son Franz. In July the hall comes alive for the Nymphenburger Sommerspiele concerts.

The north side

Take the passageway right of the entrance and turn left through a sub-room to reach the **Gobelinzimmer** (tapestry room) and Max Emanuel's bedroom. He had it decorated with nine paintings of women he "met" during a spell in exile in Paris.

The women are depicted as goddesses, suggesting Max had a rather jolly old time in the City of Light. Double back to the sub-room and turn left into the hallway filled with paintings of other Bavarian palaces. They were painted by F. J. Beich (1722-1723) and many no longer exist. Off the hallway is the **Wappenzimmer** (Heraldic Room) and more portraits of pretty ladies.

Art from the Orient

Now go back to the Steinerer Hall and through to the rooms on the south side. Turn right again through a trio of lavish living rooms to find the **Chinesisches Lackkabinett** (Chinese Lacquer Room) at the end, covered with depictions of country life in the Far East. Double back and turn left through a hallway with yet more Bavarian palaces and prepare for the palace highlight.

Famous beauties

From 1726 the **Southern Pavilion** was reserved for Bavaria's royal women: The

Queens and electresses. Fitting, perhaps, that's its main hall is now home to one of Nymphenburg Palace's biggest drawcards, the **Schönheitengalerie** (Gallery of Beauties). The walls are filled with portraits of 36 girls picked out by King Ludwig I and painted by Joseph Stieler from 1826 to 1850. The good king wanted only the most bootylicious, and the girls are drawn from all strata of society. Sultry temptress and all-round rabble-rouser Lola Montez is featured, her hair strewn with red flowers framing the flame within.

Lola's dishy to be sure, but I think the most dollsome is the doey-eyed Helene Sedlmayr. She went on to bear 10 children indicating that someone else couldn't get enough of her, either. The daughter of a shoemaker, Helene encountered the king when she was working as a shop assistant in a Munich toy store. She became known as the "*Schöne Münchenerin*" (Munich beauty), the start of a stereotype which holds that Munich girls are, well, pretty damned hot.

A "fairy-tale" was born

Filling out the southern pavilion of Nymphenburg Palace is the **Maserzimmer**, with portraits of King Ludwig I and his wife. The **Blauer Salon** features 200-year-old Parisian furniture and the bedroom next door was where Bavaria's fairy-tale king, Ludwig II, was born.

Explore further

There are plenty more sights to discover at Schloss Nymphenburg aside from the main palace. In the park behind the main building you'll find a smattering of **small palaces** the rulers used as retreats. You can see how Bavarian kings and queens used to roll in the **Marstall Museum**, which holds a fascinating collection of royal sleighs and carriages.

The **Museum Mensch und Natur** (Humanity and Nature Museum) makes another worthy side stop. This museum explores humanity and history of the Earth. It's in Nymphenburg's north wing. Great for kids.

The details: Location Schloss Nymphenburg 1, 5km northwest of the city centre. **Phone** 089 17 90 80 **Website** www.schlosser-nymphenburg.de **Cost** Nymphenburg "combination tickets" cost 10€ (8€ concession) from April 1 to October 15. They cost 8€ (6€ concession) from October 16 to March 31. This ticket gives you access to the palaces, the Marstallmuseum, the Nymphenburg Porcelain Museum and the Nymphenburg park palaces (the Amalienburg, Badenburg, Pagodenburg and Magdalenenklause).

Open Nymphenburg Palace is open daily. From April to October 15, 9am to 6pm. From October 16 to March 10am to 4pm.

Destination Munich and Bavaria ~ 120 ~

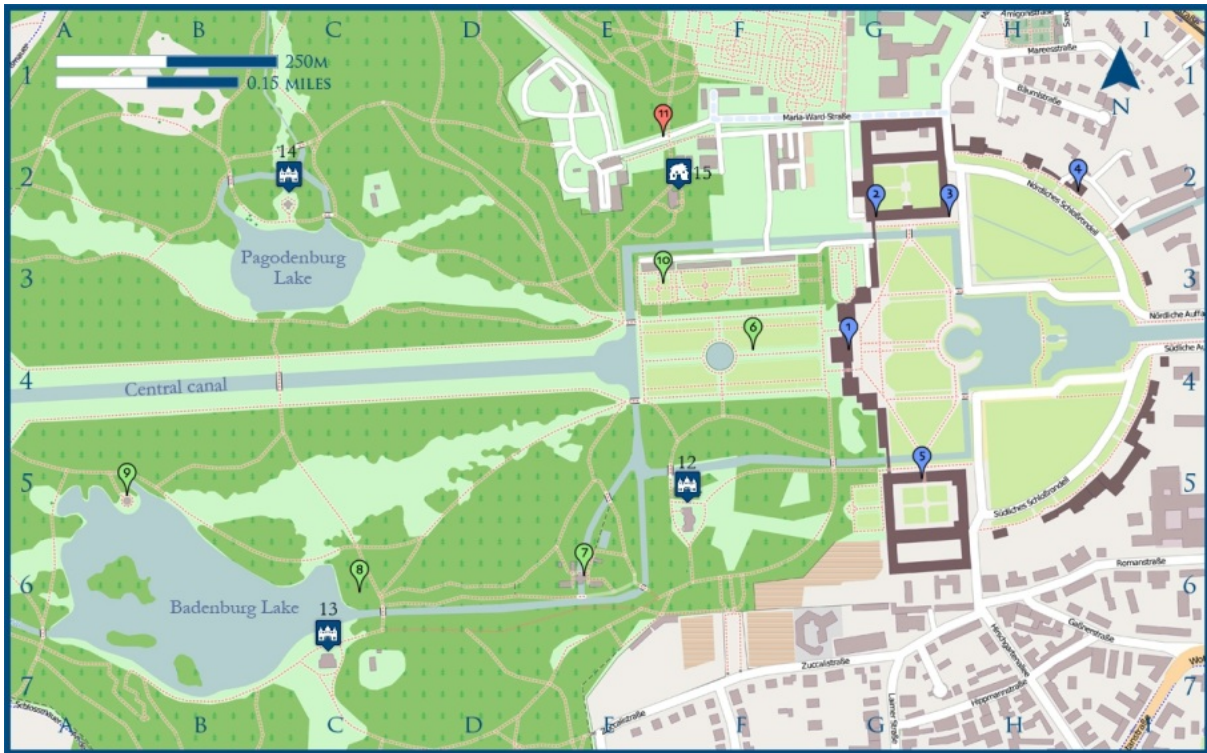
Directions To Nymphenburg Palace, take any S-Bahn to Laim. Head to the left once you leave the station and it's a 20min walk along Wotan Strasse and left at Romansplatz (or you can take bus No 51 from Laim).

•You can also take Tram No. 16 or 17 from outside the Hauptbahnhof (Main Train Station), or No 12 from Rotkreuzplatz (direction Romansplatz or Amalienburgstrasse).

Guided tours: There are no guided tours of Nymphenburg Palace but audio guides are available in German, English, Italian, Spanish and Russian.

For visitors in wheelchairs: All sights off the ground floor are accessible via lift, but there are a few steps to negotiate in the park palaces.

Nymphenburg Park Palaces



Key to Nymphenburg Palace Map

1. Nymphenburg Palace with ticket office and shop
2. Museum "Mensch und Natur" (Humankind and Nature)
3. Pump house with historic pump system
4. Nymphenburg Porcelain Manufactory
5. Marstall Museum and Nymphenburg Porcelain Museum
6. Large Parterre with fountain
7. Little village with Pump House open from Easter to the start of October 9am-4pm
8. Pan statue
9. Monopteros
10. Historic greenhouse with a small restaurant/beer garden
11. Pathway to the Botanic gardens (open April to September)

Park Palaces

- | | |
|-----------------|----------------------|
| 12. Amalienburg | 14. Pagodenburg |
| 13. Badenburg | 15. Magdalenenklause |

As if Nymphenburg Palace wasn't grandiose enough. Its royal residents also built a series of smaller chateaus in the Palace Park.

The Wittelsbachs used these retreats for swimming, throwing parties, hunting and a rare spot of navel-gazing. They're also known as the *Lustschlösser*, or "pleasure palaces" and it's

fun to go through them and pick out your favourite. Sometimes kings would peruse another kind of “lust” inside (wink, wink). They were handy houses for late-night trysts with beautiful mistresses, well away from the room where the queen slept.

Tips for touring the Nymphenburg Park Palaces

Start from the main palace’s southern wing outside the Marstall Museum. A 5min walk east will take you to the grandest of the small palaces.....

...the Amalienburg

This is where aristocrats would dance into the wee hours with their wigs and frilly glad-rags reflected into eternity. It’s a rococo masterwork, built by Prince Elector Karl Albrecht (1739) for his Austrian sweetheart Maria Amalie. Part hunting lodge, part ball-venue, the first chamber you visit is the **Dog’s Room**, lined with elaborate bunks for highborn hunting hounds. The adjoining the **Blue Cabinet**



was a living room and showcase for hunting trophies. The yellow and silver-stuccoed **Rest Room** next door has a cot for the weary.

You then go through to the showpiece **Hall of Mirrors**, where royal balls took place. Imagine a party powered by dozens of candles, their light intensified to the Nth degree by the mirrors on the walls – the effect must have been amazing.

Next up is the **Hunting Room**, its walls packed with portraits of the chase. The **Kitchen**, covered by tiles with Chinese and Dutch motifs, rounds out the Amalienburg. Continue south along the path around to the right along the canal. You’ll pass the former menagerie to the left and see a little village of white-washed houses to the right.

Keep going on to my personal favourite of the palaces....

...the Badenburger

This *Schloss* sits on the shore of a sizey lake. The Badenburger was where the royals would go for a languid dip in a huge heated pool. You enter into the airy **Banquet Hall** with its white-stuccoed walls embracing an elaborate ceiling fresco overhead. Image the regents entertaining nobles here before inviting a few lucky souls back for a dip in the bath.

Pass through the **Anteroom** to the left to see the bedroom, decked with Chinese-themed wallpaper. Through a small door here is the so-called **Affenkabinett** or “monkey cabinet”, a richly decorated dressing room and study.

The pool is back through the Anteroom to the right– you enter into a marble-panelled gallery overlooking the basin. Ruler Max Emmanuel was so inspired by the luxury of Turkish baths he built this one for himself in 1722. The original water-heating system still works. Peer down to the bath tiles to see inlaid Dutch windmills.

Back outside again take a breather and look across the lake. See the Greek temple on the far side? It’s called the **Monopteros** and honours the Greek über-god Apollo.

He’s not the only Greek deity in the palace park, as you’ll find as you cross over the bridge and see the statue of Pan, the god of shepherds. Continue on past a long field where, if you’re lucky, you’ll see a few deer moseying about. Cross another bridge across the central canal and work your way around another lake to the smallest palace, the cute little.....

...Pagodenburg

This has got to have one of the flimsiest excuses to ever to build a palace but if you’re the ruler of a kingdom then hey, you can indulge yourself. Prince Elector Max Emanuel built the Pagodenburg (1718) as a place to relax after a croquet-like game called “pall mall”. The “Pagode” in the name is an 18th century reference to the cherub-esque idols found inside. You step into a small blue-and-white **Entrance Hall** smothered with over 2000 Dutch tiles. A closer look reveals mini-portraits and landscapes.

The courtly fascination with all things Chinese continues upstairs – think dark wooden panels and rice paper wallpaper, offset by Parisian furniture. Once you leave the Pagodenburg, follow the path back towards the main palace. Branch off to the left before you reach the Grand Parterre and you’ll find the (seemingly) oldest of the Nymphenburg small palaces....

...the Magdalenenklause

This dilapidated little temple was where the royals came to peace out. The building (built 1728) was designed with a ruined hermit’s cottage in mind, its brickwork exposed behind crumbling plaster. This was a place of refuge for pondering “the religious contemplation of the transitoriness of earthly lives”. It’s also the only palace I’ve ever been into where you are required to put on oversized bathroom slippers and slide around.

It helps protect the original parquet floors. The rooms are all dark and dreary except the **Grotto Chapel**, studded with bucket-loads of colourful seashells and stones. The ceiling fresco is a tribute to Mary Magdalena.

The details: Location The park palaces are spread throughout the Nymphenburg Palace Park (Schlosspark) in Munich's west. **Phone** 089 17 90 80

Website www.schlosser-bayern.de **Open** The Amalienburg is daily the year round. The other park palaces are open daily from April to October 15 from 9am to 6pm and closed during the colder months. ▪ Everything at Nymphenburg is closed on January 1, Shrove Tuesday and December 24, 25 and 31.

Cost Nymphenburg "combination tickets" cost 10€ (8€ concession) from April 1 to October 15. They cost 8€ (6€ concession) from October 16 to March 31.

This ticket gives you access to the Nymphenburg Palace, the Marstallmuseum, the Museum of Nymphenburg Porcelain and the Nymphenburg Park Palaces mentioned above (the Amalienburg, Badenburger, Pagodenburg and Magdalenenklause).

▪ You can see the park palaces for 2€ (1€ concession) individually or 4€ (3€ concession) for the lot of them.

▪ Another option is the "14-day ticket" which gives you entry into over 40 palaces and castles across Bavaria for 20€ (36€ for partner and family tickets).

Directions To Nymphenburg Palace, take any S-Bahn to Laim. Head to the left once you leave the station and it's a 20min walk along Wotan Strasse and left at Romansplatz (or you can take bus No 51 from Laim).

▪ You can also take Tram No. 16 or 17 from outside the Hauptbahnhof (Main Train Station), or No 12 from Rotkreuzplatz (direction Romansplatz or Amalienburgstrasse).

Marstall Museum and Nymphenburg Porcelain Museum

Ever wondered how the kings of old used to roll? Dozens of gilt-gold carriages and sleighs are assembled here into one of the impressive museums of its kind in the world.

Just think of all the work that went into these majestic pieces, some of which were used only once. A major draw card is the



coronation coach Karl Albrecht rode through the streets of Munich when he became emperor of the Holy Roman Empire in 1742. It's to the back of the first hall around the corner.

Royal sleighs show you how the Bavarian royal liked to get around the countryside in winter. The most impressive once belonged to the "Fairy Tale" King Ludwig II, whose tastes for all things beautiful were a tad more genteel than most.

Check out his "Nymph sleigh" with a half-naked statue of a nymph holding up two lanterns to light the way. The museum houses a bridle and harness collection and painting of horses, including Ludwig II's favourite mount, Gisela.

There's also a camp little court merry-go-round with equipment for tournament exercises. The museum used to be known as the "Rich Remise" and housed the former stables of Nymphenburg Palace.

White gold

Above the Marstall Museum you'll find the Nymphenburg Porcelain Museum (*Porzellanmuseum*). All pieces were produced in the *Nymphenburg Porzellanmanufaktur* from 1747 to 1930. Over 1000 items exhibit styles from rococo to *Jugendstil*. Most famous among them is Franz Anton Bustelli's *Figur aus der Commedia dell'arte* (Italian Comedians).

The Details: Location The Marstall Museum is in the south wing of Nymphenburg Palace in Munich's west. **Phone** 089 179 080 **Website** www.musmn.de/starteng.htm **Open** Daily April to October 15 from 9am to 6pm. From October 16 to March it's open from 10am to 4pm. **Cost** To see the Marstall Museum and Nymphenburg Porcelain Museum alone it's 4€, concession €3.

Museum Mensch und Natur (Museum of Humankind and Nature)

A Pandora's Box of earthly mysteries is cast open at this surprisingly entertaining museum. This is a great destination for kids, but unfortunately the signage is only in German.

A World of Wonders

A section called the *Spielerische Naturkunde – nicht nur für Kinder* (English: Natural History Playtime) lets you discover the Earth's rich variety of fauna through fun interactive displays. Get a load of the *Japanischen Riesenkrabbe* (Japanese Giant Crab) which seems to have come from the Lord of the Rings props department.

The "problem bear"

There's a special exhibition on Bruno, Bavaria's famous "*Problem Bär*". A big brown bear, Bruno wandered across the Tyrolean Alps from Italy and into Bavaria in 2006 – making him the first brown bear on German soil in over 170 years. Officially known as JJ1, Bruno went on a hedonistic killing spree, taking out 33 sheep as well as chickens, beehives and even a guinea pig.

Authorities made a couple of attempts to capture Bruno, fearing he'd become a threat to humans. Sadly, they failed, and Bruno was shot dead near the Spitzingsee Lake on June 26, 2006. Bruno's stuffed body is part of the exhibit – much to the consternation of Italian authorities who claim he belongs to them. R.I.P. Bruno, we know you were just doing what bears were born to do.

Of beasts and men

There's a section on the evolution of life on Earth with more stuffed creatures including a couple of lions and a big red kangaroo. This leads on to an exhibit about dinosaurs and a fearsome predator's skull the size of a coffee table. An eye-opening section on nutrition shows what's on different dinner tables throughout the world. A room on human beings features illuminated bodies and a gigantic brain. Exhibits on rocks, crystals and underwater life fill out the museum.

The details: Location The Museum Mensch und Natur is in the north wing of Nymphenburg Palace in Munich's west. **Phone** 089 17 95 890 **Website**

www.musmn.de/starteng **Cost** 3€, concession €2 children under 18 go in free. Sundays €1 for all adults. **Open** The Museum Mensch und Natur is open Tuesday to Fridays 9am to 5pm, and Thursdays till 8pm. Saturdays, Sundays and holidays 10am to 6pm. Closed Mondays, Shrove Tuesday and December 24, 25 and 31.

BMW Welt

Motorhead or not, you won't fail to be impressed by BMW's fresh brontosaurus print on the Munich landscape. And why shouldn't a glorified car dealership become one of city's major tourist draw cards? BMW does stand for *Bayerische Motoren Werke* (Bavarian Motor Works), don't you know!

Although I can hardly tell the difference between a steering wheel and a sump gasket my visit had me dreaming of tearing down the Autobahn in one of their finely made machines.

The company's Munich "campus" has four main parts: the swish new BMW Welt, a museum, a production plant and world headquarters office building.

BMW World (BMW Welt)

Cars aside, the sheer architecture of this building is enough to get my heart racing. I've heard it was the world's first pile that couldn't have possibly been designed without the help of Computer Aided Design. You'll understand why after the first glimpse: A glass and steel "double cone" swirls towards the flat-as-a-pancake roof, itself decked with enough solar panels to power a small suburb.



Designed by Austrian company Coop Himmelb(l)au and opened in 2007, BMW World is essentially a delivery centre where the rich-enough can pick up their new rides. There's a huge show-off factor. Inside the double-cone are some of BMW's latest jalopies along with interactive displays – you can touch, spin and twist while learning about the automaker's technology.

Displays are interspersed with rather bizarre examples of "auto art" – an arrangement of peacock feathers splayed over an inverted car bonnet, for example. The main building has an obnoxiously large cafe, motorcycles (that you can sit on) and, you guessed it, more cars. Enjoy the ride.

BMW Museum

One of the weird bonnet sculptures is in the background. The big, silver "salad-bowl" across the way houses the museum, re-done and re-opened in 2008. 90 years of BMW history are accessed through a downward spiralling staircase. Exhibitions are categorised into seven "thematic blocks" looking at design, the company, motorcycles, technology, motor sport and the brand.

My favourites were the dainty 1950's Isetta "bubble car" and the downright sexy red M1 Homage roadster in the lobby.

BMW Munich Plant

The real works gets done in the half-a-square kilometre factory space behind the museum. The plant employs over 10,000 people and a few robots. Each year the plant churns out about 200,000 BMW 3 Series saloon and touring cars as well as an extra 300,000 engines.

You can take a 2.5 hour tour of the plant which involves walking over 2kms.

BMW Headquarters "Vierzylinder" (four-cylinder)

A Munich landmark since the 1972 Olympics, BMW's global headquarters consists of four "floating" columns suspended above the ground to a central support tower.

It tops out at just over 100m and was declared a historic building in 1999.

The details: Location Am Olympiapark 1, Munich. It's about 5kms north-west of the city centre. **Phone** BMW Welt info line - 018 02 11 88 22 **Open:** BMW Welt is open daily from 9am to 6pm. The BMW Museum is open 9am to 6pm Tuesday to Friday and 10am to 8pm on weekends, closed Mondays. **Cost:** BMW Welt is itself free to visit. BMW Museum costs: Adults: €9, children up to 18: €6, group of five or more, per person: €8, family ticket for up to two adults and three children: €18. Digital audio guides in English, Italian, Chinese and other languages are available from the counter for an extra €2. **Details of guided tours:**

BMW Welt "Compact" tours run daily on the hour from 9am to 4pm (from 10am on weekends).

BMW Welt "Architecture" tours run once a day, at 3pm on weekdays and 12pm on weekends. Both these tours take about 80min and cost €7. They're in both English and German. You need to book in advance through the info line above.

BMW Museum tours run regularly throughout the day, cost €12 and take 2.5 hours. No need to book for this one, but you might want to call ahead to get the times for tours in English. **BMW Plant tours** take 2.5 hours and cost €6. Done in English and German and you have to book ahead through the info line.

Directions Take the U3 to Olympiazentrum and you're there.

Munich Zoo (Tierpark Hellabrunn)

Zoos used to be cold, somewhat cruel places where animals were caged and put on display for entertainment rather than education. Tierpark Hellabrunn was one of the world's first zoos to buck that trend. Munich's zoo was founded in 1911 and was the world's first "geo-zoo", i.e., it displayed its animals by continent. Many of the 700 species aren't caged, but live in enclosures separated from visitors by moats.

Fantastic fauna

You can find all the usual suspects from lions and tigers to bears and banded mongoose. But the zoo's administrators are also rightly proud of its little-known species, some of which they have helped to save from extinction through breeding programs. The Mongolian wild

horse, Mesopotamian fallow deer and Alpine Ibex are among those species which Hellabrunn has helped back from the brink.

In earlier decades the zoo had perhaps less admirably also engaged in controversial “back-breeding” programs to recreate extinct animals (for example, “heck” cattle were bred to mimic the aurochs, a large, horned bovine which died out in Europe in the 1600s).

The zoo is undergoing an extensive refurbishment that won’t be finished until 2020. But don’t let that stop you, Hellabrunn is a must-visit for animal lovers. Guided tours for groups are available in English and there is a pizzeria, restaurant and of course (this being Munich!) a beer garden.

Some Munich Zoo highlights:

- **The Touch Paddock and Kinderzoo** – An area where kids can get up close and personal with goats, sheep and ponies. The animals can be stroked and fed with low-calorie fibre bought from vending machines and kids can watch chicks hatch from their eggs.
- **The “Villa Dracula”** – a large walk-through hall where bats and birds flap about unhindered.
- **Polarium** – Crowds flock to see the Antarctic penguins and sea lions but the star attraction of this section is the new polar bear enclosure.
- **Elephant House** – The century old Byzantine Elephant House was one of the first freestanding concrete domes in the world and has become the zoo’s most-recognisable symbol.

The details: **Location** Tierpark Strasse 30, Munich **Phone** 089 62 5080 **Website** www.tierpark-hellabrunn.de **Open** 9am to 6pm April to September, till 5pm October to March **Cost** €11, concession €7.50, children 4 to 14 €4.50 (children under 4 go free). Family tickets are also available, check the website for details. **Directions** Take the U-Bahn line 3 to the station Thalkirchen (Tierpark). From there it’s a 3min walk, just follow the signs.

Allianz Arena

“It’s a space ship from the planet Zorb!”

“No, it’s a giant inflatable boat!”

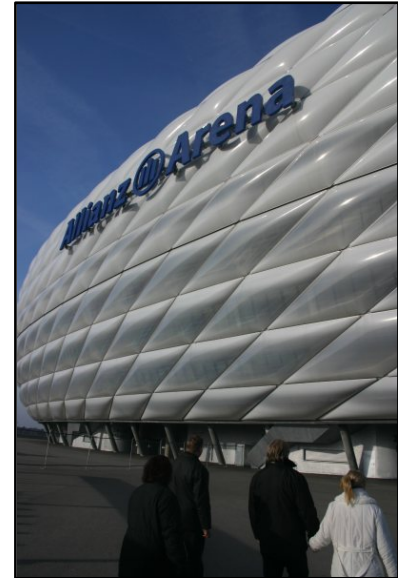
“Rubbish, it’s the world’s most beautiful, modern and innovative temple of football!”

Whoever that third guy was, he was right. But whatever you choose to call Allianz Arena, the sight of its 2,874 plastic panels lighting up the night is a sight you’ll never forget.

A new dawn

The new arena became the home of Munich's two biggest soccer teams: The hugely popular Bayern Munich (in German Bayern München) and second-league squad 1860 München. Both teams helped fund the €340 million project. Bayern Munich later bought out 1860's share after the second-rung club fell on hard times.

The stadium is wrapped in a skin of plastic-foil air panels that light up the night sky like Las Vegas. It turns red for Bayern Munich games, blue for 1860 matches and stays white when two neutral teams play.



Belly of the beast

Standard “fan” tours take in the players’ dressing rooms and entrance tunnel to the ground, the press club room, the upper tier and sponsors’ lounge. Allianz Arena can hold up to 70,000 spectators. Only soccer is played here. Visit www.fcb.de to reserve your seats if you want to see Bayern Munich play. If you want to see 1860 take the field, check out www.tsv1860.de.

Shop till the final whistle

You get to the arena via an esplanade leading from the Fröttmanning U-Bahn station. The esplanade covers a 10,000-place car park – one of Europe’s largest. There’s a shopping arcade on the third level with huge stores dedicated to both of the home clubs. There’s also an Audi shop where you can design your dream car on a groovy interactive screen. Kids will get a kick of the Lego *Spielwelt* (World of Play) where they can stick plastic bricks together to their hearts’ content.

The details: **Location** Werner-Heisenberg-Allee 25, Fröttmanning **Phone** For information about tours call 018 05 55 51 01 **Website** www.allianz-arena.de/en **Open** Tours in English start daily at 1pm, except when there’s a match on. There’s also special group tours designed for kids, and others for people in wheelchairs (Thursdays and Sundays at 2pm). **Cost** Standard fan tours cost €10, concession €9 and €6.50 for children from six to 12 It’s €24 for families. **Directions** Take the U6 to Fröttmanning. Then follow the signs.

Dachau Concentration Camp Memorial

“May the example of those who were exterminated here between 1933-1945 because they resisted Nazism help to unite the living for the defence of peace and freedom and in respect for their fellow men” – inscription on a memorial at Dachau

When the Nazis came to power in 1933, they didn't waste any time getting vicious. They built Dachau Concentration Camp, their first, that same year. It became the prototype for all Nazi death camps and they say about 43,000 people died here.

As shocking and sobering as it is the camp is well worth a visit, if only to

come to grips with one of Munich's darkest chapters. Beyond the new visitor's centre lies the old camp gates, emblazoned with the iron slogan *Arbeit Macht Frei* (Work sets you free).

Shocking insights

Around the corner there's a well-presented museum in a former utility building. This attempts to explain the concentration camp system and how the Nazis came to power. There's a small **cinema** showing a 20min documentary film in another room. There's also an exhibit on medical experiments performed on victims.

These included unnecessary surgery and seeing how long people could survive in freezing water before attempting to revive them with methods including electric shocks and body warmth provided by prostitutes. You can also see a recreated **barracks** where victims lived like proverbial sardines. Among memorials at Dachau is one with the slogan "Never Again" written in five languages. At the back of the site there's a **Jewish memorial**, a **Catholic chapel** and a **Protestant church**.

They're close to a **crematorium** which was used to burn the dead. There's also a gas chamber here which was disguised as a shower block. The official line is that the chamber was never used.

Dachau Concentration Camp was ordered built by Munich police chief Heinrich Himmler, who later became the chief of the SS and Gestapo secret police.

Ample victims

Dachau was official known as a “Protective custody camp”.

The memorial you see today was part of a much larger complex including stone mines and weapons factories. Rampant disease and malnutrition accounted for most of the deaths here. 1945 was the deadliest year when over 500 Soviet Prisoners of War killed by firing squad alone.

More than 200,000 prisoners from over 30 countries were interned. Scores of them were sent on to larger concentration camps such as Auschwitz Berkinau. Many victims were Jews from Poland and other parts of Eastern Europe.

Other victims included ethnic Roma (known as gypsies), homosexuals, communists, priests, several members of the Bavarian royal family and other Nazi opponents.

American troops were stunned when they came to liberate the camp on April 29, 1945.

They were confronted by victims, barely beyond skeletons, 1,600 people in each of the barracks designed for 250.

Hard to grasp

I don't think we can grasp today just how overwhelming it must have been.



Key to Dachau Map

1. Visitor Information Center
2. Jourhaus (SS offices) and Main Camp Gate
3. Former maintenance building now housing a museum
4. The “Bunker”, a former camp prison
5. International monument
6. Roll-call area
7. Reconstructed barracks
8. Protestant church
9. Catholic chapel
10. Jewish memorial
11. Crematorium
12. Russian Orthodox chapel
13. Carmelite Convent

Some of the Americans were so disgusted they started shooting German camp guards after their surrender. The official toll was 15, other reports suggest up to 520 Germans were killed in retaliation. Dachau later became a refugee camp for Czechoslovakian Germans kicked out after the war.

I've only been to the Dachau Concentration Camp Memorial once, and I felt so overwhelmed after 10 minutes of that bloody documentary film I had to get the hell out of there. It's only by visiting places like this that you understand how evil human beings can be to one another. Let's hope that it happens "Never Again".

The details: Location The Dachau Concentration Camp Memorial is at Alte Römer Strasse 75. **Phone** 081 31 66 99 70 **Website** www.kz-gedenkstaette-dachau.de **Open** Tuesday to Sunday 9am to 5pm **Cost** Admission is free.

Directions Take S-Bahn No. 2 to Dachau, which takes about 20min from the Hauptbahnhof. From the station, you have to catch bus No. 724 or 726. You'll need a ticket that covers zone 2.

Olympic Park

Almost 40 years have passed since the world converged on Munich's Olympic Park to go faster, higher, stronger. But that doesn't mean there's nothing happening at Olympiapark, the site of most of the events at the 1972 Munich Olympics. Soccer, ice skating, boxing, open-air rock concerts, the list goes on and on. The park is humming with activities all year round. It's free to wander around the grounds and the park is popular with joggers, in-line skaters and hang-about.

Park centrepieces are the massive Olympiastadion, the Olympiahalle and the Olympiaschwimmhalle water sports centre. All three feature a webbed, transparent roof that look like high-tech tents from some distant planet.

Up on the roof

You can do a tour of the Olympiastadion's roof but you'll pay through the nose for it. There's also abseiling and other tours on offer (see below).

Other points at the park include the winding lake **Olympiasee**, the **Olympia Tower** (known to the locals as the *Fernsehturm*, meaning Television Tower) and the **Eissportzentrum**, an ice hockey stadium.

The tower holds a revolving restaurant called 181 – that's how high off the ground it is. Also inside are a free Rock Music Museum and a viewing platform that you can visit daily until



Key to Olympic Park area map

- | | |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1. BMW Welt | 8. Olympic Stadium |
| 2. BMW Museum | 9. Theatron (open-air stage) |
| 3. Ice hockey stadium | 10. Boat rental |
| 4. Sea Life München | 11. Olympiaberg (Olympic Hill) 564m |
| 5. Olympic Tower | 12. Tollwood area |
| 6. Olympic Hall | 13. Olympia Alm (small beer garden) |
| 7. Olympic Swimming Hall | 14. Café Olympia |

midnight. With a capacity of 75,000 the Olympiastadion is Munich's biggest venue and was the home of football clubs FC Bayern Munich and 1860 München until Allianz Arena took over in 2005.

Rock the park

It hosts the likes of Madonna, AC/DC and Bruce Springsteen and the E Street Band.

As an alternative to the tower, you can get a great view of the area by climbing the **Olympiaberg** (Olympic Hill), a man-made mass construed of cleared rubble from World

War Two bombing. The hill is also a popular place to sit and listen to the big name concerts for free.

Summer park highlights include the Tollwood “world” festival in June and July and free, open-air shows at the Theatron, the lakeside stage. The Olympiapark is conveniently close to BMW Welt and museum and is home to Munich’s new Sea Life Centre.

Sea Life was made in partnership with Greenpeace and has fish from Bavaria’s lakes and rivers, the Baltic, North and Mediterranean seas.



The details:

Location The Olympic Park is at Spiridon-Louis-Ring 21, Munich. It's about 5kms north-west of the city centre. **Phone** For info on the Rooftop Tour and Abseiling call 089 30 67 24 14. For info about other attractions including the Olympia Tower call 089 30 67 27 50.

Website www.olympiapark.de

Tours, costs and times: Olympia Tower Munich’s highest lookout point with views all the way across to the Bavarian Alps. Costs €5.50 for adults, €3.50 concession and €15 for families valid for two adults and three kids. Kids under 6 free and birthday kids are always free. Open from 9am to midnight.

Roof Climb Tour As the organisers say, supply the guts to get up there and they’ll supply the rope and carabineers. Booking ahead is essential. Takes about two hours. It’s done in German, and English and French are available for groups. Costs €41 for adults and €31 for children aged 10 to 15. The minimum group rate is €320. Runs daily from April 3 to November 8 at 2.30pm and sunset. Tours for groups can be arranged all year round on request.

Abseiling Jump 40 metres off the stadium tent roof and down onto the ground. Bookings essential. Also takes about two hours. It’s done in German, and English and French are available for groups. Costs €51 for adults and €41 for children aged 10 to 15. Minimum group rate is €400. Takes place daily from April 3 to November 8 at 4pm. Organisers can make separate arrangements for groups all year round.

Stadium tour Much hyped are the old training rooms of Munich soccer clubs FC Bayern Munich and TSV 1860 München, as well as the VIP area. You can also enjoy a kick at the “goal wall”. Costs €7.50 for adults and €5 for children. Runs daily at 11am.

Adventure tour including Olympia Lobby Covers what’s done in the Stadium Tour and includes visits to the Olympic Hall and swimming centre. You cover basically the whole Olympic Park, getting around in a silly little blue and white train. Costs €9.50 for adults, €6.50 for children and €26 for families. Runs daily from April to November at 2pm and takes about 90min. Can be done out-of-season for groups on request. In English and German.

Round trip park railway If you don’t want to do a tour you can just take the silly little train for a ride and see the Olympiapark that way. Costs €3 for adults and €2 for children. Takes about 20min.

Audio tour Grab an MP3 player and explore the park at your own pace. Costs €7 and available in English and German. Pick them up from the Info-Pavilion at the Ice Stadium from April to October and in the Olympic Tower from November to March. Takes one to two hours to do the walking tour.

*The tourist info centre is in at the right end of the lake, next to the Eissportzentrum.

Directions Take the U3 to Olympiazentrum. It’s the last stop on the line.

Bavaria Filmstadt

Defiant Gauls, a luck-dragon, a gay starship and a doomed submarine.

What’s the common denominator here? They all feature on a tour of Bavaria Filmstadt, Munich’s own “mini-Hollywood”. The studio centre churns out dozens of productions annually

for Germany’s television and cinema-going audience. Some films made here like *The NeverEnding Story* and *The Boat* have cracked it big internationally. You can go behind



the scenes on a 90min guided tour through the studios. What I liked about this tour was its interactivity – volunteers can perform in a few short skits which are cut into a mini-film and shown at the end of circuit.

On top of that there's a 4D "Erlebniskino" – experience cinema, essentially a 3D cinema with added wind and water effects.

The highlight, though, has got to be the stunt show, which lasts for about 45min and takes place in a big hall opposite the on-site McDonald's. There's a car chase, people catching on fire and even a flimsy plot about New York City cops chasing down a couple of gangsters.

Get set for the tour

Many sets from the tour won't ring bells unless you're into German TV and cinema, but they're still fun to check out.

Included are sets from:

* *The Boat* (German: *Das Boot*) (1981): The gritty story of a World War Two U-Boat crew, often considered the best German film ever made. You can see several models of the submarine and walk through the cramped passageway where the interior shots were done.

* *The NeverEnding Story* (1984): Kids who are way too young to remember this movie can jump aboard Falkor the luck-dragon and see themselves on a zooming through the air thanks to the magic of blue screen. FYI, a remake of this film is scheduled for 2012.

* *Asterix and Obelix vs Caesar* (1999) – Based on the classic comics, this film packed 'em in cinemas all over Europe. You can walk through the Gauls' village and see an arena-style set.

* *(T)Raumschiff Surprise – Periode 1* (2004) – A Star Trek send-up featuring a trio of camp crew members. Tour volunteers can recreate the comic scenes.

* *The Baader Meinhof Komplex* (2008) – A bloody big-screen recount of West Germany's Red Army Faction (RAF) terrorist group.

* Sets from soapiers *Sturm der Liebe* (Storm of Love) and *Marienhof*.

These are the German-language equivalents of *Days of Our Lives* and the like.

The Bavaria Filmstadt is all rather pricey, but I recommend this one for film buffs and people travelling with kids.

The details: Location Bavariafilmplatz 7, in the suburb of Geiseltal. Bavaria Filmstadt is about 14kms south of the city centre. Phone 89 64 99 20 00 **Website** www.filmstadt.de

Open Mid-March to early November 9am to 4pm, November to March 10am to 3pm. Call ahead to check times for tours in English and French (they're always changing). **Cost** The

tour alone costs €11, children aged six to 14, €8. Throw in the stunt show and 4D cinema and it's €21 for adults and €18 for kids.

Directions Take any S-Bahn to Rosenheimer Platz. Then go up to ground level and jump on tram No. 25 in the direction of Grünwald and get off at Bavariafilmplatz. From there it's still about 10min walk, follow the signs. Give yourself at least 45min to get there from the city centre.

Bavaria Statue and Ruhmeshalle (Hall of Honour)

If you've ever wanted to get inside the head of a beautiful woman, Munich's statue of Bavaria is about to grant your wish.

You can scale the 126 steps through this colossal dame's bronze body to the tiny viewing room inside her head.

It's a good 30m above the Theresienwiese, the asphalt field where the Oktoberfest is held.

There are terrific views across Munich from inside Bavaria's head, but you may want to think twice about the climb on very hot days, when it feels like a sauna. The views are particularly stunning when Oktoberfest is in full swing. Bavaria dons a bear's fur, robe and sword and a lion, another state symbol, sits nearby.

The north face

Though she stands for all that's great about this fiercely patriotic southern German state, her face is actually modelled on...a Berliner! Sculpture Ludwig von Schwanthaler chose a Berlin girl called Cornelia to grace Bavaria's dial. She was designed with the seminal "Germanic" beauty in mind.

Metalworks chief Ferdinand von Miller had the Bavaria Statue finished in 1850. At the time it was the biggest bronze statue made since antiquity. Von Miller made several copies of her little finger to give away as gifts. They were said to be able to hold "three good Bavarian



Maß" of beer. One of these digits is on display at the Munich City Museum (Münchener Stadtmuseum) across town.

Famous faces

Bavaria is framed by the Ruhmeshalle (Hall of Fame) displaying busts of the state's leading lights. The hall's three wings are home to the busts of about 100 famous Bavarian leaders, artists and scientists. It was a boys' club up until 2000, when busts of actor Clara Ziegler and writer Lena Christ were added. Leo von Klenze designed this Doric-columned hall, built 1843-1853.

The details: Location Theresienwiese, Theresienhöhe 16

Cost €3, concession €2 **Open** April to mid-October, daily 9am to 7pm und to 8pm during Oktoberfest. **Directions** Take U-Bahn No. 4 or 5 to Theresienwiese. It's a few hundred metres' walk south-west across the field to the statue.

Blutenburg Castle

This crumpet of medieval splendour is tucked well away from the busy Autobahns of Munich's outer west. Turrets, battlements and a moat hide a twisted history of this hidden gem. Built by Duke Albrecht III in 1439, the castle changed hands several times falling ever deeper into decrepitude before major restorations in the 1980s.

It was originally a hunting lodge and was rebuilt in 1681 following the Thirty Years War. The castle itself is not open to the public, but the grounds, chapel and a restaurant are open throughout the year.

Don't miss the fabulously gothic Chapel of St Sigismund. It's almost as old as the castle itself and holds wooden statues of the 12 Apostles and Virgin Mary from the anonymous "Meister of the Blutenburger Madonna".

There are 16 stained-glass windows that showcase the highlights of the Holy Book.

The castle grounds are also home to *the Internationale Jugendbibliothek* (International Youth Library), whose shelves are stacked with roughly 400,000 children's and youth books in 110 languages.

The details: Location Corner of Pippinger Strasse and Verdi Strasse, Pipping **Phone** (Restaurant) 089 1 21 10 **Open** April to September, 9am to 5pm, October to March, 10am to 4pm. **Cost** There's no cost to visit the chapel or the grounds, and you can't get into the castle anyway. **Directions** Take any S-Bahn to München-Pasing and then bus 56 or 162 to the stop Blutenburg.

Zirkus Krone

Roll up, roll up, the biggest circus in all of Europa is here in all of its glorious, beastly best! There are wild animals from darkest Africa – Tigers! Camels! Elephants! And of course, you must see the sea lions! There are performers, a high-wire, swings and a really big trampoline! And what would any circus be without clowns? At Krone we've got 'em in spades.

A century of shows

Yes, Munich is the home of Zirkus Krone, where its 400 carnies spend winter in between tours around the continent. I think circuses are by their nature anachronistic, but if you're so inclined, this is meant to be one of Europe's best.

Now into its fourth generation, the Sembach-Krone family has been putting bums on seats for nigh on 100 years. The current circus rotunda with about 3000 seats debuted in 1962. The circus performs in Munich from Christmas Day to April, and there's a zoo there on Sundays. Children's theatre, boxing matches and concerts keep the venue pumping for the rest of the year.

The details: **Location** Mars Strasse 439 **Phone** 0 18 05 24 72 87 (toll number) **Website** www.circus-krone.de **Performances:** Monday to Saturday 3.30 pm and 8pm, Sundays and public holidays 2pm and 6pm. **Cost** Tickets €12 to €33. **Directions** Take any S-Bahn to Hackerbrücke. From there it's a 5min walk north.

Day trips from Munich

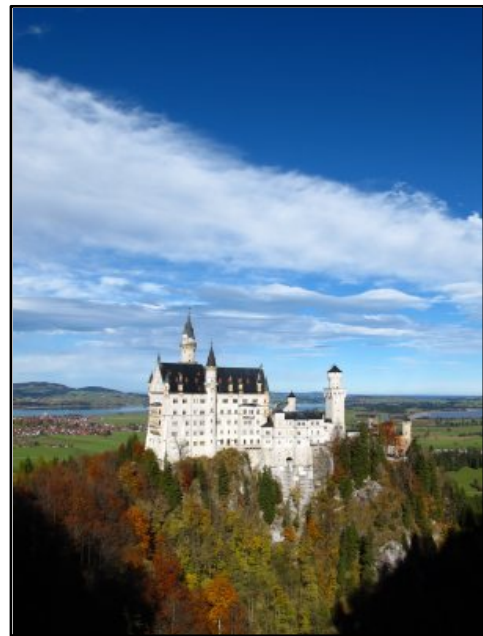
Just in case you weren't sure, Munich is the capital city of Germany's largest state, Bavaria (German: Bayern). Regional Bavaria is very well connected to the capital, so Munich makes an excellent base for days-trips and excursions. Here are 10 great ideas for exploring Bavaria, your portal for exploring this beautiful region!

Neuschwanstein Castle Germany

Think of romantic Germany and one indelible image comes to mind – Neuschwanstein Castle. It's the stuff of fairy tales, an old oddball's dream, a majestic synergy of structure and landscape and one of Europe's biggest tourist magnets. When Walt Disney sought inspiration for his Sleeping Beauty Castle he looked no further than here.

It just missed out on a placing in a 2007 New Seven Wonders of the World competition. But that doesn't matter, Neuschwanstein's caretakers are happy to call it the eighth.

But what's all the fuss about? Let's pass through the gates and into the castle and discover the reality behind the hype.



"It is my intention to rebuild the old castle ruin at Hohenschwangau near the Pollat Gorge in the authentic style of the old German knights' castles... the location is the most beautiful one could find, holy and unapproachable, a worthy temple for the divine friend who has brought salvation and true blessing to the world."

- Ludwig II, the creator of Neuschwanstein Castle

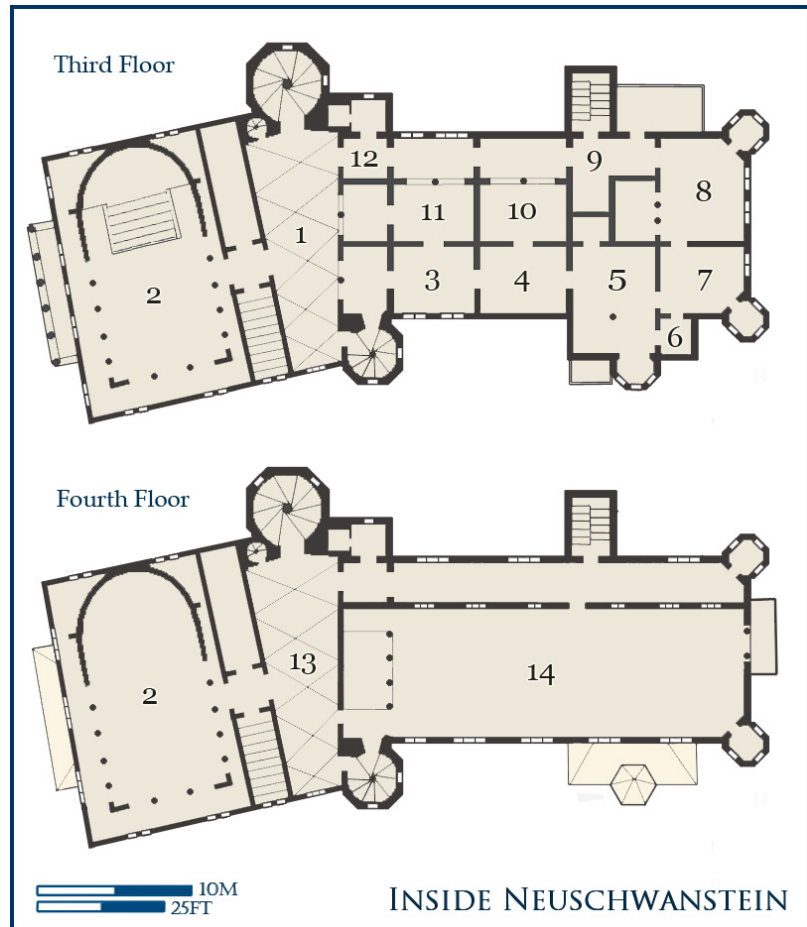
Haven for dreamers

To understand Neuschwanstein you need a glimpse into the castle's creator, the eccentric, often-called "crazy" King Ludwig II (1845 - 1886).

Ludwig was a reclusive dreamer who escaped into a fantasy world of romantic German mythology and the works of composer Richard Wagner (1813-1883), whose works he sponsored and basically worshipped. Although Ludwig's Bavarian subjects adored him (they nicknamed him "*unser Kini*" - our darling King) he was a bit of a flapdoodle with the finances. He embarked on a costly construction program which included Linderhof Palace, royal apartments in Munich's Residenz and

Herrenchiemsee Palace, which was started after Neuschwanstein.

No-one had a built a castle like Neuschwanstein in Europe for centuries but that didn't deter Ludwig. It was to be a glorious stage for the operas of his "divine friend" Wagner. Ludwig wanted to share the castle with the composer and there's some speculation that the King's love, though never requited, went beyond the merely plutonic. Neuschwanstein was started in 1869 and construction continued until Ludwig's murky death in 1886.



Key to Neuschwanstein plan

Third Floor

- 1. Lower Hall
- 2. Throne Hall
- 3. Anteroom
- 4. Dining room
- 5. Bedroom
- 6. Oratory
- 7. Dressing room
- 8. Salon
- 9. Grotto/ Conservatory
- 10. Study
- 11. Adjutant's room
- 12. Passage

Fourth Floor

- 2. Throne Hall
- 13. Upper Hall
- 14. Singers' Hall

Unhappy start, unjust end

Ludwig spent only 170 days at the castle before he was arrested and declared insane by a doctor who hadn't even examined him. The king washed up a few days later on the shores of Lake Starnberg near Munich. Although it was declared an accidental drowning, it's now pretty clear that Ludwig was assassinated by conspirators in the government who feared he was sending the kingdom's coffers to the cleaners. Most visitors to Neuschwanstein first head for the postcard views from the Marienbrücke (St Mary's Bridge) above a nearby gorge. Beyond the castle is the Forgensee (Lake Forgen), an artificial lake which wasn't there in Ludwig's time. Down to the left sits Hohenschwangau Castle, where Ludwig grew up. He had a miserable childhood with a disciplinarian dad, so Neuschwanstein's location was picked party so he could literally rise above all those bad memories.

Bluffs and guises

The castle's soaring limestone walls are just a façade, the castle's core is composed of bricks. You can only inspect the interior as part of a guided tour and there's often so many visitors it's easy to feel like a cow being hurriedly herded through. But there's still enough time to soak up the majesty. Most of the 14 rooms finished before the king's death are replete with murals from German mythology Wagner had moulded into operatic sagas. Among them are knights Lohengrin and Parzifal, the poet Tannhäuser and the tragic lovers Tristan and Isolde. Swans are another *leitmotif*, the Salon alone is decorated with hundreds of them.

Ludwig was sometimes known as the "Swan King", the water bird being another feature in Wagner's sagas of the grail knights. Neuschwanstein was given its name, literally "New Swan Stone", only after the king's death. When it was being built Ludwig called it "Neue Burg Hohenschwangau". Ludwig loved the high-tech as well as the mythical and fitted out the castle with the then latest gadgets – hot and cold running water, flushing toilets and even a telephone.

Standout rooms include:

- **The Thronsaal** (Throne Room) built in Byzantine style with one notable absence – the throne itself. The stool was still on order when Ludwig II died. My favourite mural here is one of St George slaying the dragon.
- **Ludwig's Bedroom** is done in rich, dark wood and the bed itself looks like a neo-gothic chapel. The oratory alcove to the side provided a private place to pray.

- **The Grotto** which looks like an artificial cave and once sported coloured lights and a mini-waterfall.
- The showpiece **Sängersaal** (Minstrels' Hall) was where Wagner was to compose and conduct more operas. Though Ludwig II never got to see a performance here there are now concerts every September (see details below).

Closing thoughts

As you leave Neuschwanstein you might find yourself thinking about the tragic tale of its maker and how he met his own. You might be pondering the sagas of the sagas of German knights, poets and lovers in which the King took refuge.

You might even be thinking about what you'd throw up if you had the cash to live out your wildest architectural fantasies like Ludwig. Whatever's going through your mind, there's no doubt you'll be able to remember Neuschwanstein for the rest of your life.

Practical details about the castle

Location Neuschwanstein Castle sits at the foot of the Bavarian Alps above the village of Hohenschwangau, south-west of Munich.

It's about 4kms (2.5mi) away from the larger town of Füssen, which means in German, appropriately, "Feet".

Directions for getting to the bottom of the hill...

By public transport: It's a good idea to leave early from Munich to beat the crowds – the train journey takes about 2.5 hours. There are some direct to Füssen, but you may have to change trains in the town of Buchloe.

You can check train connections on the Deutsche Bahn (German Rail) English website www.bahn.com, just type in Munich Hbf into the top line and Neuschwanstein into the bottom line. Remember if you're leaving after 9am on a weekday and any time on a weekend you can get the dosh-saving Bayern Ticket. It costs €22 for one person and €4 extra for each additional passenger.

From Füssen train station, take bus No. 73, 78 or 9651 up to the bottom of the hill where the castles are. There's the Visitor Centre where you can take care of your tickets.

By car from Munich: The quickest way is to take the A95 south from Munich towards Garmisch-Partenkirchen, then turn right onto the B2 towards Starnberg.

Follow it all the way down to the village of Peiting where you make a right onto the B17, which takes you to Schwangau. The drive should take just under two hours. Parking costs €4.50 for the day.

....and up to the castle

The most obvious way is to walk which takes about 30min. If you want to get a little romantic horse-drawn carriage will take you up there for €6 and back down again for €3. There's also a dedicated bus which takes you up the Marienbrücke lookout, from there it's a 10min walk downhill to the castle (Cost €1.80 up, €1 down). The bus doesn't run if there's too much ice or snow.

Neuschwanstein Castle tickets: With over 1.3 million visitors each year it's no surprise that getting into Neuschwanstein can be a pain. Luckily, there are a few ways to avoid a long wait (read on). Tour guides can lead you through in English and German and there are audio-guides available for other languages. Photography isn't allowed inside.

Normal procedure is to buy your ticket from the visitors' centre. Regular tickets cost €12 and concession €11, under 18-year-olds get in free. The "King's Ticket" lets you visit both the castles Neuschwanstein and the nearby Hohenschwangau on the same day, it costs €23 regular, €21 concession.

Combination "Königsschlösser" tickets cost €24 and are valid for the castles above as well as Ludwig's other creations, Linderhof Palace and Herrenchiemsee.

Queue jumping: You can jump the queue at the visitors' centre by booking your ticket ahead on the Net here , but you can only book on the day of your visit and there's a €1.80 surcharge. Still totally worthwhile if you're visiting from May to September.

What I did on my last visit was to bugger the visitors' centre all together and head straight up to the castle. Go into the forecourt and just to the right there's an office where you can buy a 14-day ticket (€24 single, €40 family/partner).

This ticket give you entry into 40 palaces, castles and other sites across Bavaria, including the Munich Residenz, palaces Linderhof, Nymphenburg and Herrenchiemsee and the Bavaria Statue in Munich.

And the best part is they'll let you join the very next tour of Neuschwanstein. Royal treatment indeed. The ticket doesn't cover Hohenschwangau Castle, however.

Opening hours: The castle is open from 9am to 6pm April to September and 10am to 4pm October to March. It's closed on New Year's Eve, New Year's Day, Christmas Eve and Christmas Day.

Phone +49 (0) 83629 30830 **Website** www.neuschwanstein.de

Concerts in the Sängersaal To enquire about concerts contact organisers through the website www.schwangau.de or call +49 (0) 8362.81980.

Tegelberg

There's more to do around the Bavarian town of Füssen than just checking out castles. Sure, the elegant piles of Neuschwanstein and Hohenschwangau are more than enough reason to make the trip down from Munich. But they're just a couple of cherries on one very big scenic cake.



How about following in my footsteps by exploring the magnificent Alps behind the castles? I recommend hiking the Tegelberg (Mount Tegel). You don't have to be an iron man to get to the top and the scenery is superlative. And if you don't want to strain your poor calves at all, you can always get the ski-lift to the top of the mountain!

OK, so how do I get to the top?

Climbing the Tegelberg makes for a good half-day expedition. You can start from the bus stop at the bottom of the hill where everybody gets off to buy tickets for the castles.

Here's what you do: Walk up the road past the queue and follow the signs up the hill.

You'll probably pass a horse-and-carriage or two and get some lovely views of the bright yellow Hohenschwangau Castle.

That's where the so-called "Mad" King Ludwig II of Bavaria grew up. There's a steeper, shortcut path off to the right after you enter the woods. Take it if you want to shave off a bit of time! Make your way to the Marienbrücke (St Mary's Bridge). This is where to go for those quintessential postcard views of Neuschwanstein Castle, rising like a dream before a stunning landscape of lakes and countryside.

The bridge is an engineering mini-marvel in itself, having been built in 1866 suspended 100m (300ft) above the Pollat Gorge.

Once you've got your pics, go back to the little landing area and turn left. There's quite a long, flat stretch along a country road before the track starts to ascend. It's pretty hard to get lost, just follow the signs directing you to Tegelberg or Tegelbergbahn and don't stray

off the track. There's a chance to see wildlife, especially deer, which romp around the slopes somehow without a care of plummeting off a cliff.

Is it dangerous?

The track isn't especially steep but it is quite narrow in parts so I'd recommend strapping on a good pair of hiking boots. Between October and May there's a good chance you'll encounter snow on the higher trails. It can turn parts of the track into sludge and make things quite slippery when the snow is melting. I wouldn't recommend hiking when it's too cold (i.e. November to March) anyway.

What else should you take?

I wouldn't do it without a bottle of water, and a bag of sweets for an occasional sugar hit. You might want a walking stick to make the climb easier on your knees as well.

Just how far is it?

It's about 2kms (1.2mi) from the bus stop to St Mary's Bridge. From there it's another 6km (3.7mi) to the top of the Tegelberg. You'll go from a height of 830m above sea level at the car park up to about 1700m at the station near the summit.

The walk up takes about 3.5 hours at an even pace.

What's at the top?

Reward yourself with something nice after the long hike. I had a burger and fries – simple I know, but it was nonetheless the most rewarding meal I'd had all year!

Next to the station there's a platform with sweeping views over the town of Füssen and a few lakes including the immense Forggensee (Lake Forgggen). The platform is also a popular launch pad for hang gliders and paragliders.

After taking a break at the station you can continue up to the summit. It's another couple of hundred metres past the station at 1,881m above sea level. You can easily see it from the viewing platform. I didn't bother with this myself as it was already late enough in the day and my legs had had it.

If you don't want to walk down the mountain there's a ski-lift to take you all the way to another car park at the bottom. It costs €10 one way and presumably €20 for a return ticket. Walking both up and down the mountain in one day would be a truly monumental undertaking, methinks. From the base of the 'berg you can get a bus back into Füssen, and perhaps a nice, warm bath.

Kloster Andechs

Head for the mountain!

The sacred mountain.

The sacred mountain of beer :-) :-)

The “Heliger Berg” (meaning Sacred Mountain in German) is a favourite day-trip destination for many Münchener. Upon it sits Kloster Andechs, a millennium-old Benedictine monastery and church. The place of pilgrimage rises above the lovely Ammersee (Lake



Ammer) about 40kms south-west of central Munich. But the main reason for going there is the 3,500-seat beer garden and restaurant which surround the church.

The monk-brewed libation is considered one of Germany’s finest. To top it off, there are great views of the lake and surrounds from the top of the hill. All in all it's an excellent spot to while away an afternoon.

Backstory

Legend has it that Christian relics were brought from the Holy Land to a long-forgotten castle on the Andechs hill in the 10th century. The relics included twigs from Jesus’ crown of thorns and a victory cross from Europe-uniter Charlemagne (742 – 814).

The first pilgrimages to Andechs started about 150 years later.

There’s evidence Andechs' monks have been brewing beer for about 900 years. The drink helped them survive the 40 days of fasting during Lent. The first church was built here around 1430.

Swedish troops damaged the building during the Thirty Years War (1618 – 1848) and it was completely destroyed by a lightning strike in 1669. Though this could easily have been seen as a message from above, the hardy monks rebuilt their abbey and the existing church was unveiled in 1675.

The church was originally gothic. Flourishes of rococo and baroque artworks were added in the 1700s. Take a look inside before you make for the refreshments. Even if houses of the holy aren’t usually up your alley it’s hard not to be impressed. Composer Carl Orff (1895 –

1982) is buried in the church and his works come alive each year at the Andechs Orff Festival in spring/early summer.

Andechs beer

Me with my first *Maß* of Andechser Doppelbock Dunkel in 2007. Andechs makes seven varieties of beer, try as many as you can but watch out, it can be strong stuff. Here's a guide to the brews.

1 ▪ Andechser Weißbier Hell – an unfiltered, cloudy wheat beer with a light colour.

Tastes a bit fruity and very, very nice (5.5 per cent alcohol).

2 ▪ Andechser Weißbier Dunkel – this is what they call a “character beer”, quite heavy so you shouldn't need to eat for a while afterwards. It's an unfiltered, dark, wheaty brew with a pleasant aroma (5 per cent alcohol).

3 ▪ Andechser Hell – touted as a “beer for daily enjoyment”, this is basically lager with a nice malt flavour (4.8 per cent alcohol).

4 ▪ Andechser Spezial Hell – a lager that's often pulled out for festivals and special events (5.9 per cent alcohol).

5 ▪ Andechser Dunkel – a slightly spicy dark beer, good after big meals.

It's got a very similar taste to the Doppelbock Dunkel with a smaller kick (4.9 per cent alcohol).

6 ▪ Andechser Doppelbock Dunkel – the internationally famous knock-out brew. This dark concoction is guaranteed to knock your socks off (7.1 per cent alcohol).

7 ▪ Andechser Bergbock Hell – the light-coloured, mild version of the famous Doppelbock (6.9 per cent alcohol).

A proper look around

Guided tours of the brewery are available in English, French and Italian, you just have to book ahead. See here for more details. Tours in German are given every day and bookings aren't needed.

For non day-trippers

If you can't make it out to the Ammersee you can still sample Andechs beer next to the twin-domed Frauenkirche in central Munich. There you'll find **Andechser am Dom**, a traditional restaurant and beer hall which spills out into the pedestrian zone during summer for the al fresco experience. They're especially proud of their pumpkin soup and game dishes starring roast hare and venison. But the prices aren't too dear!

The Details for Andechser am Dom: Address: Wein Strasse 7a, **Phone** 089 29 84 81, **Website** www.andechser-am-dom.de (in German).

Andechs Details: Location Berg Strasse 2, 82346 Andechs **Phone** (08152) 37 62 61 **Open** Daily 10am to 10pm **Website** (Partly in English) www.andechs.de **Directions** First step is to take S Bahn No. 8 to from Munich to its final stop, Herrsching (40min). From there you've a few options for getting up to Andechs: **On foot:** A nice way to go if the weather's friendly. Leave the station on the left and follow Bahnhof Strasse all the way up the hill and turn left at Seefelder Strasse (see the map below). There are signs to help you along the way. It takes about an hour from the station. **By bus:** Infrequent public buses run between the station and the monastery, look for No. 951 or 956.

Private buses with "Ammersee Reisen" leave from under the "H" sign near the station and cost about the same (€2.20 one way.) The ride takes about 10min.

The last bus leaves Andechs at 6.50pm on weekdays and 7pm on weekends.

By taxi: A taxi ride between the train station and Andechs should cost about €13. A viable option of you're a group of four or five.

By car: Not really a good idea, since you won't be able to taste the lovely beer, will you? if you are the designated one, however, there's plenty of parking at the monastery.

Alternatively, you can get the S6 to Starnberg Nord and then take bus No. 951 from there. Look at the Deutsche Bahn (German Rail) website to check out times, just put in Muenchen HBF into the first line and Kloster Andechs into the second.

Amberg

It's ancient, beautiful and there's no way you've ever heard of it. This town is buried away among Bavaria's hidden gems a few hours north of Munich. On my day-trip up there I felt like the only tourist in the place and I loved it. The city's medieval Old Town is nicknamed the *Ei* (Egg) after the shape of its intact city wall. Doable as a day trip from Munich, Nuremberg or Regensberg, this is a place that will truly enchant you.

Backstory

Iron mining made the city rich during the Middle Ages and it was able to afford one some of the best fortifications in Germany. As well as the still standing city wall Amberg had a water-filled moat and about 100 defensive towers. Medieval scribe Michael Schwaiger declared "Munich is the most beautiful princely city, Leipzig the richest, but Amberg is the most secure!"

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The city fell out of Bavarian control from the 14th century and Protestantism and Lutheranism flourished. Adherents were forced to leave or go Catholic when Bavaria retook the city in 1628.

Fighting invaders and tyrants

The city's bloodiest day was August 24, 1796 with the Battle of Amberg, a pivotal conflict in the French Revolutionary Wars. Austrian Archduke Charles and his force of 40,000 routed a French army of 34,000.

About 1200 French were killed or wounded and the battle was a turning point against them in the war. The Austrians went home with a victory and only 400 casualties.

Amberg's staunch Catholics dared to butt heads with the anti-church Nazis. Over 500 people stormed the streets in 1941 to protest a Nazi decree outlawing crucifixes in schools. The city's Jewish community (which numbered 64 in 1933) had all moved, been arrested or died by the end of the war. The USA kept an army barracks in Amberg until the 1990s.

The city will celebrate its 1000th birthday in 2034.

Suggested walking tour around Amberg

Starting from the train station on the eastern side of the Old Town, follow the path left outside the city walls. Just around the corner is the Nabburger Tor (Nabburg Gate), the grandest of Amberg's four city gates. A drawbridge was lowered to allow access across the moat and the gate's towers were used as medieval dungeons.

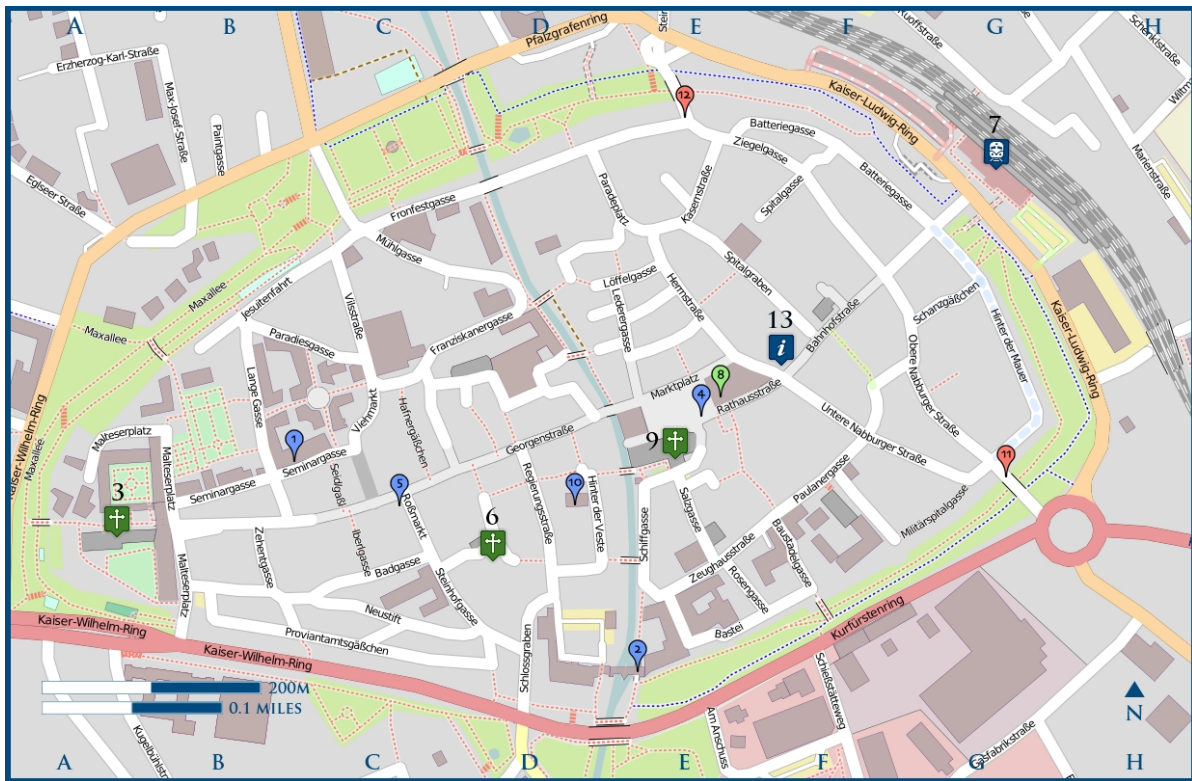
Walk through and then down Untere Nabburger Strasse to reach the square called Hallplatz. There's a tourist info centre at No. 2 across the way. Continue west and you're in the oldest and most bustling part of town....

The Market Square

Marktplatz still lives up to its name on Saturdays when produce and flower stalls fill the square. On the south side stands St Martin's, a gothic Catholic church built in 1421. The 92m (302ft) steeple wasn't added until 300 years later.

Look back west to admire the 14th century Rathaus (Town Hall) with a beautiful external staircase and balcony. After stopping for a drink with the café crowd, duck around to the left of St Martin's to find the Vils River.

Amberg City Centre Map



Down to the river

Once a means of trade and transportation, the Vils divides the Old Town neatly in half.

On Saturdays and some Sundays from May to October you can cruise the river aboard a low-slung raft called a Vils-Platte. The 12m by 2m (39ft by 7ft) vessels were once used to transport iron to nearby

Regensburg and bring salt back to Amberg. A boat tour costs €2.50 for adults and €1 for kids. Boats leave on the hour from 2pm to 5pm, contact the tourist info centre for more details. Now look downstream to the left, if you can't see what's there you may need your glasses....

Through the specs

The Stadtbrille (City Spectacles) gateway stretches across the Vils River. Two of its semi-circular arches cast reflections on the river, if you squint hard enough the effect

Key to Amberg Map

1. The Eh'häusl (Little Wedding House) **B**
2. The Stadtbrille **E**
3. St Georg Catholic Church **A**
4. Marktplatz (centre of town) **E**
5. The Frenzl House
6. The Frauenkirche
7. Amberg Bahnhof (Train Station)
8. Rathaus (Town Hall)

makes it look like a huge pair of specs. The gate was built in the early 1500s as part of the city's defences.

The 'Brille once had portcullises which could be lowered when the city was attacked. Cross the river at the little bridge about half way between the 'Brille and the church and follow Schiffbrück Gasse as it curves right. To the



The view down the Vils.

left is the Catholic Frauenkirche (Church of Our Lady), a former royal court church from the 15th century. It was built on the site of a synagogue that was demolished in the Middle Ages.

Across the way...

If you want, you can turn right here and carry on down to the Luftmuseum (Air Museum) on the corner. It's a new-aged concept housed in a 14th century building. The museum has 21 rooms exhibiting art, architecture and technology all somehow connected to the concept of air. There are also regular theatre and music performances.

(Luftmuseum details - Address: Eichenforstgäßchen 12, **Phone** 09621 420883,

Website luftmuseum.de **Cost** Adults €3.50, children €2 **Open** Tuesday to Friday 2pm to 6pm, weekends 11am to 6pm, during summer an hour longer.)

Continue onto Georgen Strasse, the Old Town's pedestrianized main drag. Admire the Frenzl-Haus (Frenzl House) on the left with its elaborate rococo bay window.

Make a left and a quick right onto Seminar Gasse, where at No.8 you'll find...

The house of love

Every city has its little surprises but I think Amberg's Eh'häusl (Little Wedding House) is one of the cutest I've found anywhere. Touted as the world's smallest hotel with only 56 square metres (63 sq. ft.) and two rooms for rent, the building has a particularly romantic heritage. Legend has it that bygone council laws only permitted homeowners to marry. It took a skint but inspired lover to find a loophole in 1728.

He found a narrow gap between two houses and claimed it as his own. He threw up back and front walls, slapped on a roof and called it a house. Cupid was happy and the council, satisfied. The Eh'häusl changed hands many times as engaged couples moved in to tie the knot before moving out again. What an amazing spot for a dirty little weekend!

Now follow the alleyway to the end to find a walled section at the “top” of the egg-shaped Old Town. Wander through to find an old Jesuit college complex. It's home to a modern library and St Georg (St George's), a 15 century gothic Catholic church. After seeing the highlights of such a beautiful little place, you might feel like weaving your way back into town for a bite to eat to round off your tour.

Annual blowout

Amberg throws its biggest party on a hill – the Maria-Hilf-Bergfest (Hill Festival) is nine days of Bavarian food, music, entertainment and beer. It's like a mini-Oktoberfest without the mass tourism.

(The Details: Location Tents and carousels are set up around the Maria-Hilf-Kirche, a church on the hill about 300m north-east of the train station **Dates** The Bergfest usually takes place from late June to early July, find exact dates on the website

www.mariahilfbergfest.de.

Accommodation in Amberg

There are no dirt-cheap places to stay but some excellent mid-range options.

- The Altstadt Hotel is a beautifully preserved and well-located pile inside the Egg near the train station. (**Address** Batteriegasse 2 **Cost** Single rooms from €50, doubles from €69 **Phone** 09621 788 23 0 **Website** altstadt-hotel-amberg.de).

- The Drahthammer Schlössl Hotel Restaurant is south of the old town and has a fine in-house eatery. (**Address** Drahthammerstraße 30 **Cost** rooms from €110 **Phone** 09621 703 0, **Website** www.hotel-drahthammer-schloessl.com).

- And then there's the romance-soaked Eh'häusl where you can take your pick between a “red salon” or a room with a fireplace (**Address** Seminargasse 8 **Phone** 09621 37 854, **Website** www.ehehaeusl.de in English).

Food and Drink

There are plenty of cafes, bars and restaurants in the old town, especially around Marktplatz and Georgen Strasse. Just take your pick.

Getting there and away

The town is about 180kms north of Munich. It takes about 2.5 hours to get there by train from central Munich, you can check connections here. By car, take the Autobahn A9 north from Munich and turn off right onto the A93 just after the town of Geisenhausen. The journey should take about two hours.

Partnachklamm

The Partnachklamm is a spectacular 700m gorge that frames a surging white-water river. You can walk the length of the gorge along a pathway cut into the limestone rock just a few metres above the river.



Walk the line

You weave through pitch-black tunnels and emerge into daylight to gaze up at waterfalls feeding into

the gorge from 80m above. It's best to go on a sunny day to see the sunbeams play off the rocks and falling water. The power of the water is amazing – it flows down from melted glacial snow ice and snow produced by a slow-dying ice-age glacier, the Schneeferner, further up in the Alps.

Wonderland

The gorge is equally spectacular in winter, but for a different reason. Ice from the waterfalls freezes the walls of the gorge into a wonderland stalactites.

You can also cross the top of the gorge on the Eisernen Brücke (Iron Bridge), which was built back in 1914. Take a raincoat if you have one in any season, or be prepared to get a

The Partnachklamm in numbers

Visitors per year: **about 200,000**

Length of the gorge: **699m (2293ft)**

Length of the tunnel sections: **247m (810ft)**

Height of the highest rock wall: **86m (282m)**

Height of the Iron Bridge (Eisernen Brücke): **68m (23ft)**

Average height of the gorge: **80m (262ft)**

little wet from dripping water. Compared to Neuschwanstein this palace was tiny. And quiet. Only a few groups of tourists were lingering at the long pool in the forecourt. It's an incredibly peaceful setting nestled in a valley at the foothills of the Bavarian Alps.

Ahh...the serenity! So much serenity.

Why stop there?

Visiting the gorge is enough of a reason by itself to make a day trip from Munich.

But there are plenty of things to see you want to explore a bit further from the far side of the gorge.

A good option to round out a full-day's hike is the Königshaus am Schachen, a little-known cottage built by King Ludwig II further up into the mountains. It's a good three to four hours past the gorge. If you're very ambitious you can even climb all the way to the summit of Germany's highest peak, the Zugspitze. It which soars 2962m (9718ft) over Garmisch-Partenkirchen. This trek takes at least eight hours, so count on bedding down at the guesthouse on the summit

Details for visiting the gorge

Open summer 8am to 6pm, winter 9am to 5pm. The gorge is open seven days a week, all year round - except for a while in spring (March or April) when melting snow makes the pathway too wet and dangerous. **Website** The official website here

www.parnachklamm.eu is only in German. **Cost** Adults €2, children €1.50

Directions From the Garmisch-Partenkirchen train station you can catch local bus No.1 or 2. to the gorge, jump on a horse-drawn carriage or take a 40-minute walk. **On foot:** Follow Bahnhof Strasse directly out from the station and turn left at Reintal Strasse, follow it to the end to get the Olympic ski jump (*Große Olympiaschanze*). Walk around the stadium and follow the signs to reach the Parnachklamm.

Königshaus am Schachen

The palaces of Linderhof, Herrenchiemsee and Neuschwanstein Castle are among Germany's greatest treasures. But Ludwig's "highest" achievement is very little known. His diminutive Königshaus (King's House) is a wooden two-storey cottage high up on Mount Schachen. The house is in the Bavarian Alps near the town of Garmisch-Partenkirchen, about an hour's drive south of Munich.

The Königshaus will be an achievement for you as well, if you decide the brave the hours-long hike up the mountain to get there. Yep, the Swiss Chalet-style cottage is only

accessible by foot or mountain bike. Don't lose heart, the way up is part of the fun and traverses forest paths, mountain streams and stunning Alpine scenery.

Royal highness

The Königshaus am Schachen was built from 1869 to 1872 and everything had to be carted up the mountain. Fresh running water came straight from the mountain streams.

The building is sometimes described as a hunting lodge but Ludwig never used it as such.



Catch your breath once you make it to the top. Breathe in the fresh mountain air and maybe sing a few verses from the "*The Sound of Music*". Then you'll be ready to take a peek inside the cottage. Forget what preconceptions you may gain from its plain, wooden exterior - a stark contrast of interior design awaits within.

Different strokes

The ground floor rooms are so simply done they could be out of some old granny's house who hasn't bothered decorating since the 1940s. You could almost forget that a king stayed here if it wasn't for touches like an intricate wooden chandelier and a cosy upholstered toilet-seat. There's a large dining room, a study, bedroom and guest room.

Up the staircase and you're suddenly blasted into another world - behold Ludwig's "Türkische Saal" (Turkish Hall) - an explosion of gold and decoration. Luxuriant couches line the room centred around an imposing fountain. Instead of using flowers which would have had to be brought up the mountain, Ludwig used stands full of peacock feathers as decoration. Stained-glass windows throw rainbow hues across the room.

Exotic affairs

Though the king loved the Bavarian countryside he also adored escaping into a fantasy world. Ludwig came up to his Königshaus to throw birthday parties for himself, often accompanied by no-one but his most loyal attendants. The parties had an Arabian Nights theme. Ludwig would lounge about in elaborate Eastern outfits.

Some servants would sit around cross-legged smoke hookah pipes while others would play music and prance about. Nearby the Königshaus is a restaurant, beer garden and a small

guesthouse with rooms for rent (see details below). A little further down the mountain is the Alpengarten (Alpine Garden). Growing there are over 1000 different species of flora sourced from ranges including the Himalayas and the Alps. One of Germany's natural wonders lies just around the corner from the twin towns of Garmisch-Partenkirchen in the Bavarian Alps. The Partnachklamm is a spectacular 700m gorge that frames a surging white-water river. You can walk the length of the gorge along a pathway cut into the limestone rock just a few metres above the river.

Getting there...Via the Partnachklamm

The Königshaus makes a nice day trip from Garmisch-Partenkirchen in combination with a jaunt through the Partnachklamm (a spectacular natural gorge). It's possible to do the whole thing in a day-trip from Munich, just leave bright and early. The path from the Partnachklamm is well made, but quite steep. It rises up 1150m from the bottom. Pack your best walking shoes and a big bottle of water. Reckon on about three to three-and-a-half hours to get up there.

Via Schloss Elmau There's a less strenuous, but longer way up starting from the car park near the hotel Schloss Elmau. From there you "only" have to climb up 850m.

You can also do this route on a mountain bike. To get there get a connecting train from Garmisch-Partenkirchen one stop further to the village of Klais and then continue along the street Elmauer Weg.

The journey from Munich's train station takes about an hour-and-a-half. Don't forget that the Bayern Ticket is great value if you're travelling with a group of up to five people, for more details go to the entry under the headline "buying tickets".

The Königshaus is about 9km from Schloss Elmau and 10km from the Partnachklamm, and that's not counting the uphill metres! But don't sweat it, on my way up I saw children, senior citizens and even a few doggies and they managed the climb easily enough.

Other details: Open The Königshaus am Schachen is open from the end of May to the start of October. **Tours** You can only inspect the Königshaus on a guided tour. They run at 11am, 1pm, 2pm, 3pm and 4pm. They're done in German, but if you ask the tour guide he can explain a few things in English too. **Phone** Call another of Ludwig's palaces, Schloss Linderhof for more info on +49 88 22 92 030. Or you can call the restaurant/guest house, called the Schachenhaus, on the number below. **Accommodation** The same family that runs the restaurant has a guesthouse with 70 beds. You can choose between staying in a dorm with mattresses on the floor for €10 or getting a private room for €15. It's open from

the end of May until the middle of October. For more info see the website www.schachenhaus.de or call +49 0172 8768 868.

Cities in Bavaria

There's much more to Bavaria than just the capital. Here's a snapshot of what awaits in the next 10 biggest cities, in order of population. They're all beautiful places to visit and very, very old.

Each of these Bavarian cities has an impressive castle, palace, city hall and sometimes all of the above. I've included each city's coat-of-arms because they give you a little clue about the history of the city, and hey, they're pretty.

Check out the Bavaria map here. It shows the locations of these cities in Bavaria.

1. Nuremberg (German: Nürnberg)

Location in the Middle Franconia (*Mittlefranken*) region

Population 500,132

German kings liked to make their digs in Nuremberg, once the unofficial capital of the Holy Roman Empire. Nuremberg's Hauptplatz comes alive with Germany's most famous Christmas market (Christkindlesmarkt) in December.

On a visit you can explore the medieval Altstadt (Old Town), framed by city walls and the glorious Kaiserburg (Imperial Castle). The castle was built in phases over 400 years from the 12th century onwards. Then pay a visit to the Reichsparteigelände, a massive open area where the infamous Nazi Nuremberg Rallies of the 1930s were held. And don't forget to sample home-grown treats including Lebkuchen (gingerbread) and the diminutive Nürnberger Bratwurst.



2. Augsburg

Location in the Swabia (*Schwaben*) district

Population 262,371

Germany's second-oldest city, Augsburg lies roughly halfway down the Romantic Road touring route. It came to prominence in the Middle-Ages under the lights of Jakob "the Rich" Fugger, once the Bill Gates of global banking and trading. Most of Augsburg's landmark buildings are the work of architect Ellias Holl (1573-1646). Chief among them is the monumental Rathaus (Town Hall) and its showpiece Goldener Saal (Golden Hall).



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In the main square stands a fountain/statue of the Roman Emperor Augustus. Augustus' stepsons, Drusus and Tiberius, founded the city in 15BC. Another top attraction is the Fuggerei, the world's oldest social housing settlement. Augsburg is the third-biggest of the cities in Bavaria.

3. Würzburg

Location in the Lower Franconia (*Unterfranken*) region

Population 134,440

Würzburg is a bustling university town on Bavaria's northern periphery.

Although over 90 per cent of the city centre was destroyed in World War

Two it has since been lovingly restored. The city straddles the river Main and is the capital of the famous Franconia wine region. Würzburg's landmark address is the Residenz, a palace built for a demanding pair of prince-bishops. The Residenz is baroque, but needs no fixing (chish!). A highlight inside is the Kaisersaal (Imperial Hall) topped with a fresco of Emperor Barbarossa.



4. Regensburg

Location in the Upper Palatinate (*Oberpfalz*) region

Population 131,489

The stuff of Middle-Ages fantasies, lovely Regensburg's core is a UNESCO World Heritage Site. It sits at the confluence of the Danube and

Regen rivers, the former crossed by the humpbacked Steinere Brücke (Stone Bridge). It's one of the most-loved cities in Bavaria and an easy day-trip from Munich.

Take a cruise along the river or explore the Old Town. It's a maze of criss-crossing alleyways centred around the twin-spired Dom St Peter (St Peter's Cathedral). Don't forget to take in the grandeur of the palace Schloss Thurn und Taxis. That's the former home of the founders of Europe's first postal system.



5. Ingolstadt

Location in the Upper Bavaria (*Oberbayern*) region

Population 122,213

Another age-old Danube city, Ingolstadt is the home of the tragic, the mysterious and the highly auto-licious. Firstly, it was the birthplace of

author Mary Shelly's "Creature", brought to life through the labours of scientist Victor Frankenstein.



Secondly, it was the birthplace of the real secret society known as the Illuminati, meaning “Enlightened”, which some theorize wields a shadowy hand on the world’s governments and big business. Lastly and much more out in the open, Ingostadt is the headquarters of the Audi luxury car company. Contemplate the past as you stroll its gothic streets.

6. Fürth

Location in the Middle Franconia (*Mittelfranken*) region

Population 113,848

Pretty little Fürth is often overlooked by visitors in favour of its noisy neighbour, Nuremburg, given that the two cities’ centres are only 7kms apart. Unfair, perhaps, as Fürth was a totally separate entity for much of its 1000+ year history and boasts a favour all of its own.

If you come, don’t miss the grandiose municipal theatre (Stadttheater) and the Jewish Museum – the city once had the biggest Jewish population in southern Germany.



7. Erlangen

Location in the Middle Franconia (*Mittelfranken*) region

Population 103,859

Another centre close to Nuremburg, Erlangen is best known as a university city with broad, tree-lined boulevards. It was expelled from France in 1683. Major sites to see include Erlangen Castle (Schloss) which today houses the university administration, and the botanical gardens. Erlangen’s annual blowout is the Bergkirchweih, a 12-day mini-Oktoberfest that takes place around Pentecost in May or June. Erlangen is one of the more overlooked bigger cities in Bavaria.



8. Bayreuth

Location in the Upper Franconia (*Oberfranken*) region

Population 73,252

Bayreuth is best-known as the home of Richard Wagner (1813-1883), the cranky composer worshipped by King Ludwig II and Hitler alike.

The operatic temple to Wagner’s works is the Bayreuth Festspielhaus. It’s the site of an annual showcase of the composer’s operas. Wagner’s great-granddaughters, Eva Wagner-Pasquier and Katharina Wagner, direct the Bayreuth Festival there in their ancestor’s name. It can take up to 10 years to secure tickets to the event.

Also worth a look here is the expansive New Castle (Neues Schloss) with an enviable collection of porcelain. A top destination for classical music fans.



9. Bamberg

Location in the Upper Franconia (*Oberfranken*) region

Population 69,558

One of the most stunning smaller cities in Bavaria, Bamberg's UNESCO Heritage-listed streets ooze charm. It's sometimes known as the "Franconian Rome" thanks to its seven-hilled setting and has its own "Little Venice", a network of canals and streams traversed by tourist-bearing gondolas.

A stroll up through the old town, past the town hall island to the magnificent cathedral and Neue Residenz will have even the most jaded travellers in raptures. Few visitors to Bamberg escape without sampling its famous Rauchbier (smoked beer), a reddish ale with the tang of bacon. Much tastier than it sounds.



10. Aschaffenburg

Location in the Lower Franconia (*Unterfranken*) region

Population 68,672

They call this place the "Bavarian Nice" after the town on the French Riviera – think Mediterranean gardens, long, languid alleyways and a sunny climate stimulating subtropical flora.

Historically a long way from Munich, and even Franconia, Aschaffenburg is tucked away in the state's north-western reaches just a short hop from Hessian hub-city Frankfurt am Main. It's one of the most far-flung cities in Bavaria. Things to see here include the high-and-mighty Schloss Johannisburg castle and a replica of a Pompeian palazzo built for King Ludwig I, the Pompejanum.



Chiemsee (Lake Chiem)

Report on Herrenchiemsee Palace by guest writer: Rebecca Pentelow

Situated only 60 km from Munich, the beautiful Chiemsee lake, sometimes referred to as the 'Bavarian sea' is home to several small islands, including perhaps Germany's most fascinating island, Herrenchiemsee.

Easily accessible by train, there is also a boat trip around the islands, allowing tourists to stop at both of the main islands, Herrenchiemsee and Frauenchiemsee, as well as a small holiday town on the other side of the lake, called Gstadt.

Herrenchiemsee island

Herrenchiemsee is home to one of Ludwig II's palaces, also known as Herrenchiemsee palace. Although perhaps not as opulent as Neuschwanstein, Ludwig's most famous castle, Herrenchiemsee is based on the French Palace of Versailles, and a great deal of the interior artwork is dedicated to the French king, Louis XIV. Though it was never finished, Herrenchiemsee still boasts impressive gardens, including a fountain modelled on the original *Bassin de Latone*; and a hall of mirrors 98 metres long, a third longer than the original in Versailles.

Much of the castle is open to tourists, including the recreation of the Ambassador's Staircase, which is particularly interesting as the original was destroyed in 1752.

Herrenchiemsee is also known on the island as the 'New Palace,' due to the presence of an Augustine Monastery which was later converted into the 'Old Palace.'

The monastery was founded in around 765, and is also well worth a visit, especially for those looking to brush up on their history. In 1949, all eleven leaders of the western German states sent delegates to this small island to draft the 'Grundgesetz', or German constitution. An only slightly modified version of this 'Grundgesetz' would later go on to become the 'Verfassung,' or the German constitution as it is known today, and a museum dedicated to its creation can be found within the Old Palace.

Frauenchiemsee island

Although perhaps not as historically relevant as Herrenchiemsee, its smaller sister island, Frauenchiemsee, is also well worth a visit. Home to an active Benedictine convent as well as several hundred permanent residents, it boasts the famous Kloster Liquor, which is produced by the nuns, as well as several small businesses run by the local residents, for example a small hand-made pottery store.

The details for visiting Herrenchiemsee Palace: Location On an island on the Chiemsee (Lake Chiem), east of Munich. **Phone** +49 (0) 80 51 68 870

Website www.herrenchiemsee.de **Open** Herrenchiemsee Palace is open daily, April to mid-October 9am to 6pm, mid-October to March 9.40am to 4.15pm.

Cost A combination ticket for the palace, King Ludwig II Museum, museum and galleries in the Augustinian Monastery is €8, concession €7. This doesn't include the cost of the ferry to the island, mind you. **Directions** "Doing" Herrenchiemsee by public transport ain't hard. Take a train from Munich Hauptbahnhof (main train station) to Prien. It takes about an hour. Remember you can get a Bayern Ticket for a group of up to five people to cut down

costs, but you can take one of the RE (Regional-Express) trains with it. You can check connections at the Deutsche Bahn website www.bahn.com.

The you can walk to the ferry pier on the lake (takes about 25min), or get a quaint little green steam train from the station at Prien for only a couple of euros. Note: the little train doesn't run during winter.

The boat from Prien to visit both Herreninsel island and Fraueninsel island costs €8 for adults and €4.10 for kids. You can buy tickets from the green train stop at the station or from the ticket office near the pier. You can check boat connections here.

Advice: Leave early in the morning if you can! There's a lot to see around the palace and on the Fraueninsel, so if you want to get you full money's worth you'd best make an early start. Check out the official Herrenchiemsee website here for more help on planning your day.

Schloss Linderhof

I find myself, however, busting at the gums to think of a better term for the slice of heaven they call Linderhof.

This pint-sized palace was the favourite address of Bavaria's "fairy tale king", Ludwig II, after a quick tour you'll understand why.

It took me a good hour driving south from Munich to see

Linderhof, stopping in at Garmisch-Partenkirchen for a quick coffee along the way.

Expectations were high, I'd say almost as high as the Alps we were heading towards. It would be hard to beat Neuschwanstein, Ludwig II's infinitely more famous fairy tale castle they're now calling the eighth wonder of the world.

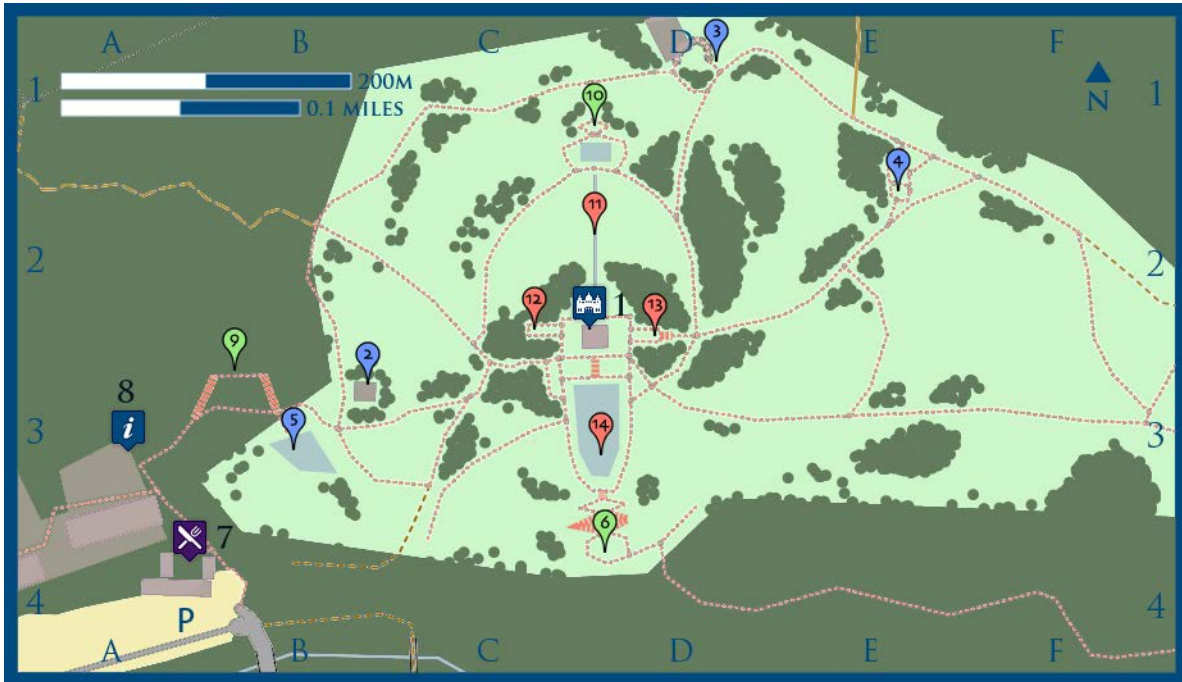
Compared to Neuschwanstein this palace was tiny. And quiet. Only a few groups of tourists were lingering at the long pool in the forecourt. It's an incredibly peaceful setting nestled in a valley at the foothills of the Bavarian Alps. Ahh...the serenity! So much serenity.

The tour begins...

An English-speaking group assembled in the vestibule (entrance hall) where a tour guide came out to meet me and the rest of the guests.

She said this was Ludwig's favourite home, built on the site of his father's old cottage and finished in 1878. Ludwig lived over seven years of his life here compared to his 11 nights at Neuschwanstein before he was declared insane and carted away.

Linderhof Park Palace map



The guide said Ludwig drew inspiration for Schloss Linderhof from his hero French "Sun-King" Louis XIV. Traces of the Sun-King's Versailles palace are all over the palace and grounds.

We were led through a succession of rooms, each somehow more opulent than the next. First stop up the stairs was a tapestry chamber.

Talk about spiffy! Every

wall, chair and chest of drawers was gilded in gold and a fine mural graced the ceiling.

Next up the audience chamber. Quite small, but then again, the king never asked anyone over for tea and crumpets.

Key to Linderhof Palace Park map

1. Linderhof Palace
2. Royal Lodge
3. Venus Grotto
4. Moorish Kiosk
5. Swan Pond
6. Temple of Venus
7. Restaurant and hotel
8. Ticket office and information desk
9. Bust of King Ludwig II

Ludwig was an incredible recluse and preferred to study in here, devouring books on art and architecture and thinking up grandiose schemes to glorify his kingdom. Still, I couldn't imagine a finer setting for an afternoon sandwich with the Queen of Spain or whoever.

The masterful bedroom

Schloss Linderhof's audience chamber was amazing enough, but the bedchamber had me dropping my jaw. It's the largest room in the palace and crowned with a 108-candle crystal chandelier. The golden balustrade blocking off the bed had me scratching my chin.

Surely a recipe for disaster. Just think of the trips he must have had making midnight runs to the bathroom after a hard day's night on Bavarian beer!

The tour guide explained that the balustrade was to give the Ludwig's resting place the appearance of an altar, further glorifying his kingly

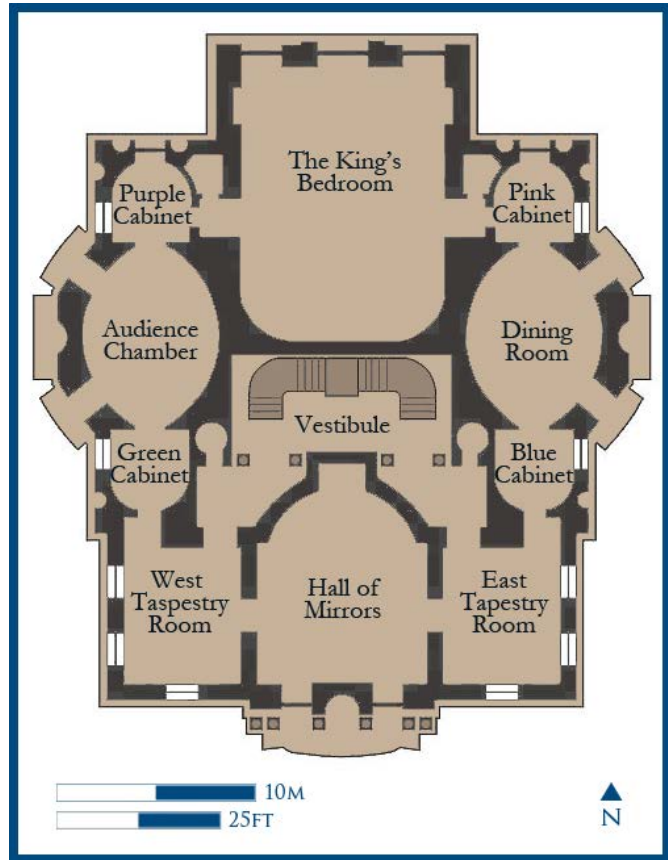
goodness. Ludwig subscribed to the absolutist school of rule, believing the king was anointed by God and could do whatever the hell he liked.

Next up was the dining room, where Ludwig dined alone. I mean really alone. Ludwig had a "magic table" installed which could be lowered and raised to and from kitchen. Staff cooked and served meals without ever coming face to face with the king. But who would he have complained to if there was a fly in his soup?

The final showpiece room was the Hall of Mirrors. Ludwig used to stay up late at night reading by candlelight reflected into infinity. He had the two mantelpieces decorated with lapis-lazuli gemstone and paced back and forth on an ostrich plume rug.

Gardens of pleasure

The tour done, we strolled the ornamental gardens and found a few more echoes of the French "Sun-King". A flower bed shaped like a bourbon emblem graced the back courtyard and a bust of Louis XIV lorded over the eastern terrace.



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At the back of the palace we found the cascade, an artificial waterfall streaming gently down 30 steps and culminating at a statue of sea god Neptune at the bottom. We headed up the hill to the Venus Grotto.



This was an artificial cave cut out of the rock. Made for private performances of Richard Wagner's

operas, it has a small lake, a waterfall and one of the first electric lighting systems in the kingdom. The lights could even change colour to suit the mood of the scene being played out.

Ludwig would swan about on the lake in a shell-shaped boat while actors and musicians got it on for an audience of one. How's that for some royal privilege!

Walking back to the car we peeked into some of the other outbuildings. There was a cute Moroccan cottage and a Moorish Kiosk with a peacock-themed throne. They say Ludwig liked to live out flamboyant fantasies within. His servants donned Eastern gowns and sat cross-legged smoking hookah pipes as musicians and dancers entertained. The palace and gardens had me thrilled.

As good as Neuschwanstein? Every little bit and more. I also felt a tad envious that I wasn't born a king and have such fine digs. But then I suppose I wouldn't have had Ludwig's obsession for beauty needed to create something like Linderhof.

The details: Location Schloss Linderhof 12, 82488 Ettal, Bavaria **Phone** 088 2 29 20 30

Website www.linderhof.de **Open** Schloss Linderhof is open daily, April to September 9am to 6pm, October to March 10am to 4pm. **Cost** April to September €8.50, concession €7.50. October to March €5, concession €4

Directions If you're coming by public transport take a train to Oberammergau and then a connecting bus to Schloss Linderhof. If you are driving, take the A95 highway and the road B2 to Oberau. Follow the signs in Oberau to the road B23 (Ettaler Strasse). Outside Ettal turn left into the road ST2060.

Ski resorts near Munich

By guest writer Steve Rout

The long lines of cars heading south on the motorway and the crowded carriages on the trains in the “short platform” section of Munich’s main railway station are testament to the popularity of the nearby mountain ranges.

On a clear day, as the tourist office frequently maintains, you can see the snow-covered peaks from the city. On a clear winter weekend, many of Munich’s inhabitants will be up at various heights on those peaks – skiing, ski touring, snowshoeing or walking. Plenty head into Austria for the generally higher skiing, but there are enough resorts closer at hand in the Bavarian Alps:

Garmisch-Partenkirchen

Garmisch-Partenkirchen is the *grande dame* of German ski resorts, famous for the Winter Olympics and its yearly ski races on the World Cup circuit, and one of the more “traditional” ski areas in the Alps.

As you’d expect, the skiing is pretty impressive, with a fairly extensive range of slopes above the town, all linked by mountain railway. These slopes are also where the World Cup racing takes place and there are some challenging descents to the edge of the town mixed in with the more flattering intermediate terrain.

The immediate disadvantage is the altitude. At only just over 700m, the lower slopes can get thin and icy in poor snow years. On the other hand, the high mountain ski area below the Zugspitze (2961m) would knock the socks of some of the specialist glacier areas in other countries. The train journey inside the mountain or the cable car ride up above the lake (the Eibsee) are spectacular in their own right. The costs are high in Germany’s equivalent to Austria’s Kitzbühel or Switzerland’s St Moritz but, whether a wealthy holidaymaker or a day tripper counting the cash, most visitors find that it is a price worth paying. Garmisch-Partenkirchen is easily reached by motorway or rail connections.

Oberammergau

Oberammergau is, of course, famous for its Passion Play and woodcarving shops. This village in the mountains also boasts two small ski areas (one with very easy slopes and one with a serious and long down through the trees). But the main winter attractions are the picturesque decorations on the houses in the village and the range of winter sports on offer.

As well as the skiing, there are cleared winter walking trails and snowshoe routes up into the mountains.

And the cross country skiing in the valley down towards King Ludwig's Linderhof Castle is set in magnificent winter scenery. Getting to Oberammergau involves taking the same route south as Garmisch but cutting off to the west before the town (either train or car).

Lenggries

The Brauneck ski area near Lenggries (just south of Bad Tölz) is a relatively small area but also a surprisingly interesting one. The ski area rises to a height of 1700m and is filled with red intermediate runs. There is also a black World Cup run down the face back into the valley. The main advantage of this resort is the convenience from Munich – it's one of the closest decent-sized ski areas to the city and can be easily reached on public transport as well as by car.

Other Resorts

Skiers looking for further resorts might like to try the small area at the mountain village of Mittenwald near the Austrian border; the ski area which links the lakes of the Tegernsee and the Spitzingsee; the Sudelfeld area above Bayrischzell; and, for those who want to head a bit further afield, the resort of Oberstdorf to the southwest or Berchtesgaden to the southeast.

"Ski Resorts near Munich" Author Steve Rout is an ex-journalist who lives near the German border in Austria. He now runs the popular Ski Germany www.skigermany.com website.

Oktoberfest Munich - A full guide



You race a mob of lads in leather shorts to find a seat in the packed, wooden tent. A busy barmaid whams down an enormous glass of beer. You drink to the cry of *Prost!* and get ready to do it again. Then you stroll outside and jump on the roller-coaster. You're pushed, pulled, stretched and slammed and decide this would have been a better idea before the beer! Feeling hungry now? Nothing a plate of pork knuckles wouldn't fix. Easy to fill your belly here, if you've got the coin for it. The sun goes down and you head back inside. You start swinging your drink and singing along to the sound of oompah music. Soon you're dancing on the benches with a dozen friendly locals...

How it started

Munich's Oktoberfest originated in 1810 as a horse race to celebrate a royal wedding. But everyone apparently enjoyed the drinking a lot more, and had such a great time they decided to do it all again the following year.

The horse race is now part of history but the beer certainly isn't and neither are those willing to drink it. Oktoberfest (with a k, not Octoberfest) is officially the world's biggest party drawing about six million visitors a year to southern Germany. The action takes place on Munich's fairgrounds, (officially called the Theresienwiese, informally, the *Wiesn*), south-west of the city's Main Train Station.

Munich Festivals: a quick overview

- **Strong Beer Festival** (mid-March to mid-April) ▪ **Auer Dult** (April/May, June/July, late Oct) ▪ **Munich Spring Festival** (mid-April – early May) ▪ **Kaltenberg Knights' Tournament** (mid to late July) ▪ **Tollwood** (Late June/July) ▪ **Kockerlball** (July) ▪ **Christopher Street Day** (July) ▪ **Oktoberfest** (mid-Sept – early Oct) 2013: 21.09-06.10 ▪ **Munich Marathon** (mid-Oct) ▪ **Christmas Markets** (late Nov/Dec)

When to go

Oktoberfest 2012 starts on Saturday, September 22 and finishes on Sunday, October 7. In 2013 the festival runs from September 21 to October 6.

There's often a mad rush to find a seat before the beer starts flowing at 10am (9am on weekends). There's a costume parade and a gay party on the first Sunday. Weekdays are much quieter than weekends, especially around lunchtime.

Which tent to pick

Most of the drinking is done in the 14 big beer "tents" - actually big wooden halls. You can reserve tables through www.oktoberfest.de but most sell out months in advance. The festivities officially start in the Schottenhamel tent and often reach their rowdiest in the Hacker tent (known as the Heaven of Bavaria). The bright red Hippodrom tent near the main entrance can't be missed: It's the place to see and be seen among Munich's hipper, younger, set.

The Hofbräu tent is famed for pulling far more tourists than locals, the Augustiner might be the best for Bavarian authenticity and the Löwenbräu becomes a good option when everywhere else is full.

Where to stay

Munich's Thalkirchen Camping Ground could be the cheapest place to stay with tents available for just a few euros. There's a small supermarket on site, regular buses to the Wiesn and a 24-hour party ambience during Oktoberfest. It's at Zentralländstr. 49, Munich. A handful of good hostels sit just south of the main train station, about a 15 minute stagger back from the Wiesn. Check out Jaeger's www.jaegershotel.de for its friendly bar or the top-rated Wombat's

www.wombats-hostels.com. Both are in Senefelder Strasse.

What to wear to the Oktoberfest

Practically anything goes, but for an extra layer of fun consider kitting out like a local. For guys, a pair of Lederhosen leather shorts start from €120. For gals, a traditional Dirndl dress cost upwards of about €100.

Tip: Note the bow

When worn correctly Dirndls also reveal the wearers' availability. Look just above the apron: If there's a bow on the right she's taken. A bow on the left means she's still to be had, and a bow bang on the front marks a virgin.

What to eat and drink

Beer! The amber fluid is served exclusively in one litre glass mugs, called *Maß* (mass) that cost about €9. The beer is slowly brewed through the summer and packs a six per cent alcoholic punch. For a change, try the beery-lemonade mixture called *Radler*, or head out to the wine tent.

Food is everywhere at the Oktoberfest. Popular picks are grilled chicken (*Hendl*), pork knuckles (*Schweinshaxe*) and giant pretzels (*Breze*). The huge hearts half the girls hang around their necks are made of gingerbread. For the daring there's the Ox (*Osche*).

Oktoberfest tent guide

Oktoberfest tent guide

So many beer tents, so little time...

There are 14 big beer tents at the Munich Oktoberfest and each of them has its own little claim to fame. Of course they're not tents of the type you take down to the seaside to go camping for a few days with your mates. They're immense wooden structures assembled each year just for the Oktoberfest and taken down again when the party's over.

Sizes range from the Hofbräu-Festzelt with enough room for 10,000 revellers to the relatively dinky Käfer's Wies'n-Schänke with "only" room for 2900 inside and out.

You may not actually get to choose – depending on when you go the fest you might just think yourself lucky to get into any tent at all. But it doesn't really matter, there are no bad eggs here. When you're partying the evening away swaying back and forth on a bench amidst a sea of thousands it really doesn't matter too much which tent you're in. Just let yourself get a little caught up in the moment and you'll have a riot. Here's an introduction to each of the 14 tents along with contact info and details on how to reserve tables.

The Hippodrom

During the week the beer tents open at 10am and on weekends and public holidays at 9am. The tents close at 11.30pm, with the last drinks served at 10.30pm. Käfer's Wiesnschänke und das Weinzelt are the exceptions, they stay open until 1am with last drinks called at 12.15am.

Proprietors Sepp Krätz and family **Phone** +49 (89) 29 16 46 46 **Fax** +49 (89) 29 54 42

Seating capacity (inside) 3200 (outside) 1000 **Beer** Spaten-Franziskaner-Bräu

Website www.hippodrom-oktoberfest.de **Reservations?** Check the website for details.

The Fischer-Vroni

Bavarian food culture revolves around the pig. Be it *Schweinshaxe* (pork knuckles), *Schweinebraten* (roast pork) or *Spanferkel* (suckling pig), folks down here just can't get enough of swine. I respect that because it's tasty, but there is one Oktoberfest tent that revolves around a totally different culinary tradition. Fischer-Vroni specializes in *Steckerlfisch*, piscine pleasures slow-grilled on sticks and served up virtually intact from the pond – minus the guts. You can gobble it all up until you're left with a head and tail connected by a fishy spine. I've even seen someone poke out the eyes and eat them too, but don't be doing that, it's really, really gross.

Proprietors Johann and Silvia Stadtmüller **Phone** +49 (89) 66 10 42 (Wednesdays and Fridays) **Fax** +49 (89) 65 25 34 **Seating capacity** (inside) 2695 (outside) 700 **Beer** Augustiner **Website** www.fischer-vroni.de **Reservations?** May be possible by emailing: reservierung@fischer-vroni.de

The Ochsenbraterei

Each year over 100 oxen are roasted on long spits in the galley of the Ochsenbraterei. They're each christened with a name before being spit roasted and you can check them all out on a blackboard to the side of the tent. It's a tradition going back to 1881. Aside from that this tent has a fantastic atmosphere and it's a top place to party.

Proprietors Anneliese and Hermann Haberl **Phone** +49 (89) 38 38 73 12 (reservation office) +49 (89) 51 11 58 0 **Fax** +49 (89) 38 38 73 40 (reservation office) +49 (89) 51 11 58 10 **Seating capacity** (inside) 5900 (outside) 1500 **Beer** Spaten **Website** www.ochsenbraterei.de **Reservations?** Available by phone, fax or post, details on the website.

The Schottenhamel

At high noon on the first Saturday Munich's lord mayor wields a wooden mallet to whack a tap into the first wooden barrel of each Oktoberfest. With a cry of "O'zapft is!" – It's tapped!" can beer be served across the Wiesn. I've had an awesome time partying in the Schottenhamel in the past and with any luck I'll be back this year – it's got to be one of the best tents at the festival. It's renowned for attracting a young, flirty set.

Proprietors Peter and Christian Schottenhamel **Phone** +49 (89) 54 46 93 10 **Fax** +49 (89) 54 46 93 19 **Seating capacity** (inside) 6000 (outside) 4000 **Beer** Spaten-Franziskaner-Bräu **Website** festzelt.schottenhamel.de **Reservations?** By phone, details on the tent's website.

The Hacker-Festzelt

Probably the best-looking tent on the Wiesn, the Hacker's been dubbed the "*Himmel der Bayern*" – "Heaven of the Bavarians". Banners painted with sky and clouds teeter from the rafters. A seldom hushed band stand rises up in the middle of the tent. The



Inside the Hofbräu-Festzelt.

atmosphere is electric. For party people this place really does feel like heaven. It's also one of the most popular tents so make sure you're there extra early to get a seat inside.

Proprietors Toni and Christl Roiderer **Phone** +49 (8170) 7303 **Seating capacity** (inside) 6950 (outside) 2400 **Beer** Hacker-Pschorr **Website** www.hacker-festzelt.de
Reservations? Details on the tent's website.

The Schützen-Festzelt

One of the oldest Oktoberfest tents, the Schützen sits under the Bavaria Statue near the southern end of the Wiesn. Many punters here hail from Bavaria's deeply traditional southeast corner called *Oberbayern* (English: Upper Bavaria). This is where leather shorts and ankle-slapping dances aren't just hokey traditions but for many, a way of life.

This old-school clientele bears testament to the type of atmosphere you'll find inside. The Schützen chef's signature dish is suckling pig (*Spanferkel*) served with malt beer sauce and potato salad.

Proprietors Claudia and Eduard Reinbold **Phone** (089) 23 18 12 24 **Fax** (089) 23 18 12 44
Seating capacity (inside and outside) 5440 **Beer** Löwenbräu **Website** (German) www.schuetzen-festzelt.de **Reservations?** Website doesn't mention them, you could try calling the number above.

The Hofbräu-Festzelt

Among the biggest and most famous beer tents at Oktoberfest is the Hofbräu, companion to the world-renowned Hofbräuhaus beer hall in Munich's old town.

It's known for being the most international tent. Aussies, Yanks, Japanese and Brits are all to be found here in their throngs. That's not to say you won't encounter a truck load of Bavarians here too, there's room enough for everyone. The Hofbräu is the only tent

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with a standing area decked out with high tables for your beers, so you usually stand a good chance of finding somewhere to drink in here.

Proprietors Margot and Günter Steinberg **Phone** +49 89 4489670 **Fax** +49 89 4483587

Seating capacity (inside) 6898 (outside) 3022 **Beer** Hofbräu München **Website** www.hb-festzelt.de **Reservations?** Must be made in person at the Hofbräukeller in Munich, details and availability on the website.

The Armbrustschützen-Festhalle

The name translates to “Crossbow shooters’ tent”. It’s where Bavaria’s shooting and archery clubs come to play. As such, the walls are decorated with dead deer antlers and the like. Though it’s not one of the most popular tents I’ve never had much luck getting in here.

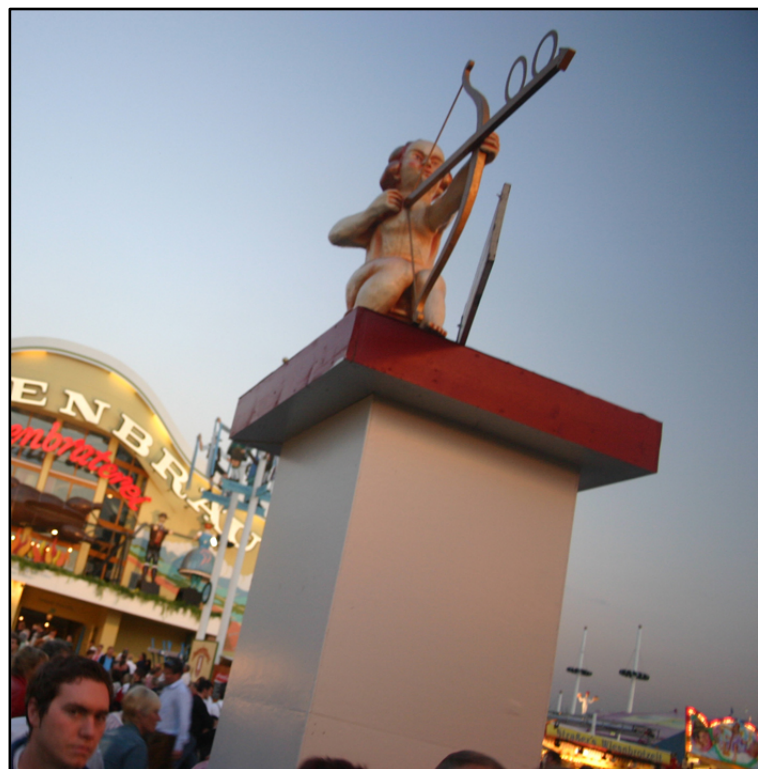
Proprietors Peter Inselkammer and family **Phone** +49 (89) 23 70 37 03 **Fax** +49 (89) 23 70 37 05 **Seating capacity** (inside) 5830 (outside) 1600 **Beer** Paulaner **Website** www.armbrustschuetzenzelt.de **Reservations?** Lunchtime bookings available by fax, check the website for details.

Oktoberfest A to Z

Planning on hitting up Germany for the world’s biggest party? Here’s an alphabetical guide to Munich’s popular piss-up.

Augustiner-Festhalle. Loved by the locals, the Augustiner is the only beer tent still to serve beer from wooden barrels.

Bavaria. Not just the name of the German state where Munich is, but also the tag for the enormous statue of an Amazonian woman on the Weisn (Oktoberfest field). She’s the patron saint of the land, and you can get a good view of it by climbing the 66 stairs to her head.



Costume Parade. The second day of the festival features a procession of about 10,000 gussied up revellers led by the Münchener Kindl, the child-monk symbol of the city.

Dirndl. The frilly dress famed for its plunging neckline worn by every self-respecting *Fräulein* on the Weisn. The **If you're looking for the loo, just follow this guy's arrow.** range from the traditional, ankle-length numbers to the mini-skirted, ultra-revealing “porno-Dirndl”.

Eyes. When you're toasting across the table, make sure you look at these. If you don't, so say the natives, you're in for seven years of bad sex.

Fischer-Vroni. A comparatively small tent that serves a variety of fish on sticks and Munich's favourite Augustiner beer.

Gemütlichkeit. What Oktoberfest is all about. The uniquely German word for cosiness, acceptance and being jolly.

Hofbräu-Festzelt. One of the biggest beer tents, the Hofbräu can hold over 10,000 people and is a favourite of international visitors.

I mog di narrisch gern. A way to say “I'm sweet on you!” in Bavarian. Positive results are by no means guaranteed.

Janker. The traditional jacket worn in combination with Lederhosen.

Käsespätzle. A southern German specialty recommended for those averse to swine. Consists of egg-based noodles with grated cheese and fried onions. Divine.

Lederhosen. The short, leather pants worn by the men. They usually have suspenders and a flap at the front that can be let down to take a wee.

Maß. The name of the oversized beer glasses. You can be slapped with a 60 euro fine of you try to take one away from the tent.

Noagerl. The term for the dregs at the bottom of the beer glass. If you're so tanked that go around drinking these from abandoned tables at the end of the night you'll be called a *Noagerlzuzla*, which isn't really a nice thing to be called regardless of the meaning.

O'zapft is! Munich's mayor shouts this out to officially start each festival at 12pm on the first day. In Bavarian, it means simply "It's tapped!"

Pork. Folks down here can't get enough of the stuff. The Germans have found a way to prepare practically every part of a pig for human consumption. King among them is *Schweinshaxe* (pork knuckles) served with gravy and a potato dumpling.

Quartl. Bavarian for a quarter-litre beer glass. Ask for one at least four times as big and you won't be laughed at.

Reinheitsgebot. This 500-year-old German purity law (now just a regulation, but still adhered to by most breweries) means water, barley and hops are the only ingredients allowed in beer. Won't stop you from getting a frightful hangover, though.

Schlager. Not the local word for beer, but a type of bouncy German pop music that's played often in the tents.

Toilets. They're everywhere and are often the only place quiet enough if you need to call someone on your mobile phone.

Uaviech. The word for either a "primal animal" or a "real man". How you may see yourself after a *Maß* of beer.

Vareckt. A word meaning either dead or insidious. How you'll inevitably feel after six.

Weinzelt. A smaller tent with 1300 places, this tent serves wine as well as beer.

X-Ray. You may need one if you swallow a fork at the Oktoberfest. Happens. Sorry, but there's really not many words starting with x!

Yodeling. *Sound of Music* fans may be tipsy enough to try this, and why not? It's about the only place in the world you can without fear of prompting a severe wedgie.

Zzzzz. Need some shut-eye? The grassy incline around the Bavaria statue becomes a popular spot in the mid-afternoon to nap off one too many.

Oktoberfest parades

Two big parades help get the Oktoberfest underway. Try and see at least some of the Costume und Riflemen's Procession on the first Sunday – a spectacle almost as good as that inside one of the beer tents when things are kicking at 9pm on a Friday night.

Both parades are led by a young Munich woman on horseback dressed as the *Münchner Kindl*, the monk-inspired city mascot.

The Oktoberfest parades are:

Grand entry of the Oktoberfest Landlords and Breweries (*Einzug der Festwirte*) – takes place on the first Saturday of the festival. A kind of prelude to the fest, this parade has about 1,000 Oktoberfest workers, carneys and proprietors rambling down Sonnen Strasse to the Theresienwiese. Included are the hard-working waiters and waitresses on decorated floats, the beer tent bands and the tents' proprietors in carriages. The horse-drawn drays of the Munich breweries deliver some of the first drops of beer. This parade starts at 10.45am and lasts about an hour.

The Costume und Riflemen's Procession (*Trachten- und Schützenumzug*) – Takes place on the first Sunday of the festival. Over 8,000 marchers don their finest provincial apparel for this parade through the centre of Munich to the Wiesn. It's fascinating to watch. Not just the ubiquitous Lederhosen and Dirndls are represented but traditional costumes from across Germany as well as Italy, Croatia, Austria, Poland and Switzerland.

It's by far the bigger of the two Oktoberfest parades. I get a particular kick out of the women from Black Forest region with their *Bollenhut* hats topped with bright red pompoms. Joining the parade are flag-throwers, marching bands, riflemen in historical uniforms, carriages and floats, dancers, horses, oxen, cows and goats.

The first parade was in 1835 to mark the silver wedding anniversary of King Ludwig I and Princess Theresa of Bavaria. The event was revived in 1950 and has since become an integral part of the fest and is broadcast live on German TV.

Start point for the 7km-long course is the Maximiliansbrücke (bridge) at the Isar River. The parade proceeds west along Maximilian Strasse, up to Odeonsplatz, down past Karlsplatz (Stachus) and west along Schwanthaler Strasse to the Oktoberfest grounds. The parade starts at 10am and takes about 2.5 hours.

Oktoberfest dates and opening times

When am I allowed into the Oktoberfest tents? Is there anything special afoot on the days I'm going? On what days can I see people in funny costumes and cannon shooting? Patience, young grasshopper, here you'll find what you seek. It's the temporal guide to the Oktoberfest.

During the week the beer tents open at 10am and on weekends and public holidays at 9am. The tents close at 11.30pm, with the last drinks served at 10.30pm. Käfer's Wiesnschänke und das Weinzelt are the exceptions, they stay open until 1am with last drinks called at 12.15am.

Oktoberfest day by day guide

Opening parade

When the first Saturday

Time 10.45am to 11.45am

The traditional prelude to the fest is the parade of carneys and beer-wenches officially called the Grand entry of the Oktoberfest Landlords and Breweries (*Einzug der Festwirte*). This is when the festival's workers, tent host families and the lord mayor rock up to kick things off.

Let there be beer!

Date the first Saturday **Time** 12pm

Following the parade comes the *Anstich*, when Munich's lord mayor beats a tap into the first wooden keg of Oktoberfest beer. It's done in the Schottenhamel tent. When the tap is in position (usually after two or three good whacks) the mayor shouts out "O'zapft is!" (It's tapped!). There's no beer served anywhere on the Wiesn until this happens. Then there's a 12-gun salute and the party's on for young and old.

All dressed up...

When the first Sunday **Time** 9.45am to 12.30pm

The Costume und Riflemen's Procession (*Trachten- und Schützenumzug*) winds its way through the streets of Munich's Old Town to the Wiesn. Over 7,000 people march in costumes that span Central Europe and go back to the Middle Ages. Worth a look, but watch out for the big piles of poo-poo the horses leave all over the road.

A gay old time

When the first Sunday **Time** 12pm

Munich gay group the Münchner Löwen Club (Munich Lions' Club) reserves the back of the Bräurosl Festzelt tent for their Gay Sunday event.

Familienstag (Family Day)

When the first Tuesday

This is the first of two supposedly more family friendly days at the Wiesn, with reduced prices on rides and food from 12pm to 6pm.

Let us praise this mug of beer

When the first Thursday **Time** 10am

The Oktoberfest service (*Oktoberfest- und Gedenkgottesdienst*). The Oktoberfest has hosted a token religious service for its travelling show folk and workers for the past 50 years. It takes place in the Hippodrom, ironically one of the more sinful tents on the Wiesn. The general public is, of course, welcome.

They come, they see, they conquer

When the middle weekend of the festival

This marks the beginning of the unofficial "Italian Weekend", three days of rampant south-of-the-border shenanigans when the Latin hoards stream north to the city they call "Monaco di Baviera". Despite a rowdy/grabby reputation, they're mostly harmless, friendly and make great drinking buddies. Viva Italia!

Musicians do it outside

Date the second Sunday **Time** 11am

About 400 musicians blow out their spit-valves and symphonize their strings in preparation for an outdoor concert on the steps of the big, bronze Bavaria Statue. If the weather is declared *Sheiße*, it'll be put off until October 4.

Gay Day

When the second Monday **Time** 6pm

A gay and lesbian gathering takes place in the Fischer-Vroni tent in the name of *Rosa Montag*.

Familienstag (Family Day)

When the second Tuesday

The second of two supposedly more family friendly days at the Wiesn, with reduced prices on rides and food from 12pm to 6pm.

Final day!

Date the third Sunday or Monday

In some years (for example in 2012) Oktoberfest runs a day longer, finishing on Monday instead of the usual Sunday. It's thanks to the (*Tag der deutschen Einheit*) Day of German Unity, which is a public holiday. Organisers promise it's easier than normal to get seated in the beer tents as most of them aren't taking reservations for this day. The last day of Oktoberfest is marked by the *Böllerschießen* event around the steps of Bavaria Statue at 12pm.

It involves dozens of old lederhosen lads shooting hand cannons and ancient rifles, an address by the lord mayor and more gussied up brass musicians than you can poke a stick at. In the dying moments of the festival the tents go dark and everyone lights up sparklers, magic! Then the fest winds up for another year at 11.30pm. *Aus is!*

Oktoberfest lost and found

Angel wings and wedding rings? If you accidentally leave something under the tables at Oktoberfest you can rest assured you're not alone. Even Superman did it last year, although the oldies seem to be learning how to keep their false teeth intact. Every year over 4000 lost items are handed in, many never to be seen again by their owners.

It's always fun reading the statistics. Among the left-behinds from last year were 680 ID cards and passports, 410 wallets, 360 keys, 265 spectacles, 280 mobile phones and 80 cameras. A superman costume, a pair of angel wings, four wedding rings and a set of diving goggles also turned up. A Dachshund was found wondering drunk through the grounds but was eventually picked up by its owner. In 2008 no pairs of dentures were found for the first time in decades. The German Health Minister claimed it as a victory for improved dental health standards across the country.

The Oktoberfest lost-and-found office (*Fundbüro*) is behind the Schottenhamel Festhalle beer tent, to the left of the main thoroughfare if you enter the grounds from the north.

It's open from 12.30pm to 11pm every day of the fest (Phone 089 23 33 02 98).

After the festival you can search for lost items through the Munich Lost-and-Found office - *Fundbüro der Landeshauptstadt München* (Address Oetztaler Strasse, 17/Rgb, Phone 089 23 34 59 05).

If not claimed, lost items are kept for six months and then auctioned off.

Oktoberfest numbers

Here's a list of telephone numbers you may need to get you out of trouble on your visit to the Oktoberfest.

Emergency help

Emergency car repair help (ADAC) (0180) 222 222 2

Emergency medical help, red cross (089) 50 22 22 22

Lost children's centre (*Kinderfundstelle*) (089) 233 30 296

Fire brigade 112

Oktoberfest police station 110 / (089) 500 32 20

Services

Munich Airport information (089) 97 52 13 13

Munich tourist office (089) 233 96 500

Oktoberfest-press office (089) 233 30-390 / -318

Tours of the Oktoberfest venue (089) 23 23 900 / (089) 50 07 75 00

Oktoberfest post office (089) 502 22376

Can't find something?

Lost-and-found office at the Oktoberfest (089) 233 30298

Lost-and-found office - Fundbüro (general for Munich) (089) 233 00

Camp sites

Campingplatz Obermenzing (089) 811 22 35

Campingplatz Thalkirchen (089) 72 43 0808

Need a ride?

Taxis (089) 21 61 0

Munich Public Transport office - MVV (Münchener Verkehrsverbund) (089) 210 33 0

Oktoberfest Songs

So you've got seat a on a bench and are surrounded by friends. You're juggling a huge mug of beer with an oversized pretzel. There are women in beautiful Dirndls, lederhosen lads and a cracking atmosphere. It's a perfect Oktoberfest. But there's one thing missing that you can't quite put your finger on until.....

Ooommmmpaaaah! Ooommmmpaaaah! Da dee da dee da.

Of course! The music.

What would Oktoberfest be without it?

Who hasn't got their own favourite Oktoberfest song? If not, just stick around this site for a while and I guarantee you'll end up with one! Whether you're looking for *Ein Prosit* lyrics, a "swim, swim, swim" *Fliegerlied* translation or music ideas for your Oktoberfest, this is the place to find them.

What makes an Oktoberfest song?

A wise dude once said there are only two kinds of people in this world: those who like to categorise things and those who don't. I'm one of the former, and I say music at the Munich Oktoberfest can be split into four can be classed into four groups: brass-band music, classic *Schlager* hits, English-language anthems and modern pop.

Brass-band music (*Blasmusik*) is played during parades and early on inside the beer tents before people are game or inebriated enough to get up on the benches and start swaying around. The one exception is *Ein Prosit*, which is played every 20 minutes or so no matter what time of day it is. *Ein Prosit* is also one of the few *Blasmusik* tunes to have lyrics, otherwise they're pretty much always instrumental.

German *Schlager* songs (which simply means "hits" in English) were huge in the sixties and seventies and are now back with vengeance. Hallmark themes are love and nostalgia, rhythms are light and poppy and accompanying dances are invariably silly. These are songs to dance, sing and remember to. A few examples are *Cowboy und Indianer* und *Er Gehört zu mir*.

The Oktoberfest song scene is understandably dominated by *Deutsch*, but the English language is by no means ignored. Pop, rock and disco unkillables like *I Will Survive*, *Highway to Hell* and *New York, New York* are regularly belted out as the evening party atmosphere takes over in the tents.

To round off, we have modern party hits that snake up the German charts.

German, Spanish, English, hip-hop, ballads and head bangers, anything goes, as long as it's popular! The bands in the Oktoberfest tents don't follow any rules –they just play what they think will go down well.

If, say, *We Speak No Americano* gets a roaring response in one tent, pretty soon it gets played in all of the tents a couple of times a day. The most popular songs in any given year

are dubbed “Wiesn Hits”. These songs can then make it onto www.oktoberfest-songs.com and their immortality is sealed.

Sixteen classic Oktoberfest songs

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1. Ein Prosit | 9. So ein Schöner Tag (Fliegerlied) |
| 2. Skandal im Sperrbezirk | 10. Hände zum Himmel |
| 3. Bayern, des samma mir | 11. Das Geht Ab |
| 4. Marmor, Stein und Eisen Bricht | 12. Ab in den Süden |
| 5. Viva Colonia | 13. Cowboy und Indianer |
| 6. Anita | 14. Er gehört zu mir |
| 7. Fürstenfeld | 15. Anton aus Tirol |
| 8. Joana du geile Sau | 16. Hofbräuhaus Lied |

Many songs in English are also played at the Oktoberfest. Here are a few of the most popular ones:

- Country Roads
- I will survive
- Hey baby!
- YMCA

Schwimm, schwimm, schwimm

By far the most popular Oktoberfest song of the last five years or so has been the *Fliegerlied* (literally in English: “Aeroplane Song”). Its alternative name is *So ein Schöner Tag* (Today is Such a Beautiful Day) and there’s little doubt you’ll hear it more than once at the Oktoberfest.

The reasons are twofold: firstly, it’s an Ohrwurm, the colourful German term meaning “ear worm” which denotes a tune that gets stuck in your head. Secondly: hand movements! You see you can’t just learn the words to the *Fliegerlied*, you’ve gotta learn to pretend to swim, flex your biceps and jump along with the tune.

It’s all very, very silly and heaps of fun. Bavarian band Donikkl released the song in 2008 and a cover by singer Tim Toupet hit German top 10 the year after.

Here are the lyrics to *Fliegerlied* in both English and German.

"So ein schöner Tag (Fliegerlied)"	"Today is Such a Beautiful Day (Flier song)"
Ich lieg gern im Gras und schau zum Himmel rauf.	I like to lay in the grass and look up at the sky.
Schaun die ganzen die Wolken nicht lustig aus?	Don't all the clouds look funny?
Und Fliegt ein Flieger vorbei, dann wink ich zu ihm rauf. (Kinder: "Hallo Flieger")	And a plane flies past, and I wave up at it. (Kids: "Hello flier")
Und bist du auch noch dabei, dann bin super drauf.	And if you're there too, then I feel fantastic.
Und ich flieg, flieg, flieg, wie ein Flieger bin so stark, stark, stark, wie ein Tiger und so groß, groß, groß, wie 'ne Giraffe so hoch uoh-oh-oh und ich spring, spring, spring immer wieder und ich schwimm, schwimm, schwimm zu dir rüber und ich nehm, nehm, nehm dich bei der Hand weil ich dich mag und ich sag:	And I fly, fly, fly, like a plane am so strong, strong, strong like a tiger and so tall, tall, tall like a giraffe and tall all-oh-oh and I jump, jump, jump and keep on jumping and I swim, swim, swim over to you and I take, take, take you by the hand because I like you and I say
Heut ist so ein schöner Tag - la, la, la, la, la (Wiederholung)	Today is such a beautiful day - la, la, la, la, la (Repeat)

Other Munich and Bavaria Festivals

Few folks need a flimsier excuse to celebrate than the Bavarians. We all know about the Oktoberfest, but for now, let's take a look at a few of the other festivals and events taking place in Munich and surrounds throughout the year.

Augsburg Plärrer

Ahh, the Plärrer....I've downed more beer and had more fun at this festival over the years than I'd care to remember. This is the grand blowout in Augsburg, Bavaria's third largest city after Munich and Nuremberg.

The Plärrer is the biggest beer tent/rides/amusements festival in Bavarian Swabia, the south-western corner of Bavaria. It's a smaller-scale Oktoberfest with less of an international flavour, but more genuine German goodness.

Possibly the coolest thing the Plärrer has over the Oktoberfest is that it's on twice a year! The festival takes place over two weeks (and three weekends) in Spring (April/May) and again in Autumn (August/September). The latter Plärrer is a great warm up for the Munich Oktoberfest if you're planning on sticking around that long.

All up about 80 food stands, amusements and rides fill the grounds. Think shooting alleys, dodgem cars, a Ferris wheel, ghost train, bratwurst stands, children's pony rides and a couple of big beer tents in the middle and you've pretty much got the Plärrer sussed.

To the beer tents!...

There are two big beer tents which hold a couple of thousand people each and a two smaller tents which hold a couple of hundred. Of the two big tents, the Festzelt Binswanger is the best to party in. The "Binsi" generally attracts a younger crowd, has a slightly better atmosphere and (usually anyway) better music.

The only downside to this tent is the lager which is brewed by the local company Hasenbräu (Hare Brew) and is often derided as headache-inducing bunny pee pee. I actually don't think it's all that bad, but if you are overly concerned you could try the Dunkles (dark beer) which is brewed by the excellent Kloster Scheyern.

The other big tent is the Festhalle Schaller. The Schaller used to be the second-choice tent to the Binsi but it's come a long way in the past few years and now it's also heaps of fun. The food at the Schaller is probably better and there's a lovely beer garden at the back. This

tent is more the place to come if you want a slightly quieter time of it and won't feel obliged to stand on the benches swaying to the music.

The two smaller tents are the Festzelt Hühnerbrateri Ebert-Miller, known for its great grilled chicken, and the (new as of 2012) Sterndl Alm Festzelt, intended as a "fine cuisine" tent.

Try the fish!

Standard German beerfest fare served inside the tents (pork knuckles, potato salad, grilled chicken, etc). But for something special I recommend you look next door to either the Binswanger or the Schaller tents. There you'll find a stand serving that most rare and oily of Bavarian delicacies...the Steckerlfisch.

That literally means "fish on a stick" and that's how it's cooked, slowly barbecuing away suspended above a row of hot coals. The fish is infused with a mix of oil, garlic and herbs and you get it pretty much whole, minus the guts. Yummm! Common varieties are trout (in German: Forelle) and mackerel (Makrele). Steckerlfisch is paid for by weight, an average one will set you back €6. Buy a giant pretzel to eat of on the side, grab a couple of wooden forks and off you go! You're even allowed to take it into tents to enjoy with a mug of nice cold beer.

Parade

A parade kicks off the Autumn Plärrer on the first Saturday morning it's held. Hundreds of performers, marching bands, community clubs and vintage cars troop their way merrily down the main streets of Augsburg to the festival grounds, starting at about 10am. Worth seeing if you're about!

A bit of history

The Plärrer can trace its roots back to the old city market festivals or "Dults" which have been held in Augsburg for over 1000 years. The festival was officially called the "Geplärre" until 1978 and moved to its current location outside the old city walls in 1878 because it was getting too noisy for comfort.

After World War One no alcohol was served for almost 10 years until 1927. The first beer tent appeared in 1930. Although rides and amusements are considered fun enough these days, things were different and a darned sight wackier in the past. For example, in 1969 the festival's star attraction was "the smallest man in the world" measuring just 78cm!

The Details

Takes place The Spring Plärrer is on for two weeks in April/May and the Autumn Plärrer takes place in late August/early September. *In 2013: Spring Plärrer 31 March - 13 April.*

Website (in German) www.plaerrerr-volksfest.de **Opening times** Monday to Thursday 12pm to 11pm, Friday/Saturday 12pm to 11.30pm, Sundays and public holidays 10.30am to 11pm.

Costs Entry is free. Rides and amusements generally cost €2-€3. Count on €10 if you want a decent meal inside one of the beer tents. A Maß (litre of beer costs around €7.50, so round it up to €8 with a tip).

Reservations It's possible to book a table inside the beer tents. However unlike at the Oktoberfest where you have to book months in advance, a few weeks ahead should suffice for the Plärrer. Contact the beer tent management directly to book. For the Festzelt Schaller **Phone** 0821 508 7161 Fax 03212 508 7165 **Email** festzelt-schaller@web.de For the Festzelt Binswanger **Phone** 0821 298 298-0 Fax 0821 298 298-29 **Email** info@festzelt-binswanger.de .

Directions Augsburg has a well-serviced train connection to Munich and it takes as little as 30min to get there (by high-speed ICE train) or 45min with a regular train. From the Augsburg Hauptbahnhof (main train station) it's a 20min walk to the Plärrer grounds. If you want to cut the walk short you can walk 10min east to the Königsplatz and get Tram No. 64 from in front of the McDonalds to the stop "Plärrer" direction "P+R Augsburg Nord". If you're using a Bayern Ticket to get to Augsburg from Munich you won't need to buy an extra ticket for the tram. **Other useful numbers:** *Plärrer police stand* 0821 323 2291 *Lost and found* 0821 324 5888 *Augsburg taxi* 0821 350 25.

Munich Strong Beer Festival

To appreciate the Munich love of beer you just have to consider what locals call the "fifth season".

It's the *Starkbierzeit* (Strong Beer Time), a three-week frenzy of early-spring stout swigging.

But these ain't no ordinary

suds. Prepare your taste buds for a fortune of flavour, an abundance of aroma, a trove of textures: Munich Starkbier. Beer halls and breweries host their own Starkbierfests across the city. It's a fabulous event where you have the supreme privilege of downing

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fresh, delicious brew that tastes like it was especially concocted just for you to drink on that specific day.

Party central

The original and biggest party is at Paulaner “Nockherberg” brewery a couple of clicks south of central Munich. It’s an Oktoberfest-style atmosphere where thousands of visitors - many in traditional Bavarian outfits - pack into a huge hall and dance on the benches along to modern and old-time German hits. The beer is served by the one-litre ceramic steins called *Keferloher*. I've been going for the last three years and it's a safe bet I'll be back again.



Praise the monks

Just like the city itself, Munich’s Starkbier tradition started with a bunch of monks. The pious Paulaner brothers-of-the-cloth started brewing their Starkbier Salvator in 1651. They dubbed the stuff “*Flüssiges Brot*” (liquid bread) as it helped them survive their 40 days of Lent fasting with full bellies and good spirits. Bavarian rulers began joining in the tapping of the first Starkbier kegs in the early 1700s and the first public beer festival was in 1751.

An integral part of the Starkbierfest is the comedic *Derblecken* which takes place at Nockherberg a day before the main party starts. It’s a chance for the city’s wits to poke fun at local politicians, and mildly insult others by not mentioning them at all.

You’ll notice that Paulaner’s *Festsaal* (festival hall) at Nockherberg is quite new despite all that history. That’s because the old Paulaner Keller burned down in 1999 in Munich's most ruinous fire in decades. 89 fire engines took two days to quench the blaze and the damage amounted to €15 million (over \$US 20 million).

Hungry? Have a beer!

You might be surprised to learn that although Stark means “strong” in German, the name of Starkbier doesn’t actually refer to the alcoholic punch it packs, rather the beer’s *Stammwürze* or "original wort". This indicates the amount of solids in the beverage. For example, Paulaner’s Salvator has an original wort of 18.3 per cent, so a one-litre *Maß* contains 183g of solids, about the same as a third of a loaf of bread. Put another way, the same beer contains 706 calories, equivalent to 14.5 chicken McNuggets at Maccy D’s.

So it’s no wonder they call the stuff liquid bread.

That said, Starkbier is also heavy-weight in terms of alcohol percentage, with Salvator coming in at 7.5 per cent. As you can see, when you’re at the Starkbierfest, it doesn’t take long before both your belly and your liver are fully stuffed!

The details:

“Salvator Ausschank” at Paulaner am Nockherberg

The oldest, loudest and proudest Munich Strong Beer Festival, Paulaner’s Festsaal has room for up to 2500 punters.

Takes place Mid-March to mid-April **Open** Weekdays from 2pm to 10.30pm, weekends from 11am to

10.30pm **Location and directions** Hoch Strasse 77, 81541, Munich.

Move over, Terminator!

Starkbiers brewed for this time of year tend to bear an "-ator" suffix. There are at least 40 different varieties brewed in Bavaria alone. The starkest "-ator" of them all is Hacker-Pschorr’s Animator with a mighty *Stammwürze* of 19 per cent and alcohol content of 7.8 per cent.

Here are a couple of other much-loved libations:

- Salvator - Paulaner-Brauerei
- Triumphator – Löwenbräu / Spaten Brauerei, Munich
- Maximator – Augustiner-Brauerei, Munich
- Unimator – Unionsbräu Haidhausen, Munich
- Delicator – Hofbräuhaus, Munich
- Aviator – Airbräu, Munich Airport
- Multiplikator – Edelweißbrauerei, Odelzhausen
- Spekulator – Weissbräu Jodlbauer, Rothalmünster
- Kulminator – EKV Actienbrauerei, Kulmbach
- Bambergator – Brauerei Fäßla, Bamberg
- Celebrator – Franz Inselkammer, Aying
- Rhönator – Rother-Bräu, Rothenberg ob der Tauber
- Suffikator – Bürgerbräu Röhm & Söhne, Bad Reichenhall
- Speziator – Brauerei S. Riegele
- Rariator – Münzbräu, Günzburg
- Honorator – Ingobräu, Ingolstadt
- Bavariator – Müllerbräu, Pfaffenhofen

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Take U-Bahn No. 1 or 2 to Kolumbusplatz, from where it's a 15min walk up the hill to the brewery. Or you can take Tram 27 to "Ostfriedhof" from where it's a 3min walk down the hill.

Phone 089 4 59 91 30

Website www.nockherberg.com(in German) **Reservations** You can reserve a table by phone or fax **Cost** Entry costs €2. If you arrive after 5pm (or 3pm on weekends) entry will cost about €9, but you'll also get a voucher for one beer. A one-litre *Keferloher* will cost about €8.

Munich Strong Beer Festival at the Löwenbräukeller

Open From 6pm until 11pm **Location and directions** Nymphenburger Strasse 2, Am Stiglmaier Platz, 80335 Munich It's about a 15min walk north of the Hauptbahnhof along Dachauer Strasse. Or you can take U Bahn No. 1 to Stieglmaier Platz

Website www.loewenbraeukeller.com (in German)

Phone You can also order tickets over the phone 089 5 47 26 69 16 **Cost** Entry costs €16.50

Other top picks for Starkbier tasting

Munich Strong Beer Festival events also take place at:

- **Augustiner Keller** Arnulf Strasse 52, 80335 Munich **Phone** 089 59 43 93
- **Unionsbräu Haidhausen** Einstein Strasse 42, 81675 Munich **Phone** 089 47 76 77
- **Forschungsbrauerei** The only Starkbier maker which doesn't stick an "-ator" on its potent brew, here it's called St James.

Address Unterhachinger Strasse 76, 81737 Munich **Phone** 089 67 011 69

Munich Auer Dult

Treasure hunters delight in Munich's Auer Dult.

Stall vendors, rides and tents turn an otherwise quite church district into a bustling island of commerce and conviviality. There are three Dults a year, in spring, summer and autumn, and each runs for nine days.

I love the Dult. It doesn't get many international tourists so it feels authentic and traditional.

And what a tradition it has, the Dult is Munich's oldest fair dating back to 1310. Each one attracts about 100,000 visitors, so things can get tight. Try to go in the morning or during the working week if you want to have room to move, on sunny weekend days you may find yourself doing more crowd battling than treasure hunting.



Shops, rides and dinner tables

You can haggle with the stall vendors but watch out, they usually drive a hard bargain and you should count yourself lucky if you manage to get a euro or two off something that should cost €10. There are about 300 stalls selling all sorts of stuff so you can browse all day if you like. The Dult claims to have Europe's largest crockery market but the range doesn't stop with pots and porcelain.

Musical instruments, hand-made jewellery second-hand Lederhosen and Dirndl dresses, wooden toys, furniture and books are some of the selection. It's also a very kid-friendly festival with carousels, a mini Ferris wheel, shooting galleries, dodgem cars and horse rides. A kiddie favourite is a long-running children's' puppet show called Kasperl von der Au. This being Bavaria, there's also a beer tent serving a steady range of Munich brews and regional dishes.

What's with the funny sounding name?

The Auer part comes from the district of Au where the fest is held. Au's original name was *Awe zu Gysingen* meaning "Meadow on Water", thanks to its leafy location on the Isar River. The Old German word *Dult* means "religious observance" and that's how this festival began – a sprinkling of stands out the front of a church amidst a religious celebration honouring a local saint. As the centuries rolled away the religious aspect toned down and today it's a purely "popular" people's fair. The saints are still there in spirit, however, as the Dult takes place around the *Mariahilfskirche* (Mariahilfs Church).

The details of the Munich Auer Dult

Takes place 2012: Maidult - April 28 to May 6, Jakobidult - June 28 to July 5, Kirchweihdult - October 20 to 28, 2013: Maidult – April 27 to May 5, Jakobidult – June 27 to July 4, Kirchweidult – October 19 to 27

Location and directions The market take takes place on Mariahilfsplatz, an open area around the Mariahilfskirche, a church you can see from some way off. It's on the east of the Rive Isar and you can get there by taking any S-Bahn to Rosenheimer-Platz. From the subway it's a 5min walk down Franziskaner Strasse and then right onto Gebsattel Strasse. You can also take tram No. 27. **Website** www.auerdult.de

Open Market stands are open from 9am to 8pm and rides run from 10.30am to 8pm.

Contact The Munich Tourist Office organises the Dult. Its contact person is Janine Brandt who you can reach by phone 089 23 33 02 94 or email janine.brandt@muenchen.de

Münchener Frühlingsfest (Spring Festival)

Think Oktoberfest, then shrink it. The Munich Spring Festival is sometimes called the “*Kleine Wiesn*” (Little Oktoberfest) or the “*Kleine Schwester des Oktoberfestes*” (Oktoberfest's Little Sister).

After a litre or two of fresh springtime beer you'll be calling it a victory for common sense. The fest runs over two weeks and takes place at Munich's Theresienwiese. I went along with a couple of friends for the first time a couple of years ago and loved it. We first took a stroll around the grounds to check out the rides before finding a spinning carousel with an in-built bar - Happy hour with €1 glasses of Pils! Bliss. After that we sat in the Paulaner beer garden to soak up the sun and a bit more beer before transitioning into the Augustiner beer tent as the sun went down. Then party, party, party.

A few specifics for drinking...

The Spring Festival has a big beer tent called the Festhalle Bayernland which seats about 2000 people. Munich's favourite Augustiner beer is splashed out from traditional wooden kegs. In 2010 the Hippodrom-Festzelt, a favourite Oktoberfest beer tent, made its debut at the Munich Spring Festival and a new lager beer called Spaten Frühlingsfest Hell was served for the first time.

If the weather's friendly you might want to sit a while in the Radlingers Weißbiergarten, a beer garden that specialises in Paulaner Weizen (Bavarian "white beer"). A band often cranks out old-time Bavarian hits. There's also a covered section, the Allwetter-Biergarten, if it's too wet or chilly.

...and riding

There are dozens of rides including a Ferris wheel (*Riesenrad*) a ghost train (*Geisterbahn*), the "Frisbee" and Europe's longest portable slide, the *Münchner Rutschn*. There are more than 10 rides designed especially for younger kids. Tuesdays are special "family days" with reduced prices for the rides.

Special events

The festival kicks off with a big parade and the *Böllerschützen*, where aging artillery enthusiasts shoot mini hand-cannons into the air. The first keg is tapped inside the Hippodrom-Festzelt at 4pm on the opening day to get the beer flowing. On the first Saturday of the festival you'll find one of Munich's greatest flea-markets: Over 1000 stands peddling everything from boomerangs to Beethoven. Vendors open at 6am so you'll need an early start to snap up the best bargains. On the second Friday there's usually a big fireworks display after sunset. Other special events that pop up sporadically at the fest included a vintage car exhibition and a couple of days where visitors can pay with (now extinct) Deutschmarks.

Tip: *Get into Hell*

There's no fire and brimstone, Hell means "light" in German and refers to the shade of the brew, not the strength.

The Details:Location It takes place at the Theresienwiese (Oktoberfest Field) Takes place from mid-April to early May **Open** Daily from 11am until 11pm (11.30pm on Fridays and Saturdays). Beer is only served after 4pm on the opening day. **Cost** Free entrance to the grounds and the beer tents. A *Maß* (one litre mug) of beer costs around 8€, about a euro cheaper than at the Oktoberfest. **Website** www.ganz-muenchen.de (German only) **Directions** Take the U Bahn no 4 or 5 to Theresienwiese, or you can leg it 15min south-west from the Hauptbahnhof.

Kaltenberg Knights Tournament (Kaltenberger Ritterturnier)

You walk through the gates and see a line of knights. Looks like they're getting ready for something, maybe a fight? Then you shuffle along to find a place for the parade: There are fire-eaters, freaks on stilts, looks like anything goes here!

You watch a medieval rock concert while swilling some mead and you're ready for more. It's to the arena!

There are heroes on horseback, arch-villains in black and damsels in distress. The show's about to start and your seat, my liege, awaits...

If you've ever wanted to live out your own Middle-Ages fantasy then the Kaltenberg Knights' Tournament in Germany is the festival for you. Over

120,000 people flock to Kaltenberg

Castle near Munich every July and step back to a time when ankle-length dresses were edgy fashion and swords were on everybody's hips.

Survey the realm

There's more than 1000 official costumed "performers" and many visitors also choose to dress up and wander among the stands, tents and towers that comprise about 100,000 square metres of *ye olde* merriment. You can find some seriously unique gifts at the Medieval Market – how would grandma like an "Elixir of Longevity" for Christmas?

What about a new coat of chain mail for cousin Bob or a bronze tiara for sister Sally? Bagpipe-bearing Corvus Corax stomps up and down on the stage, while medieval priests try to save your soul. Brooding barbarians prowl, jugglers juggle, strong men flex their muscles and elegant ladies smile and curtsy. It all kind of forces you to join in and go with the flow.



For your noble pleasure.....

As dusk sets in the performance starts in the main arena and a comely couple ride out on horseback. It's the Prince of Wasserburg and Princess of Kaltenberg, they wave, the crowd cheers, and all is good. Then enter the dragon. The *Schwarze Ritter* (Black Knight) descends with his troupe of scoundrels to steal the princess. His hyperbolic laughing fits and general campiness label him as the Diet Coke of Evil, but he's very much the star of the show. There's a similar storyline each year with a few twists thrown in to keep crowds coming back. This time the Black Knight was revealed to be the princess herself, cursed by a witch to confront her lover at the tip of a sword. If the plot seems thin, fear not. It's really just a backdrop to the horseback stunts, the swordfights, the fireworks, and above all, the jousting.

Take your lances!

That's right, jousting! French stunt team Cavalcade provides what's undoubtedly the highlight of the whole festival. The atmosphere is electric as the fully-armoured knights face each other with lances. In a huff of hooves, they're off!...take careful aim from their steeds...lances splinter...someone's hit!..... he rolls off the back and bites the dust....to the victor goes the glory! It's very well-done and particularly entertaining when a falling knight gets his foot caught in a stirrup and is dragged along the ground for a couple of dozen meters. Afterwards, the knights retire to the "throne room" for autographs and photos.

A right royal party

The Kaltenberg festival has noble roots, having been founded by Prince Lutipold of Bavaria back in 1979. Lutipold's the direct descendant of Ludwig II, the king famed for building Neuschwanstein Castle in Füssen, one of Germany's most recognised symbols.

The details for the Kaltenberg Knights' Festival:

Location Kaltenberg Schloss, Schloss Strasse 8. It's near Geltendorf, about 50km west of Munich **Phone** (Tickets) 018 05 11 33 13, (Info) 0900 1 33 14 33 (for overseas inquiries) +49 81 93 93 31 00 **Website** www.ritterturnier.de **Takes Place** Mid to late July.

The grounds open at 4pm and the parade (*Festumzug*) starts at 15.30. The arena show goes from 8pm to 10pm. The official program ends at midnight, but you can party on with the Barbarians' Club if you want to stay longer. Daytime shows are on Saturday the 14th, Saturday the 21st, Sunday the 22nd and Sunday the 29th. Grounds open at 11am and the parade starts at 1pm. The arena show goes from 3.30pm to 5.30pm. The official program ends at 7.30pm.

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A "Children's' Knights' Tournament" - *Kinderritterturnier* - takes place in the arena just after each of the daytime performances.

On Thursday the 27th is the hugely popular "*Gauklernacht*" - Jesters' Night which features an army of 1000+ performers as colourful as they are flexible. It goes from 6pm to 2am. The usual arena show doesn't take place but there's so much else going on you won't even notice. Organisers call this night a "Symphony of Light and Fire". Cool!

Cost *Tickets including admission and a seat for the arena show cost between €33 and €59, depending on how close to the action you are. *Tickets for the roofed royal Lodge cost €59. *If you can't get a seat for the arena show, don't worry! Admission to the grounds costs €22, where you can see the market, the parade, the concerts, everything really! And you can stand at the back of the grandstands and watch the arena show anyway. *Jesters' Night tickets cost €25.

*Kids under 6 years get in free, but there's no guarantee of a seat for the arena show. Tickets for kids 6 to 15 are €5 less than the adult tickets, except for the Lodge where they pay full-price. It's an extra €5 cheaper for these kids on Sunday the 5th. *There's also a 10 per cent advanced booking fee and €1.20 service charge per ticket. *You can book tickets online with the "Kaltenberger Ticket Machine" here kaltenberg.ticketmachine.net. Keep in mind it's in German, but it's not so difficult to navigate - you can even pick your exact seats for the arena show.

Directions If you're coming by public transport take an S-Bahn train (the number S4) to Geltendorf and then get a special connecting bus to the Kaltenberg Knights Festival.

To check connections visit the Deutsche Bahn site www.bahn.com.

If you're coming from Munich's main station enter *Muenchen Hbf* into the first line and *Geltendorf* into the second line. Give yourself at least an hour to get there from Munich.

Other Info:

*The tournament takes place regardless of rain, hail or surprise dragon attack but you're asked not to use umbrellas in the arena because they annoy the people sitting behind you.

*Dogs aren't allowed, they don't get along with the goblins.

*Prams and baby carriages are allowed in the grounds but have to be left outside the arena, at the first-aid station.

Tollwood

Here you can browse craftsman's stands while biting back on a bio-bratwurst.

A summer highlight, Tollwood brings the world together in Munich.

What began as a small alternative culture festival in 1988 has evolved into a major event which attracts over 800,000 people.



It's 25 days of "culture for everyone" with three driving forces:

1. A so-called Market of Ideas - *Markt der Ideen*
2. Certified "bio" food-stands and tents offering cuisine from around the world, and,
3. A cultural program with live music and theatrical performances.

Entertainment

Entry to the grounds and about 75 per cent of performances are free, but a couple of big-top tents host evening concerts which you have to pay a bit extra if you want in.

Free concerts range from sing-along cover bands to African drumming and instrumentalists. On my first visit I saw a Beatles tribute band outside the Andechser beer tent before catching a bizarre little Spaniard tickle a grand piano suspended vertically 6m (20ft) in the air. Head to the Tanzbar if you've if you want to boogies after the sun goes down. Dance styles from tango to traditional Bavarian are demonstrated and encouraged.

Food and drink

Tollwood revolves around the plate – about 50 food stands dish up an international cuisine cornucopia. The real challenge is deciding what you'd most like to try. I chose a plate of Moroccan rice and lamb, topped off by a bun with little Nuremberg sausages.

Delicious, but later I was regretting not leaving room for the Thai massaman curry, the Hungarian Gulyás soup or the African fried fish. The focus is on offering fair, environmentally friendly produced food regardless of the country of origin.

Shopping

Bonsai trees, hammock shops, didgeridoos, giant wooden giraffes, it's all available at Tollwood's *Markt der Ideen*. There are over 200 stalls offering gifts and mementos from around the world. Ever wanted a tattoo of a dolphin on your lower back? Here's where you can get it done. What about having a mould made of your hands and then watching it crafted into a unique candle holder? It could come in handy!

The Details:

Location and directions Tollwood takes place just south of the Olympiaberg (Olympic hill) at Munich's Olympiapark (Olympic Park). It's about 5kms north-west of the city centre.

In keeping with the eco-friendly theme of the festival organizers suggest taking public transport, or riding a bike. The easiest way to get to there is to take the U-Bahn No. 3 to Olympiazentrum. It's the last stop on the line. From there it's a 15 to 20min walk. Below is a map showing the way from the U-Bahn station **Takes place** Late June/July. Things get underway in the morning and carry on until about 11pm.

Website www.tollwood.de (in English)

Tickets Entry to the festival is free but you have to buy tickets if you want to see some of the concerts. Performers for this year are still to be announced but among the acts that have lined in recent years include B.B. King, Bryan Adams, Philipp Poisel and Ich and Ich. You can book through the website München Ticket here www.muenchenticket.de. **Phone** The Tollwood information hotline is +49 700 38 38 50 24. It costs 12c a minute from a landline in Germany and more from anywhere else.

Kocherlball

Here's one right out of the history books. The Kocherlball or "Cooks' Ball" is an early morning dance-fest that takes place around the Chinese Tower in Munich's Englischer Garten Park.

Page from the past

Towards the end of the 19th century the dance took place pretty much every Sunday over summer. The city's servants, cooks, nannies and other minions would get up early to meet and dance around the tower from about 5am to 8am. This was often the only time the lower-classes could get off work because their masters were still asleep. However, in a foreshadowing of *Footloose*, a party-pooing mayor banned the dance in 1904 due to "lack of morality".

The ball is back

The Kocherlball was revived in 1989 for the 200th anniversary of the Englischer Garten and now it's more popular than ever. Each year about 15,000 people flock to the tower to recreate the old days. Many dress up, either in much-loved modern Bavarian Lederhosen or Dirndl dresses, or in period costume. Dances including the polka, waltz and a local jig called the *Münchener Francaise* are performed. But not everyone comes to dance. Many are just there to enjoy the atmosphere and grab a bite to eat. This isn't an event that attracts a lot of international tourists so there's a really authentic feel to it all. All in all, it's a unique and seldom-experienced part of Munich history!

The Details:

Location and directions Around the Chinesischer Turm (Chinese Tower) in the Englischer Garten. Take the U3 or U6 to Universität. Walk east along Veterinär Strasse from Geschwister-Scholl-Platz at the university, into the park and turn left at the Monopteros (Greek temple on the hill). The walk should take you about 15min. There's also a bus that passes by the Chinese Tower (No.52) and connects to Münchener Freiheit U-Bahn station.

Takes place A Sunday in mid-July, in 2013: Sunday, July 14. From 6am to 10am. If it's raining too much the ball is put back a week. **Website** You can find plenty more photos and videos of the Kocherlball at ganz-muenchen.de.

Munich Christopher Street Day

The gay and lesbian community energises Munich during the city's annual Christopher Street Day celebration.

For nine days in July the city centre explodes with drag queens, high heels and feather boas in the name of gay and lesbian equality and issues confronting the gay community.

A lesbian festival, the Angertorstraßenfest, will mark the official opening of the 2013 Munich Christopher Street Day on Saturday, 6th of July. The main events take place on Saturday, 13th of July. These include a CSD-Politparade through Munich's streets and the RathausClubbing (when a stage is set up in front of Munich's city hall). A street festival starts on the 13th and concludes the next day.

(More details of specific events yet to be confirmed, but here's how the festival has played out in recent years):

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Celebrations start at 11.30am on Saturday with a welcoming ceremony at Marienplatz. There are political speeches and comedy and DJ acts continue into the evening.

There's also parade around Munich's Old Town starting from Marienplatz at 12pm. The parade includes over 40 floats and stretches over 1km. It's great fun to watch and there's a hugely festive atmosphere.

On Saturday night there's clubbing inside Munich's Neues Rathaus, the City Hall on Marienplatz. On Sunday at 5pm there's a ridiculous "high-heels race" where 10 participants attempt to outrun each other along with handbag throwing and ladder climbing competitions.

Another focal point is Rindermarkt, a square 5min walk south of Marienplatz. Munich and international DJs mix it up on an outdoor stage on both Saturday and Sunday from midday to midnight.

How it started

Christopher Street Day began in 1969 when New York's gay community demonstrated, sometimes violently, against police against discrimination. Known as the Stonewall riots, the protests sparked a new gay rights movement and it's remembered at Christopher Street Day celebrations around the world. Munich Lord Mayor Christian Ude is the event's patron. See the entry under "Lesbian and Gay Munich" to find out more on the topic.

The Details:

Takes place 2013: July 6 to 14. **Location** Around central Munich, particularly Marienplatz and Rindermarkt squares.

Website www.csd-munich.de **Contact** Organisers CSD München GmbH **Email** info@csd-munich.de **Fax** 089 54 33 32 12 **Phone** 089 54 33 32 11.

Munich Marathon

Participants puff through the Old Town and loop through the Englischer Garten before high-tailing it to the Olympic Stadium for the grand finale. If you're not running it can still be fun to go down to the stadium from about 1pm and watch the knackered runners come in.

Many runners. One world

As well as the main event there's also a half marathon and a relay where five runners trundle a total of 42kms. Another highlight is the so-called "Friendship run". Organizers want participants to dress up in their national costume and run 6kms (3.7mi) before

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enjoying a traditional Bavarian *Weißwurst* breakfast. This one isn't a competition and there's no entry fee, it's all about having a few laughs and spreading the international love. Being a dedicated Aussie I think might go down dressed up as Crocodile Dundee. Either that or in a pair of red Speedoes and a surf lifesaver's hat. Nah, probably as Crocodile Dundee.

They are the champions

The record time for the men's marathon is 2:09:46, set by Kenyan Michael Kite in 2000. The women's record is 2:33:09, set by Hungarian Karolina Szabó in 1991. The marathon draws anywhere from 5000 to 9,000 participants and the 10km run attracts about 2000.

The Details:

Location Through the streets of Munich. The full marathon starts at 10am at Ackermann Strasse in the Olympic Park, between the Spiridon-Louis-Ring and Schwere-Reiter-Strasse. The finish is in the Olympic Stadium. The *Trachtenlauf* (Folklore Run) starts at the Willi-Gebhardt-Ufer in Olympic Park. **Takes place** 2012: October 14. 2013: October 13. All runs take place the Sunday, except for the *Trachtenlauf*, which is at 10am on the day before. **Cost** To run the full marathon costs between €55 and €70, depending on how early you book. The half-marathon costs €35 to €50, the relay €90 to 160.

Website www.muenchenmarathon.de

Munich Christmas Markets

Germany's Christmas markets are famous the world over. You are spoilt for choice in Munich, which has about 10 main *Christkindlesmärkte* spread throughout the city. Each one has its own flavour so you could



easily pass a couple of days just exploring the food, gift stands and attractions at each of them. Take a look around for yourself and maybe you'll discover the best Christmas Market Munich has to offer. Here's a quick guide to the highlights of the city's Christmas markets:

What to shop for

Make sure the purses or wallets are full, this is the perfect place to stock up on gifts for Christmas day. There are decorations, star-shaped lamps, carved nutcrackers, clothes, picture books, handmade candles, soap, handicrafts, you name it. Wooden mangers (*Krippel*) are especially popular.

Most German families keep them to decorate their living rooms for Christmas. There are also hundreds of manger decorations available, from tiny wooden baby Jesus', to sheep and kings bearing gold, frankincense and myrrh. There is even a special market devoted to mangers, the Kripperlmarkt on Rindermarkt just south of Marienplatz.

What to eat

Christmas market cuisine is simply a world unto itself. Gorge yourself on a half-meter sausage or stroll around with a paper cone full of mouth-watering nuts. Oh my god, did I really write that? Anyway, the choice is yours.

Munich Christmas markets for foodies:

- **Wurst** - Sausages of every shape and ethnicity are on offer - from the diminutive *Nürnberger Würstchen*, to classic bratwurst, to the mammoth, spicy, half-meter *Feuerteufel* (fire devil).
- **Dampfnudeln** - This is a light, steamed dumpling often coated with vanilla custard. You can get it with a berry filling if you wish.

- **Chocolate-coated fruit** - This comes served on sticks and just screams out at you to take a bite. Choco-bananas, choco-strawberries and choco-peaches are all there.
- **Lebkuchen** - Gingerbread cookies never tasted better than at a Christmas market. They say the best stuff comes from Nürnberg (Nuremberg) in northern Bavaria.
- **Magenbrot** - Another type of gingerbread, the name means "stomach bread". A great tummy filler.
- **Plätzchen** - The quintessential baked Christmas cookies. They often come mixed in a bag, tops for snacking. They often feature ingredients like nougat, berries, chocolate or almonds.
- **Gebrannte Mandeln** - Roasted chestnuts, coated with spices, sugar or chocolate. Simply delicious, this is the enticing smell that permeates over the Christmas markets.

What to drink at Munich Christmas markets

It's all about the *Glühwein*. This spicy nectar is the main reason many people come to the Christmas markets at all. It's not only because of the alcohol content, the way a cup of the stuff warms up your fingers, or the taste of the spicy red wine it embodies. It's all of those things, and the feeling of cosiness you get from huddling around with friends holding hut mugs, even though it's totally freezing outside.

A cup of *Glühwein* costs about €2. It's normal to pay double that when you receive your drink, the other half is for the deposit (*Pfand*) which you can pick up when you return your mug to the stand.

The grumpy little man

In Bavarian tradition Santa Claus (the *Weihnachtsmann* or *Sankt Nikolaus*) isn't the only character who runs around visiting kiddies in December. He also has a dirty little friend called Grampus.

Grampus dresses in black and carries a big bundle of sticks. He's there to scare the children who've fallen into the "naughty" column. But of course he doesn't actually spank anybody, it's all just a bit of good old pagan fun.

On December 6 and December 20 Santa's meanie helpers (many dressed up as grotesque demons) have a "Krampus run" around a few Munich Christmas markets, especially the one at Marienplatz. It's worth seeing for the costumes alone and takes place from 4.30pm to 5.30pm.

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You can, of course, just keep the mug, they make great souvenirs. Staying off the booze? Don't let the name put you off but the *Kinderpunsch* (Children's punch) is the most popular non-alcoholic option at your average Christmas market in Munich.

Where to find the main Munich Christmas markets

The biggest and most commercial Christmas market is on Marienplatz, with hundreds of stands and a great big Christmas tree. From this Christmas market you can watch daily musical performances from the balcony of the Neues Rathaus (New Town Hall) at 5.30pm. Open weekdays 10am-8.30pm, Saturday 9am-8.30pm, Sunday 10am-7.30pm. This really isn't the best Christmas market in Munich though. It's overcrowded, expensive and just too darned big whereas a good Christmas market should feel a little cosy. Try and explore some of Munich's other markets, particularly those mentioned below.

Post away

Duck under the archways of the Neues Rathaus and through to the inner Prunkhof courtyard. There you'll find the once-a-year Christmas market post office.

The Deutsche Post will stamp your envelopes and parcels with a special edition "Christkindl" stamp.

Open Weekdays 12pm-6pm, weekends 10am-7pm.

Note: Christmas markets tend to be open from the last week of November to December 23.

Other Munich Christmas markets:

Chinese Tower

One of Munich's nicest Christmas markets is at the Chinesischer Turm (Chinese Tower) in the Englischer Garten. December 7 and 14 are special "children's days" when the little ones receive gifts from a jolly Santa.

Sendlinger Tor

Munich's old southern city gate hosts a spectacular Christmas market that lights up beautifully in the evenings. Blind musicians belt out Silly Season hits on weekends from 5pm to 7pm.

Schwabing

The Christmas market in Munich's former Bohemian quarter keeps a cool flair. There are over 100 one-person stands and a focus on unique handcrafted gifts. There are also daily

live musical performances and vendors offering cuisine from around the world. It's just next to the Münchener Freiheit U-Bahn station to the north of the city centre.

Christmas Village

you'll find the Christmas Village (Weinaachtdorf) inside the Kaiserhof courtyard of the Munich Residenz, just off Odeonsplatz. It's Munich's second biggest Christmas market and features traditional craftsmen's works. There is also regular live music to keep the shoppers bopping along.

1000 years ago

The "middle-ages" Christmas market on Wittelsbacherplatz is one of the more unusual of the Munich Christmas markets. This market attempts to throw you back to the age of knights, damsels and jesters. There are regular fire shows, dance lessons and displays of wizardry. **Website** www.mittelaltermarkt-muenchen.de

Praterinsel

This Christmas market prides itself on its fine craftworks and entertainment for children. It's on an island in the Isar River near the major Maximilian Strasse shopping mile.

Neuhausen (Rotkreuzplatz)

A little bit out of the centre, this huge and truly suburban Christmas market has a great program of music and puppet shows on the weekends.

Tollwood Winter Festival

This isn't technically one of the Munich Christmas markets but it's very much one in spirit. The winter Tollwood festival excels in art and world culture, and has a "Market of Ideas" with food and handicrafts from the world's four corners. There will be a few big marquees feature live music and other performances. It's at the Theresienwiese, where the Oktoberfest also takes place. In my opinion it's the most funky Christmas Market Munich has to offer.

Dining and drinking – a quick and dirty guide

A short and sweet guide to where to eat, drink and party in Munich. I've divided it into five sections: 1. Munich Beer Gardens, 2. Quick Bites and Cafes, 3. Going Local, 4. Fine Dining and 5. Clubs, Bars and Party Venues. In each category I've included just a very few of my favourite venues. By all means give them a try, but there are thousands of decent venues in Munich, so don't be shy about finding a few more.

Munich Beer Gardens

Beer gardens are to Munich what street cafes are to Paris, pubs are to London and amphetamines were to Johnny Cash – implicit, allied and utterly inseparable. Munich's beer gardens are like little islands in the urban sea where locals escape the hectic and wind down.

It's not all about the beer. These are places to share a lazy lunch with family or friends, or make a few new ones on the table next to you. You will have never seen Germans as laid-back and friendly as at beer gardens in Munich. Most beer gardens have playgrounds for kids and a couple have other diversions, such as a deer enclosure (the Hirschgarten) or paddle-boat rental (the Seehaus). Shady chestnut trees and long wooden benches are two of the hallmarks of traditional Munich beer gardens.

The benches encourage you to sit down with strangers and strike up a conversation. That's what they call *Gemütlichkeit*, friends. That unique German word which means a sense of cosiness and social acceptance. So jabber, drink and be jolly - soon you'll be *Prost*-ing like a pro.



One of Munich's most-loved beer gardens, the Chinese Tower.

In the glass

Munich beer gardens usually each serve only one brand of beer from the city's major breweries, be it Paulaner, Augustiner, Hofbräu, Löwenbräu, Hacker-Pschorr or Spaten. The standard measure is the one-litre *Maß* but half-litre portions are almost always available.

Try the *Radler* if you're taking it easy. It's a mix of beer (lager) and sweet lemonade, invented *Helles* especially for cyclists. If you're off the booze altogether a cola/Fanta mix called *Spezi* is a popular choice.

On the plate

Beer garden cuisine has become something of a sub-genre in its own right. Hot food is served, but you're also allowed to bring your own food from home. It's tradition in Munich beer gardens and locals view it as a God-given right (see the How they started section below). So do yourself a favour and get down to the nearest supermarket, or the Viktualienmarkt if you want to splash out a bit.

A few more pointers on food at Munich beer gardens:

- If you want to buy your meal, *Steckerlfisch* (grilled fish on a stick), *Hendl* (chicken) - you typically get a half, and *Hax'n* (pork knuckle) are fine options.
- Many Munich restaurants also have a small beer garden attached, but these aren't traditional in the sense that you can't bring your own food (obviously).

Biergarten picnic list:

Pick up the following items and stash them in a bag along with plates, cutlery and a tablecloth (blue and white Bavarian chequered pattern preferred).

1. Obatzda – A cheesy-oniony spread and beer garden staple. You can buy it in little tubs, usually next to the butter at the supermarket.

2. Fruit and veg – *Radi* (radish) is the usual favourite at garden benches, cut it up into a spiral and stick it on your buns. Cherry tomatoes, pickles and cucumbers are other healthy fillers.

3. Meat - No lack of options here, German supermarkets have a huge variety of sliced *Fleisch* for your DIY snacks.

4. Bread and Brezel – Any type of bread should do, but the denser the better and preferably not pre-sliced. There's no need to stick around the supermarket for these, bakeries are everywhere in Munich.

Bread rolls here are called *Semmel*. *Brezel* (pretzels) should be fresh and have a sprinkling of rock salt – it's the best bit.

- Sections of beer gardens that are already tableclothed are usually reserved for guests ordering food. Here you can expect typical restaurant service with waiters and such.
- Otherwise, buying food and drinks is self-service. You go up to the hut to order and take the consumable booty with you.

How they started

Munich beer gardens were born, just like the city itself, on the banks of the Isar River. Since beer only brews when it's cold, budding beer barons dug cellars along the banks of the icy Alpine stream.

Gravel was strewn and amply-foliaged chestnut trees were planted to keep the sun's rays at bay and the beer nice and cool. It wasn't long until someone hit upon the idea of selling the brew on the spot. Long wooden benches were set up around the trees and the "traditional" beer garden we know and love today came to be.

This, of course, got on the goat of the existing Munich guesthouses, who found themselves facing a stiff new brand of competition. Sit inside a stuffy old pub on a hot summer's day or head down to river to drink straight of the barrel? I know what I would have chosen.

King Ludwig I himself stepped in with a stroke of genius – the beer gardens would be allowed to sell beer, but not food.

And so the punters were allowed to take their own food along to the gardens.

It's a custom that continues to this day, even though Ludwig's decree was long since

First-class Munich beer gardens

Here are my reviews of the most-loved Munich beer gardens. I haven't bothered to give them individual ratings since they're all top-notch. Do try to get to at least one of them during your stay.

abolished and beer gardens in Munich can serve food as well.

Chinesischer Turm

Where it's at

Wanna get worldly? Here you can drink German beer next to a Chinese tower in a so-called English garden. This is Munich's loudest and proudest beer garden and rightly deserves to be on any traveller's itinerary. It's smack dab in the middle of the city's famous park.

The proximity to LMU university makes it a popular spot for the student crowd but really, this is one beer garden that sucks in all and sundry. Benches are spread around an impressive five-story faux Chinese pavilion that's said to be a copy of one in London's Royal Gardens. I think it looks like an immense wedding cake, but then again when I'm there I am usually half tanked. A bunch of aging lads in Lederhosen take over the first floor on weekends and belt out oompah tunes.

Beer and food

Hofbräu beer is now served. The owners switched over from Löwenbräu a few years ago, God bless their souls. There are plenty of typical German snacks on offer from the self-service huts (not the best *wurst* I've had, but not bad!), and you can go in for a proper sit-down meal at the restaurant next door.

The garden

The Chinesischer Turm is Munich's second biggest after the Hirschgarten with about 7000 places, the lion's share on traditional wooden banks. The beer garden has lots of shade and a few shady characters - great place for people watching! A playground and very old-school carousel are there for the little ones.

Backstory

The tower was built in 1790 as part of some craze for all things Oriental. It burned down when Munich was taking a World War Two pounding in 1944 and rebuilt in 1951-52.

In July it hosts the Kocherlball, a fancy dress ball that started with the maids and servants of the mega-wealthy. It's an early morning affair, starts at 6am. In December there's a Christmas market and the tower is a lit up like a Christmas tree. A beautiful spot in the depths of winter.

The Details:

Location Englischer Garten 3, Schwabing **Phone** 089 38 38 70 **Website** www.chinaturm.de

Open 10am to 1am

Directions Take the U3 or U6 to Universität. Walk east along Veterinär Strasse from Geschwister-Scholl-Platz at the university, into the park and turn left at the Monopteros (Greek temple on the hill). It should take you about 15min. There's also a bus that passes by the Chinese Tower (No.52) and connects to Münchener Freiheit U-Bahn station, a good idea if you have had one too many beers!

Seehaus

Where it's at

You can't get much better than this. Not only is Seehaus in the midst of the vast Englischer Garten park, it sits on a lake bank for maximum chill-out factor. It's the only place in Munich where you can rent a paddle-boat and cut a few laps around some little islands.



The crowd is a tad on the yuppie side. To be sure, the venue doesn't attract the same diverse crowd as down at the Chinesischer Turm. Still, this was the first beer garden I went to in Munich so it will always have a special place in my liver.

Beer and food

Serves Paulaner beer. There's a stall selling wine in one corner. Food's top quality and there are good vegetarian options including frozen yogurt. Prices here are above-average – both a drawback and a good reason to go traditional and pack your own snacks.

The garden

There are traditional wooden benches and chestnut trees lending shade all the way down the water's edge. Seats 2,500, with an extra 320 in the restaurant. There's a paddle boat rental station and a healthy swan community nearby.

Backstory

The amber liquid first started flowing here in 1811. The garden and restaurant have been expanded and upgraded through the decades and the existing chow-house was opened in 1985.

The Details:

Location Kleinhesselohe 3 **Phone** 089 3 81 61 30 **Website** www.kuffler-gastronomie.de

Open 9am to 1am **Directions** Take U3 or U6 to Münchener Freiheit. Walk east down Feilizsch Strasse, into the park and keep going till you see the lake. Takes about 10min.

Flaucher

Where it's at

This is great addition to your Isar River bike-and-beer gardens itinerary. The beer garden is in a secluded woody semi-island about 4.5kms south of the city centre. Another idea is to end up here after touring the nearby Munich Zoo. A wee bit further south is a lovely criss-crossey section of bridges and rocky river beaches, hugely popular with nudies in the warmer months.

The garden

Fills all the classic criteria with wooden benches, a stone floor and plenty of chestnut trees. There's a small playground for the kids. Seats 2000, with another 70 spots in the restaurant.

Beer and food

Löwenbräu and Franziskaner Weißbier are on tap. The food here is excellent, some people claim it offers Munich's best *Riesenbreze* (giant pretzel). My culinary tip is the *Steckerlfisch*. For the uninitiated that means fish on a stick.

It's not battered, it's an entire grilled fish so you can still see its little face. You can pick the edible bits off with your hands or a wooden fork. Here they usually serve mackerel. A tad oily but delicious.

Backstory

A bloke called Johann Flaucher founded the first restaurant here in an old forestry office in 1871. The whole area used to be part of the private hunting domain of the ruling Wittelsbach clan.

The Details:

Location Isarauen 8, Thalkirchen **Phone** 089 7 23 26 77 **Website** www.zum-flaucher.de

Open 10am to 11pm **Directions** By public transport, take the U3 to Brudermühl Strasse, from where it's a 10min walk. Go east down Brudermühl Strasse, turn right down Hans-Preißinger Strasse (just before the bridge), take the track along the river and cross over the Schinderbrücke bridge. From there it's a few minutes along Isarauen.

Hirschgarten

Where it's at

This is the biggest beer garden in Munich, and most people think it's one of the best. Up to 8000 folks can be seated in the great outdoors of Munich's west. The garden sits in a sprawling 40ha park between Nymphenburg Palace and the main S-Bahn line.

It's still a bit of a Munich secret as most tourists can't be bothered venturing out to find it.

I assure you it's well worth the effort. Delicious food and beer, an inviting atmosphere and more tradition that you can shake a stick at make this one of Munich's best.

Beer and food

Brews on tap include HB Tegernsee, Kaltenberger Bräu and Munich's favourite Augustiner. It's the only Munich beer garden still to serve the amber fluid straight from wooden kegs. There are five beer stations and after you finish one off you're obliged to give it a rinse in a cold-water basin before racking it up going back for another (very traditional). Waiters serve only the tableclothed area near the restaurant. There are plenty of self-service huts for everybody else serving everything from grilled fish to ice cream.

I recommend the *Obatzda* with *Breze* for snack time.

It's easy to feel like you're really in the countryside here as the beer garden is sheltered from major roads by hedges and parkland. Most of the tables and chairs sit under grand, leafy chestnuts but there are also some sections where you can sun it up if you wish. The restaurant seats 320 and stays open throughout the year.

The name *Hirschgarten* means "deer garden" and about 30 of Bambi's long-lost relatives are on-hand in an adjacent petting zoo. It's a hit among kids and Vietnam War veterans alike. There are also five outdoor big screens around which 4000 people can watch the soccer (they make room for up to 8000 when the World Cup is on).



Clean your won beer mug at the Hirschgarten.

Backstory

The parkland surrounds go back to 1720 when it was set up as a breeding ground for pheasants. Prince Elector Karl Theodor let the nobility hunt deer there from 1780 (hence the name) and soon after opened it up to the general public. The first drinking hole was opened in 1791.

The Details: Location Hirschgartenallee 1 **Phone** 089 17 25 91 **Website**

www.hirschgarten.com(in English) **Open** 9am to midnight **Directions** Although a new S-Bahn station called “Hirschgarten” opened in early 2010 it’s still easier to get to the beer garden from the next station, Laim. If you’re coming from the city, exit on the left, go through the tunnel and take the next right at Winfried Strasse. Then you’re in the park. Take the first right and curve around to the left and you’re at the beer garden. It’s about a 15min walk from the station.

Other places to dine, drink and dance

Quick bites and cafes

Café Tambosi

Old-world elegance can be relived at Café Tambosi, Munich’s oldest coffee house. They say Mozart himself used to hang about here for coffee and cake and the décor doesn’t seem to have changed much since he was about in the late 1700s.

You can either take a seat inside crammed with baroque-era memorabilia and old wooden furniture or out on Odeonsplatz, up on the balcony or on the other side of the cafe facing into the Hofgarten. Students from a nearby music school often perform to guests on the Hofgarten side.

Service can be painfully slow so try and order together and ask for the bill at the same time.

Sample costs Caffè Lola Montez €4.10, two scoops of ice cream with strawberries €8.50

Open Daily 7.3am-1am **Address** Odeonsplatz 18, Munich **Phone** 089 298 322 **Website**

www.tambosi.de.

Pasta e Basta

This is a cheap Italian dinner with a basic, bustling and family friendly atmosphere. Their motto is: “Full plates, half price”! Most meals are under five Euros and a bowl of spaghetti is only €3.45. This ain’t fine dining, but it’s a bargain and tasty to boot.

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Sample costs lasagne Bolognese €4.45, salami pizza €3.95, cup of coffee €1.90 **Address** Frauenhofer Strasse 19 and Amalien Strasse 87 **Phone** 089 13 939 446 **Website** www.pastaebastaweb.de **Open** Monday to Sunday 11am to midnight.

Café Glockenspiel

This little place undoubtedly has one of the city's top views, right over Marienplatz facing the Glockenspiel. I've gotten in here once or twice at about 4pm-4.30pm and hung out with a coffee before watching the Marienplatz fill up with tourists. Then I've gone to the window to watch the afternoon performance of the Glockenspiel at 5pm.

Costs The kitchen does modern salad and steak lunches and dinners for €8 to €15.

Address Marienplatz 28 (entrance via Rosen Strasse around the corner) **Phone** 089 264 256 **Website** www.cafe-glockenspiel.de **Open** Monday to Saturday 11am to 1am, Sunday 10am to 7pm.

Lamms

You're into the wee hours after an evening of exploring the Munich nightlife. You'd like nothing better than a schnitzel the size of a dead elephant's ear or a plate of spicy hot ribs to settle the liquid load in your tum. There's the perfect place to head and it's called Lamms. It's Austrian-run, open 24 hours, has a beer garden and Augustiner beer on tap. Gets busy after midnight on weekends but don't let that stop you, it's part of Lamms' special atmosphere!

Sample costs A Riesenschnitzel mit kleinem Salatteller (giant schnitzel with a plate of salad) costs €10.80. **Address** Sendlinger-Tor-Platz 11 **Phone** 089 59 19 63 **Website** www.lamms.de **Open** As I said 24 hours a day.

Going local - beer halls and restaurants to enjoy the best of Bavarian cuisine

Practically all of the beer gardens mentioned in the Munich beer gardens pages also have a small also have a "Wirtshaus" where you can eat and drink Bavarian when the weather turns cold, so lend them a thought too if you want to "go local".

Hofbräuhaus

Possibly the most famous beer hall in the world and a Munich landmark. Go to my full review by [clicking here](#).

Zum Augustiner

If you're wondering where Munich's most-loved beer is to be found then look no further. Augustiner's brews are served straight from traditional oaken barrels.

This is a classic Munich beer hall decked out with a vaulted ceiling and paraphernalia from the city's 800+ year history. It's actually a maze of hidden corners and

private rooms (one is even coated in seashells) but chances are you won't get to see much of them unless you go purposely sticky nosing around.

There's also seating on the pedestrian street in front of the restaurant and a small beer garden out back. If you're visiting in spring I suggest you give your tastebuds an orgasm and order one of the

Spargelspezialitäten (asparagus specialities).

Sample costs Asparagus with hollandaise sauce and grilled zander €21.80, 500ml *Helles* (lager) beer 3.70€

Address In Munich's main pedestrian drag, Arnulfstrasse 52 **Open** Daily 10am-12am

Phone 089 594 393 **Website** www.augustiner-restaurant.com



Löwenbräukeller

If you've already heard of any Munich beer there's a good chance it's Löwenbräu (pronounced: *Ler-vin-broy*). The brew has been widely exported for over a century, even though it's one of Munich's least favourite home grown beers. This massive beer hall is nonetheless impressive with room for 2000 revellers in the upstairs "cellar" and a further 1000 in the adjacent beer garden. It was much bigger in the past though: before the original building was destroyed by bombing in 1944 there was room for some 8000 guests. The building has a big, pointy turret and is simply impossible to miss.

They go all out for seasonal events here. In mid-February to March it's the scene of some rowdy masquerade balls to celebrate Carnival (or as they call it in Bavaria, Fasching).

In mid-March there's the Strong Beer Festival where Löwenbräu's Triumphator beer gets 'em dancing on the benches. It's not just the beer that packs a punch at this fest, as there's also an annual *Steinheberwettbewerb* (rock-lifting competition).

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The cellar is transformed into an alternative venue during Oktoberfest, when it takes the name Das Wiesenzelt am Stiglmaierplatz, which has the advantage of being able to stay open well past midnight. But there's reason to call in all year round as Bavarian oompah bands and *Schuhplatter* dancers take the stage any day of the week.

Sample costs Roast pork with a dumpling and salad €10.50, 0.5L Löwenbräu beer €4.20.

Address Nymphenburger Strasse 2 **Open** Daily 10am to 12am

Phone 089 5472 6690

Website www.loewenbraeukeller.com

Weisses Brauhaus

This is nothing less than the home of my hands-down favourite Munich beer, Schneider Weissbier. It has a nutty, banana-like flavour, that, believe me is a lot tastier than it sounds. If you're up for a challenge Schneider has a couple of strong concoctions; the Aventinus wheat *Doppelbock* (8.2 per cent) and the almost black Eisbock which weighs in at a



A classic Bavarian dish, Schweinshaxe with Knödel.

whopping 12 per cent! The venue itself has a busy and somewhat refined edge compared with the noisy Hofbräuhaus nearby. This isn't the place to party into the night but for a traditional meal and some suds it's second to none.

There's been a brewery at this location since at least 1540 and groups of 10 or more can tour of the production facilities, see the website for details.

Sample costs *Haxenteller* (mixed-pork plate) €12.90, pair of sausages with sauerkraut €6.40, 0.5L Schneider Weissbier Original €3.60

Address Tal 7, 80331 Munich **Open** Daily 8am to 1am **Phone** 089 290 1380 **Website** www.weisses-brauhaus.de.

Fine Dining

Tantris

Some say it's one of the world's best restaurants, so it's no surprise Tantris is Munich's culinary holy-of-holies. Chef Hans Haas is a star in Germany and his "temple of table joy" has two Michelin stars.

The *Gault Millau* French restaurant guide gives it their highest rating of 19 points. Reservations are a must. A fixed four-course lunch costs just shy of €100 and dinner will set you back €125 for a five-course meal and €145 if you opt for eight courses.

Tantris is gaudy, overdressed, expensive and excellent.

Open Tuesday to Saturday 12pm to 3pm and 6.30pm to 1am **Address** Johann Fichte Strasse 7 **Phone** 089 36 19 590 **Website** www.tantris.com

Clubs, bars and party venues

Atomic Café

Ever seen the film *Studio 54*? This is about as close you'll get to the ultra-hip 70s disco in Munich, albeit on a much cosier scale. There are few cooler live music venues than the Atomic Café, located just around the block from its polar opposite, the Hofbräuhaus.

The interior is a splash of pink and red lit by disco balls. There are dimly-lit corners with leather sofas and a dance floor that really doesn't get started until after midnight.

It's alternative, hipster cool, so don't come hoping for top 40 hits. When bands aren't taking the stage there are DJs. Wednesday nights are dedicated to Britpop and the like.

Costs Cocktail happy hour and free entry from 10pm to 11pm, after that there's a cover charge of €6+, Tickets to concerts are typically €15-€25, Beer €3+, cocktails €8.70-€9

Open from 10pm Tue-Sat **Address** Neuturm Strasse 5 **Phone** 089 2283 054 **Website** www.atomic.de.

Paradiso Tanzbar

Formerly known as Old Mrs Henderson, Paradiso has been chick for decades, pulling stars like Mick Jagger, David Bowie and Freddie Mercury (who even made the music video for *Living On My Own* here). Music ranges from 80s to burlesque to modern dance. It's cool, cosy and kitschy and attracts a yuppie crowd, so dress well to get in.

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Costs Cover charge €5, beer €3.50, mixed drinks €8+ **Address** Rumford Strasse 2, Isarvorstadt **Phone** 089 263 469 **Website** www.paradiso-tanzbar.de.

8 Seasons

Another up-market bar with just a dab of *schicki-micki*. The four sizey rooms and plush leather couches fill up quick on weekends when guest DJs are in. If money's no issue and you're into beautiful people, there are few venues better than this.

Costs Cover charge €10 - €20, beer €4.50 cocktails €10+. **Address** Sonnen Strasse, Altstadt-Lehel **Phone** 089 2429 44 44 **Website** www.8-seasons.com.

Schumann's Bar am Hofgarten

Run by Germany's own "celebrity bartender", Charlie Schumann, this is Munich's hottest address to hobnob with the bold and the beautiful.

Schumann is himself something of a Munich institution, having modelled for Hugo Boss, invented a line of cocktails (among them the heavenly *Swimmingpool*) and showing up in the social pages every other week.

Most tables are reserved for regulars so expect standing room only and be careful not to trip over anyone famous. Your best bet is to arrive early and grab a barstool to watch the bartenders in action. Wear nothing but your best.

Costs Beer €3,50, Cocktails 7.50+ **Open** Mon-Fri 8am-3am, Sat/Sun 6pm-3am **Address** Odeonsplatz 6-7 **Phone** 089 22 90 60 **Website** www.schumanns.de.

Things to do – ideas for how to spend your time in Munich

A D.I.Y. walking tour of Munich's city centre

Does your trip to Munich have a very tight schedule? Or maybe you've been hanging out too long at the Oktoberfest and have realised that you haven't seen anything of the city yet? Well, fear not, this guide is here to show you the way. The web's first, only and absolutely bestest guide to getting the most of out Munich in just 120 minutes!

Start point: Marienplatz

12.00pm – Kick off your flying tour at the crack of midday, just in time to watch the Glockenspiel chime away on the face of the neo-gothic Neues Rathaus (New Town Hall).



Now wade left through the crowds, don't loiter at the Fish Fountain like everyone else, just keep on going! Stop at the archway under the Altes Rathaus (Old Town Hall) and do a 180-spin for the best ground-level shot of Marienplatz and the twin-domes of the Frauenkirche cathedral.

No time to fuss over the focus, chop, chop! Continue through the arches and say hi to the Juliet Statue on the left. Yeah, yeah, parting is sweet sorrow, but you're on a schedule!

12.10pm - Turn on your heel and jog down to the Viktualienmarkt, Munich's bustling outdoor marketplace. Grab a *Leberkässemmel* (meatloaf bun) from one of the stands for sustenance. It's mighty filling and you can chomp it down on the run.

12.20pm - Do a turn around the maypole before hightailing out of the market down Rosental street.

Here you'll find Angermaier, a renown Munich merchant for Lederhosen (leather shorts) and sexy and/or traditional Dirndl dresses. This is where stars like Boris Becker and, believe it or not, Snoop Dogg have come to kit out. Quick eye-scan for some nice get-up, no time to dally, slap it on and pay up before the shop assistant realises you've left your other clothes in the changing room.

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12.40pm - Now you look like a real Bavarian, it's time to party like one. Scamper back up to Marienplatz and jump in a rickshaw taxi with the name of Munich's holiest of unholy venues on your lips – "Take me to the Hofbräuhaus"!

12.50pm - No time for hanging around here, rush into the Schwemme drinking hall of this, the world's most famous pub. Grab a one-litre Maß glass of beer from a random table and toast its owner for his generous nature. Take a healthy swig, Prost! Do a quick jig with the waiter/waitress of your choice and get out of there before someone calls security.

01.00pm - Outside again, dive back into the rickshaw. Directions to driver: "Alter Hof!" and he'll spin you through the city's original power base with its fabled Monkey Tower. Continue north passing Max-Joeseph-Platz, soaking up brief views of the opera-riffic Nationaltheater, the royal Residenz and a statue of good King Max I Joseph.

01.10pm - Dismount at the first big bronze lion you see along Residenz Strasse. Give him a rub for luck, don't feel silly everyone does it here!



Then saunter up to Munich's most Italianate square, Odeonsplatz.

Skip up the stairs of the Feldherrnhalle (Field Marshall's Hall) between yet more lions. Spin

around again and admire the view down Munich's grandest boulevard, Ludwig Strasse, one Bavarian King's answer to Paris' Avenue des Champs Élysées.

See the Siegestor victory archway all the way up the end? Good! Tick it off, you've got to hustle!

01.20pm - You've done "the beer" now pay tribute to Munich's other cultural pillar: "the art". Sprint through the archway to your right and you're in the Hofgarten (Royal Garden). Look back at the wall of the arcade where you came in. It's lined with frescoes depicting Bavarian history and its ruling Wittelsbach clan. Nice folks.

01.25pm - Now it's time to run! Onwards across the Hofgarten and down the tunnel into the city's vast park, the Englischer Garten. And no bellyaching, thousands of people jog this route this every year as part of the Münchener Stadtlauf (city fun-run). *Schnell! Schnell!*

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01.35pm - Branch off to the right as soon as you get into the park and follow the track past the little island with the Japanese Teahouse. It was gift to Munich for hosting the 1972 Olympics. Keep following the bend around to the head of the stream, past the massive Haus der Kunst art gallery. One of the city's poshest nightclubs, P1, is under there, but hey, it's not open at this hour. Keep it up! Your Munich tour is almost done.

01.40pm - Head to the bridge over Prinzregenten Strasse and take in one of Munich's wackiest sights, the guys and gals surfing full-length surfboards in the Eisbach stream.

01.45pm - Now you can take a chill pill, catch your breath, wind down.

It's time for the cruisey part of your tour. If there's another richshaw around, grab it! If not, a horse-drawn carriage or someone else's bike will do just fine. Wheel it up through the park, don't mind the nudies on the way, they're just doing what comes natural. Pass the Monopteros Greek temple and you're on the final leg!

01.50pm - Get off at the Chinesischer Turm, Munich's most-loved beer garden with a big ol' Chinese pavilion in the middle. Grab yourself the adult beverage of your choice and listen to some oompah music.

You're at the end of your Munich tour! Now you can relax, safe in the knowledge that you have seen the absolute hands down best of everything the city has to offer.

Shopping in Munich

Passionate shoppers will be right at home in Munich. Here are the main parts of the city you'll want to hit up to burn some cash.

1 • Pedestrian Zone

Munich's main shopping axis is impossible to miss. The pedestrian zone runs from Karlsplatz through to Marienplatz and is usually packed, so be prepared to walk slow or do some side stepping. Huge department stores

Galleria Kaufhof and Karstadt battle for space with multinational fashion chains like H&M, Zara and

C and A. A gentleman's highlight is Hirmer, the world's biggest men's fashion house.



Inside the Fünf Höfe arcade.

2 ▪ Maximilian Strasse

If money's no object this is the street to cruise. One of Munich's grandest boulevards, Maximilian Strasse stretches from the National Theatre up to the Bavarian parliament, the Maximilianeum lording on a hill on the eastern bank of the Isar River.

High-end luxury stores like Armani and Bulgari can be found here. Don't miss a wander through the Maximilianhöfe, a new shopping centre filled with luxury boutiques and the state opera's rehearsal stage.

3 ▪ Theatiner Strasse

Another well-to-do shopping destination arching from Marienplatz to Odeonsplatz. The highlight here is the *Fünf Höfe* (Five Courtyards) shopping arcade with its chic cafes, clothes shops and postmodern public spaces.

4 ▪ Sendlinger Strasse and

Hackenviertel

Laid-back and full of surprises, this is one of my favourite strips to stroll if I've got some time to kill in central Munich. There are many independent shops, cafes and even a few art galleries tucked away back in arcades that you have to scout around for. The shops at the southern end near the Sendlinger Tor and particularly interesting – there's a tea shop, a few gift shops and even a shop dedicated to witches' needs!

5 ▪ Around Leopold Strasse

The legions of Munich's yuppies hang out in the coffee bars and boutiques of Leopold Strasse, Schwabing's main drag. Make a caffeine stop here and indulge in a spot of people watching, and then explore a few side streets. My favourite is Hohenzollern Strasse, packed with antique shops, boutiques and independent art galleries.

6 ▪ Viktualienmarkt

The city's grand outdoor market with hundreds of food, flower and gift vendors.

7 ▪ Delicatessens

Munich has two grand old delicatessens which have been serving Bavarian royals and ardent gourmets for donkey's years.

The more accessible is **Dallmayr**, just north of Marienplatz. It's manned by an elegant army of blue dressed/white aproned ladies and stocks everything from coffee and chocolate to sushi, sweets and Black Sea caviar costing €100s for a matchbox full.

Don't miss the stone fountain with its pool populated with living crabs! There's also a café and fine dining restaurant upstairs.

Costs Six assorted chocolates €4.50, “Guten Morgen” breakfast at the café €13.50, six-course dinner at the restaurant €125 **Open** Delicatessen and café 9.30am-7pm Mon-Sat, Restaurant 7pm-11pm Tue-Sat **Address** Dienser Strasse 14 **Phone** 089 213 50 **Website** www.delikatessenhaus-dallmayr.de.

The other is **Feinkost Käfer** which is a little out of the way on the east side of the Isar River. Käfer has a similar array of fine food as well as a bistro and a wine cellar stocked with over 100,000 bottles of plonk. **Open** Mon-Sat 9am-8pm **Address** Prinzregenten Strasse 73 **Phone** 089 238 887 828 **Website** www.feinkost-kaefer.de.

Munich souvenirs

Some typical souvenirs to buy in Munich include:

- **Glass and stone drinking mugs** – These come with or without a metal “pewter” top.
- **Bavarian beer** – Pick up a few bottles of Munich’s finest brews at any supermarket.
- **Traditional clothing (*Tracht*)** – Bavarian *lederhosen* (leather shorts) and *Dirndl* (women’s dress) have to be among the most recognized national costumes in the world.
- **Chiavari** – this is a chain decorated with little pendants like animal teeth and coins. It’s worn by men and women over traditional *lederhosen* and *Dirndl* dresses.
- **Nymphenburg porcelain** – Fine white gold from the famous *Porzellan Manufaktur Nymphenburg*.
- **Plush lion dolls** – The kings of the jungle are the traditional symbol of Bavarian royalty. Pick a cute mini version in Munich, you can even get one wearing a little pair of *lederhosen*.

Books in English

After something to read during your European tour? Munich has a few solid options for those seeking English language books in Munich. Here’s a guide to finding the best books in the folkloric city of monks.

The main places to pick up your books in English in Munich...

Hugendubel

Hugendubel's dedicated English-language bookstore sadly closed down in 2012, but multi-storey branches still can be found on Karlsplatz and Marienplatz, both boasting humble collections of English-language titles. At the Marienplatz branch it's on the second floor. This also offers great views over Marienplatz and of the Glockenspiel opposite.

There's a cafe on the top floor and lots of comfy red armchairs. English-language travel guides are mixed in with the German titles – look for the word *Reiseführer* (travel guide) on the directory signs. The English language section Karlsplatz branch is on the ground floor, around to the left past the entrance.

The Details: Location Salvatorplatz 2 **Phone** 089 30 75 75 75 **Website**

www.hugendubel.de **Open** Monday to Saturday 10am to 8pm **Directions** (to the English-language branch: Take U-Bahn No. 3, 4, 5 or 6 to Odeonsplatz then duck down Salvator Strasse past the Feldherrnhalle to your right.

The Munich Readery

What claims to be Germany's biggest English-language second hand bookstore stocks around 40,000 titles in an Aladdin's cave of crowded shelves.

There are novels, non-fiction books and even children's books if that's what you're after. The store is run by a friendly American who's lived here for years. You can't sell your used books to the Readery but you can trade them in for other second-hand titles. To learn more about the trading policy, see here or check out the store's website www.readery.de.

The details: Location Augusten Strasse 104, Munich **Phone** 089 12 19 24 03 **Open** Monday to Friday 11am to 8pm, Saturday 10am to 6pm **Directions** It's about a 20min walk north of the Hauptbahnhof. Or you can catch the U2 subway to Theresien Strasse and then walk two blocks north on Augusten Strasse.

Words' Worth

A long-running Munich favourite, Words' Worth has a mid-strength range of fiction and non-fiction titles at pretty reasonable prices. They also stock DVDs, gifts, board games and oddball items such as organic soaps and "brandy butter" before Christmas.

The Details: Location Schelling Strasse 3. It's in the humanities building of LMU (Munich's main university). **Phone** 089 2 80 91 41 **Website** www.wordsworth.de **Open** Mondays to

Fridays from 9am to 8pm. Saturdays 10am to 4pm. **Directions** Take U-Bahn No 3 or 6 to the stop Universität.

Internationale Presse

A functional little one-stop shop in the Hauptbahnhof opposite the platforms. It has a small but steady range of the latest novels in English as well as magazines and newspapers from around the world. As with most shops at the Hauptbahnhof, it's open late and on Sundays.

Tours of Munich

There are many options for seeing the sights in Munich. You might like to explore the city by bike or take part in a guided walking tour of the *Altstadt* - city centre. If you're feeling a bit less energetic you can take a hop-on, hop-off bus tour or guided taxi ride through the city. Lovebirds might enjoy a jaunt through the Englischer Garten in the back of a horse-drawn carriage. See below for more details about the different options and links to company websites where you can learn more.

DIY Munich walking tours

Organised tours can be a great chance to see and learn about things you wouldn't normally if you were walking around with your nose stuck in a guidebook.

But they're not for everyone.

I personally like to just wander around a new city by myself or with a few companions and just soak everything up. If this is more your style, check out the do-it-yourself Munich walking tour under the heading "A D.I.Y. Walking Tour of Munich's City Centre".

By bus

Hop-on, hop-off bus tours are a good way to go if you've on a tight schedule and still want to see the city's highlights. They're also handy if you're with someone like your 80-year-old grandpa, your six-year-old nephew who doesn't want to walk around too much.

Munich bus tours leave from in front of the Karstadt department store opposite then Hauptbahnhof.

The busses are double-deckers and the top comes off in good weather.

They generally leave every 30min between 10am and 4pm and there are audio-guides to let you know a bit about the sights you're passing by.

The company Gray Line SIGHTseeing has two routes:

- The "Express Hop-On Hop-Off Tour" passes the Pinakotheken art galleries, Odeonsplatz, Max-Joeseph-Platz, Marienplatz and Karlsplatz.

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It costs €11.50, children €6 and should take about an hour if you don't get off anywhere.

- The "Grand Circle Hop-On Hop-Off Tour" covers all of the above and also swings by Nymphenburg Palace, the Olympic Park and the Schwabing district.

It costs €15.90, children €7.60 and takes about 2.5 hours. Reservations not needed.

More details: Website www.sightseeing-munich.com **Phone** +49 (0)89 54 90 75 60 **Email** info@sightseeing-munich.com

By rickshaw

Operator Rickscha-Mobil offers rickshaw tours and "conference bike" rentals.

More details: Website www-rikscha-mobil.de (in German) **Phone** 089 24 21 68 80 **Email** info@rikscha-mobil.de

By carriage

For a romantic change, there are horse-drawn carriage rides operated by Kutscherei Holzmann through the Englischer Garten.

More details: Website kutschen-muenchen.de **Phone** 089 18 06 08

By bike

Munich is proud of being one of Germany's most bike friendly cities. See the report under the heading "Munich by bike" for info on organised bike tours and how to rent your own pair of wheels to explore the city at your own pace.

By taxi

You can even rent a special taxi guide to take you around the city through the company Taxi Guide München. **More details: Website** www.taxi-guide-muenchen.de **Phone** 0175 48 12 848 **Email** info@taxi-guide-muenchen.de.

On foot

A couple of companies including Sandemans New Europe and Radius Tours actually offer free walking tours. But you'd be pushing the bounds of common decency if you didn't leave a little tip. Check out these websites for more info.

- Sandemans (www.munichwalktours.de)
- Munich Walk Tours (www.munichwalktours.de)
- Radius Tours (www.radiustours.com)

Tour operator **Munich Insider** offers a range of walking tours for groups with creative themes including the "Ghost Tours", "Graveyards" and "Hangmen, Whores and Hags".

See here: www.munich-insider.com for more info.

Tours of Munich in sign language

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The Munich Tourist Office organises walking tours for deaf visitors in German, Greek, American and international sign language. There's a maximum of 15 people per group and fee is €103 for two hours.

Contact: Munich Tourist Office, Sendlinger Strasse 1, **Phone** 089 23 33 02 34 Fax 089 23 33 02 37 **Email** gaestefuehrungen@muenchen.de

Online tours of Munich

Get a feel for Munich before you come with the virtual 360 degree views on the Panorama Cities website www.panorama-cities.net.

Bookable tours

And finally, here are a couple of tours of Munich available to book my online partners Viator. To see all the options, go to www.destination-munich.com/tours-in-munich.html and www.destination-munich.com/tours-of-bavaria.html.

Munich for Kids

Travelling to Munich with kids? They'll love it. Many city museums parks set aside areas for children with interactive displays and playrooms. Other attractions like the "Fairy tale Fun Park" are especially designed with kids in mind.

There's no lack of things to do around the Bavarian countryside either. What kid wouldn't love a visit to theme parks devoted to Lego or Playmobil for example? Or better still, a visit to one of Bavaria's real fairy tale castles and palaces. The Munich tourist office sells a "Münchener Familienpass" with discounts and info in English on heaps of kid-friendly sights, playgrounds and swimming pools. They can also give you tips on current child-focused happenings. But for now, here's a list of nine tips on what to do in Munich for kids.

1. Sea Life

Take the little ones on a voyage beneath the waves at the **Sea Life München** museum, which opened in 2006. Over 10,000 creatures of the deep reside in over 30 large tanks. Visitors explore the popular "Tropical Ocean" tank from an underwater glass-topped tunnel. It's in Munich's Olympic Park. www.visitsealife.com

2. Fairy-tale fun park

What kid hasn't already heard of classic German fairy tales like *Snow White*, *Hänsel and Gretel* or *Little Red Riding Hood*? At the **Freizeitpark Märchenwald** (Fairy tale Forest) over

20 fairy tales on display which the little ones can bring to life with the press of a button. Great for younger kids. www.maerchenwald-isartal.de

3. Watch the surfing

Take them to see the surfers cutting the standing breaker in the Englischer Garten park.

4. Circus

Munich is home to Europe's biggest circus, the **Zirkus Krone**. You could attend a show with acrobats, clowns and animals, or go along to the petting zoo where kids can get to know said animals. One of the most famous is Goliath, a horse who has given rides to over 70,000 children over the past 20 years. How's that for a "workhorse"!

5. Toyshop

Your kids could find seventh heaven in Munich's **Obletter Spielwaren**. It's probably the city's most famous toy store and spreads out over several levels at the Karlsplatz-Stachus central square.

6. Zoo

The **Munich Zoo** (*Tierpark Hellabrunn*) is one of Germany's biggest with over 450 species of animals. They're grouped continentally into Africa, Europe, America, Asia, Australia and even Antarctica. It's a highlight of Munich for kids of any age. There is a petting zoo, pony and camel rides for children. www.tierpark-hellabrunn.de

7. Church towers

Why not take the kids up to one of Munich's church tower lookouts at the Frauenkirche or the Alter Peter? The views are great and the climb up the hundreds of wooden stairs might wear them out enough for you to catch your breath!

8. Beer gardens

Munich beer gardens are designed to be family friendly and many have playgrounds to keep the kids happy while the grown-ups are enjoying a drink. The Hirschgarten even has a petting zoo with little bambis running around and the Chinesischer Turm (Chinese Tower) has a magnificent old-fashioned carousel.

9. Boating

Just near another beer garden, the Seehaus in the Englischer Garten, is a lake where you can rent out paddle boats and go for a spin around a trio of mini-islands.

Museums for kids in Munich

These seven Munich museums appeal to young and old as they have children's areas or themes of interest to kids:

1. Deutsches Museum – The world’s biggest science and technology museum has hundreds of interactive displays and “Children’s Kingdom” for the little ones.



Kids having fun at the Deutsches Museum.

2. Nature – Kids can explore the natural world at the Museum of Humankind and Nature (Museum Mensch und Natur) which has displays stuffed with animals, dinosaurs and fauna.

It's in Nymphenburg Palace.

3. Movies – Munich’s Bavaria Filmstadt film studios has lots to interest children including the sets from the Asterix films, a stunt show and a 4D cinema.

4. Dinosaurs – The Paleontological Museum Munich has a nice collection of dinosaur skeletons and exhibits. www.palmuc.de

5. Aeroplanes – The Deutsche Museum’s “Flugwerft Schleissheim” exhibits dozens of aircraft for kids who want to spread their wings. Children can get into a real cockpit to wiggle the landing flaps and learn about the history of flight at a “Flying Circus”. It's in Munich's north separate from the rest of the Deutsche Museum. www.deutsches-museum.de

6. Toys – There is a dedicated toy museum in the tower of the Altes Rathaus (Old Town Hall) on Marienplatz. Exhibits are for looking, not touching, and your kids might get a bit edgy. There are thousands of old toys and special exhibits on Barbie, robots and teddy bears.

7. Cars and motorbikes – The space-aged BMW Welt dealership has a few nice interactive displays and motorbikes kids can sit on and pretend they’re Valentino Rossi.

Seasonal events in Munich for kids

Ice skating – In December there’s an ice skating rink set up just for kids above the fountain at Karlsplatz-Stachus.

Festivals – Annual Munich festivals including the Oktoberfest, Auer Dult and Spring Festival all have rides and carousels to keep the young ones entertained, but it’s best to keep them away from the beer tents in the evenings. I can imagine few things more

exciting for a kid than to be taken to the Kaltenberg Knights' Tournament which takes place near Munich in July.

Things for kids around Bavaria

There's a lot to do and see around Munich for kids to enjoy. Check out these four ideas for day-trips into the Bavarian countryside.

Neuschwanstein – Want to see the building that Disney's Sleeping Beauty Castle is based on? Neuschwanstein Castle south-west of Munich is surely one for the whole family.

Legoland – There's a theme park built from over 50 million of the classic bricks two hours west of Munich in the city of Günzburg. There are rides and roller coasters, a "pirate land" and a "knights' kingdom". There's also a "mini-land" in Lego recreating some of Europe's highlights including Venice, Dutch windmill-filled landscapes and Neuschwanstein Castle.

www.legoland.de

Bayernpark – This all-round fun park has an indoor pool with slides, an elevated railway, a climbing wall and a plethora of rides for kids.

It's about 90min north-east of Munich. www.bayern-park-freizeitpark-funpark.de

Playmobil Fun Park – Playmobil's popular toys take centre stage at a huge theme park next to Nuremburg in Bavaria's north. www.playmobil.de

I hope this story has given you a few ideas on what to do with in Munich for kids!

Six fine city views

Where's the best view over Munich? Here are six of the best skylines over the city.

6. Olympiaturm (Olympic tower) -

Higher, higher, higher

The lordliest of the Munich skylines is glimpsed from the top of the Olympic tower in Munich's north-west. The city's highest lookout point (182m) offers views well into the Alps when the weather behaves itself. This is also the only lookout point where you can enjoy



The view from the Alter Peter.

a sit-down dinner while you visit Munich – there's a revolving restaurant up there. The

tower is also - perhaps less romantically - known locals at the Fernsehturm (Television Tower) thanks to its broadcasting clout.

5. Monopteros - Turn on, tune in, drop out

More fine Munich skylines are to be had from this Greek temple. It crowns an artificial hill in the heart of the Englischer Garten. It's a nice perch to watch the action in the park framed by woodland and the city's spires in the distance. This used to be a popular hang-out for stoners back in the 60s, but you don't need to smoke anything to feel chilled out here.

4. Glockenspiel Café or Hugendubel bookstore - *From shop windows*

Watch Munich's famous automated clock from an even footing from The Glockenspiel Café, smack dab on Marienplatz. The entrance is in a little passage off Rosen Strasse. But if you don't feel like forking out for a cappuccino, ride the escalators up to the upper floors of the Hugendubel bookstore, on Marienplatz, towards the south-eastern corner.

3. The Blue Spa of the Bayerischer Hof hotel - *Pricey panoramas*

One of Munich's most exclusive hotels hogs an exquisite view over the city from its top-floor spa centre. You can get a full panorama of the city – the view of the historic Frauenkirche is particularly impressive. It's like a little paradise up there with a terrace, lounge, bar, saunas and a pool with a retractable roof. If you don't have the \$\$\$ to actually be a guest at this hotel, go in and say you're doing some research for a tour group, the staff will most likely be happy to show you around!

2. Bavaria Statue - Head above the rest

How about getting inside the head of a beautiful woman and enjoying a unique city view at the same time? The Bavaria Statue is an iron 30m tall bronze maiden on the Theresienwiese (Oktoberfest field). You can climb up through her body – Statue of Liberty style – to glimpse the city skyline through small holes in her gorgeous mug. Ideal, of course, when the fest is in full swing.

1. Alter Peter - Best perch in the house

The town's top view is had from the tower of the Sankt-Peter-Kirche (Church of St. Peter). The tower itself bears the nickname "Alter Peter" – Old Peter. This is where to head for postcard-perfect ensemble shots of the Neues Rathaus and the Frauenkirche cathedral. Just mind the 306 creaky steps on the way up!

Cinemas in Munich

There are a couple of options if you'd like to catch a movie while you're visiting Munich.

Most films are dubbed into German for local audiences but a few cinemas which screen original versions of the latest films.

The most distinguished is **Cinema München**, with one large viewing hall

and an excellent sound system. It gets quite busy on weekends so make a reservation online. You can also check the program on the website here www.cinema-muenchen.com.

Cinema München - Location It's at Nymphenburger Strasse 31 about 20min walk north of the Main Train Station (Hauptbahnhof). You could also take the U-Bahn No .1 to Stiglmaier Platz and walk from there. **Phone** 089 55 52 55.

Lots of character

Another silver-screen institution is the **Museum Lichtspiele** which has four small cinemas, each with a different theme. It's cosy as hell and makes for a very original experience.

The Museum Lichtspiele also holds the world record for screenings of the Rocky Horror Picture Show. Yep, it's been shown here every Saturday night for about 30 years.

Museum Lichtspiele - Location It's at Lilien Strasse 2, close to the S-Bahn station Isartor **Phone** 089 482 403 **Website** muenchen.movietown.eu.

Big screen big scale

Munich's big cinema Multiplex is the Mathäser which you walk past on the way from the Hauptbahnhof to the Karlsplatz-Stachus square.

They usually show films dubbed into German but if you're keen on checking something out in the original language here watch out for letters OV, meaning "original version" next to the film title on the preview screens.

Mathäser Cinema Location Bayer Strasse 5, it's a 5 min walk east of the Hauptbahnhof **Phone** 089 515651 **Website** www.mathaeser.de.



Gay and lesbian Munich

Though Munich's gay reputation can't be compared to other German cities like Cologne and Berlin, there seems to be plenty to keep same-sex-preferring visitors busy. The Glockenbachviertel (district) just south of city centre is the traditional gay and lesbian hive. There's a gay information point (the *Schwules Kommunikations- und Kulturzentrum* or Sub for short) in this area just near the Sendlinger Tor at Müller Strasse 14.

The big blowout on Munich's gay calendar is the Christopher Street Day celebrations in July. It lasts two days and has open-air concerts, a parade and a handbag throwing contest.

More info

The **Münchner Löwen Club** (Munich Lions Club) is a big group of gay leather and fetish enthusiasts with a busy social calendar including meetings during Munich's Starkbierfest (Strong Beer Season) and Oktoberfest. The club's homepage is at www.mlc-munich.de. And at www.patroc.com you can find a Munich gay travel guide from the gay guide people Patroc.

Some popular gay and lesbian stomping grounds:

Inges Karotte ☹

Described as a "female jungle", this is Munich's oldest and most famous lesbian hangout. Diverse clientele, happy hour 4pm to 6pm. **Costs** Cocktails €5+, happy hour 4pm to 6pm. **Address** Baaderstrasse 13 **Phone** 089 2010 669.

Bau ☹

Bau claims to be Bavaria's biggest gay bar. It's split over two levels and attracts a strong international set. Special events include foam parties, leather flea markets, mailbox parties, stand-up comedy and movie nights. Don't go before 10pm.

Address Müller Strasse 41 **Phone** 089 2000 9090 **Website** www.bau-munich.de.

Hotel Deutsche Eiche 🌳🎯☹

The "German Oak" has long been a haven for Munich's gays and creative types. As well as a three-star hotel there's an international restaurant and bathhouse open to non-residents with a whirlpool, sauna, steam bath and darkroom. It's close to Munich's gay haven, the Glockenbachviertel.

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Costs Hotel prices: standard single €79, double €139, apartment/junior suite €199, Bathhouse entry: €17 (€11 for under 27s), meals €10 - €25. **Address** Reichenbach Strasse 13 **Phone** 089 2311 66 0 **Website** www.deutsche-eiche.com.

Kr@ftAkt ☞ 🍷 🍺

An internet café cum coffee café cum bar cum nightclub in the heart of the Glockenbachviertel. Coffee, cake and light Bavarian fare pick up the slack until the cocktails start rolling into the evening. The music can be repetitive and the crowd stuck up, but at least you can check your email for free.

Open from 10am to 2am Sun-Thu and till 4am Fri/Sat **Address** Thalkirchner Strasse 4 **Phone** 089 215 88 881 **Website** www.kraftakt.com.

Café Nil 🍷 🍺 🎵

One of Munich's few unpretentious gay joints pulls in a cross section of the community from twenty-somethings to baby boomers. It's been decorated in reddish tones and Egypt-inspired artwork (*Nil* is German for Nile). Try the cornflakes schnitzel with french fries. Meals €6-€7, beer €3+, cappuccino €3, caipirinha €7.

Open 3pm-3am **Address** Hans-Sachs-Str. 2, Isarvorstadt **Phone** 089 265 545 **Website** www.cafenil.com.

Accommodation in Munich

Munich has accommodation to please every taste and touch, and standards are generally higher here than in other big German cities. There are many hotels and hostels clustered around the Hauptbahnhof. While this is convenient and close to the Oktoberfest field it's not a particularly nice part of the city with more than its fair share of porn shops and sports bars. Nicer are lodgings closer in to the *Altstadt* or along the Isar River but these are a tad harder to come by.

There is also a smattering of hotels around Munich Airport, see here for listings and a map. If you're in Munich and you're still scouting for a hotel, pick up a copy of the excellent Munich City Guide from the tourist office. It lists just about every lodging in the city.

Prices

Space in Munich is a valued commodity and you might find yourself forking out more on accommodation here than in cities like Berlin or Hamburg. Rates go up during the warmer months (expect to pay "high season" prices from May to October).

Be prepared to bite the bullet if you're coming for Oktoberfest. Prices skyrocket up to three times the normal going price. For example, the budget hotel chain Ibis charges €49 for one person during summer and €179 for the same room during the festival. It's crazy but you can expect all the hotels to do the same.

Counter-intuitive though it is, hotel rates usually go down on weekends. I guess this is because of the high number of business travellers push up demand during the week. It's worth asking for a discount if you're coming for a weekend. If you're really looking to save money you might want to consider staying at a campsite or participating in the free accommodation service, CouchSurfing. See the stories below to explore the options.

Scared by Oktoberfest hotel prices?

You can cut costs by staying outside Munich during Oktoberfest. Though you'll have to pay a bit extra to commute in and out you'll end up saving a bunch on "festival surcharges" heaped on by the Munich hotels.

Smaller cities less than an hour away from central Munich by train include Augsburg, Landsberg and Freising. It's even possible to do Oktoberfest as a day-trip from Salzburg in Austria, it's about two hours away by train.

Luxury Munich hotels

Munich's handful of "five-star superior" hotels are lavish landmarks.

Expect the works – large private rooms, spa centres, sweeping views, theatres, a choice of restaurants and bars and, of course, price tags to match. These hotels are almost all in the city centre and you can pay anything from €200 to €2000 a night! If money's no object here's where you can live it up.

Five-star superior

Sofitel Munich Bayerpost - *Oriental principals, European luxury*

Our verdict: 4/5

The hotelling yin and the yang are in perfect harmony at this five-star luxury number.

The designers took an Asian approach with the décor combining straight lines with contrasting darks and lights.

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Sofitel hotels are known the world over for style and luxury and the group's Munich flagship is no exception. Though the standard rooms are modern and well-appointed, they can be a bit on the small side. The suites, on the other hand, are spacious, individual and modern, some stretching over two storeys. We particularly liked the sliding partitions that can open the bathroom up to the bedroom, very nice touch! From the suites on the eighth floor you can see the Alps on a clear day.

Dining opportunities include an international restaurant, cocktail bar and "Suzie W." bistro majoring in Asian-Euro fusion cuisine. The cavernous black marble spa centre almost left us speechless, it even has its own café. Guests can also avail themselves of a designer swimming pool, gym and massage service.

The fine points: **Class** Five star superior **Address** Bayer Strasse 12, 80335 Munich. It's on the south side of the Main Train Station. **Capacity** 396 rooms, 769 beds **Breakfast** €28 extra per night **Pets allowed?** Yes **Parking** Yes **Phone** (+49) 89 59 94 80 Fax (+49) 89 599 48 1000 **Website** www.sofitel.com **Prices** €209 - €1650.

The Charles Hotel - *Making a splash*

Our verdict: 5/5

The Charles is the new kid on Munich's "five-star superior" block and it's trying its damndest to be the best. It's hard not to be impressed by this hotel. We especially like how Munich's artistic heritage has been incorporated into the design – original works by the city's famous artist Franz



von Lenbach grace the walls and bathrooms have handsome Nymphenburg porcelain tile

art.

Rooms on the east side have superb views over the Old Botanic Garden and Munich's classical skyline. They're all simply lavish and feature exquisite furniture and trimmings. Adjacent floor-heated bathrooms are done in Bavarian limestone. Rooms on the east side have superb views over the Old Botanic Garden and Munich's classical skyline.

The presidential suite covers an impressive 200 square meters and even has its own Turkish bath.

On request it can consume three extra suites to make a 455-square-metre mini-palace.

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The Charles' staff is faultless, eager to please and very professional.

This hotel has the largest hotel swimming pool in Munich (15m long) as well as a high-tech gym with personal trainer (Forte himself does triathlons in his spare time). A sauna and steam room there for pampering. There's a cosy bar and Italian restaurant with terrace and private dining room.

Seven meeting rooms and a 250-person ballroom cater for business travellers. The Charles opened in October 2007 and is owned by British hotel baron Sir Rocco Forte.

The Charles, the fine points: **Class** Five star superior **Address** Sophien Strasse 28, 80333 Munich. It's five minutes on foot north of the Main Train Station. **Capacity** 160 rooms, 318 beds **Breakfast** Costs €28 extra per day **Pets allowed?** Yes **Parking** Yes **Phone** (+49) 89 5 44 55 50 **Fax** (+49) 89 54 45 55 20 00 **Website** www.roccofortehotels.com **Prices** €495 - €6,500.

Bayerischer Hof - *Classic luxury*

Our verdict: 5/5

This is class that can't be copied, style without strings. The Bayerischer Hof is one of the few Munich top-enders that's not part of a hotel chain. The "Grand Olde Dame" opened in 1841 and has been owned by the Volkhardt family since 1897, now into its fourth generation.

If you're really out to spoil yourself and money is no object, this is the place to do it. Some of the rooms have a colonial African-style, tastefully done in red and yellow and finished in black wood.

The suites further upstairs are even more impressive. Some have individual themes such as "Paris" or "Paradise Island". There are three

restaurants and a half dozen bars. Outstanding is the Palais Keller, done up as a Bavarian hunting lodge, and the south seas-themed Trader Vic's. An attached theatre (the Komödie) and a nightclub fill out the entertainment options. Other facilities include a ballroom with space for 2500 guests and 40 (yes, 40!) conference rooms. Some are decorated so opulently that they'd give the state rooms at Munich's Nymphenburg Palace a run for their money.



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The top floor is home to a spa centre, terrace and pool with retractable roof. Female guests can pamper themselves with a facial, massage or a haircut, while the gents can chat around a barbecue enjoying one of the finest views of Munich's historic centre. The gym was designed by (who else?) former Mr Universe Ralf Möller. To top it off, the service is excellent, efficient and refined.

Bayerischer Hof, the fine points: **Class** Five star superior **Address** Promenadeplatz 2-6, 80333 Munich. **Capacity** 373 rooms, 676 beds **Breakfast** A champagne buffet breakfast is €26.50 **Pets allowed?** Yes **Parking** Yes, but €27 extra per day **Phone** (+49) 892 12 00 **Fax** (+49) 89 212 09 06 **Website** www.bayerischerhof.de **Prices** €221 - €3100.

Four star

Flemings Hotel Munich - *Good value*

Our verdict: 3.5/5

Flemings tends to get a bit lost among the cluster of accommodations near Munich's main train station. But don't let that fool you, this is a top-value hotel. Rooms are done in simple black and white, with basic TVs and spacious desks. We liked the open, glass and granite bathrooms facing into the rooms.

Also on hand is a small gym, sauna, steam bath and solarium. If you're hungry a brasserie delivers classic French cuisine while a restaurant/wine bar takes care of the rest. Flemings is a good, solid choice, close to the shops and the centre of the city.

Flemings Hotel, the fine points: **Class** Four star **Address** Bayer Strasse 47, 80335 Munich. **Capacity** 112 rooms, 210 beds **Breakfast** Light breakfast included **Pets allowed?** Yes **Parking** Yes **Phone** (+49) 89 8 39 32 90 **Fax** (+49) 89 4 44 46 69 99 **Website** www.flemings-hotels.com **Prices** €86 - €437.

Courtyard by Marriot Munich City Center - *New lodgings doing well*

Our verdict: 4.5/5

A relative newcomer, the Courtyard Marriot has carved out a comfortable niche in Munich's four-star market since opening in 2006.

Rooms are elegantly done in maroon and mustard décor and have large, flat-screen TVs. The suites have lovely king-sized beds and separate lounge area. There are also 12 "Studio" rooms for luxury lovers. Guests can enjoy a cosy bar called the "Oléo Pazzo" – Crazy Olive, which specialises in cocktails. When you're hungry, there's a bistro serving Mediterranean

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cuisine and a grand ballroom to cater for conferences. Also on-site is a small gym, business centre and 24-hour mini-market.

Courtyard by Marriot, the fine points: **Class** Four star **Address** Schwanthaler Strasse 37, 80336 Munich. A five-minute walk south of the Main Train Station **Capacity** 248 rooms, 409 beds **Breakfast** Yes **Pets allowed?** Yes **Parking** Yes **Phone** (+49) 89 54 88 48 80 **Fax** (+49) 89 54 88 48 83 33 **Website** www.marriott.com **Prices** €155 - €384.

Maritim Hotel Munich - *Both classy and homely*

Our verdict: 4/5

Maritim's glassy façade doesn't exactly blow you away from street level, but wait until you get inside! When you first walk into the extra-plush (with an adjoining piano bar) you know that this hotel is, well, a little bit special.

Rooms have a sense of homeliness, perhaps because they're blessed with that oft-forgotten décor masterstroke: wallpaper. If thoughts of a grandmother's reading "salon" flood into your mind as they did ours, never fear. The Maritim is all soft pastels, modern, and tastefully done. Unfortunately, some of the double rooms consist of two single beds pushed together. This hotel has a strong business-oriented clientele, attested to by its 550-seat hall and six function rooms. The top floor holds a swimming pool with a view, steam bath and sauna. In addition there is a small gym, conservatory with a patio, beer garden and two restaurants to choose from.

Maritim Hotel, the fine points: **Class** Four star **Address** Goethe Strasse 7, 80336 Munich. It's a two-minute walk south of the Main Train Station. **Capacity** 347 rooms, 561 beds **Breakfast** Yes **Pets allowed?** Yes **Parking** Yes **Phone** (+49) 89 55 23 50 **Fax** (+49) 89 55 23 59 00 **Website** www.maritim.de **Prices** €120 - €382.

A few other top choices among luxury Munich hotels:

Five-star or five-star superior

Hotel Vier Jahreszeiten Kempinski - Best location on Munich's "Golden Mile" - Maximilian Strasse **Address** Maximilian Strasse 17 **Phone** 089 21 252 700 **Website** www.kempinski.com.

Hotel Königshof - Going strong since the 1860s. **Address** Karlsplatz 25 **Phone** 089 551 360 **Website** www.koenigshof-hotel.de.

Four star

Drei Lowen Hotel Munich - A good-value, business-oriented hotel south of the Main Train Station. **Address** Schiller Strasse 8 **Phone** 089 551 11 10 **Website** www.hotel3loewen.de

Platzl Hotel - A Munich institution with an enviable location overlooking the same-named square where the Hofbräuhaus resides. Excellent Bavarian menu at the hotel restaurant. **Details: Address** Sparkassen Strasse 10 **Phone** 089 237 030 **Website** www.platzl.de

King's Hotels (Center and First Class) - Has two hotels, one three, the other four stars just north of the train station. Décor is a tad gaudy, but well done. **Address** for King's Hotel First Class Dachauer Strasse 13 **Phone** 089 551 870 **Website** for both hotels www.kingshotels.com

Hotel Excelsior Munich - A ridiculously well-decorated hotel with a wine-focussed restaurant, the Vinothek, and a bar. It's opposite the Main Train Station. **Address** Schützen Strasse 11 **Phone** 089 55 1370 **Website** www.excelsior-hotel.de.

Cheap Munich hotels

This section of the market has stepped up in recent years as some upper-end hotels have downgraded themselves to cater for tighter budgets. Thanks, global financial catastrophe! Big international chains like Holiday Inn, Ibis, Mercure and the Hilton are all represented with at least two branches in different parts of the city.

Other independent hotels tend to have a more personal touch. Upper-end lodgings have a restaurant/bar a few nice extras like mini-shops and work-out rooms. Bottom-end hotels can feel sparse and might just have a bare-bones breakfast room or nothing at all.

Expect to pay at least €60 a night at the very cheapest hotels and up to €400 for those at the top-end.

Three star

Hotel Germania - *Vintage appeal*

Our verdict: 4/5 Old World charm is the order of the day at the 1930s-era Hotel Germania. Rooms are well-sized with wooden highlights and coloured with pastel blues and greens. They're outfitted with desks TVs, and are well sound-proofed from the street.

Last time we visited we saw the "light and airy" suite, perfectly warm and cosy with old and elegant furniture. The Hotel Germania has breakfast and conference rooms and a small but cosy cocktail bar. All in all, a good-value mid-ranger.

Hotel Germania, the fine points: **Class** Three stars **Address** Schwanthaler Strasse 28, 80336 Munich. It's on a corner one block south of the Main Train Station. **Capacity** 99 rooms, 170 beds **Breakfast** Yes, and a buffet is 10€ extra **Pets allowed?** Yes, €10 extra per day **Parking** Yes **Phone** (+49) 89 59 04 60 **Fax** (+49) 89 59 11 71 **Website** www.hotel-germania.net **Prices** €65 - €190

Hotel Europaischer Hof - *Good room variety, a Munich treasure*

Our verdict: 3/5

The lobby of the Hotel Europaischer Hof has a nice Munich touch – a copy of a gold-gilded Morriskentänzer figurine. The original little dancing chaps date from 1480 and rank among Munich's artistic gems. Rooms come in four classes from the basic "Standard Class" to the luxurious "Superior Class". They all have large, plasma TVs and decent-sized bathrooms. The lavish first-floor breakfast room and café club help to even the bill.

Rooms facing the courtyard (*Hof* in German, hence the hotel's name) are more expensive than those facing the street, even though the "Hof" is little more than a car park! It is a lot quieter though. Wireless internet is a free extra service.

Europaischer Hof, the fine points: **Class** Three star **Address** Bayer Strasse 31, 80336 Munich. It's across from the southern end of the Main Train Station. **Capacity** 149 rooms, 260 beds **Breakfast** Light breakfast included **Pets allowed?** Yes **Parking** Yes, but costs daily €7.50 for motorbikes, €13.50 and €16.50 for anything bigger **Phone** (+49) 89 55 15 10 **Fax** (+49) 89 5 51 5114 44 **Website** www.heh.de **Prices** €61.50 - €322.

Two star

Hotel Dolomit - *Small and peaceful lodgings*

Our verdict: 3.5/5

The Dolomit ranks among the few good-value two star choices in Munich. The hotel takes its name from the famous coral mountains of northern Italy's Trentino region. Rooms are

simply done with dark wood highlights. The singles tend to be a bit on the small side but they're clean and tidy and the beds are soft.

Many have a wall-mounted flat screen TV just above the bed, and sound-proofed windows are supposed to ensure you'll have a good night's sleep. There's a breakfast room, but not too much else here in the way of facilities. The Dolomit is a good choice for budget travellers who want to avoid the noise and bustle of the hostels.

Dolomit, the fine points: **Class** Two star **Address** Goethe Strasse 11, 80336 Munich. A two-minute walk south of the Main Train Station. **Capacity** 53 rooms, 86 beds **Breakfast** Light breakfast included **Pets allowed?** Yes **Parking** Yes **Phone** (+49) 89 59 28 47 **Fax** (+49) 89 59 63 13 **Website** hotel-dolomit.de **Prices** €49 - €189.

Other top choices

Belle Blue Hotel Munich - Nicely renovated mid-ranger with top-end bathrooms. Near the Main Train Station. **Address** Schiller Strasse 21 **Phone** 089 550 6260 **Website** www.hotel-belleblue.de.

Hotel Schlicker "Zum Goldenen Löwen" - A popular old dame of a hotel (over 400 years old!) around the corner from the Viktualienmarkt. **Address** Tal 8 **Phone** 089 24 288 70 **Website** hotel-schlicker.de.

St Paul Hotel Munich - Just next to the Oktoberfest field and named after St Paul's church next door. It's incredibly annoying website features an over-vocal "hotel ghost" who will try to destroy your speakers. **Address** St. Paul Strasse 7 **Phone** 089 54 40 78 00 **Website** www.hotel-stpaul.de.

Holiday Inn Munich - Has a grand total of seven hotels in and around Munich, a couple tucked away near the Isar River and one near the airport. **Phone** 0800 183 0477 **Website** www.holidayinn.com.

Ibis Hotel Munich - Cube-style rooms at six locations around Munich. **Website** www.ibishotel.com.

Mercure Munich - Seven neat and well-priced hotels around Munich. **Website** www.mercure.com.

Hotel Galleria Munich - Cosy and charming, the Galleria is a family-run number with 19 rooms. It's about 5kms south of the city centre near the zoo and the Isar River. **Address** Plinganser Strasse 142 **Phone** 089 723 30 01 **Website** www.hotel-galleria.de.

Hotels near Munich Airport

If you're on a short layover or need to make an early getaway you might consider getting a room close to Munich Airport. Most of the hotels around the airport fall into the mid-range, except the luxurious five-star Kempinski Hotel Munich Airport which is located at the airport itself. There are other close-by clusters of hotels in Erding and Freising, both towns with a few diversions if you have time to kill. Erding is renowned for its huge thermal spa complex www.therme-erding.de and Freising boasts the world's oldest brewery, Weihenstephan www.weihenstephaner.de.

Munich Hostels

There are a solid number of independent youth hostels in Munich for visitors who'd rather save their Yankee dollars for beer.

They're relaxed places and most have a bar and some kind of chill-out zone for when a hangover's got the better of you. Staff are easy going and helpful, often more so than at mid-range hotels. All have dorms and a selection of double and single rooms. Expect to pay about €20 to €30 for berth in a dorm and up to €60 for a private room. Prices double or triple during Oktoberfest, so bite the bullet and book early.

Jaeger's Hostel - *New face*

Our verdict: 3.5/5

A backpacking fixture, Jaeger's went through a full-scale facelift a few years back and the results are impressive. The single, double and twin rooms are all-new. These rooms are bright and clean with fine wooden finishings and private bathrooms.

The segmented 40-bed basement dormitory is the same as it always was, however. It's clean, simple and, as to be expected, a little bit rowdy. Jaeger's also has four, six, eight and 10-bed dorms, some of which are mixed-sex and some are women-only. There's an age limit of 35 in the dorms, but this doesn't apply if you're in a group and you book out the entire room. There's a laundry downstairs, internet for €1 per 20min and no curfew. The bar, pool table and friendly staff at Jaeger's have always racked up points from us. Oh, and you get a free shot on arrival!

Jaeger's, the fine points: **Class** Hostel class! **Address** Senefeld Strasse 3, 80336 Munich. It's a two-minute walk south of the Main Train Station. **Capacity** 300 beds **Breakfast** Light

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breakfast included **Pets allowed?** Yes **Parking** No **Phone** (+49) 89 55 52 81 **Fax** (+49) 89 59 25 98 **Website** www.jaegershostel.de **Prices** €17 - €45.

Euro Youth Hostel - *Simple pad, busy bar*

Our verdict: 4.5/5

Party party, you won't want for drinks of the adult variety at the Euro. Its rockin' bar packs 'em in 6pm to 4am with a nice, long three-hour happy hour. The hostel has been listed as the Let's Go guide's favourite Munich backpacker flop for about a decade in a row and the staff is proud as punch. It has a certain old-world charm, probably because for 100 years up until the 1970s this building used to be a luxurious hotel, the Astoria! The rooms are a tad more "plain and simple" now though.

Doubles have TVs and private bathrooms. Some three, four and five-bed rooms share a bathroom in the hall. If you don't mind sharing there are also 12 and 20-bed dorms. A buffet breakfast is there to get you started and complementary tea is on offer throughout the day. The hostel has a book exchange, bike hire, free security lockers and luggage storage. Just about everything you need!

Euro Youth Hostel, the fine points: **Class** Hostel class! **Address** Senefeld Strasse 5, 80336 Munich. It's a two-minute walk south of the Main Train Station. **Capacity** 194 beds, 58 rooms **Breakfast** Light breakfast included **Pets allowed?** Yes **Parking** Yes **Phone** (+49) 89 59 90 88 11 **Fax** (+49) 89 59 25 98 **Website** www.euro-youth-hotel.de **Prices** €12.50 - €20.

Other top choices

The4You - Well run and central with a buffet brekky and bar serving cheap beer. **Address** Hirten Strasse 18 **Phone** 089 5521 660 **Website** www.the4you.de.

Wombat's - A solid city choice for the young at heart, with a great bar and a cosy "winter garden". **Address** Senefelder Strasse 1 **Phone** 089 5998 9180 **Website** www.wombats-hostels.com.

CVJM Jugendgaestehaus (YMCA Munich) - It is indeed fun to stay here. Munich's Y offers a wide range of activities for kids and adults. **Address** Landwehr Strasse 13 **Phone** 089 552 1410 **Website** www.cvjm-muenchen.org.

Easy Palace City Hostel - A multi-cultural little joint with dorms, doubles and singles. Very close to the Theresienwiese (Oktoberfest field). **Address** Mozart Strasse 4 **Phone** 089 55 87 970 **Website** www.easypalace.de.

Meininger - A boxy low-key number with dorm beds and overpriced doubles. **Details:**

Address Landsberger Strasse 20 **Phone** 030 666 36 100 **Website** www.meininger-hotels.com.

Jugendhotel "In Via" Marienherberge - A women-only hostel near the Hauptbahnhof. Expect to pay about €25 for a spot in a four-bed dorm, €30 for a single room and €55 for a double. It's only open to women under 28 and there's a lockout from midnight to 6am.

Address Goethe Strasse 9, Munich, **Phone** 089 55 58 05

Email invia-marienherberge@arcor.de online bookings aren't possible.

Hostelling International in Munich

Munich also has several "official" youth hostels (German: *Jugendgästehaus* or *Jugendherberge*) part of the Hostelling International network. There is no age limit but it helps if you're a member of a hostelling organisation in your own country. If you're not you can still stay, but you have to pay for an "International Guest Card" which costs €3.10 a night for up to six nights before you're in the club. These hostels tend to be super clean and breakfast is included in the price (around €30 for a dorm bed). The downside is that they're pretty sterile and often less fun than the independent hostels.

In Munich they are:

Hostel München-City - About 5kms north-west of the city centre. **Address** Wendl-Dietrich Strasse 20 **Phone** 089 202 444 90 **Website** www.hihostels.com.

Hostel München Park - A fair hike south of the city centre in Thalkirchen. **Address** Miesinger Strasse 4 **Phone** 089 785 767 70 **Website** www.hihostels.com.

Camping in Munich

Camping's a top way to reduce travel costs and enjoy a well-landscaped environment at the same time. Munich's camp sites are generally clean, modern and chilled-out spots. But the crowds can get a little overwhelming at the peak of summer and during Oktoberfest.

There's often a mini-market on site for basic needs (doughnuts, beer, toothpaste, etc). Most are open from about March to October and some can rent you a tent (or space in a big marquee) if you aren't packing one yourself.

All of the grounds are a little way out of the city centre but public transport is always nearby. Many camp sites also have space for caravans and campervans. At most of the sites you don't need or aren't able to make reservations, see details below.

Places for camping in Munich

The Tent

This is one of the more laid-back camping grounds in Munich and the best part is that you don't need to bring your own canvas. There is space to pitch your own tent but there's also a huge "Bed-Tent" filled with bunks and an even more economical "Floor-Tent" where you crash out on a floor mat. Great for solo



travellers. Use of a guest kitchen, lockers and showers are included in the price.

Location The Tent is in Munich's west above Nymphenburg Park and the botanic gardens. It's a not-for-profit operation with a focus on being green. **Open** from June 6 to October 5 **Cost** from €7.50 for space in the Floor-Tent to €21 for a bunk in the Bed-Tent during Oktoberfest. **Website** www.the-tent.com **Address** In den Kirschen 30, 80992 Munich **Phone** 089 14 14 300 **Email** cu@the-tent.com

Wies'n Camp

This camp site is especially set up to deal with the Oktoberfest overflow. They have tents and caravans for up to four people a pop. The tents are lined up in neat little rows and there's a communal marquee where a mini-Oktoberfest breaks out.

Location The Wies'n Camp is at a horseracing track in eastern Munich. **Open** September 16 to October 4 **Cost** per tent €55, per caravan €110 (slightly more on weekends) **Website** www.munich-oktoberfest.com **Address** Schichtl Strasse, 81929 Munich **Phone** 089 550 790 00 **Email** munich-enterprise@t-online.de

The Munich-Thalkirchen Camping Site

This is one of the more popular (and therefore more boisterous) options for camping in Munich. There's a small shop on site and a shuttle service to the nearest U-Bahn (subway)

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station. They don't allow reservations – during Oktoberfest it's first come, first served, so rock up early and you might be lucky.

Location The Thalkirchen Camping Site is south of city centre near the Munich Zoo (*Tierpark Hellabrunn*). It's on a reserve by the Isar River so it really is a great location to get outdoorsy in the summer. **Open** mid-march to the end of October **Cost** per adult €4.40, hot showers €1. You pay a bit extra for your tent and there's a €3.60 surcharge during Oktoberfest **Website** Find it through the Munich city website here www.muenchen.de.

Address Zentralländ Strasse 49, 81379 Munich **Phone** 089 723 17 07

Email campingplatz.muenchen@web.de

Campingplatz Nord-West (North-west Camping Ground)

A quiet camping spot with a family atmosphere. There's a small shop on site and space for campers and caravans.

Location You guessed it – it's in Munich's north-west. Half way to Dachau. **Open** year round **Cost** per adult €5.20, tents from €4.50, hot shower €1.50. **Website** (in German) www.campingplatz-nord-west.de **Address** Auf den SchrederWiesn 3, 80995 Munich **Phone** 089 150 69 36.

Campingplatz Obermenzing

A chilled-out camping ground in a huge park with lots of lovely hedges. There's a recreation room, mini-market. There are buses to Munich suburban trains from the campsite. There are no tents for hire but if you bring one you're virtually guaranteed to get a spot here if you're coming for Oktoberfest. Reservations are not accepted.

A good option for camping in Munich for those not wanting to be too close to the big city.

Location The Campingplatz Obermenzing is in Munich's west, a ways behind Nymphenburg Palace Park. **Open** from March 15 to the end of October **Cost** per adult €5, tents from €4.50, hot shower €1.00 **Website** www.campingplatz-muenchen.de **Address** Lochhausener Strasse 59, 81247 Munich **Phone** 089 81 122 35 **Email** campingplatz-obermenzing@t-online.de

Practical Travel Info

This section is a portal for finding out about all the practical stuff you might need when you're travelling. These details might not get your blood pumping, but should keep you out of trouble and your expense account in the black.

Getting around

Getting around Munich

Munich is a breeze to navigate compared to cities like Paris and London. I recommend you stick to the U-Bahn and S-Bahn for getting around the city. The public transport system is quick and reliable and will have you zooming around in no time.



Forms of public transportation

S-Bahn

Use this to traverse Munich's east-west axis and get into the outer districts. S-Bahn means *Schnellbahn* (fast train) and lines are marked with an "S" (for example, S2). The main axis runs from Pasing in the west, through the Hauptbahnhof (Main Train Station) and Marienplatz to Munich-Ost in the east.

U-Bahn

These cover more specific locations within the city off the S-Bahn axis. U-Bahn means underground train and they're marked with a "U" (for example U6).

Tram

If it's a nice day, why not enjoy it by staying above ground and take the tram?

They're handy for getting you places trains don't go, like the Pinakothek art galleries and the Maximilianeum Bavarian parliament. All tram lines cross the Hauptbahnhof and/or Karlsplatz (Stachus).

To and from the airport

Two S-Bahn lines run from Munich's Franz-Joseph-Strauss Airport to the city, the S1 and the S8. The journey takes about 40 minutes.

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Trains leave to and from below the Hauptbahnhof every 10 minutes from 3.30am and end about 12.30am the next morning. Keep this in mind if you have an early morning flight! Once I missed the last S-Bahn out to Munich Airport and had to spend half the night at the Hauptbahnhof.

See the entry under the heading "[Munich Airport transfers](#)" for more details on how to get in from your flight.

Night services

Regular U-Bahn, S-Bahn and tram services run until about 2am, when the night buses and trams take over. They're marked with an "N" (for example, N26) and times are given at tram and bus stops.

Now you know how to get around, let's look at what ticket you need.

Buying tickets

Tickets for getting around Munich on public transport can be bought from machines at all train and tram stops. Some hotels sell them too.

The machines are relatively straightforward and speak English (look for the black flag button). Innenraum passes cover the inner city. If you want to get out further to places like Dachau or the Starnbergersee lake, get an XXL pass. If you're in Munich for a few days I advise getting the Tageskarte if you're on your own, or the Partnerticket if you're with a group of up to five.

Types of regular tickets

Tageskarte (day ticket)

These let you make as many trips as you want until 6am the next day. Tageskarte Innenraum costs €5.60, XXL costs €7.50. A three-day variety is available for the Innenraum and costs €13.80. The Gesamtnetz (Entire Network) ticket costs €23.70 covers the airport. It's the best ticket to get if you're travelling solo and you're in Munich for a few days.

Partnerticket (group ticket)

Don't let the name confuse you, it's valid for up to five people and works the same as the Tageskarte. It costs €10.20 for the Innenraum and €13.10 for XXL. So just get the XXL!

A three-day version is available for the Innenraum only and costs €23.70. It's the best way to go if you're in Munich with some friends for a few days. But unfortunately, it doesn't cover the airport or any outer districts so you'll need an extra ticket to cover that.

City Tour Card

Formerly called the Welcome Card, the City Tour Card is like a normal day ticket or group ticket which also gives you discounts on over 30 Munich attractions and city tours (Nymphenburg Palace, Bavaria Filmstadt, the Bier- and Oktoberfest Museum etc.). If you're planning on hitting up a few museums, etc, during your stay it's worthwhile getting this one instead of a normal public transport ticket.

City Tour Card costs:

Single Ticket

- *One day inner city (1 Tag Innenraum) €9.90
- *Three day inner city (3 Tage Innenraum) €19.90
- *Three-day entire network (3 Tage Gesamtnetz) €31.50

Partner Ticket

- *One day inner city (1 Tag innenraum) €16.90
- *Three day inner city (3 Tage Innenraum) €29.90
- *Three-day entire network (3 Tage Gesamtnetz) €51.50

You can buy the City Tour Card from ticket machines, the tourist offices at the Main Train Station and Marienplatz and online at www.citytourcard-muenchen.com (site only in German). Remember you still have to validate the City Tour Card at the stamping machine.

Other tickets

Einzelfahrkarte (Single Ticket) This covers one journey in one zone, but it's valid for three hours so you can make stops along the way. Costs €2.50.

If you're only travelling to or from the airport on any given day you need the Einzelfahrkarte Gesamtnetz (entire network), or if you're with a group, the Partnerticket Gesamtnetz.

Kurzstrecke (Short Distance)

Not going far? This ticket is for you. Covers one trip up to two stops with the S-Bahn and then to more with the U-Bahn or vice-versa. Costs €1.20.

"Blacking" it

Remember if you have a Single Ticket or Short Distance Ticket you have to validate it at the little stamping machines before you get on the tram, U-Bahn or S-Bahn. If you aren't in the habit of buying tickets, you are, in the local parlance, travelling "black" (Schwarzfahren) and might be forced by the inspectors to pay a €40 fine. Though the chances aren't massive

you'll be caught, in my experience the inspectors are merciless even if you claim tourists' ignorance.

Got kids?

Kids travelling with adults are often covered by sharing their parents' Partnerticket. If you're one adult travelling with a kid get the Tageskarte and a separate Kinder Tageskarte for kids aged six to 14. Kids under six years old travel free.

Moving around Bavaria

The Bayern Ticket (Bavaria Ticket) is great for day-trips and you can buy it from ticket machines at train stations. Up to five people can use this ticket to take any regular (not the express IC or ICE) trains anywhere in Bavaria and to Salzburg in Austria. The Bayern Ticket costs €22 for one person and €4 extra for each additional passenger. It's easy to buy them from the touch-screen machines at the train station before you travel. Over-the-counter service costs €2 more. The ticket is valid from 9am on weekdays (but 3am on weekends) and until 3am the next day. To find out about train times and connections, visit the Deutsche Bahn (German Rail) website.

Munich by bike

Munich claims to be one of Germany's most cycle friendly cities – even the Lord Mayor gets to work on two wheels! There are over 200kms (124mi) of bike paths in greater Munich.

Many cycling lanes are marked off on the side of the road and others are on sidewalks.

You have to be bit careful as occasionally a pedestrian wonders onto them ahead of you,

just make sure your bike bell is working! Always lock your bike up (the city's not *that* safe) and take note signs reading "*Fahrräder abstellen verboten!*" Mean you're not allowed to park there.



Taking bikes on trains in Munich and Bavaria

Bikes can't be loaded onto city buses or trams but you can take them on the U- and S-Bahn – usually. They're not allowed on during rush hour (Monday to Friday from 6am to 9am and again from 4pm to 6pm). But during school holidays the afternoon ban doesn't apply.

You also need to buy your bike a ticket and stamp it at the ticket machines. The Fahrrad-Tageskarte MVV (Munich Bike Day Pass) costs €2.50 and is valid from when you stamp it until 6am the next day.

A Fahrrad-Tageskarte Bayern (Bavaria Day Bike Pass) not only covers Munich's U- and S-Bahns, but also regular train services throughout Bavaria. They cost €4.50 and are valid from the time of purchase until 3am the next day. It's available from train station ticket machines. The two Munich tourist information centres provide extra advice and pamphlets on how to get the most out of the city on two wheels.

Bike rental in Munich

If you'd like to rent a bike a typical daily rate is €15 a day for a three-gear bike and up to €20 for a 24-gear or mountain bike. They usually come with a lock and/or a basket and operators are happy to lend you a helmet.

Call-A-Bike

The Deutsche Bahn runs a system called Call-A-Bike. You register over the phone, get a code, pick up a bike from the Main Train Station and away you go, it's charged automatically to your credit card. You can also pick up random Call-A-Bikes elsewhere in the city and leave them at any major intersection. It's cheap at just 8c per minute and a maximum charge of €9 for 24 hours.

Other places to rent bikes in Munich

Radius Tours and Bikes

Open March 15 to the end of October from 9.30am to 6pm

Address Arnulf Strasse 3. it's in the Hauptbahnhof – Main Train Station – opposite platform 32 **Website** www.radiusmunich.com **Phone** 089 59 61 13 **Email** info@radiusmunich.com

Munich Walking Tours Bikes

Open 9am to 11pm **Address:** Thomas-Wimmer-Ring 1, it's 5min walk from Marienplatz

Website www.munichwalktours.de **Phone** 089 24 23 17 67 **Email:**

info@munichwalktours.de

Organised bike tours of Munich

A guy called Lenny from **Discover Munich** offers free three-hour bike tours through downtown Munich and the Englischer Garten. Tours start from the Fish Fountain at Marienplatz and go daily from March 1 to November 10 (March 10 to April 15 and

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September 1 to November 10 at 12.30pm, from April 16 to August 31 at 11.30am and 4pm)

See the website for more details: www.discovermunich.net.

Mike's Bike Tours offer half and full-day tours Munich by bike costing €18 and €49 respectively. Tours start at the tower of the Altes Rathaus (Old Town Hall) on Marienplatz. From March 1 to April 14 and September 1 to November 10 tours leave at 12.30pm, from April 15 to August 31 at 11.30am and 4pm. There are some discounts for backpackers, check out the website here www.mikesbiketours.com.

More info

The Munich city council website has an excellent section on biking in and around Munich, go to www.muenchen.de and run a search.

Have a blast exploring Munich by bike!

Getting there by car or bus

Munich by bus

Long distance busses are a cheap but bum-numbing option for travelling across Europe. If you're not booking far ahead enough to get discount train or air fares this could be the way to go.

European coach companies come under an umbrella organisation called Eurolines. It runs coaches to more than 500 destinations in about 30 countries across Europe including Russia, the UK and Turkey. It's especially cheap if you grab one of the "Europabus Special" tickets, which mean you might only have to pay €19 one-way Munich to Vienna, €29 to Paris or €39 to London.

There are also discount fares on offer for students and seniors. You book online and print out a ticket, very easy, here's the website www.eurolines.com. If you're on a whistle-stop tour you might like the Eurolines Pass. This is a multi-day ticket that lets you take Euroline buses as much as you want within a 15 or 30 day time span. It's the bus equivalent of Eurorail. Tickets start from €175 for 15 days' travel in the low season, see here for details on that one. Eurolines' Germany hotline is 069 7903 501. Eurolines is represented by Deutsche Touring in Germany, you can find their website here www.touring.de.

Munich bus station

Munich has a new long-distance bus station. It's about 5min west of the Hauptbahnhof at Hackerbrücke. Called the ZOB (short for Zentrale Omnibusbahnhof München), it's a space-

age structure with a big, crazy roof. The coach companies have offices on the first floor, click here to go to the ZOB website.

Will it hurt?

Sure, the bus isn't so comfortable - it can be a literal pain in the arse. My first Eurolines experience was a bit of a nightmare - 12 hours overnight to Paris. Couldn't sleep a wink. But was nice to get to the City of Light at 7am, and after finding my hostel the first thing I did was head up the Eiffel Tower just after sunrise – magic!

The last long distance bus to Munich I took was back from Ljubljana in Slovenia.

The bus was packed, but at least they showed a film which was easy to follow with the sound turned all the way down – *From Dusk Till Dawn*. I wonder what the old ladies I was sitting next to thought of the vampire strippers?

Car Rental

All major car rental agencies have branches in Munich and hiring your own set of wheels is usually a straightforward procedure. Many even allow you to rent a car in one city and drop it off in another, even if that city is a couple of countries away.

Check though if you're planning on heading east, some companies restrict travel to countries in Eastern Europe such as the Czech Republic. Expect to pay at least €30 a day for a hatchback and €65 a day for a station wagon or something larger.

Many rental companies offer special deals on weekends.

Most companies don't rent cars to under 25s, and if they do there'll probably be a surcharge (Sixt charges young drivers an extra €10 a day and restricts them to small cars, for example). Keep in mind that to drive around Munich your car needs to have a sticker showing how environmentally friendly it is. This should be provided by the rental company but it's a good idea to ask up.

All companies have branches at Munich Airport and many have a desk at the "Rental Centre" at the Hauptbahnhof. There isn't a great deal of quality difference between companies but from personal experience I recommend Europcar. Major car rental companies include:

- **Europcar** Address: Mars Strasse 24 Phone 089 545 43990 Website germany.europcar.de
- **Sixt** Address: Seitz Strasse 9-11 Phone 1805 252 525 **Website** (in German) www.sixt.de
- **Avis** Address: Hauptbahnhof 1 (upstairs at the Main Train Station) Phone 089 55022 5152

Website www.avis.de

▪ **Herz** Address: Lotte-Branz Strasse 3 Phone 089 31 83 660 Website www.hertz.de

Car sharing in Germany

If you're a bit adventurous and willing to do a little of work to save some bucks this could be right up your alley.

There are several website where drivers advertise passenger seats for a price – you just find one who's going from your departure point to where you want to, give them a quick call or email and arrange to meet on the day of travel. It's called *Mitfahrgelegenheit*, one of those unreasonably long German words, meaning "car-sharing opportunity". It's often the cheapest way to get around if you're not planning too far ahead – a typical rate is €5 per 100kms (62mi). Average prices from Munich to cities including Berlin and Cologne range from €25 to €30. Routes vary from short inter-Deutschland hops and into neighbouring countries to trips right across Europe.

Letting some random drive me across the country! Seriously?

My first big German car journey, Munich to Berlin, was through this service just before New Year's back in 2006. I'll freely admit I was shitscared during most of the ride.

As you may know there's no speed limit on many German Autobahns and the driver didn't seem to be capable of doing less than 200kph (125mph) while using his "free" hand to either snack on bread rolls or gesticulate in wild conversation with the rest of the passengers.

Lucky the drivers I've met since then have been a tad more professional and I've made other *Mitfahr* journeys across Germany and to Prague in the Czech Republic.

It's as safe as you could expect, even for women travelling alone. You can even have some engaging conversations and strike up friendships with the drivers/fellow passengers.

Finding a ride

The most popular site is in German so if your *Deutsch* skills aren't up to it you'll have to use the Google Translator or some other service to navigate. Don't let it stop you though, most Germans speak some English (especially the younger ones typically involved in these programs) so just try calling and saying "Hello, do you speak English?" You'll most likely get a positive response.

Websites for car sharing in Germany

▪ The biggest site is www.mitfahrgelegenheit.de with over one million registered users.

- Another service is www.mitfahrzentrale.de. This one has an English version but there are far fewer offers.
- There's also www.mifaz.com, this one has mostly offers going to or around Bavaria and has an English tab on the right of the screen.

Munich Airport

Munich's Franz-Joseph-Strauss Airport (code: MUC) is the most obvious connection if you're coming to Munich from overseas. It's the second busiest airport in Germany after Frankfurt. If you're used to going through airport hell in other parts of the world, don't worry, this one is different.

It's every bit as efficient as you'd expect from a German transport hub and gets consistently voted among the best airports in Europe. The airport is about 30km (18mi) north-east of central Munich and connects by S-Bahn (the Munich subway/suburban train system).

There are also buses running to Munich's central station and other ways of getting in and out. The airport has two terminals; Terminal 1 is home to Germany's Lufthansa and its Star Alliance partners including Continental, United, US Airways, Air China, Singapore Airlines, Air New Zealand and Air Canada.

All other airlines use Terminal 2.

What to do at the airport

Here are a few ideas for what to do if you've got time to kill at Munich Airport.

Munich Airport Centre (MAC)

This is a concourse area that connects the terminals. There are bars, a supermarket, shops and access to the S-Bahn, all under a huge, transparent roof. It's also where you'll find the luxury Kempinski Hotel Munich. But for many visitors the main reason to come is....

Airbräu - The world's only airport brewery?

While most airports aren't known for being cheap and delicious Munich's Airbräu is exactly that.

This huge beer garden / restaurant is getting such a good reputation some Münchenerers even go out to the airport just to make a visit. It's a perfect place to make time fly during airport "dead" time. Main meals are under €10 and a half-litre beer costs just €2.30 so it's among the cheapest pints in Munich. Airbräu brews its own beer including *Helles* (lager), *Weißbier* (wheat beer), and a powerful strong beer called Aviator. The 600-seat beer

garden is open from April to October. It's in the MAC concourse. More info: **Website** www.munich-airport.de.

Visitors' Park

One stop away from the airport is the Visitors' Park (Besucherpark), where air-heads can watch planes roll in and out of Terminal 1 from the top of a hill. As well as this look-out spot there are a couple of historic planes on display including a Lockheed Super Constellation and a Junkers "Auntie Ju" 52.

Napcap

Sick of falling asleep on airport benches? Munich Airport has rentable, private "pods" called Napcap. Inside there's a small couchette as well as a flat-screen TV, desk, and internet connection. The pods cost between €10 and €15 an hour and the minimum charge is €30. You can pay with your credit card at the pod. The Napcaps are in Terminal 2 next to Gate H32. **Website** www.napcabs.net.

Kempinski Hotel Munich Spa

You can visit the spa centre of this 5-star airport hotel as a day guest. There is an indoor pool, whirl pool, sauna and steam bath (with separate men's and women's sections), gym, massage and beauty parlours. **Website** <http://www.kempinski.com/en/munichairport>

Getting to Munich Airport by car

Franz-Joseph-Strauss links to the A92 Autobahn, which connects to the A9 Autobahn for access into central Munich. If you're going to another part of the city you may need to use the A99 ring road, see the map below. Note that to go right into central Munich – beyond the Mittlerer Ring road, your vehicle has to have a valid red, green or yellow sticker indicating the car's carbon output.

Parking

There is a long-term parking zone opposite Terminal 1 and more parking zones near Terminal 2 and the Visitors' Park.

Phone numbers

Medical centre/emergency service 089 97 56 33 44

Flight information 089 97 52 13 13

Terminal 1 lost and found 089 97 52 13 70, service centre 089 97 52 13 75.

Terminal 2 lost and found: 089 97 52 28 70: service centre 089 97 52 28 75

Munich Airport transfers

So you've arrived from a bone-rattling flight, collected your bags and made it through passport control. You're ready to embrace the Bavarian capital, but you're not quite there yet. Here's a guide to getting in and out of the city from Munich Airport.

By public transport

Most people use Munich's suburban trains (S-Bahn) to get in and out of the city. Two trains connect the airport with the Main Train Station (Hauptbahnhof) the S8 and the S1. The S-Bahn is under the Munich Airport Centre between the terminals, just follow the signs with the green "S". Note that if you're taking the S1 to the airport make sure you sit towards the back of the train as forward section couples off and heads towards Neufahrn.

Tickets

The best ticket to buy is the Airport City Day Ticket, which costs €10.80 for one person and €19.60 for a "Partner Ticket" which covers up to five people.

It's valid until 6am the next day and covers all of Munich's S-Bahns, U-Bahns (subways), trams and public buses.

If the only trip you're making that day is to or from the airport you could also get Single Ticket (*Einzelfahrkarte*) for Zone 4, which costs around €9.60. Tickets are available from the multi-lingual machines (*Ticketautomaten*), which accept credit cards and cash (in euros).

Remember you have to validate your ticket at the little stamping machine before you get on the train.

By bus

Lufthansa runs buses from the airport to the Munich Hauptbahnhof, which you can use even if you're not flying with them. There's not much advantage over public transportation, though, as it takes just as long (40min, depending on traffic) and costs slightly more (€10 one way and €16 return). It might be useful if you're heading somewhere in Munich's north, as the bus also stops at the Nordfriedhof U-Bahn station in the suburb of Schwabing. The bus departs every 20min from 6.25am to 9.45pm. You buy your ticket on the bus.

By taxi

Taxis line up directly outside the Munich Airport terminals and all run on meters, a trip into central Munich costs about €55.

Connecting to other parts of Bavaria

If you're heading to cities including Passau, Nuremburg and Regensburg you can take a bus (No. 635) from Munich Airport to the train station at the nearby town of Freising and go from there. Lufthansa also runs shuttle services to Ingolstadt, Regensburg and several Austrian cities, although they're also more expensive than regular public transport, see www.lufthansa.com for more details.

Munich weather

Coming from Australia I was blissfully unaware of places which actually had four distinct seasons. Here's a taste of the weather you can expect throughout the year.

Summer splendour - June 21 to September 22

Munich springs to life in the summer (*Sommer*) and the street cafes cram with visitors and office workers. Count on spending more time outdoors if you're visiting then. As the days draw longer (it doesn't get dark until about 10pm in early July) people stay outside later. The Isar River banks and the Englischer Garten are favourite after-hours hang-out zones. Summer's solid festival program includes Tollwood, the film and opera festivals and the Olympiapark Summer Festival. Munich's warmest months are June and July with average daily high of 22°C or 73F. But it often reaches 30°C or 35°C (95F) and the humidity can make it feel like a sauna. Keep in mind these are also the wettest months, with an average rainfall of 12cm (5 inches) a day, often delivered in thunderstorm form. So don't forget the umbrella!

Autumn flair - September 23 to December 20

The days draw shorter in Autumn (*Herbst*). A cool breeze starts to blow and people start going home straight from work rather than hanging about outdoors. Foliage explodes into dazzling hues of yellow, orange and red before finally shedding it all onto the footpaths to be dutifully swept away by anonymous little men and six o'clock in the morning.

November seems to be the least-loved month as it's usually cold and grey with nothing interesting going on. December brings the chance of snow and the guarantee of being able to huddle at an outdoor Christmas market with a hot cup of hot, spicy wine (*Glühwein*).

Winter freeze - December 21 to March 20

An Italian friend once told me that you have to take up skiing if you live in Bavaria, otherwise there's just nothing to look forward to in the winter (*Winter*). Bavarians mostly agree and head a couple of hours south to the Alps. January is usually the coldest month,

with an average daily high of just 2°C or 36F, sometimes dropping as low as -20°C (-4F). You can usually rely on at least a few weeks of snow from January to March.

Count on spending most of your time indoors if you visit Munich in winter, at museums, pubs and restaurants. That said there are other outdoor options besides heading for the hills.

Check out the canal in front of Nymphenburg Palace, it freezes over and becomes a very cool ice skating stretch. *Fasching* (Carnival), 40 days of chilly partying in February/March, is a sure sign that spring is just around the corner.

Springtime joy - March 21 to June 20

Oktoberfest aside, the best time to be in Munich is spring (*Frühling*).

The once-essential scarfs and gloves of winter are put aside, back into the drawers for another year.

Barren trees and bushes reassert themselves with flowers and foliage. The streets aren't yet full of

summer tourists but the beer gardens slowly start to fill up with locals, usually relieved that the freezer has been switched off for another six months. A popular springtime delicacy is white asparagus (*Spargel*).



The Föhn

This is what they call dry wind that blows north over the Alps, particularly in winter and early spring. It can boost the temperature through the roof (up to 25°C in March!) and melts the snow into rivers and streams.

The *Föhn* also brings exceptionally clear views of the Alps, so it's a top time to head up to one of Munich's lookout spots like the Olympic Tower or the Alter Peter church tower.

The wind is often blamed for causing headaches and boosting overall levels of crankiness. Though it's not clear why a study by Munich's LMU (university) claims the *Föhn* increases accidents and even suicides by up to 10 per cent.

Oktoberfest weather

Falling as it does at the end of summer, you can't really depend on anything weatherwise for the fest. I've been at Oktoberfests when there was nothing better to sit at the outdoor tables, enjoying a beer in shorts and a T-shirt. Other times when I've been stuck outside it's rained so hard people were building those tables into little forts for shelter and I froze despite gloves and three layers of clothing. Just to be on the safe side pack an umbrella, a range of clothes and check the forecast on the day.

Visa requirements for Germany

Do I need a visa to visit Germany?

Let's take a look. Here are a few fast facts about Germany visa requirements. I've divided the easiness of access to Germany into three categories: Easy as pie, Easy as pizza and Easy as Paella.

Easy as pie

If you're an EU passport holder you don't need a visa at all to stay in Germany indefinitely. You should have your national identity card handy though, or failing that, a passport. Citizens of Switzerland, Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein also fall into the category.

Easy as pizza

Visitors from about 25 other countries around the world don't need a Germany travel visa. These include the United States, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Singapore, Malaysia, Croatia and South Korea. But visitors from these countries can only stay for three months within a six-month period in the European "Schengen" visa zone.

This includes 25 European countries (most of Europe), but not including the United Kingdom or Ireland. So it's possible to stay in Germany for three months and then Austria for three months, but then you'd have to spend six months out of the Schengen zone before you do it again. Note that this visa doesn't allow you to work or study in Germany.

Easy as Paella

It's a little more difficult if you come from South Africa, China, Taiwan, Russia, Turkey or any other country. You'll need to get a special "Schengen Travel Visa" which you can only apply for from your home country. To get it, you'll have to contact your local German embassy or consulate and fill out a few forms. You can download the application form for

the Schengen visa in several different languages from this website www.auswaertiges-amt.de.

Other documents you may need include:

- A passport which should be valid for at least four months after your planned departure date.
- A return ticket back home or at least a booking confirmation.
- Travel insurance.
- Proof you have enough money to sustain yourself during your stay (a bank statement should suffice).
- And, of course, a passport photo. If you're taking a course or planning to attend a school or university you'll need a confirmation letter from your school, which should also be translated into German.

Study and work visa requirements for Germany

If you're a European Union citizen or come from Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland have the right to live and work in Germany, just like that. All you have to do is register with the local government office where they're be living (this office is typically called the "Einwohnermeldeamt" or "Bürgeramt"). If you're Australian, Canadian, Israeli, Japanese, South Korean or a US American you can apply for a work or study visa after they enter Germany (this is what I did, by the way). So it's doable for you guys to enter Germany on a standard "Schengen" tourist visa, find a job, get your new employer to give you a letter of support and then go to the local government office to get a visa for a longer stay. Nationals of other countries have to have to get their hands on a German residence permit (*Aufenthaltserlaubnis*) first, which you have to do before coming to Germany. You guys should contact the German embassy in your country for more information.

Good luck getting that rubber stamp!

Telephoning 📞

Due to the mobile phone (German: *Handy*) revolution, the number of public telephones around Munich is steadily decreasing, just like everywhere else in the world.

But you can still find them spread throughout the city, and especially at train and subway stations. Public telephones are always cheaper than using a hotel phone.

In Munich they're usually grey with bright pink highlights. The older telephone booths are yellow. The majority of public telephones in Munich take phone cards (either 6 euros or 25

euros) which you can buy from newspaper stands, post offices and some hotels. Some also take either coins or credit cards.

You might want to consider buying an international telephone card before leaving home, a good idea if you're planning to hit several countries over a couple of weeks. Costs, of course vary depending on where you're calling and the time of day.

Dialling tips

1. If you're making an international call to a landline phone, first dial 00, then wait for the tone before dialling the country code, area code and number. Remember to leave off the first 0 of the area code.
2. If you're calling a mobile (cell phone) overseas dial 00, wait for the tone and dial the country code and then the mobile number, leaving off the first 0 of the mobile number.
3. A few popular country codes; Australia: 61, New Zealand: 64, USA and Canada: 1, United Kingdom: 44, Ireland: 353, South Africa: 27.
4. The country code for Germany is 49 and the area code for Munich is 89.

*Directory enquiries for Germany: 11 833

*International directory enquiries: 11 834

Postal services

For many visitors, the most convenient branch will be the office just opposite the main entrance of the Hauptbahnhof at Bahnhofplatz 1. That's the entrance through the lobby hall, across from the train platforms.

This branch has long opening hours, open Monday to Friday 8am to 8pm and 9am to 4pm on Saturday. Post offices are co-located with one of Germany's biggest banks, the Postbank, so you can get some cash here too.

Having something sent to you in Munich

If you want something sent to you in Munich but you don't know where you'll be staying, you can have it addressed to the post office and it'll be left there until you pick it up.

This is called the post restante service and actually operates in most countries around the world. The letters or packages for you should be addressed with the words "*Postlargernde Briefe/Sendungen, Bahnhofplatz 1, 80074 Munich, Germany*". That'll get it sent to the post office opposite the Main Train Station. You'll need a passport or some other form of ID to pick it up.

Sending letters, postcards, packages

You can buy stamps from post offices, and from funky little automatic machines outside them. It costs 65c to send a postcard anywhere within Europe, a square €1 anywhere outside of it. Standard-sized letters should cost about €2. Germany's mailboxes are done in a good old reliable yellow. Sometimes there's one slot for local letters and another for all other destinations, which should have "*andere PLZ*" written on it.

Websites about Munich

Can't find what you're looking for on Destination Munich? Here are some other sites about Munich and travelling in Germany.

* **Official site** The official Munich City Council website has some pages in English. www.muenchen.de

* **Forum** Munich has an active forum which caters mainly to the city's ex-pat crowd. It's called Toytown Germany www.toytowngermany.com

* **Getting there and around**

The English version of the German Rail (Deutsche Bahn) site lets you look up train connections and prices. www.bahn.de

The **Munich Airport** site lets you look up scheduled arrival and departure times. www.munich-airport.de

* **News** The Munich Eye reports in English about happenings in Munich and Bavaria (www.themunicheye.com). *The Local* provides news from across Germany in English. (www.thelocal.de) The *Deutsche Welle* website provides European and international news as well. www.dw-world.de

Tourist Information Centres

Munich has two main tourist information centres where you can pick up brochures, maps and tips about happenings in the city. They can also help you arrange guides and make hotel reservations.

One centre is at Bahnhofplatz 2 in the Hauptbahnhof (Main Train Station) building. Exit the station's main hall opposite the platforms and it's around the corner to the right.

It's open Monday to Saturday 9am to 8pm, Sunday 10am to 6pm, closes early on Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve, closed on Christmas and New Year's Day.

The other centre on the ground floor of the Neues Rathaus (New Town Hall). It's open Monday to Friday 10am to 8pm, Saturday 10am to 4pm, closed on Sundays and public

holidays. It's open on Sundays and a little later during the week when the Christmas markets are going on. Contact details: **Phone** +49 089 23 39 65 00 **Email** tourismus@muenchen.de **Website** www.muenchen.de

Munich for disabled travellers

Munich does a good job of catering for tourists with a physical disability. Most museums and hotels have wheelchair access and footpaths are generally flat and trouble-free if you're in a wheelchair. The only problem might be navigating the throngs of people on the main pedestrian drags during summer!

A guide to the city

The Munich tourist office produces a fantastic 34-page English guide to the city especially for physically challenged visitors. You can download it as a PDF document, go to www.muenchen.de and search for "Munich for Physically Challenged Tourists."

Getting around Munich made easy

There are elevators leading down to the underground U- and S-Bahn trains. Many trams even have a little ramp which mechanically shoots out in front of the door when the driver notices that someone in a wheelchair wants to get on. There is also information about the height difference between the platform edge and the floors of the trains. There is also info about bus and tram lines with "low-floor buses" and boarding aids.

Train station helpers

If you think you'll need some help on arrival or departure at the Munich Main Train Station (Hauptbahnhof) you can get in touch with the in-house volunteer helpers, the **Bahnhofsmision München**. They can help you get on or off trains, offer free tea and coffee and can even speed you around to another platform if you have to make a quick connection. The Bahnhofsmision München centre is at the southern end of the station next to Platform 11.

Contact details: **Website** www.bahnhofsmision-muenchen.de (in German) **Phone** 089 59 45 76 77 78 **Email:** Andrea.Sontheim@Bahnhofsmision-Muenchen.de, Gabriele.Ochse@Bahnhofsmision-Muenchen.de.

Ride services for the disabled

Try the excellent **Mini-Bus Team Munich**. **Phone** 0893 99 3999 (9:30 am to 5pm) **Mobile** 01717 77 1127 (at all other times) **Website** www.minibusteam.de

Or try the...

Bavarian Red Cross (Ride Service). It's best to register at least a day in advance for this service, especially if want to organise a day trip away from Munich. **Address:** Kaiser-Wilhelm-Strasse 4, 82319 Starnberg **Phone** 049 08151 2222

For those in need of more assistance try the SFD (Special Ride Service for the Severely Disabled). They offer stair transport, vehicles for electric wheelchairs and small busses for up to four wheelchairs and attendants. For this service you must register at least a day in advance. **Phone** 00896 255522

Wheelchair repairs in Munich

There are a couple of businesses in Munich which offer wheelchair repairs.

Check out:

Rolli mobil GmbH

As well as wheelchair repairs, there guys offer wheelchair rentals and defective device pickup. **Address** Leopold Strasse 208, 80804 Munich **Phone** 089 3610 2428 **Opening Hours** 9am to 6pm, 9am to 5pm on Fridays

or

Streifeneder

Address Wildermuth Strasse 88, 80993 Munich **Phone** 089 5209 690 **Open** 7.30am to 5pm, 7.30am to 12.30pm on Fridays **Parking** Outside the front door

Women travellers in Munich

Munich is one of the safest big cities in Europe and harassment against women is rare. Just use your common sense and take a bit of care if you find yourself alone after dark on the subway or in an isolated area. Take particular care during Oktoberfest time. The **Frauennotruf München** is a counselling service for women who have been sexually assaulted. **Phone** 089 76 37 37 **Website** www.frauennotrufmuenchen.de

Of course if you have been assaulted you should first contact the police on the emergency number 110.

Women-only accommodation

Munich has a couple of women-only places to stay. One is the Frauenpension Muenchen south of city centre in Untergiesing-Harlaching (try pronouncing that one!). It has single rooms for 99 euros and doubles for 111 euros. **Address** Wolgemut Strasse, Munich **Phone** 0163 174 47 41 **Website in German** www.frauenpension-muenchen.de

Also women-only is the Jugendhotel "In Via" Marienherberge near the Hauptbahnhof (Main Train Station). It's a cheaper option, expect to pay about 25 euros for a spot in a four-bed dorm, 30 euros for a single room and 55 euros for a double.

It's only open to women travellers in Munich under 28 and there's a lockout from midnight to 6am. **Address** Goethe Strasse 9, Munich **Phone** 089 55 58 05

Email invia-marienherberge@arcor.de online bookings are not possible.

School and public holidays in Bavaria

Bavaria is well-endowed with public holidays.

Germans love to take advantage of long weekends by taking mini-trips around the countryside so keep in mind things get a little busy around these times. Businesses, museums public transport operators treat them as Sundays, see Munich opening hours for more details on what you can expect to find open.

Popular holiday spots are likewise crowded during school holidays. These take place late December / early January (*Winterferien*), March / April (*Osterferien*), May / June (*Pfingstenferien*), August (*Sommerferien*) and early November (the *Herbstferien*).

Bavaria's public holidays are:

- *Neujahr* (New Year's Day) January 1
- *Heilige Drei Könige* (Epiphany) January 6
- *Karfreitag* (Good Friday) March / April
- *Ostersonntag und Ostermontag* (Easter Sunday and Monday) March / April
- *Tag der Arbeit* (Labour Day) May 1
- *Christi Himmelfahrt* (Ascension Day) 40 days after Easter
- *Pfingstensonntag und Pfingstenmontag* (Whitsun / Pentecost) mid-May to mid-June
- *Fronleichnam* (Corpus Christi) 10 days after Pentecost
- *Mariä Himmelfahrt* (Assumption Day) August 15
- *Tag der Deutschen Einheit* (Day of German Unity) October 3
- *Allerheiligen* (All Saints Day) November 1
- *1. Weihnachtstag* (Christmas Day) December 25
- *2. Weihnachtstag* (Boxing Day) December 26

The lucky city of Augsburg (Bavaria's third largest) gets one more day off, August 8. It marks the *Friedensfest* (Peace of Augsburg) which ended the religious struggle between the Lutherans and the Catholics in 1555.

Happy holidays!

Munich Opening Hours

You may feel a little inconvenienced if you're coming from somewhere like the UK or Australia where we're used to late-night shopping and 24-hour supermarkets.

Not so in Bavaria, where people still think they should get to spend Sundays with their families (and good on them). So most **supermarkets** open 8am to 8pm Monday to Saturday. Other shops open at 9am or 10am to 8pm. Virtually all shops are closed on Sundays but **pubs, restaurants, petrol stations** stay open, and many bakeries open for a few hours.

Some **restaurants** (particularly outside Munich) close one day a week, if so they'll hang sign with *Ruhetag* – "Rest Day" on the door. **Banks** open 8.30am to 4pm Monday to Friday, sometimes longer, especially the Postbank, a combination post office/bank.

One island of constant commerce is the **Hauptbahnhof** (Main Train Station) where shops are allowed to open late and on Sundays. Shops at **Munich Airport** are also open late every day.

Museums are open weekends but many close on Monday. Most of the major crowd-pullers such as Neuschwanstein Castle and Nymphenburg Palace are open every day but close for a couple of days around Christmas and New Year's. **Pharmacies** follow normal business hours and there's always one in any given part of the city that's open late and on Sundays for emergency needs. Check the sign on your nearest pharmacy's front door to find out where the nearest open one is.

Consulates in Munich

If you get into serious trouble during your visit you may need to turn to your country's consulate for help. Many countries have Munich consulates which support their main embassy in Berlin. It's best to try and phone consulates in the afternoon, most of them close at 12.30pm (they are bureaucrats after all). Keep in mind that the phone numbers given below don't include the international code for Germany, which is +49. Here's a run-down of the kinds of services consulates usually do and don't provide to their countrymen and women.

Consulates will usually do the following:

- Issue replacement passports.

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- Provide support if you are arrested (such as organising a lawyer).
- Try to contact you if they're told you're being held by police.
- Contact friends and family back for you if you're in trouble.
- Take special action in the case of natural disasters, civil disturbances or terrorism.
- Give information on dealing with local authorities and transferring money.
- Help if you're a victim of crime or are in hospital.

They usually cannot:

- Get you out of jail or interfere with the local criminal or civil court proceedings.
- Get you preferential treatment in hospital or prison.
- Pay any bills for you or give you money (although some will lend you some cash in exceptional circumstances).
- Make arrangements for work, accommodation or business.

- **Details of selected consulates in Munich (or nearest representation) -**

Australia ▪ Australian Honorary Consul Munich (limited service) **Address** Maximilianhöfe, Maximilian Strasse 13, 80539 Munich **Office hours** Tuesdays 9am to 1pm.

▪ Australian Consulate-General **Address** Main Tower, 28th Floor Neue Mainzer Strasse 52-58, 60311 Frankfurt **Phone** 069 90558-0 **Website** www.germany.embassy.gov.au

Canada ▪ Konsulat von Kanada **Address** Tal 29 / III, 80331 Munich **Phone** 089 21 99 570 **Website** www.canadainternational.gc.ca

India ▪ Generalkonsulat der Republik Indien **Address** Widenmayer Strasse 15, 80538 Munich **Phone** 089 210239-0 **Website** www.indianembassy.de

Ireland ▪ Honorarkonsulat von Irland **Address** Denninger Strasse 15, 81679 Munich **Phone** 089 20 80 59 90 **Website** www.embassyofireland.de

Israel has no representation in Munich, contact the embassy in Berlin. ▪ Botschaft des Staates Israel **Address** Auguste Victoria Strasse 74, 14193 Berlin **Phone** 030 89 04 55 00 **Website** berlin.mfa.gov.il

Italy ▪ Italienisches Generalkonsulat **Address** Möhl Strasse 3, 81675 Munich **Phone** 089 2103 1142 **Website** www.consmonacodibaviera.esteri.it

Japan ▪ Japanisches Generalkonsulat **Address** Karl-Scharnagl-Ring 7, 80539 Munich **Phone** 089 417604-0 **Website** www.dus.emb-japan.go.jp

New Zealand has no representation in Munich, contact the embassy in Berlin. Botschaft von Neuseeland **Address** Friedrich Strasse 60, 10117 Berlin **Phone** 030 20 62 10

Website www.nzembassy.com

Russian Federation ▪ Russische Föderation Generalkonsulat **Address** Seidl Strasse 28, 80335 Munich **Phone** 089 5925-03 **Website** www.russisches-konsulat.de

South Africa ▪ Generalkonsulat der Republik Südafrika **Address** Sendlinger-Tor-Platz 5, 80336 Munich **Phone** 089 231163-0 **Website** www.suedafrika.org

United Kingdom ▪ British Consulate-General **Address** Möhl Strasse 5, Munich **Phone** 089 21 10 90 **Website** ukingermany.fco.gov.uk

United States of America ▪ Amerikanisches Generalkonsulat **Address** Königin Strasse 5, 80539 Munich **Phone** 089 2888-0 **Website** munich.usconsulate.gov

Munich Lost and Found

Sad as it may be, sometimes things go pear shaped and you lose something along the way. If this happens in Munich you could first try asking at one of the tourist info centres at Marienplatz or the Hauptbahnhof, you may get very lucky and find that someone has handed it in there.

If not you'll have to contact the Munich Lost and Found Office (*Fundbüro*).

Munich Lost & Found details: The office's official name is Kreisverwaltungsreferat Hauptabteilung I/23 – Fundbüro **Directions** It's at Oetztaler Strasse 19 south-west of the city centre. To get there take the U-Bahn No. 6 to Harras (direction Klinikum Großhadern) or S-Bahn No. 7 or 27 and walk from there **Phone** 089 23 39 60 45

Email fundbuero.kvr@muenchen.de **Open** Monday to Thursday from 8am to midday, Tuesday also from 2pm to 6.30pm, Friday open 7am to midday. It's closed on Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve.

Maybe I left it on the train?

If you think you've left something behind on the S-Bahn or a train around Bavaria you can contact the Deutsche Bahn (German Rail) Lost and Found office, which is in the main hall of the Hauptbahnhof. This service has a hotline you call for 59c a minute (Phone 09 00 19 90 599). The office is open Monday to Friday from 7am to 8pm and from 8am to 6pm on weekends and public holidays.

Oktoberfest Lost and Found

There is a separate office at the Oktoberfest grounds for items lost there, see the Oktoberfest section for more details.

Credit cards and phones

If you're a victim of theft or lose a wallet or handbag containing credit cards you'll want to cancel them straight away. Luckily Germany has a toll-free round-the-clock number which you can call to cancel all international bank and credit cards. It's 116 116 from within Germany and either +49 116 116 or +49 30 4050 4050 from abroad (charges apply for international calls). You can also use this number to report lost or stolen mobile phones and the service will notify your service provider of the loss if you want the phone locked. Here are the numbers for the major credit card companies if you want to call direct.

- **VISA** (01803) 61 76 170
- **Diner's Club** (01805) 33 66 95
- **American Express** (069) 97 97 10 00
- **MasterCard and EuroCard** (069) 79 220

Final stuff

About the author

Hi, my name's Stuart and I'm the author of Destination Munich. This is the page where I tell you a little bit about myself..

By far the question I'm asked the most is "how does an Australian end up in Germany?" I'll give you the short version of what's turning out to be a very long story! Let me drop a few hits: some inspiring old fellas, a massive wave, terracotta bricks and a certain girl.

Early days as a journo

After I finished university in Melbourne I became a newspaper reporter. Interviewing people, photography and writing: I loved every part of it. No question, journalism was the job I knew I wanted to do for the rest of my life. After leaving Australia I planned to get back into it someday and I guess, through this website, I already have.

But anyway, after a few years at a small-town newspaper I got the chance to go to China to write about an Australian trade delegation which was visiting there. While hanging around a certain hostel in Beijing I met some long-term travellers, guys who'd been on the road for years and in some cases, decades.

My life-changing decision

The lesson I learned from them was that you didn't have to lead a conventional life of office, home, sleep, repeat. They had made their lives into an adventure. I was determined to do the same. So that's when I made the biggest decision I'd ever make: one more year at a suburban newspaper, and then I'd be off around the world.

Volunteering in Thailand

I travelled around South-East Asia for a year, soaking up the culture, great food and doing some travel writing for other websites.

But by far the most rewarding experience was the four months I spent in Khao Lak in southern Thailand. This was in 2005, so less than a year after that region was devastated by the massive Indian Ocean Tsunami.



Volunteers had come from all around the world to help the locals get back on their feet. I worked on a construction site in a fishing village called Nam Khem – digging holes, pouring cement and laying bricks. It was hard work but a lot of fun and of course, very rewarding. It was there I met a girl from Bavaria who became my girlfriend for a while. Things were going pretty well for us, so I decided to move over to Germany and give English teaching a go.

After 12 months in Asia I was ready for a change anyway. 35°C every day is great for a while, but I'd still never seen a flake of snow in my life. What better place to start a new chapter of my journey than in Bavaria?

And so over I came. The relationship with that girl ended pretty soon but I've hang around anyway, I guess I've fallen in love with the place. Although I was English teaching immensely I started looking for a way back into my primary passions in life, writing and photography. Eventually I came across the idea of building my own website.

The Destination Munich experience

It was an interesting proposition – I'd never tried website building before. But with a lot of patience a bit of inspiration from others who'd started travel successful websites I gave it a go. The main part of it was the writing and photos, right?

I started slurping up everything I could find on Munich and venturing into unknown quarters of the city. I went to every museum I could find, attended every festival and read up on the history. The more I grasped what made Munich tick the more I became fascinated, and I started believing this really was the world's greatest city.

I hope that passion comes across in my writing and rubs off on those of you who are planning a trip to Munich. I still miss my home in Australia, especially my friends and family.

But I'm comforted by the thought that I can always go back on day. Until I do, I'm going to make the most out of my time here in Europe. There is so much to see, and so many different cultures to experience all in a relatively small area – well, compared to Australia, anyway! I'm still enjoying the journey, I hope you enjoy yours as well.

Stuart Anderson

About the images

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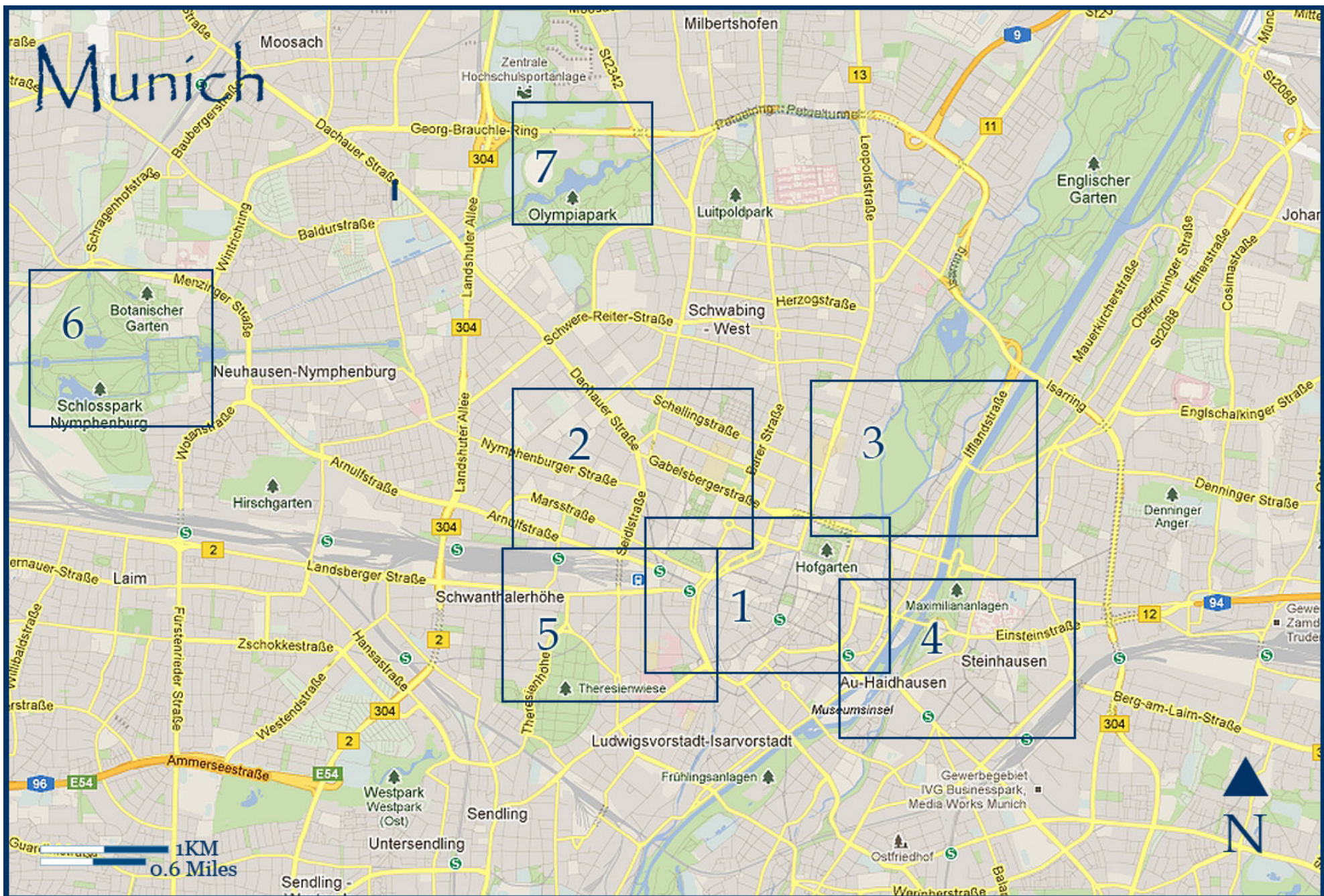
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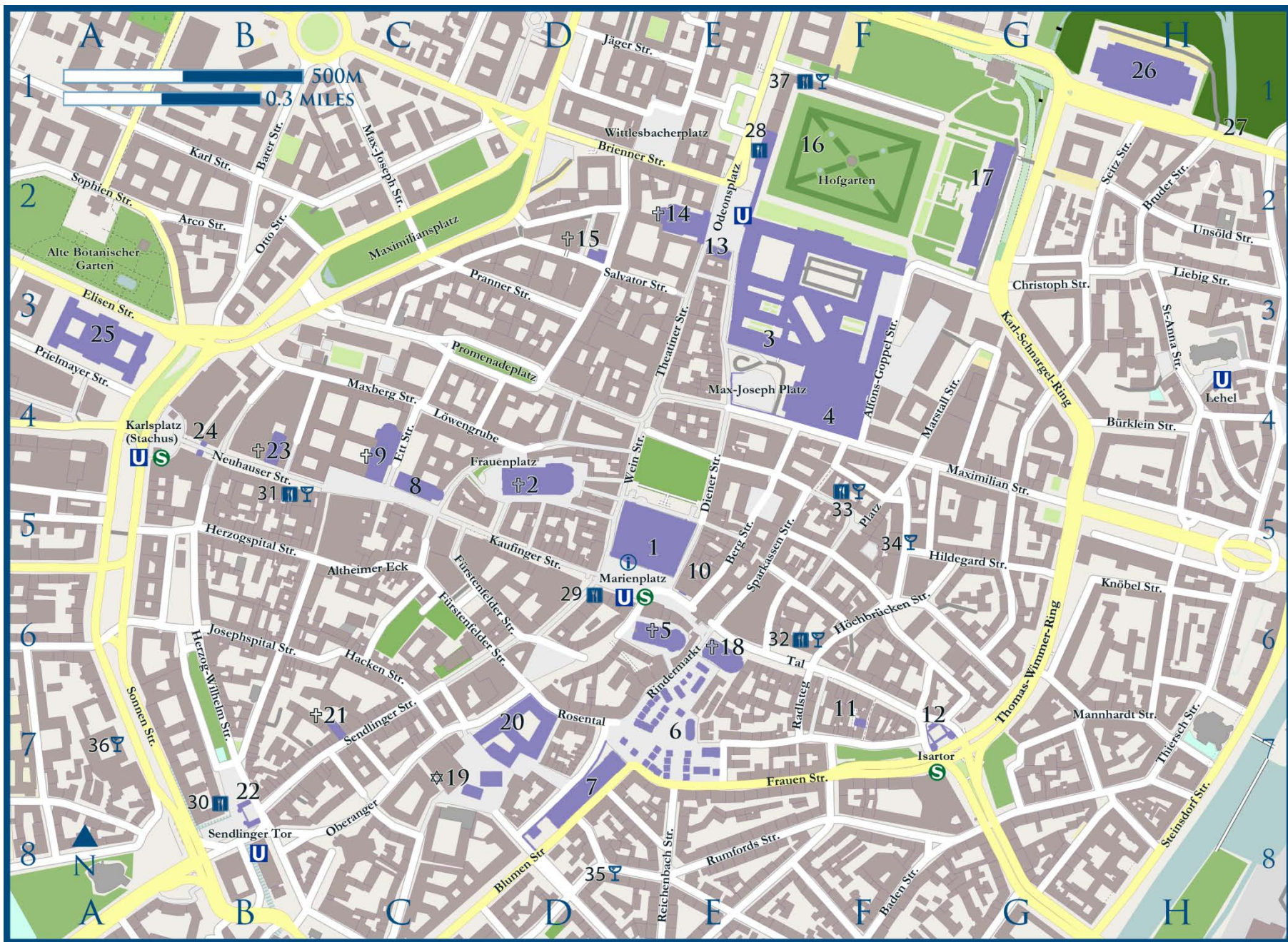
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Munich Overview Map 1. City Centre, 2. Art Precinct, 3. Schwabing and the Park, 4. Haidhausen, 5. Theresienwiese, 6. Nymphenburg Palace and Park, 8. Olympic Park.
 Map data © Google Maps 2012 (see permission details). P.276

City Centre map key

1. [Neues Rathaus](#) (New City Hall) **E5**
2. [Frauenkirche](#) (cathedral) **D5**
3. [Munich Residenz](#) **F4**
4. [National Theatre](#) **F4**
5. Sankt Peter Kirche (Church of St. St. Peter) **E6**
6. [Viktualienmarkt](#) (city market) **E7**
7. Schranerhalle (gourmet food hall) **D8**
8. [German Hunting and Fishing Museum](#) **C5**
9. [Church of St Michael](#) (Michaelskirche) **C4**
10. [Altes Rathaus](#) (Old City Hall) **E5**
11. [Bier und Oktoberfest Museum](#) **F7**
12. [Isartor](#) (Valentin Karstadt Musäum is inside) **G7**
13. [Feldherrnhalle](#) (Field Marshalls' Hall) **E2**
14. [Theatinerkirche](#) (Theatine Church) **E2**
15. Salvatorkirche (Salvator Church) **D2**
16. [Hofgarten](#) **F2**
17. Bavarian State Chancellery **G2**
18. Heiliggeistkirche (Church of the Holy Ghost) **E6**
19. [Jewish Center / Synagogue](#) **C8**



20. [Munich City Museum](#) **D7**
21. [Asamkirche](#) (Asam Church) **B7**
22. [Sendlingertor](#) (Sendling Gate) **B7**
23. [Bürgersaalkirche](#) (Church) **B4**

24. [Karlstor](#) (Karl's Gate) **B4**
25. [Justizpalast](#) (Palace of Justice) **A3**
26. [Haus der Kunst](#) (House of Art) **H1**
27. [Surfing in the Eisbach](#) **H1**

- Eating, drinking and partying**
28. [Café Tambosi](#) **E1**
 29. [Café Glockenspiel](#) **D6**
 30. [Lamms](#) **B8**

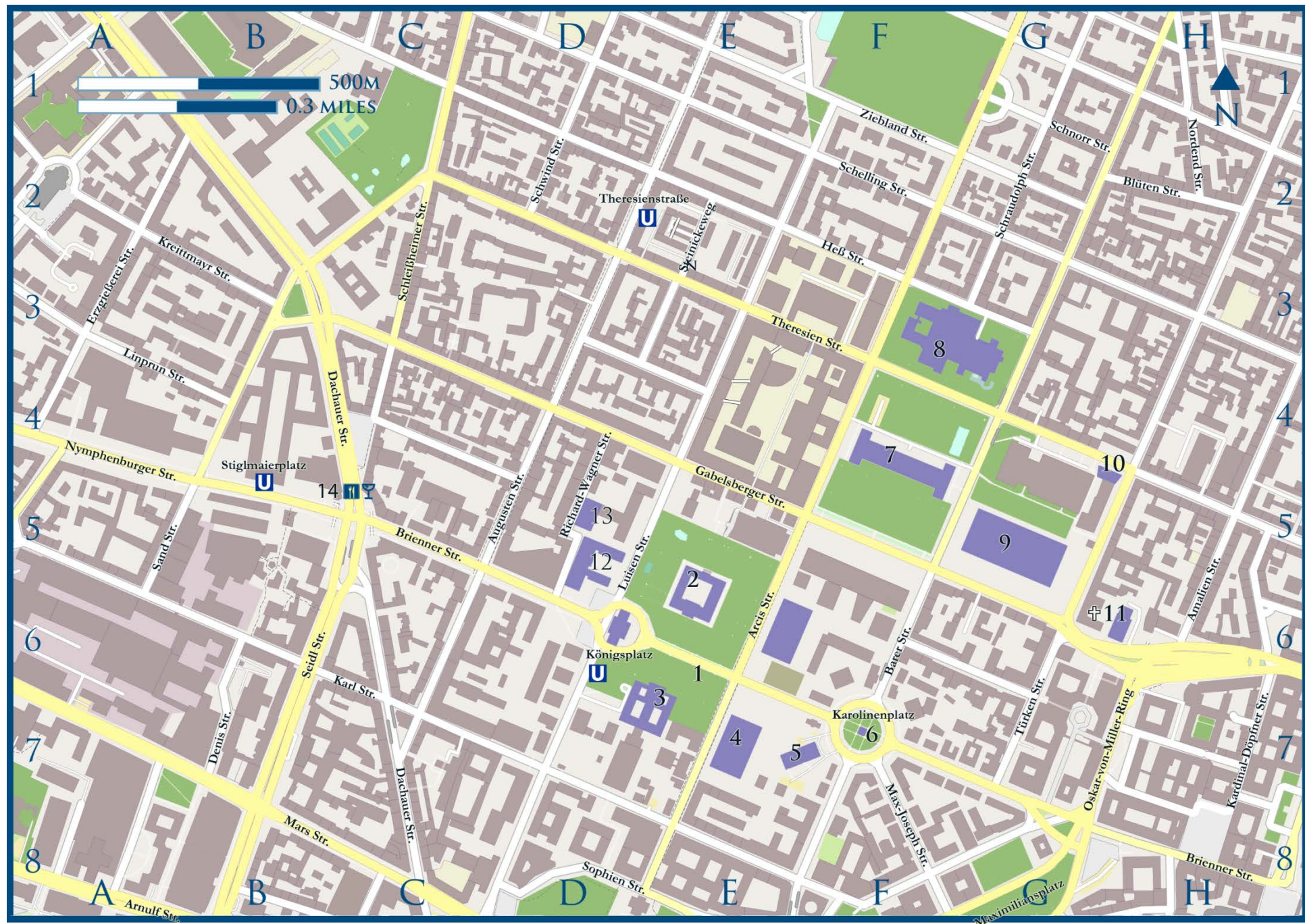
31. [Zum Augustiner](#) **B5**
32. [Weisses Brauhaus](#) **F6**
33. [Hofbräuhaus](#) **F5**
34. [Atomic Café](#) **F5**

35. [Paradiso Tanzbar](#) **D8**
36. [8 Seasons](#) **B7**
37. [Schumann's Bar am Hofgarten](#) **E1**

Key to Art Precinct Area

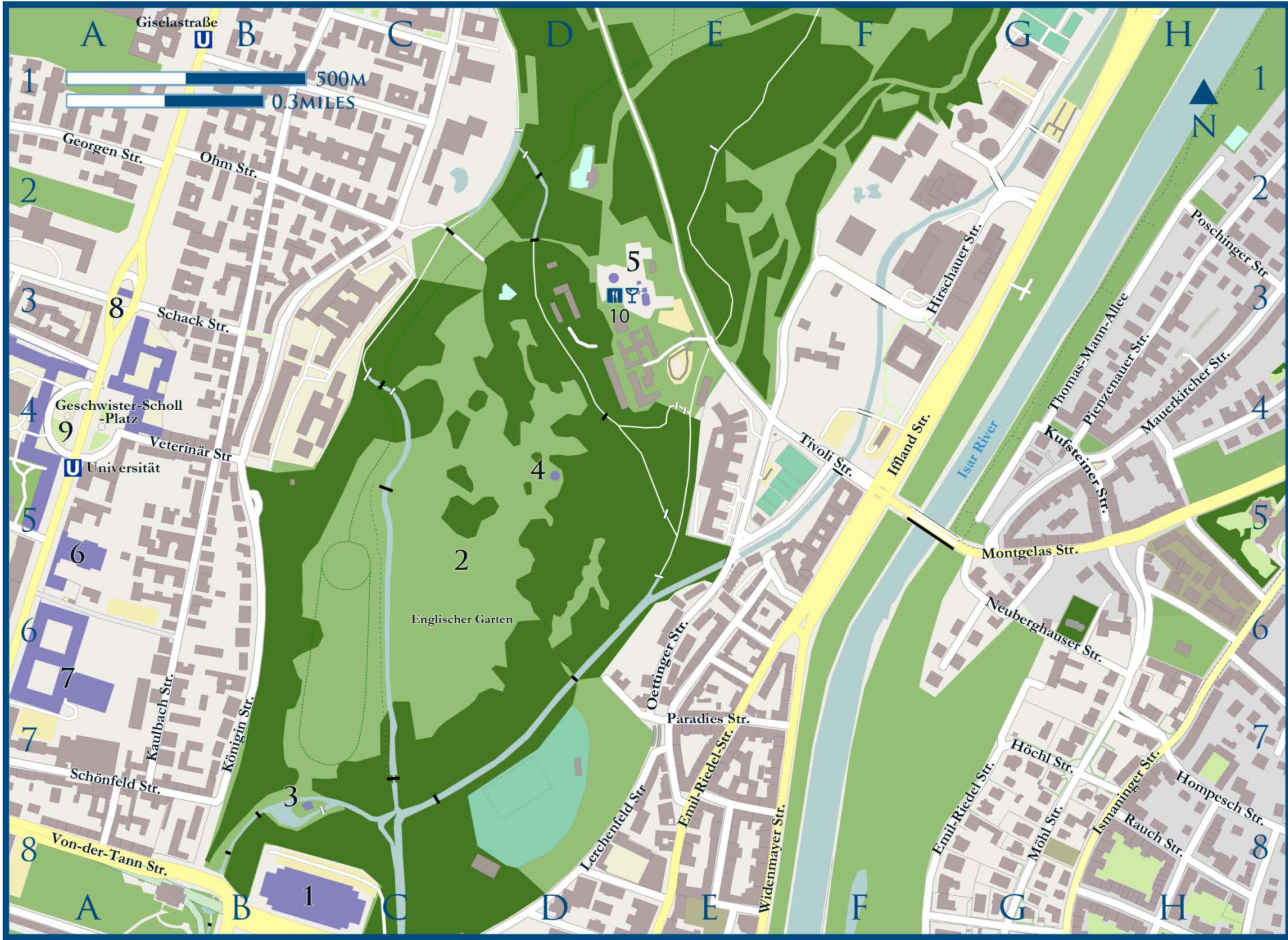
Map

1. [Königsplatz](#) **E6**
2. [Glyptothek](#) **E5**
3. [Antiken-](#)
[sammlungen](#) (State
Antiques Collection) **E6**
4. [Staatliche](#)
[Graphische Sammlung](#)
(Bavarian Collection of
Graphic Arts) **E7**
5. [Amerikahaus](#) **E7**
6. [Karolinenplatz](#)
(Caroline's Square) **F7**
7. [Alte Pinakothek](#) **F4**
8. [Neue Pinakothek](#) **F3**
9. [Pinakothek der](#)
[Moderne](#) **G5**
10. [Museum](#)
[Brandhorst](#) **G4**
11. St. Markus Church
H6
12. Lenbachhaus **D5**
13. Paleontological
Museum **D5**
- Eating, drinking and
partying**
14. Löwenbräukeller
B5



Key to Schwabing and the Park Area Map

- 1. Haus der Kunst (House of Art) **B8**
 - 2. Englischer Garten **C5**
 - 3. Japanese Teahouse **B8**
 - 4. Monopteros **D5**
 - 5. Chinese Tower **D3**
 - 6. Ludwigskirche (Church of St. Ludwig) **A5**
 - 7. Bayerische Staatsbibliothek (Bavarian State Library) **A6**
 - 8. Siegestor (Victory Arch) **A3**
 - 9. LMU uni and White Rose museum **A4**
 - Eating, drinking and partying**
 - 10. Chinese Tower beer garden and restaurant **D3**
- P.279



Key to Haidhausen Area

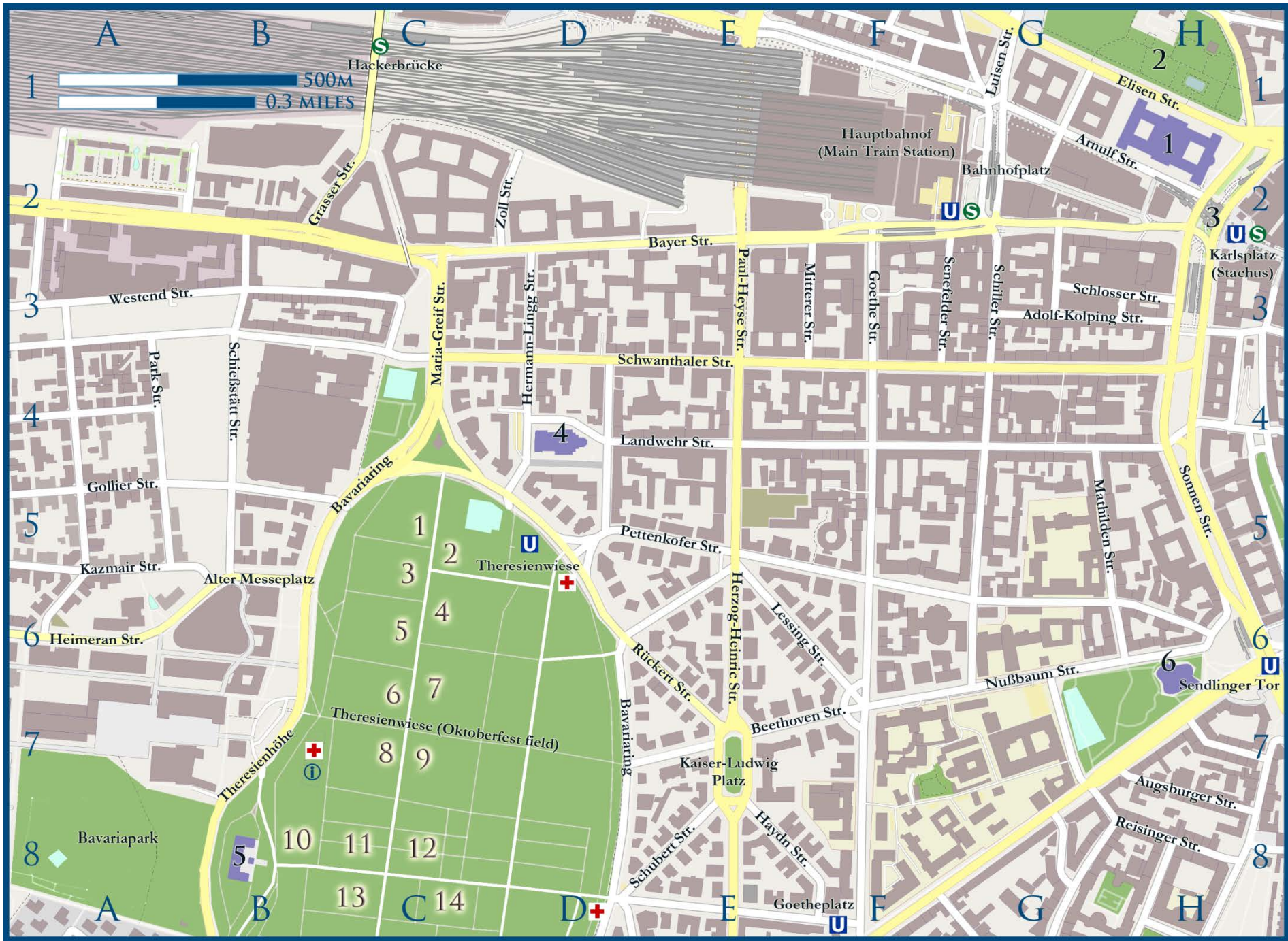
Map

- 1. Maximilianeum **D4**
 - 2. Alpine Museum **B5**
 - 3. Deutsches Museum
A7
 - 4. Müllersches Volksbad
(indoor swimming pool) **B6**
 - 5. Gasteig **B6**
 - 6. St. Johannes Kirche
(church) **E6**
 - 7. Friedensengel (Angel
of Peace) **D1**
 - 8. Museum Villa Stuck
E1
 - 9. Prinzregententheater **G2**
 - 10. St Lukas (church) **A5**
- A5**
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Key to Theresienwiese Area Map

- 1. Justizpalast (Palace of Justice) **H1**
- 2. Alter Botanischer Garten **H1**
- 3. Karlsplatz (Stachus) **H3**
- 4. Sankt Paul (St. Paul's Church) **D4**
- 5. Bavaria Statue and Ruhmeshalle **B8**
- 6. Sankt Matthäus Kirche (St. Matthew's Church) **D4**
- Oktoberfest beer tents
- 1. Hippodrom
- 2. Fischer-Vroni
- 3. Armbrustschützen-Festhalle
- 4. Ochsenbraterei
- 5. Hofbräu-Festzelt
- 6. Hacker-Festzelt
- 7. Augustiner-Festhalle
- 8. Schottenhamel-Festhalle
- 9. Pschorrbräu-Festhalle "Bräurosl"
- 10. Schützen-Festzelt
- 11. Paulanerbräu "Winzerer Fähndl"
- 12. Löwenbräu-Festhalle
- 13. Käfer's Wies'n-Schänke
- 14. Kufflers Weinzelt *P.281*

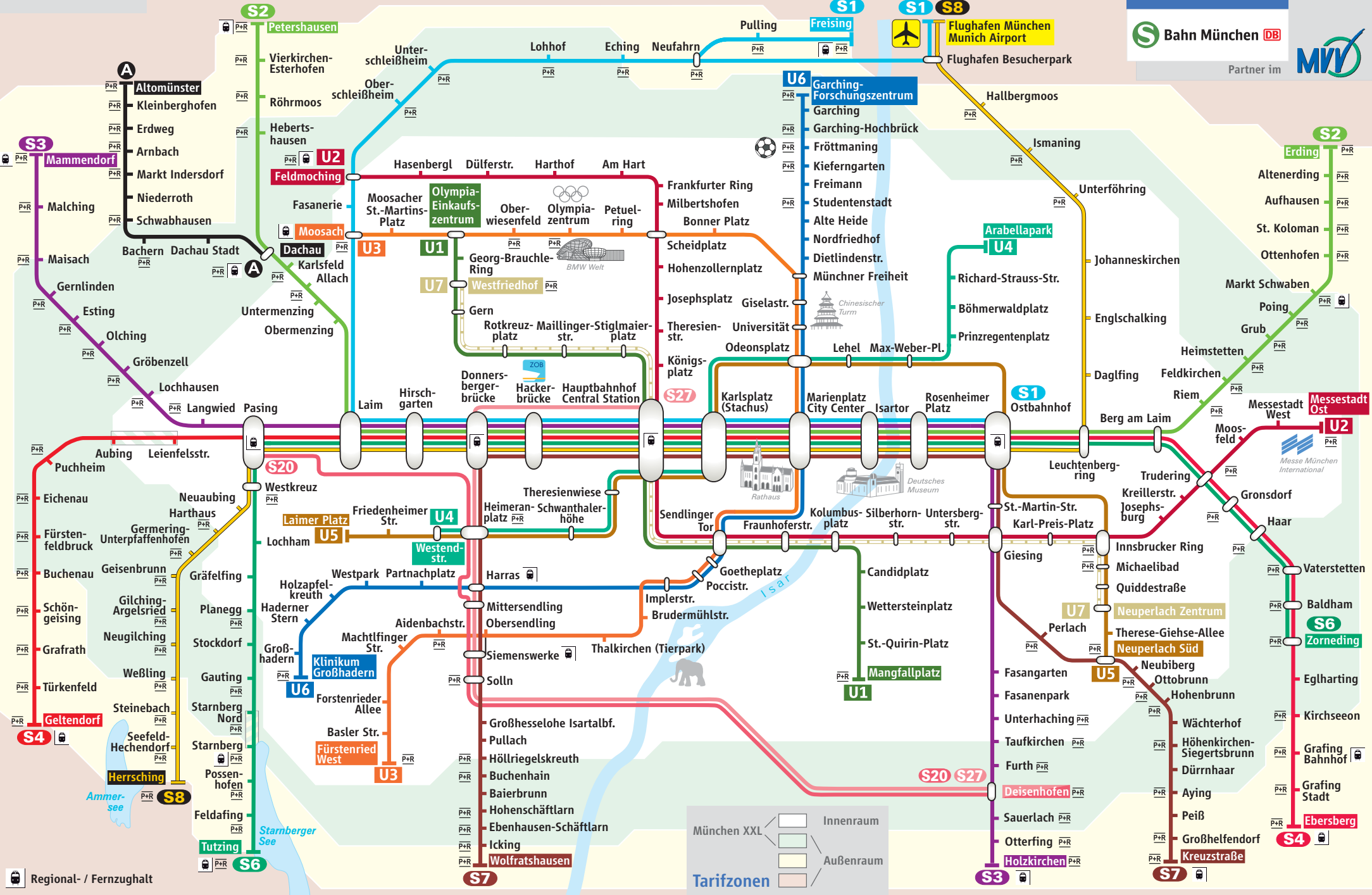




Schnellbahnnetz



Partner im MVV



München XXL

- Innenraum
- Außenraum

Tarifzonen

Regional- / Fernzugtakt

"Destination Munich and Bavaria has what other travel guides lack: Personality, wit and honest, critical reviews."



Munich loves you!

Travel writer and proud lederhosen owner Stuart Anderson knows Munich and Bavaria. And so he should, after all, he's spent the last six years living there and creating the online travel guide www.destination-munich.com. Let Stuart show you around the land he loves, a place of stunning castles, stimulating museums, sunny beer gardens and a unique culture that's renowned around the globe.

We'll also peer into Munich's rich and turbulent history, visit the Alps and take part in the mother of all festivals, the Oktoberfest.

This ebook includes:

MAPS – Colourful and precise, these will keep you on the right track.

REVIEWS – Well-written and insightful guides to over 60 of Munich's star attractions, plus a special section on day-trips into the Bavarian countryside.

ILLUSTRATIONS – Dozens of Munich and Bavaria photos to whet the appetite and spark the imagination.

TIPS – Insider advice to help you “cut the queues” and get the most out of your trip – from someone who's done it all before.