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JUNE 2023

# WHAT'S UP

WHAT TO SEE | WHAT TO DO

BAVARIA



## LAKE SIDE

*in Switzerland*

A DAY IN INNSBRUCK | EDITOR'S PICKS | & MUCH MORE





# U.S. FORCES EUROPE ARMY TEN MILER

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**CHECK-IN:** 6-7:30 a.m.

**RUNNERS MEETING:** 7:30 a.m.

Mandatory runner safety briefing

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# WHAT'S UP

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# June Events

By Tamala Malerk

# EDITOR'S PICKS

It is June and summer festival season has officially begun in Germany! Get outside and enjoy the sun, eat some great food, dance to some music, play some games and shop until you drop at one of these fantastic fests. Always check the event's website before traveling.



## Elbhang Festival June 23-25, Dresden

The towns of Loschwitz and Pillnitz combine to create one fantastically large fairy tale themed festival area filled with music, dancing and wine.



@FOTO: STEFAN BRENDING

## Rock am Ring June 2-4, Nürnberg

Popular American bands such as Evanescence, Sum 41, Machine Gun Kelly, Bring Me the Horizon, Tenacious D, Incubus, Halestorm and more are performing at this three-day festival.



## Kessel Festival June 24-25, Stuttgart

This two-day festival celebrates music, markets, gastronomy and sports. Children will love the circus and getting air-brushed tattoos while adults will love shopping at the sustainability-themed market.



## Bachfest June 8-18, Leipzig

This year's theme is "Bach for Future" at this festival dedicated to classical musician Johann Sebastian Bach that is filled with concerts, special exhibitions, guided tours and more. June 11 marks the 300th anniversary of this monumental event.



@RHEINEVENTS, CC BY-SA 4.0

## Panama Open Air June 30- July 1, Bonn

This is a two-day festival for those 16+. What began as an illegal rave is now one of the rising multi-genre music festivals in Europe. Enjoy various types of music across four stages.



## SUCUK Festival June 9-11, Dortmund

If you love sausage, Dortmund has a three-day festival for you. From French to Jamaican, German and Turkish, you can sample many types of sausages and say you've been to the inaugural event.



## Cultural Summer Festival June-September, Berlin

Enjoy three months of special events across Berlin including ballets on ships, readings at the zoo, theater in the streets and so much more. Another event is the Special Olympics World Games occurring between June 17-25.



## Kieler Woche (Kiel Week) June 17-25, Kiel

Cheer on your favorite sailor at one of the largest sailing events in the world. The week begins with Olympic competitions in preparation for the Paris 2024 Summer Olympics.

## Tell Your Story!

### Editor's Pick Call Out:

Did you attend one of previous Editor's Picks events? 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](mailto:contentteam@stripes.com). ■

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# PHOTO of the month

If you are starving for the beauty of immense mountains at any time of year, Garmisch-Partenkirchen is the place to venture to. Now nicknamed Ga-Pa, Partenkirchen was once the Roman town of Partanum while the younger Garmisch began as a Teutonic community, combining townships in 1935. Ga-Pa may be known as a premier winter sports resort, but visitors also look forward to attending warm-weather festivals like AlpenFestival every August for fans of the outdoors.

Photo by Richard Crocker.

For a chance for your photo to be featured, email [contentteam@stripes.com](mailto:contentteam@stripes.com). ■



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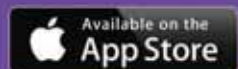
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# Ready, Set,



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# The Mountain Bike City *of Innsbruck*

By Kat Nickola



Nothing beats a sunny day biking in the Alps, and the Innsbruck area is a premier biking destination. Touting itself as a bike city, this Austrian city makes a great day trip for any kind of cyclist. Innsbruck is so bike-focused that its tourist website has a massive section devoted to routes, trails and information. There are scenic valley bike paths and leisurely tours around the city, but the biggest draw is mountain biking.

## Mountain Bike Trails

Mountain bikers can tackle one of the numerous routes available. Expect tough uphill slogs followed by incredibly fast downhill sections with views to die for. Almost all the trails have an alpine hut along the way to enjoy a break, take in the peak panorama and maybe grab a pint. The Innsbruck city website offers 60 different routes for experienced mountain bikers.

One of the best-known loops is the 21-kilometer Mutters Three Hut loop. The route features everything you'd want in an alpine trail: forests, meadows and alpine views galore, plus the opportunity to grab a wurst

and beer at a mountain cafe. The route is not difficult after the initial, and optional, uphill section. It is primarily easily navigable wide dirt trails, with grazing sheep and cows as your only potential obstacles.

The first five kilometers are an uphill sweat-fest with roughly 600-meter elevation gain. All that hard work pays off when you emerge from the forest and get your first view of mountain peaks. The top is also your first opportunity for a snack break at the traditional Mutterer Alm (hut). To make this ride friendlier on your calves, or for a family day out, you can skip the uphill portion by buying tickets for the Muttereralm gondola.

The trail is primarily downhill after reaching the Mutterer, with only two short and gradual uphill sections afterward. The middle part of the route flows in and out of the trees to the scenic, but closed, Raitiser Alm. From there, the trail continues down to the quaint Kreither Alm and another potential lunch and drinks stop. The final section is the prettiest as you pedal downhill through mountain meadows facing the views across the valley.



Visit Stars and Stripes  
Europe on Komoot for  
a route map.



## Downhill Tracks

For riders who want to focus on a fun, fast technical downhill ride, there are three gondolas near Innsbruck open to mountain bikers in the summer.

The Muttereralmbahn is the location of Bikepark Innsbruck. If you want speed, this is the place! As the site of the five-day Crankworx festival and race, Bikepark Innsbruck features five singletrack high-speed downhill trails, plus a pump track, a beginner park with easy obstacles and a new jumpline for experts. Bike services abound; there are wash stations, maintenance tools and rental safety equipment – helmets are mandatory. Bike rentals are also available if you book ahead and there is even a bike school for newbies. Tickets are sold for the gondola, and parking is validated for free for those who use it.

The downhill tracks here range in difficulty. There are easier routes aptly named The Simple One and The First One, plus other moderately difficult flow trails with jumps and ramps. The park also has a second, smaller location five kilometers down the road at the Nockspitzbahn with two expert trails: The Rough One and The Wild One.

There is a great family-friendly downhill ride at the Bergbahnen Oberperfuss. After taking the gondola up, you can enjoy a speedy mountain bike ride down on wide, gently sloping trails. There are extensive mountain views, open meadows and three scenic alpine hut cafes to choose from.

The best part of this option is that it can easily be adjusted for distance. Returning downhill from the top of Gondola 1 is five kilometers, mostly through the forest. Adding Gondola 2 means a 7-kilometer downhill



through meadow and forest. You can also bike uphill from the top of Gondola 2 past the pretty reservoir for 2.5 kilometers to Roskogelhütte where you can grab a snack and soak in peak views before speeding 8.6 kilometers back to the bottom.

The final downhill option is the famous Nordkette Singletrail accessed via the Nordkette gondola. This is an infamously steep, difficult 3.2 kilometer downhill singletrack with a 36 percent grade and 1,000 meters of elevation change. Experts only!

For an extensive bike trail planning tool throughout Tirolian Austria visit [radrouting.tirol/index\\_en.html](https://radrouting.tirol/index_en.html) ■



*Expect tough uphill slogs followed by incredibly fast downhill sections with views to die for.*





# LAKE SIDE *in Switzerland*

By Tamala Malerk

Switzerland is known as a world-class skiing destination; however, there is so much for everyone along the many lakes. This month, we are spending time lakeside in Zürich, Luzern and Lugano.



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## ZÜRICH

Zürich is known as one of the most expensive cities in the world, but that shouldn't keep you from visiting if given the opportunity. Meandering around Zürich is the lovely price of free.

One of the first places you can check out is the Lindenhof. History buffs everywhere will be interested to know that the Lindenhof was used as an ancient fort and then an early medieval royal residence. Everyone else will be interested to know that this is a place where you can get a gorgeous view of Lake Zürich and the city itself.

For those looking for shops, tourist spots and photo opportunities, make your way into the center part of town. We walked down Bahnhofstrasse where all the luxury stores are in Zürich. I marveled at all the watches, designer bags and clothing and also explained to my spouse what people found so special about red-soled shoes. We stumbled upon a farmers market with a multitude of items, from clothes and shoes to vintage military hats and taxidermized

animals. We also perused bookstores, took pictures of beautiful opera houses and churches, and walked around the lake.

*Pro-Tip: Pack water and snacks to stay hydrated and fueled in Zürich. There are stunning views of the boats navigating the water and swimming spots. All of this is nestled around green spaces and cute little gardens perfect for a light picnic.*

We loved looking at the lake so much we were inspired to go on a 1.5-hour boat tour. This can be quite the people-watching opportunity as residents use it to ferry themselves around Zürich.

## LUZERN

Luzern presents another opportunity for lakeside fun. However, in Luzern, we learned about some of the cultural differences between the Swiss and Americans while walking around the lake. We accidentally stumbled upon the "nude-positive" corner of the swimming area. For those visiting, this was off to the side of the swimming area away from the rest of the swimmers, not front-and-center.

Heading into town you can see some of the more popular attractions: Glacier Garden and the Lion Monument. Glacier Garden offers fun for the whole family. What I enjoyed most was the air-conditioned indoor "tour" through the ice ages and time. There is also a house museum on-site where you can see tons of gems and other artifacts. If you get hungry there is a bistro and shop where you can get coffee, water, hot dogs and other treats.

Next to the garden is the Lion Monument. Visited by over 1.4 million people a year, the monument was erected in 1821 to memorialize the Swiss guards who perished in 1792 when the Tuileries were stormed in France. Nowadays, a lion magnet or figure is the "must-have" souvenir of Luzern.

You can end the night eating pizza and watching the sun go down behind the mountains from the appropriately named Sunset Bar which is beautifully situated on the lake. They have a convenient website where you can order directly from your smartphone and be alerted when the food and drinks are ready to pick up.



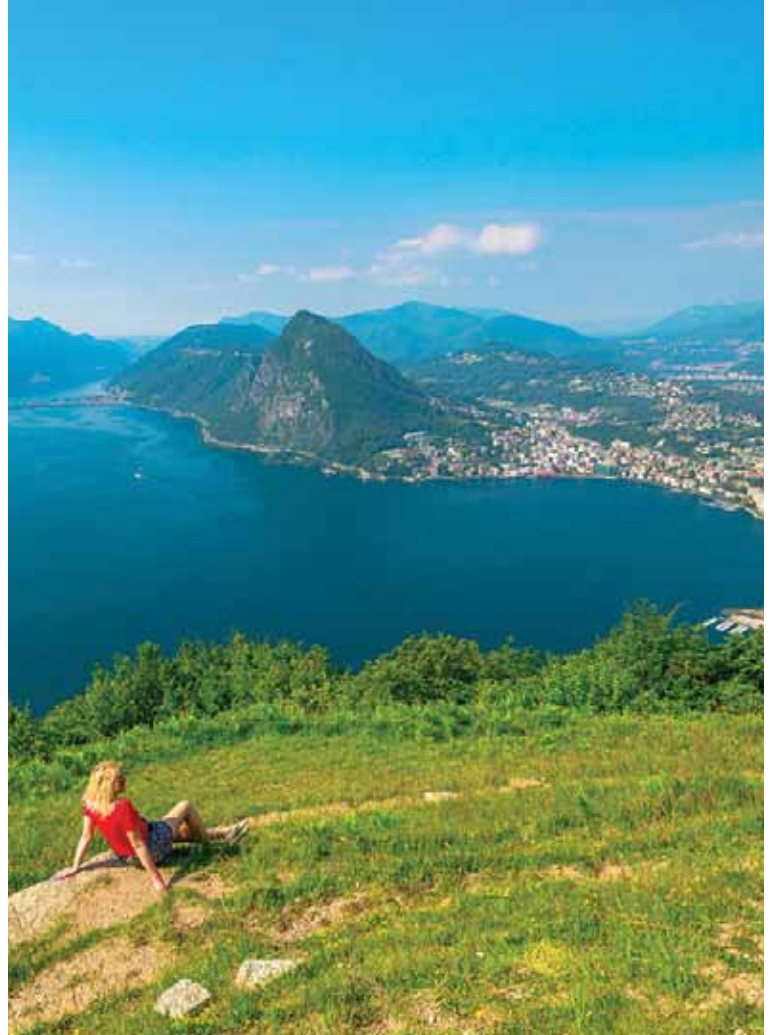
## LUGANO

Unlike the rest of Switzerland, which speaks German or French, Lugano is located in the Italian-speaking region of Ticino. Along the lake is a beautiful lakeside promenade and Belvedere Garden. Take in all the gorgeous floral and watery views while the weather is sunny and bright (not to leave out the modern art that is on display).

Just one block away from the lake and under the 270-meter-long ancient city porticoes is Via Nassa, “Lugano’s number one shopping destination,” according to [luganoregion.com](http://luganoregion.com). Here you can find department stores, jewelry stores, upscale boutiques, antique shops, food, cafes and more hidden underneath the arches.

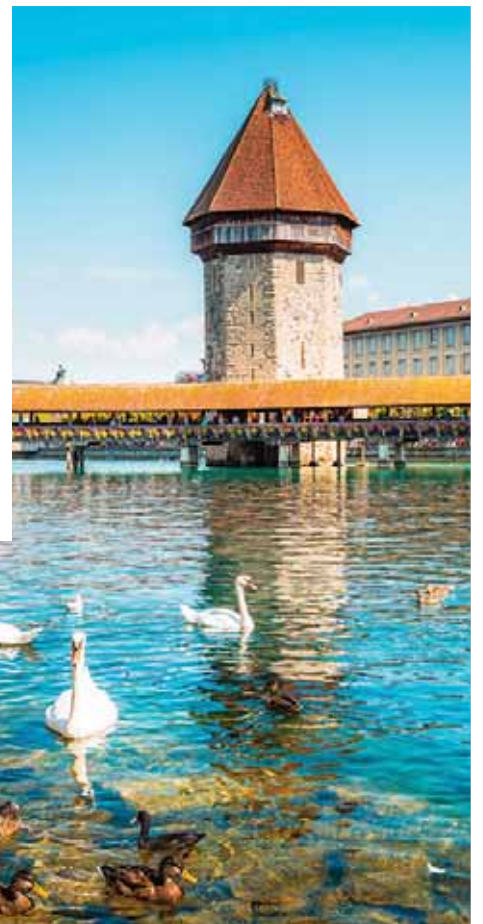
For those who want to take advantage of the gorgeous weather and head out on a boat, Società Navigazione del Lago di Lugano offers a variety of rental boat and boat cruise options, (including my favorite, the night cruise) to create your own adventure. People who want to stay on land can also enjoy the beautiful weather by hiking on the Olive Tree Trail. Along this 3.5-kilometer trail, you will find the remains of old olive groves and 18 informative boards about the history and science of olive oil and trees.

Switzerland isn’t just snowboarding and skiing; there is so much to do there when the snow on the ground has melted and the sun is high in the sky. ■



**Nowadays, a lion magnet or figure makes for the “must-have” souvenir of Luzern.**

“SWITZERLAND ISN’T JUST SNOWBOARDING AND SKIING; THERE IS SO MUCH TO DO THERE WHEN THE SNOW ON THE GROUND HAS MELTED AND THE SUN IS HIGH IN THE SKY.”





# Volunteering with a Library

IN BAVARIA

By Tamala Malerk

**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 on-base libraries. I interviewed volunteers Gudrun Williams-Fusco and Maurizio Fusco from the Ansbach Library and Shannon Craycraft, the supervisory library technician, Cathy Ignacio, Army Community Services specialist, and library volunteers Christina Michta and Art Fusco from the Garmisch area.

For more from these fantastic volunteers, a longer version of this article can be found here:



## Ansbach Library

At 10 cents a book, with multiple brothers and sisters and her grandmother at home, Gudrun's mom had to put money away for library trips. The sacrifices were worth it because her mother and father "felt that this [having books available] was one of the most important things in a child's development." This is the foundation Gudrun's love for books was built on. She stated, "it was not like 'oh you have to read this book,' it was like a privilege. It was a gift."

Gudrun and her husband Maurizio have been volunteers with the Ansbach Library for three years. They do various tasks, including filing books and DVDs, decorating the library for seasons and events and disinfecting surfaces and housekeeping. According to Maurizio, they even took a small plot of land in front of the library that was "totally abandoned and really ugly" and put in a garden. Gudrun added that beautifying the entrance to the library was important because "when you go to the library, this is something that is stimulating and rejuvenating for your soul and I felt the entrance to the library needs to bring this point across."

When asked about the most fulfilling aspects of volunteering, Gudrun noted, "it is giving back to the people ... and brighten[ing] their day." She also expressed her love of working with the library staff, Michael, Maddie and Carrie.

At the time of writing, Gudrun and Maurizio were the sole volunteers for the library and they can always use some help. Those interested in volunteering can call the library at +49-981-1831740 or DSN 314-468-1740.

## Garmisch Library

Art has been 3D printing as a hobby for almost three years and wanted to "check out" what type of 3D printer the library had on-site. He had almost 40 children attend his STEAM presentation about the 3D printer, and they requested an official 3D printing club that Art now hosts twice a month along with a five-week Saturday 3D printing class.

Christina and Shannon work with younger children doing puppet shows, crafts and reading books (often connecting crafts to the stories being told). Christina described witnessing the younger children's creativity, explaining how children can differ from one another: "Maybe they glue it differently, because that is how he or she is seeing it," she said. "It is his or her creativity and that is what is really fun. They can take it to another level."

Both Art and Christina agree that the interaction with children is the most fulfilling part of volunteering at the library. Art describes the moment his students finally grasp a new concept in his class as when "the mad scientist kicks in."

Cathy shared her perspective from an organizational standpoint that "volunteers become family in the workplace. Volunteers are change agents in the community," she said. "When they move ... they leave that void in the organization."

Some popular programs at the library are the summer reading program, story time, the opportunity to "just sit and relax" and the puppet shows.

If you are interested in volunteering with the Garmisch Library, go to ACS, the library, or utilize the Volunteer Management Information System, VMIS. ■



# Four Cities Perfect for a BUDGET Solo Getaway

By Kat Nickola



Going solo is the perfect way to take a quick trip focused on personal interests. Keeping costs low can be hard, and summer is peak season in Europe. Here are some frugal travel tips and four cities perfect for a budget solo getaway.

Book now with discount airlines for off-season travel; direct flights are cheapest. Make it a goal to use a small backpack that fits under the seat; this avoids extra charges for overhead space and checked bags. Try to find lodging near the sightseeing so it's easy to walk or take public transportation. Taxis are budget killers. Hostels nowadays are a combination of basic private rooms and dorm-style accommodations. A hotel or hostel that includes breakfast can also mean a great cost savings. Restaurant prices can be daunting; try going out for lunch as costs are lower at midday. Grab picnic foods at a local grocery store for dinner and bring a refillable water bottle.



*Alicante*

Travelers looking for sun and sand, a bit of history and scenic streets to wander will love Alicante, Spain. Find accommodations in the city center as close to the waterfront esplanade and El Postiguet Beach as your budget allows. Wander the palm-studded town past cute plazas. Hike up to the free cliff-top Castillo de Santa Bárbara via the barrio neighborhood on its western flank and enjoy the Mediterranean view.

Scan for more details,  
like flight options and itineraries  
for these amazing places!



*Riga*

Riga is a city for lovers of artistic architecture and Baltic culture. This capital city sits near the mouth of the Daugava River at the Baltic sea and features a UNESCO-listed old town and art nouveau architecture. Stay in the old town to have maximum time exploring the cobbled streets and unique sculptures like the Cat House and The Ghost. See the magnificent Riga Cathedral and the medieval House of the Black Heads guildhall, or head the opposite direction and take a canal boat tour.



*London*

London is notoriously expensive, but there are so many free museums, cheap flights and hostel stays that it can be affordable. Food is expensive, however. Visit grocery stores, food courts or sandwich shops and splurge once on lunch at a pub. Stay in the area around the University of London for budget hostels. Walk to the British Museum to spot world-famous archaeological finds, the British Library to see the Magna Carta, or Platform 9¾ at Kings Cross (all free). Big-name sites in London are pricey and often overrated, but it is free to walk by and take pictures. Bus line 11 is especially convenient as a budget 'city tour' on your way to the Tower of London area for iconic bridge pictures.



*Cluj-Napoca*

Cluj, as its nicknamed, is unique on this list as the starting point for car-touring the dramatic Transylvanian countryside. Entrance fees are cheaper in Romania, as are car rentals when booked ahead. Driving out of town, visit the Romulus Vuia Ethnographic Park to learn about traditional Transylvanian life. Drive southeast to the hilltop fortified old town of Sighișoara and the spooky birthplace of Vlad the Impaler. Nearby are the fortified churches of Biertan and Viscri and rural Transylvanian villages full of goats and horse carts. ■



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