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APRIL 2023

WHAT'S UP

WHAT TO SEE | WHAT TO DO BAVARIA



LOIRE VALLEY

Châteaux

The Meaning of German May Day | Editors Picks | & Much More!

HONORING
the Past,
TREASURING
the Present,
SHAPING
the Future.

USAG BAVARIA KINDERFEST EVENTS

Hohenfels: April 15

noon - 4 p.m. | School Age Center, B112

Garmisch: April 26

4:30 - 6 p.m. | Pete Burk Community Center, B725

Tower & Rose Barracks: April 29

noon - 4 p.m.
Wild B.O.A.R. Outdoor Recreation, RC600



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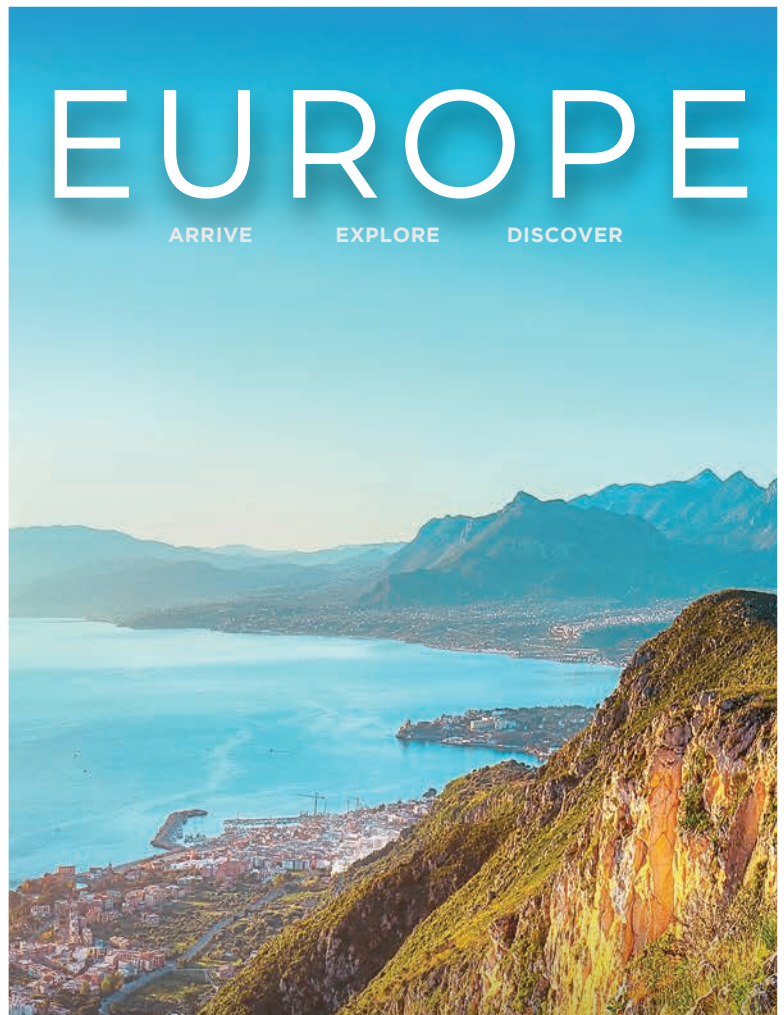


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April Events

EDITOR'S

PICKS

By Tamala Malerk



Spring has sprung and it's the time of year to venture outside with fewer than three layers of clothing on. From craft fairs to concerts, street food, festivals and more, we've got something for everyone happening across Germany this month. Always check the event's website before traveling.

Creative Fair April 13-16, Stuttgart



©PHOTO: LANDESMESSE STUTTGART GMBH

Shop all of your DIY wants and needs at this fair, such as sewing, painting and cake decorating supplies. Learn something new at one of the many workshops.

INTERMODELLBAU 2023 April 20-23, Dortmund



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Model enthusiasts, and even those with an interest, should find themselves at the "world's largest exhibition for model making and model sports." You can look at over 20,000 models across eight halls brought to you by over 500 exhibitors from around the world.

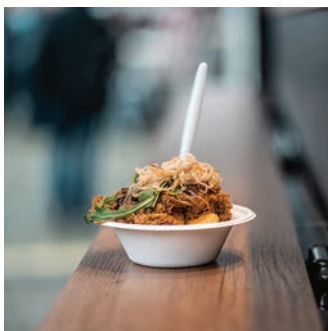
Macklemore "the BEN Tour" April 21, Cologne



©MACKLEMORE

Put on your most glorious thrift shop finds, remember the good ole' days and make your way to this concert. Go to macklemore.com for more dates and locations.

FOOD LOVERS—Street Food April 21-23, Essen



©FOOD LOVERS

Foodies unite in the town which literally translates to the word "eat." Over 30 vendors, from amateur cooks to professional chefs will be cooking up a delicious variety of street foods with vegan, vegetarian, herbivore and meat options for all.

57th Munich Spring Festival April 21-May 7, Munich



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Rides, concerts, improv shows, great food and drinks await you at this large event.

DISNEY100: The Concert April 27, Hamburg



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With a century of television, animation, films and music, there is sure to be something in this concert for every member of the family to enjoy. Go to eventim.de/artist/disney-in-concert/ for more dates and locations.

Jazzahead! Trade Fair and Festival April 27-30, Bremen



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Make your way to this festival, convention, expo, concert and networking all-in-one event for "high quality, contemporary jazz." Enjoy 40 concerts across 30 different venues.

May Market April 29-May 9, Mannheim



@MAIMARKT MANNHEIM

For 11 days, you can shop from over 900 vendors and exhibitors. From kitchen essentials to books, travel items, garden accessories and so much more, you should be able to find almost anything you might want or need.

Tell Your Story!

Editor's Pick Call Out:

Did you attend a previous Editor's Picks event? We want to hear all about it! Please share something memorable about your experience in about 50-70 words and you could be featured here. Send your submissions to contentteam@stripes.com. ■

PHOTO of the month

The historical region of Cappadocia, located in central Turkey (or Türkiye) has plenty of great views, but don't worry if you're afraid of heights and want to see the hot air balloons from the ground. The dramatic and steep ridges allow for plenty of vistas along the colorfully striped canyons, rock pillars called "fairy towers" and bustling cities nestled in the valleys in between. The spring and fall are a great alternative to the summer crowds to visit, and guests are welcomed in cave hotels, built right into the cliffsides, almost like the civilizations once did living there for millennia.

Photo by Bobby Becerra.

For a chance for your photo to be featured, email contentteam@stripes.com.



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A DAY IN

Munich

By Stacy Roman

As one of Germany's gateways to the Alps, Munich exudes glamour, history, charm and, most importantly, fun. Synonymous for the world-famous celebration of all things beer, there is more to this fabulous Bavarian city than Oktoberfest. Filled with fantastic architecture and traditions, there are plenty of ways to spend a day in Munich.

Stroll through Marienplatz. This stunning square is right in the heart of Munich, in the middle of the Altstadt. The striking Neues Rathaus (New Town Hall) is the seat of the city government and is home to a giant, intricately detailed Glockenspiel which chimes twice a day (three times during the summer). The enormous clock comes to life, with 32 life-sized carvings rotating through scenes of Munich's history. The show lasts no more than 15 minutes but is worth a peek if you're there around lunchtime.

Discover a foodie's paradise at Viktualienmarkt. What began as a simple farmer's market more than 200 years ago has transformed into a gastronomic delight for any food lover. Just a short walk from Marienplatz, your senses will be delighted with fresh produce, baked goods and plenty of culinary specialties. More than 140 vendors offer a variety of local foods, as well as hard-to-find ingredients and spices. You can also find reasonably priced souvenirs and knick-knacks to bring home.

Check out the surfing scene. Along a small section of the Isar River in the Englischer Garten is the Eisbach. Roughly translating to "ice brook," this icy channel emerges from underground and collides

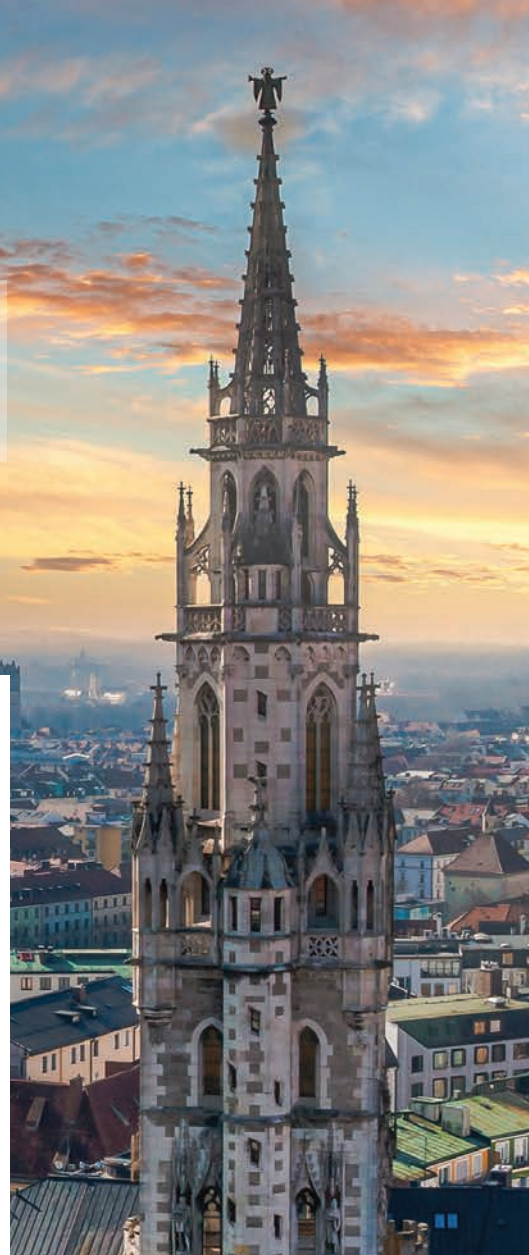
with a stone step creating a sizeable wave all year long. Because of the strong current, only experienced or professional surfers should give this wave a go. However, it's still a lot of fun to check it out from along the riverbank.

Spend the day at Olympic Park. Host to the 1972 Olympics, Munich has transformed the former site into a sprawling park full of playgrounds, entertainment venues, a well-maintained swimming pool and so much more. Visitors can make the trek to the top of the Olympic Tower for a breathtaking panoramic view of the city. Thrill-seekers can also do a roof climb atop the stadium or zipline their way across.

Get up late and shop the Midnight Bazaar. In a twist on the traditional "Flohmarkt," the "Midnightbazar" is a night market held usually on the first Saturday of the month. For a mere three euros, shoppers can peruse through vintage clothes and one-of-a-kind oddities. With an eclectic and funky vibe, the market is complete with a beer hall, food vendors and a live DJ.

Fulfill your need for speed at BMW Welt. Even if BMW isn't your favorite car brand, you can't help but be impressed at BMW Welt. Located next to their headquarters in Munich, you can tour the factory and check out models dating back to their inception at the museum. If you want a more hands-on experience, you can rent any production model of BMW or MINI. You can also learn to drift like the best of them with a lesson or two from their driving instructors on their closed-course racetrack.

Munich is so much more than lederhosen and Oktoberfest. With plentiful museums, galleries, shops, parks and other activities, you'll want to keep coming back for more. ■



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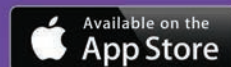
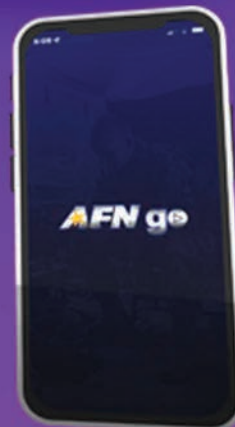
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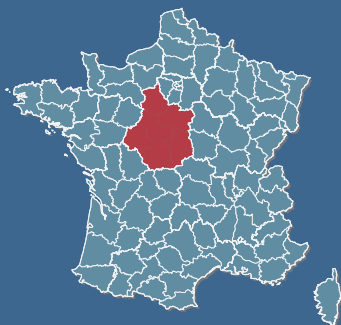
LOIRE VALLEY

Châteaux

By Erica Fowler

France's

Loire Valley is a pleasant environment to find yourself in, with lush rolling hills, vineyards, quaint towns and the long-traversed Loire River streaming toward the Bay of Biscay. A mild climate and bountiful nature are what have brought aristocrats to this region for centuries, leaving the landscape adorned with more than 300 extravagant châteaux.



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Château d'Amboise

Amboise makes a great “home base” to stay in the Loire Valley. The Château d'Amboise shrewdly occupies a hill overlooking the town, where the Gauls and Romans had previously built fortifications. In the 15th century, King Charles VII seized the castle from its owner, the Viscount of Thours, for plotting against one of the king's favorites. The château quickly became a favored location of the royal family, and successive kings were born here. They left their mark by way of new construction on the site to make it truly extravagant. As part of his love of all things Renaissance, a 22-year-old King Francis I convinced the great Leonardo Da Vinci to live within the proximity of his court. Da Vinci even had an underground passage to get to the château from his nearby home at Clos Lucé, where today there are many displays and interactive models of his inventions. You can also visit Da Vinci's final resting place, which is on the grounds at the small gothic chapel of St. Hubert.

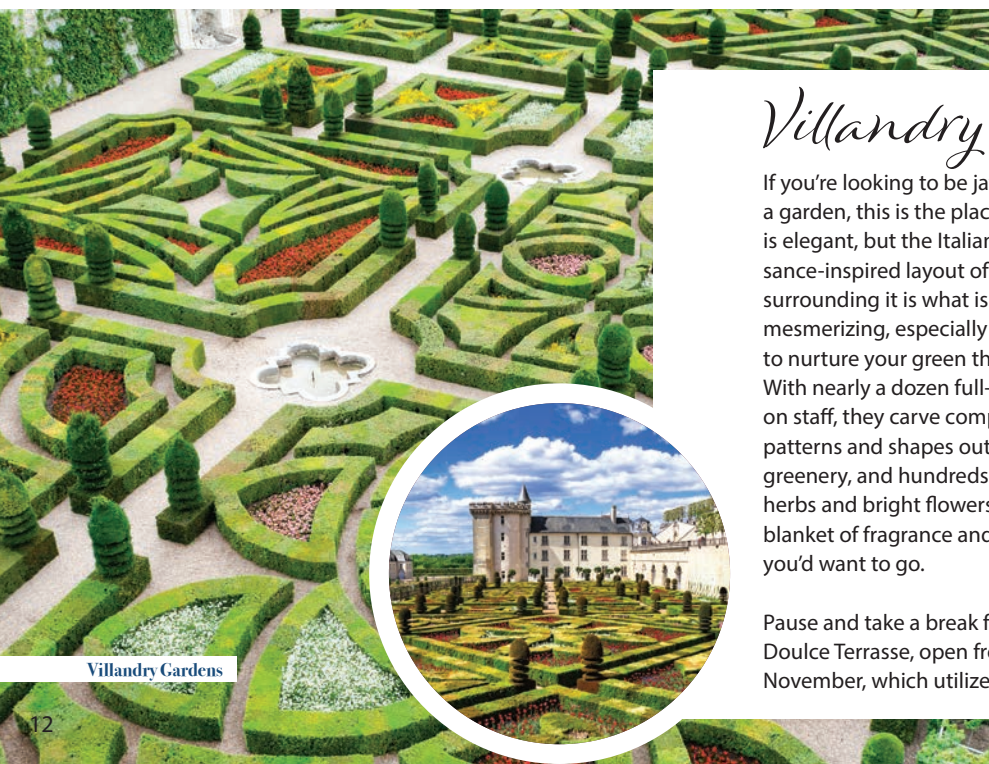
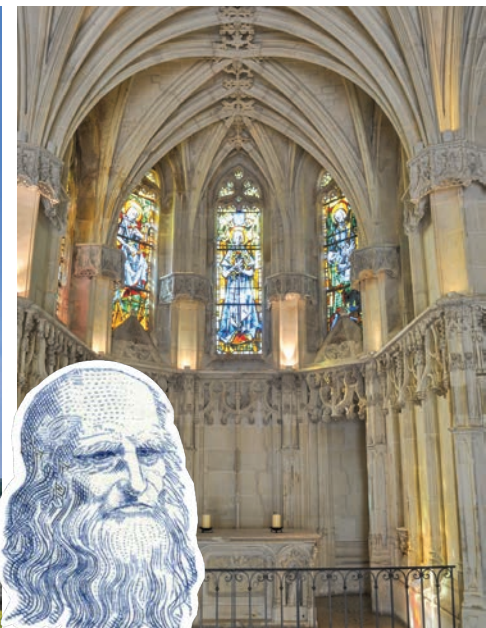
On a warm day, you can partake in a Loire River dip like the locals do, plus explore the old town. Not far from Amboise, there's a fantastic zoo called ZooParc de Beauval, which is great if you have kids who need an environment change. Be sure to try new dishes right from the source, such as fresh escargot, tender braised duck or anything savory doused in beurre blanc, which is a butter sauce made with shallots and white wine. Rosé wine is also a specialty in the valley, and worth an exploration of its different flavor profiles at wineries like Domaine de Roche Ville or Domaine de la Belle Etoile. The vintners host tours and tastings throughout the year and reservations can be made on their websites.



Château d'Amboise



St. Hubert Chapel



Villandry

If you're looking to be jaw-dropped by a garden, this is the place. The château is elegant, but the Italian Renaissance-inspired layout of the greenery surrounding it is what is even more mesmerizing, especially if you aspire to nurture your green thumb like me. With nearly a dozen full-time gardeners on staff, they carve complex geometric patterns and shapes out of luscious greenery, and hundreds of rose bushes, herbs and bright flowers send a vast blanket of fragrance and color as far as you'd want to go.

Pause and take a break for lunch at La Douce Terrasse, open from April to November, which utilizes fresh produce

from the château's vegetable garden and other regional products, so you get a sample of Loire's offerings in one sitting. Take a moment to notice the architecture of the château itself, which has been melded with the medieval keep towering over the rest of the structure. This is what remains of the Colombiers fortified castle before the château was built on top of the foundation in the 16th century. It was renamed Villandry in 1639 under the ownership of Jean Breton, Francis I's Controller-General for War. Breton's interest in the art of gardening had a chance to come to fruition and has a lasting impression to this day.

Villandry Gardens

Château de Cheverny

This country estate has been in the same family for six centuries, and it contains beautifully maintained painted interiors, originally installed in the 17th century. On the grounds, you can watch the exciting and comedic mass of 100 hunting dogs during their mealtime from April to mid-September. I do wonder how their caretakers can tell all 100 apart! During your visit, check out the gardens and lounge on a canal boat ride or cart to explore the nature around the estate, all easily done by selecting a guided tour.



Château d'Cheverny

Château d'Chambord



Louis XIV Ceremonial Bedroom

Château de Chambord

Chambord is the largest estate in the Loire Valley, with 440 rooms and a popular tourist destination. What looks so grand now was initially dreamed up as a hunting lodge, and in 1519, construction commenced at the order of Francis I. The view from the terraces provides fantastic perspectives of the forests and fields, where it was once an escape for the royal entourage to lead hunting parties. The rooms are outfitted with many tributes to this pastime. The structure is a prime example of Italian Renaissance design; The exterior is even outfitted with a black and white fresco, but instead of using black marble like the Italians, the builders used slate.

For all the effort and funds put into this architectural marvel, ironically the king only called Chambord home for 50 days, and the court then moved on. Some of the furniture on display reflects this mobility because many pieces are surprisingly easy to disassemble. The court attendants would set up and break down rooms like a music concert would today. One of the special features in the heart of the residence that does stay put is the double spiral staircase, which was built so that people could scale two sets of intertwined stairs without ever meeting. Historians estimate that it could have been one of Da Vinci's designs, who died shortly before construction started.

When you visit today, you will likely see horseback riders taking advantage of the large property and a recreated ornamental garden that is faithful to its previous 400-year-old design. There is even a pick-your-own vegetable garden that has been added. The caretakers for the estate have also restarted the organic vineyards that were previously commonplace here and now produce wine that is sold in the chateau's gift shop. ■

The French word for furniture is “mobilier,” referring to the portability of pieces, as popular designs that exist today were originally developed for a royal court on the go.



By Tamala Malerk

Volunteering at a Thrift Store

IN BAVARIA

Volunteering can be such a fulfilling activity. Every other month, we are highlighting a new organization or event for those who are looking to learn more about the services and resources available to them as well as for those who are looking to give back to the community.

This month, we are featuring military community thrift stores. Popular among frugal families and treasure hunters alike, thrift stores are a place where you can bring a couple of dollars and leave with new-found possessions, upcycling projects (or maybe just a much-needed coffee pot). I interviewed Leslie Leyba and Shelby St. Gelais from the Grafenwöhr and Vilseck Thrift Stores as well as Aleks Gatchell and Brynne Hamer from the Hohenfels Thrift Store, and they shared some insights into what it was like to volunteer with the stores.

A longer version of this article can be found by scanning here.



Grafenwöhr and Vilseck

Leslie currently serves as the President of the Bavaria Community Spouses' Club (BCSC); Shelby is Vice President, and these positions are how they ended up volunteering with the stores. They perform a variety of tasks such as sorting donations, helping with displays or helping guests find items.

When asked about the fulfilling aspects of volunteering, Shelby shared a story about a family: three and four-year-old girls who come in once a week to buy something with a themed focus, such as crafting or drawing. Shelby found joy in showing the girls the notebook and crafting section. It took her back to her childhood when she made dollar store trips with her pop-pop, and she described it as "realizing this was that trip for them every week... those moments make it all worth it."

The thrift store is a vital component of the military community. Proceeds from the store go right back to the military community and on-post organizations such as USO's "Dinner on Us" program or the community tree lighting as well as grants and scholarships. BCSC has a goal of donating \$100,000 back to the community between September 2022 and May 2023 and by December 2022, they had already reached \$60,000. You can help them achieve that goal by donating new and gently used items to the store as well as going to the store and finding your next treasure.

Those interested in volunteering at the Grafenwöhr and Vilseck thrift stores should know that up to 10 hours of childcare can be paid for per month for volunteers, and they receive a discount at the store. If you are interested in volunteering at the thrift store, reach out to the stores' Facebook pages at facebook.com/vilseckthriftshop or facebook.com/Grafenwöhrthrift or just walk into the store and fill out a short form.

Hohenfels

Aleks has been with the thrift store since September 2022 and does many different things for the store including sorting donations, customer service and training new volunteers. Brynne has been with the store since June 2022.

When asked about the fulfilling aspects of volunteering, Aleks stated that it was "meeting all of the people and being a part of the community." Brynne noted how the proceeds from the store go toward welfare grants and scholarships for the community. Brynne also noted how the items at the shop are much cheaper than they would be at other stores and having those items is "helpful for the community," especially for those first moving into the community when expenses are already often high.

Volunteering with the thrift stores allows people to not only give back to their local community but also provides them with a new and stronger skill set. Aleks talked about volunteers gaining retail and customer service skills that translate well into the workforce. Brynne noted how great it is that you can interact with a variety of people through the thrift store, "from contractors to civilians, retirees [and] family members." There is no telling who, or what, will walk through the door and what stories might come with them.

Those interested in volunteering at the thrift store can reach out via their Facebook page, facebook.com/HohenfelsThriftShop, email the manager at tsmanager.hohenfelscsc@gmail.com, or sign-up through the Volunteer Management Information System at vms.armyfamilywebportal.com. ■

German May Day

By Tamala Malerk

When one thinks of witches, devils and partying, they tend to think of Halloween. Revealing secret crushes and professing undying love is associated with Valentine's Day. And within the history of the eight-hour workday and labor regulations, Labor Day in September is the most obvious holiday connection. However, Germany combines ideas from all of these holidays into one huge holiday on May 1, also known as May Day.

HISTORY

May Day is a German public holiday where most shops, banks, post offices and businesses are closed. This holiday calls for multi-day preparation and partying. May Day as a concept dates back to the Iron Age (1200 B.C.E. to 600 B.C.E.). However, some traditions from this holiday as we know it today only date back to the Middle Ages. It is meant to welcome spring weather and ward away evil spirits.

MAY TREE/MAYPOLE

The Maibaum, known as the May Tree or Maypole, dates back to 16th century Germany. The tree is adorned with flowers, streamers and sometimes local arts and crafts, then usually placed in a prominent spot in town. Celebrations and food accompany the raising of the pole, but the real work is ensuring that a neighboring town doesn't steal your pole.

WALPURGISNACHT/HEXEN-NACHT AND TANZ IN DEN MAI

The night of April 30 is known as the Witches' Night. It was believed that on this night, witches would go up the mountain and commune with devils. This has also been combined with the celebration of an English nun, St. Walburga, who cured locals of many illnesses according to Brittanica.com. Nowadays, people dance the night away, either up on mountains or at sea level, from April 30 to May 1 (Dance into May).

INTERNATIONAL WORKERS' DAY/EXTRA VACATION

In Berlin, and many other larger cities, International Workers' Day is celebrated with demonstrations and partying in the streets. The largest demonstrations happen in Berlin's Kreuzberg district. If May Day happens to fall close to Ascension Day or the Pentecost weekend, it is not uncommon for Germans to take additional leave and go on a mini vacation.

LOOKING FOR LOVE

On top of protesting, dancing and Maypole duties, this is also a day to profess your love. There are several traditions you can follow. You can place a miniature May Tree in the yard of your beloved (particularly a birch sapling, according to some sources). You can also draw a chalk line from your house to theirs. ■



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