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June Events

By Karen Bradbury

EDITOR'S PICKS

The sun is out, the days are hot and the nights are even hotter! Germany takes full advantage of all the light and warmth of the season with an events calendar bursting with activities for young and old, the sports-inclined and those who'd rather just kick back and be entertained. As always, be sure to double-check dates and regulations in place at the time of the event.

Schlossbeleuchtungen / Castle Illuminations **June 4, Heidelberg**



Heidelberg's tumultuous history comes to life through a light show recalling the burning of its castle and dazzling fireworks. The show repeats on July 9 and Sept. 3.

Theatrium / Wilhelm Street Festival **June 10 & 11, Wiesbaden**



Elegant Wilhelmstraße proves it can party with this street fest filled with tasty treats, cold drinks, live music, walking acts and an artisans market.

Internationales Straßenfest / International Street Fest **Sindelfingen, June 17 to 19**



Sindelfingen celebrates its international character with a street fair that proudly shines a spotlight on the foods, cultures and customs of its residents.

Altstadtfest / Old Town Festival **June 18 & 19, Amberg**



The entire Old Town is transformed into a massive party zone, with vendors selling food and drink, concerts and colorful shows performed by local talent.

Johannisnacht / Johannes Night **June 24 to 27, Mainz**



Mainz remembers its most famous son, Johannes Gutenberg, inventor of the printing press, with a street party bursting with bands, books, sports and fun.

Weinfest der Zeller Schwarze Katz / Wine Fest of the Zell Black Cat **June 24 to 27, Zell**



A charming village by the Mosel River is the setting for this convivial wine fest offering quality wines, culinary treats, live bands and grandiose fireworks.

Lange Nacht der Kultur / Long Night of Culture **June 25, Kaiserslautern**



A wealth of cultural experiences, from concerts to exhibitions is a delight for all ages. Expect more than 150 live performances from afternoon until late in the night.

Kessel Festival **June 25 & 26, Stuttgart**



This festival combining music, sports and culture is organized with sustainability as its guiding principle. Expect local acts, ball sports, a market and program for kids.

PLAN AHEAD

Zugspitze Ultra Trail **July 15 to 17, Garmisch-Partenkirchen**

Up to 4,000 participants are expected to take part in Germany's biggest trail running event. Runners can choose from five different courses, with distances ranging from 25 to 106 kilometers around the country's highest peak. ■



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PHOTO of the month

Situated in the Bavarian Alps and close to the Austrian border is the picturesque area of Berchtesgaden. Filled with plenty of outdoor activities such as hiking and paragliding and home to the infamous Eagle's Nest, Berchtesgaden has another showstopping landmark—the pilgrimage church of Maria Gern. This beautiful Roman Catholic church beckons visitors every year with its impressive architecture and elaborate interior.

Photo by Tim Sutphen.

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a day at

MAINAU ISLAND

By Karen Bradbury

The vast body of water called Bodensee by German speakers and known as Lake Constance in English has attracted international tourists for over a century. With spectacular views of snow-capped Alpine peaks and shores lapping up against three countries, Germany's largest freshwater lake offers outstanding natural beauty, history and endless sporting activities. This clear, cool body of water eventually flows into the mighty Rhine.

When planning days out, Lake Constance's visitors face a dilemma. They could stroll the streets of cosmopolitan Konstanz, sample locally caught fish delicacies in the restaurants of medieval Meersburg or explore Stone Age dwellings built on piles in Unteruhldingen.

There's one excursion that tops many travelers' to-do lists. A single day on the island of Mainau is enough to convince visitors of the aptness of its nickname: Blumeninsel, or Flower Island. Just two-thirds of a mile long at its broadest, the island packs an outsized punch in terms of diversity of species and blossoming beauty throughout much of the year.

Walk Through Paradise

Mainau is best explored by means of a circular walking tour. Parking on the mainland, a footbridge leads to the island; once across, turn right. Kids will fall for Children's Land, where a reproduction of an old-time lakeside village offers splashing and climbing fun and a farmyard tempts with pony rides and a petting zoo.

The island's southern tip is a gardener's delight with its Italian Floral Water Cascade, descending granite boulders surrounded by Mediterranean vegetation; Lakeside Garden with Floral Clock, in which flowers are planted in accordance with the time they open and shut; and the Roof Garden, where shrubs and bushes frame a postcard-perfect view over glimmering waters.

Baroque Beauty and a Tropical Delight

Mainau's architectural highlights are found slightly inland. The wave-shaped glass Palm House displays exotic palm species. The Palace Church of St. Marien is a Baroque jewel with artistic masterpieces dedicated to Mary's life. The Palace of the Teutonic Order, completed in 1746, impresses with its symmetry and sweeping staircase. While most of its lavish rooms are only open for special events, its cafe is open to the public.

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LEFT: View over the Lake Constance in Meersburg, Germany; RIGHT: Italian Floral Water Cascade; MIDDLE: Mainau Children's Land.



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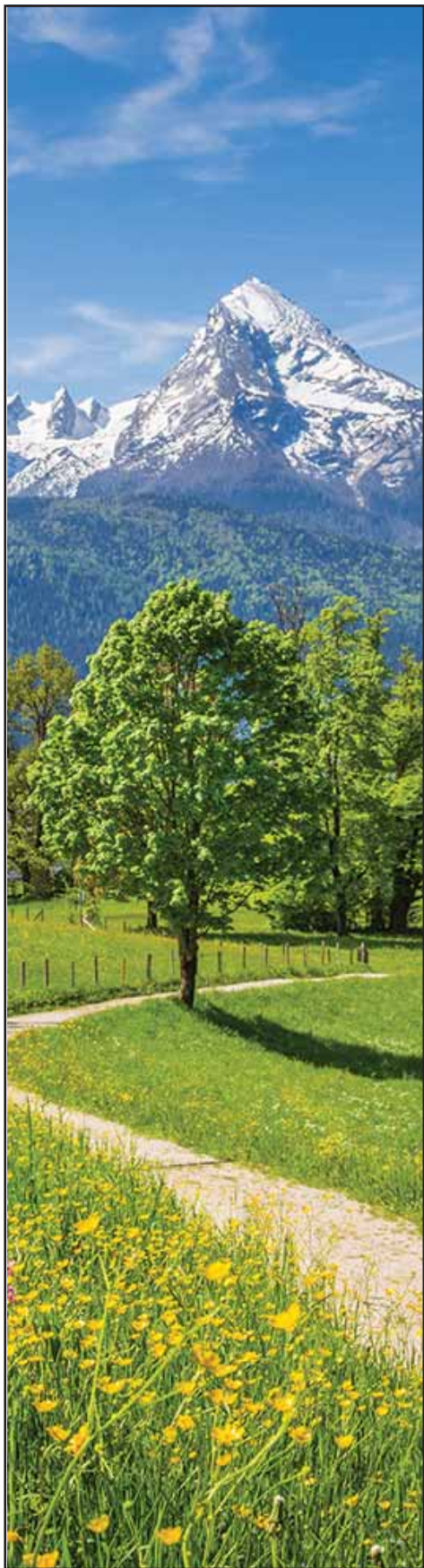
Another Mainau gem looms large. The Butterfly House transports visitors into a tropical paradise in which 120 species of butterflies flutter about freely. Temperatures maintained at around 80°F keep its colorful denizens flourishing. Budding scientists can observe the butterfly's life cycle.

Blossoms Galore

Mainau's crowning glory is its profusion of flowers, with each month bringing different blooms. The show starts in earnest in April, as tulips, daffodils, magnolias and azaleas blossom. In May, irises, peonies, wisteria and rhododendrons enter the scene. In June, roses reach full glory, and by July, hydrangeas steal the show. Throughout August, exotics such as frangipani and hibiscus carry admirers to distant shores. Autumn's glory is reflected in dahlias, asters and the turning leaves of the trees.

Plan a Visit

Mainau can be visited year-round. Ticket prices for summer 2022 are 26 euros for adults and 16 euros for students. Entry is free for those ages 12 and under. Parking costs 6 euros. Leashed dogs are welcome in most areas. Food from quick bites to elegant meals is available in ten establishments, including a beer garden by the harbor. ■



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TAKE AN ADVENTURE TO Wales

By Stacy Roman

Does flying through the air in a dark green forest, beachcombing the pebbly shoreline or taking in a world-class show in an ultra-modern theater sound like fun? If so, you can do all of the above and so much more on your next trip to the United Kingdom. Avoid the crowds of London and Edinburgh and head in the opposite direction. The small yet uniquely charming country of Wales is bursting with plenty of thrilling escapades just waiting for you. With three breathtaking national parks, spectacular coastlines and waterfalls, ancient castles and legends, Wales will leave you with wonderful memories and more.

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With three breathtaking national parks, spectacular coastlines and waterfalls, ancient castles and legends, Wales will leave you with wonderful memories and more.

A LITTLE HISTORY

Wales has been inhabited for hundreds of thousands of years, with evidence showing Neanderthals once roamed through the region. Wales has been part of numerous kingdoms and empires in more modern times. In the 1500s, King Henry VIII passed legislation to fully incorporate the country into what is now known as the U.K. While it has had a heavy English influence, the Welsh have steadfastly and proudly retained their culture and language.

In the 19th and 20th centuries, the plethora of iron and coal found in Wales led to an economic and industrial boom. Steelworkers and coal miners from around the U.K. settled in Wales. In the post-World War II era, the demand for steel and coal decreased drastically. As the times shifted, Wales became a devolved nation—one that is part of the U.K. but can decide how to spend and administer its budget and create many of its own laws.



MAGNIFICENT NATIONAL PARKS

Wales is home to three of the 15 national parks in the U.K.; Snowdonia in the north, Pembrokeshire Coast along the southwest shores and Brecon Beacons in the south-central part of the country. Known for its craggy peaks and namesake, Snowdon (the tallest mountain in Wales), Snowdonia is a popular spot with visitors all year. Avid hikers can ascend to the top of Snowdon for stunning views of the countryside. Centuries-old castle ruins and crumbling abbeys dot the landscape, making for fascinating hikes and treks through the park.

Further south, Brecon Beacons offers lush meadows, rolling hills, lakes and some spectacular waterfalls. Evidence of ancient Roman stone circles, burial mounds and other prehistoric landmarks can make your imagination run wild. For those who love stargazing, Brecon Beacons was the first national park in Wales (and the U.K.) to be designated as an International Dark Sky Reserve. On a clear night, visitors can look up and see an incredible blanket of twinkling stars stretching across the horizon.

Pembrokeshire Coast National Park follows 186 miles of pristine coastline in southwest Wales. Outdoor enthusiasts can hike along the shoreline in its entirety or break it up into smaller chunks. Rocky beaches teeming with marine life and waterfowl are a nature lover's paradise. Visitors can pitch a tent, rent an RV or do a little glamping along the coast.

THE VIEWS FROM SNOWDON ARE STUNNING AND SNOWDONIA IS A POPULAR SPOT WITH VISITORS ALL YEAR.

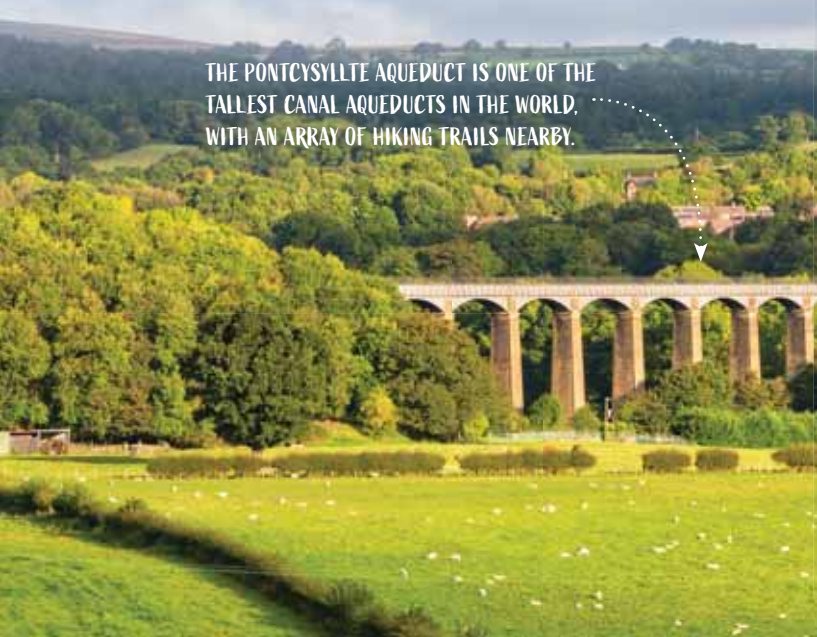


ZIPLINING AND FOREST ADVENTURES

Adrenaline junkies will have plenty of opportunities to get their thrills. Ziplining, which consists of strapping into a harness and zipping through the landscape on a wire, is popular in Wales, and Zip World operates at four different locations in the country. Visitors can choose to soar over old mining quarries, beneath the ground through caverns or through the lush forest canopy. Zip World Penrhyn is home to the world's fastest and Europe's longest zipline. Measuring at more than 1.5 kilometers and with speeds above 100 mph, Velocity 2 will give you an adrenaline jolt like nothing else.

If ziplining is a little too extreme, but you're still looking for an outdoorsy experience, head to the town of Llangollen. This northern area offers plenty of stunning scenery and activities. The Pontcysyllte Aqueduct is one of the tallest canal aqueducts in the world, with an array of hiking trails nearby. Visitors can also partake in gorge walking—hiking along the river's edge, with plenty of sliding down rocks and rappelling along the canyon walls. Or take a less intense trek to Horseshoe Falls and enjoy all that nature has to offer.

THE PONTCYSYLLTE AQUEDUCT IS ONE OF THE TALLEST CANAL AQUEDUCTS IN THE WORLD, WITH AN ARRAY OF HIKING TRAILS NEARBY.



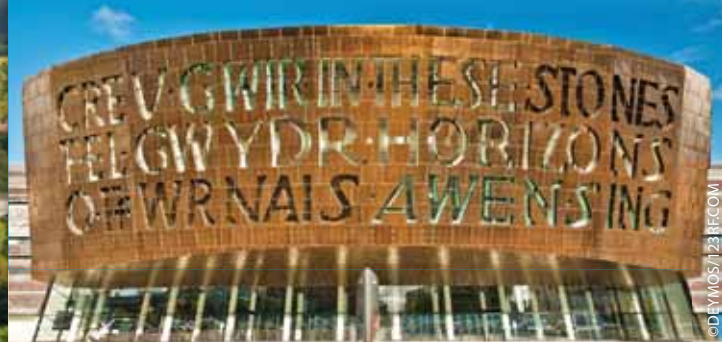
GALIVANT THROUGH THE CAPITAL CITY

Sometimes the urban jungle is more appealing than the rugged great outdoors. Dating back to the 1st century, Cardiff has been at the forefront of trade and export for Wales. The history, culture and traditions woven together make the capital an alluring destination to visit. Sitting atop a former Roman fort, Cardiff Castle is a great place to start. Visitors can explore the Norman Keep, Castle Apartments and tunnels used as air-raid shelters during the war or simply walk the gardens and enjoy the beautiful exterior of the imposing fortress.

The Norwegian Church is another timeless spot in the city. During the height of the Industrial Revolution, Norwegian seafarers often used the church as a landmark to guide them to port. In WWII, it was used as a refuge and meeting point. The famous Welsh children's author, Roald Dahl, was baptized and often attended services at this beautiful house of worship.

Theater and musical art aficionados will want to make a beeline to the Millennium Centre. Built with materials sourced exclusively from Wales, it's a breathtaking homage to Welsh culture. Emblazoned with the inscription, "In these stones horizons sing," in both Welsh and English, this performing arts venue is worth a visit.

When planning a trip to the U.K., veer off the beaten path and see just how enchanting and wonderful Wales can be. This tiny hidden gem of a country will not disappoint with jaw-dropping thrills, incredible countryside, coastlines and cities. ■



THEATER AND MUSICAL ART AFICIONADOS WILL WANT TO VISIT THE MILLENNIUM CENTRE. IT IS A BREATHTAKING HOMAGE TO WELSH CULTURE.



By Mary Del Rosario

Cheery folk singers, strong stouts and friendly locals make Dublin a city many put on their top list of destinations, especially when in Ireland. Whether the city calls you therefor a day or more, these items below should not be overlooked when exploring Dublin.



1

Earn a certificate for pouring your own pint of beer at the Guinness Academy. This experience is for adults only and costs 32 euros.

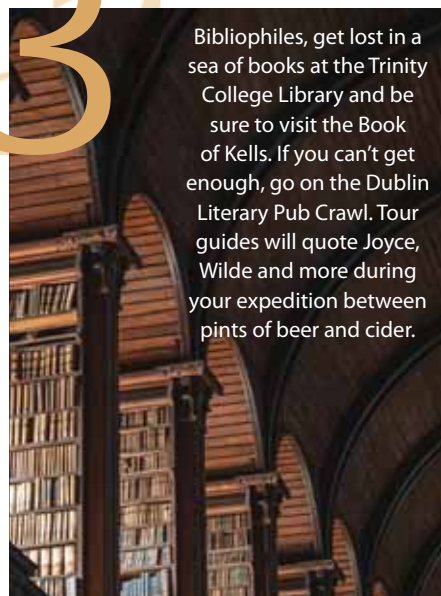
2

If Irish stouts don't call your name, tour the Old Jameson Distillery and take a one-hour whiskey cocktail making masterclass.



3

Bibliophiles, get lost in a sea of books at the Trinity College Library and be sure to visit the Book of Kells. If you can't get enough, go on the Dublin Literary Pub Crawl. Tour guides will quote Joyce, Wilde and more during your expedition between pints of beer and cider.

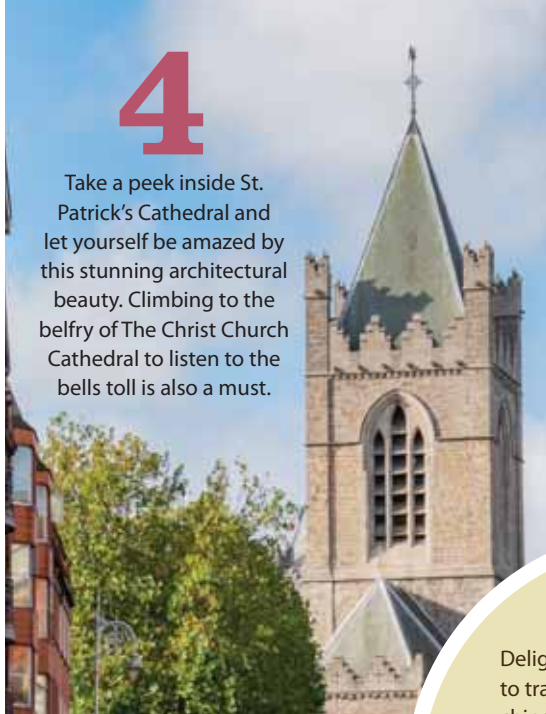


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4

Take a peek inside St. Patrick's Cathedral and let yourself be amazed by this stunning architectural beauty. Climbing to the belfry of The Christ Church Cathedral to listen to the bells toll is also a must.



©KITILEONG/123RF.COM

5

Delight your tastebuds to traditional fish and chips at Leo Burdock. Your stomach will thank you. Irish stew, boxty (potato) pancakes and soda bread are also must eats.



6

Walk across the "half-penny," or Ha'Penny Bridge—its official name is the Liffey Bridge and it was built in 1816.



8

Be fancy and drink tea and eat sumptuous sweets at Queen of Tarts, a charming cafe located in Cows Lane and Temple Bar.



9

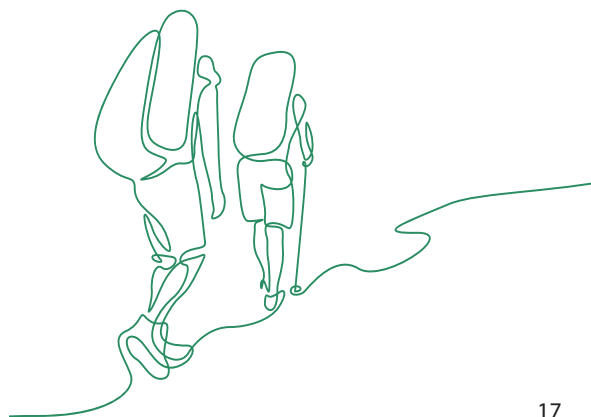
Stroll through Suffolk Street, where you will see a statue of Molly Malone, a legendary Dubliner whose identity isn't fully discovered.



©FAITHIE/123RF.COM

10

Take a day trip from Dublin to enjoy some hiking in the Wicklow Mountains. This vast area is about an hour away from Dublin. ■



7

Meander and pub crawl your way through Temple Bar, Dublin's buzzing neighborhood flooded with beer, whiskey and folk music.



©ALESSANDRO0770/123RF.COM

A Souvenir From Wales: Lovespoons

By Anna Leigh Bagiackas

You're driving through the Welsh countryside with your best friend, family member or travel companion, surrounded by green rolling hills with sheep grazing in the fields. You think back to the delicious Welsh rarebit and bara brith fruit cake you shared, as well as the pints of beer or Welsh whiskey you tried. Memories of driving along the coast and exploring the city of Cardiff together fill your camera. Learning bits of the Welsh language and meeting locals, it is safe to say you've been charmed by this country, and you think, "what can I take home to remember this special trip?"

A Welsh lovespoon could be exactly what you're looking for. This tradition goes back to 17th-century Wales where beautifully carved spoons were given as tokens of affection, often in a romantic gesture. The spoons would be carved with symbols representing love and friendship, and it was important for the woodworking to show the skill

of the carver. Some believe that the origins of the lovespoon come from the carved "cawl" spoon, which was used to sip Welsh broth. Today, the tradition goes beyond just romance and often, spoons are gifted for special events like birthdays, anniversaries or the birth of a child. Certain symbols represent different things, such as the horseshoe meaning good luck or a ship hoping for a smooth passage through life.

Although you can find similar traditions and items elsewhere in Europe, it is believed that the tradition came from Wales. The earliest dated spoon can be found in St. Fagans National Museum of History, near the city of Cardiff. Woodcarvers and craftspeople today continue the tradition, which has expanded beyond spoons to larger pieces. One part of the lovespoon that makes it unique is how it appears to be made of multiple pieces of wood but is actually crafted from only one.

Where to Find Lovespoons

Although you could easily find a lovespoon online or even at different souvenir shops, seek out some of these shops and galleries to truly appreciate the craft and artists who are continuing the tradition today. If you're taking a road trip around Wales, why not make it a lovespoon tour and stop along the way to explore lovespoon shops and see different designs and meet craftspeople? Many shops will offer personalized items such as name engravings or symbols.

The Lovespoon Workshop:

Try your hand at making your own thanks to the resources and ideas from The Lovespoon Workshop, located near Tenby of Pembrokeshire. This family business has been hand carving spoons since 1975.

The Lovespoon Gallery:

See over 300 unique lovespoons at the gallery in Mumbles, Swansea. This one-of-a-kind gallery holds the largest collection of these spoons from artists all around Wales and has been sharing and selling these pieces since 1987.

Welsh Love Spoons:

Located in the southern valleys of Wales, woodcarvers handcraft a range of intricately designed lovespoons. Carvers use lime wood from Monmouthshire to create their pieces.

Welsh Lovespoon Studio:

This family-run business in South Wales offers both lovespoons and Celtic wall art, carved by designer Phil Arnold. They are inspired by traditions of the Celtic Nations, creating beautifully designed gifts for any occasion. ■





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