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April Events

By Tamala Malerk

EDITOR'S PICKS

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.



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

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



©PHOTO: LANDESMESSE STUTTGART GMBH

Creative Fair April 13-16, Stuttgart

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.



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DISNEY100: The Concert April 27, Hamburg

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.



©WOLFGANG HELM/
MESSE DORTMUND

INTERMODELLBAU 2023 April 20-23, Dortmund

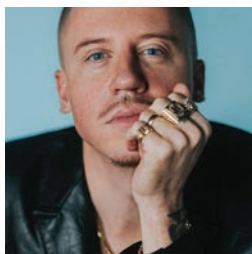
Model enthusiasts, and even those with an interest, should find themselves at the "world's largest exhibition for model making and model sports." You can look at over 20,000 models across eight halls brought to you by over 500 exhibitors around the world.



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

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Macklemore "the BEN Tour" April 21, Cologne

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.



©MAIMARKT MANNHEIM

May Market April 29-May 9, 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.



©FOOD LOVERS

FOOD LOVERS—Street Food April 21-23, Essen

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.

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. ■

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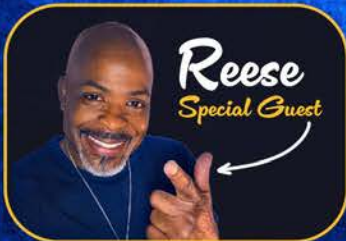
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PHOTO of the month

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.

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BUGA23

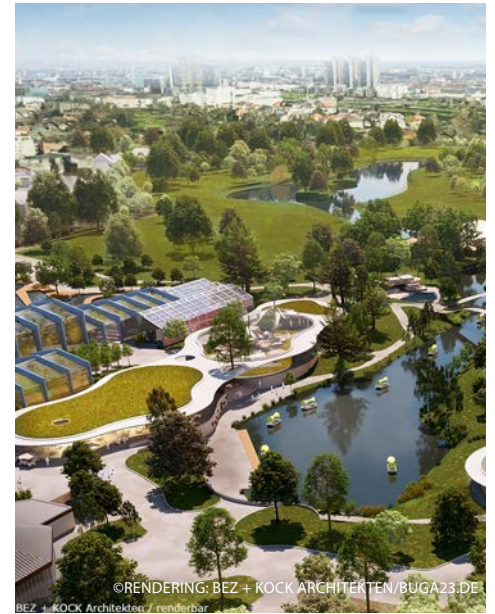
By Tamala Malerk



BUGA23 is a 178-day-long summer festival and garden show overrunning Mannheim between April 14 and October 8 this year. With over 5,000 events occurring between summer and fall, there is no telling what all you can find at this festival across Spinelli Park (once a U.S. military base, now a park) and in Luisenpark (but we can give you a quick run-down).



See if you can find the butterflies, Humboldt penguins and underwater creatures scattered in the exhibits along the festival.



Each year BUGA focuses on a concept. This year, the concept is sustainability and is brought to you by 52 exhibitors. Not only can you see beautiful garden landscapes, gorgeous flowers and experience a large festival, but you can also learn all about innovative ideas and techniques concerning energy, environment, food security and climate. Have fun and learn something from experts in these fields.

All the Pretty Flowers

There are 19 rotating flower shows so you are guaranteed to see something new each time you return. Aside from the shows, parts of Spinelli Park are transformed into a floral paradise. There are one million flower bulbs, 4,000 bright dahlias, grasses and perennials, as well as over 4,000 rose bushes planted throughout the site.

Places to Play

Take advantage of the summer weather by participating in one of the many activities the organizers have designed for the festival. Do some parkour, calishenics or climbing. Splash around the water playground or walk along the 80-meter long, 12-meter-high panoramic footbridge.

Experimental Field

No need to break out the chemistry set; it's not that kind of experiment. Rather, Spinelli Park has been transformed, upcycled, and renovated to cater to sustainability. An abandoned gas station is now a kiosk. Materials from the destruction of the base have been recycled rather than tossed in a landfill. Seventeen "future gardens" are spread across the field and represent the 17 sustainability goals of the United Nations.

Artistic Expressions and Animal Friends

All summer long, check out jazz bands, orchestras, improv troupes, and more with new shows occurring every day. See if you can find the butterflies, Humboldt penguins and underwater creatures scattered in the exhibits along the festival. Don't worry, there are also plenty of places to relax and fuel up with food and drinks across the festival.

Cable Car and Boat Rides

If you need to go from one event in Spinelli Park to another in Luisenpark quickly, fret not. There is an overhead cable car spanning across the Neckar River ready to provide transportation from park to park in eight minutes. Cool off on a 25 or 50-minute "Gondaletta" ride on the Kutzerweiher pond and see Luisenpark from a different perspective.

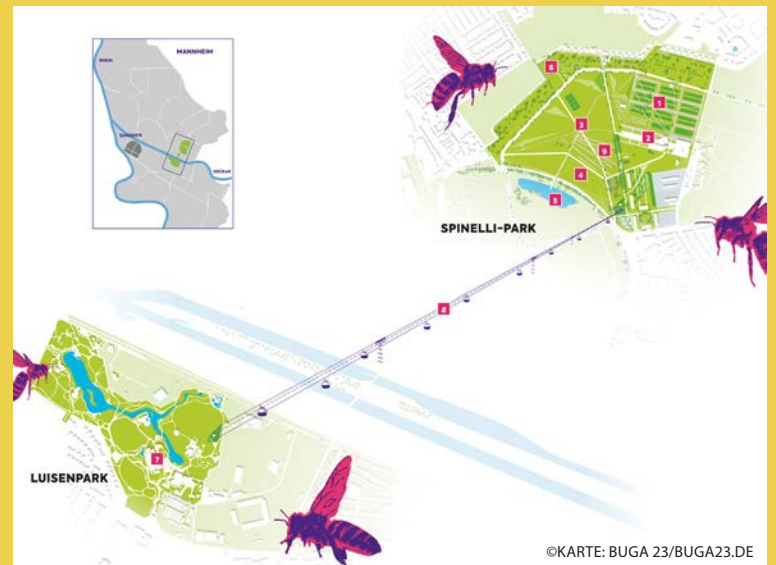
Leave With More Knowledge

The focus of this festival is all about achieving a sustainable Mannheim with the eventual goal of climate-neutrality. There are discussions and lectures all summer long, including discussions for the City of Mannheim's Mission Statement 2030.

Know Before You Go

Visitors can purchase one-day, two-day and season passes. Children under the age of 14 are granted free admission. Dogs must remain at home unless they are a service animal. Group tours are available at both parks for an additional cost and are 1.5 hours long.

With so many events and so much going on, there is something for everyone to spend a great day at BUGA23. ■



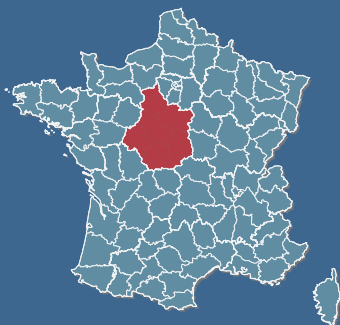
LOIRE VALLEY

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.

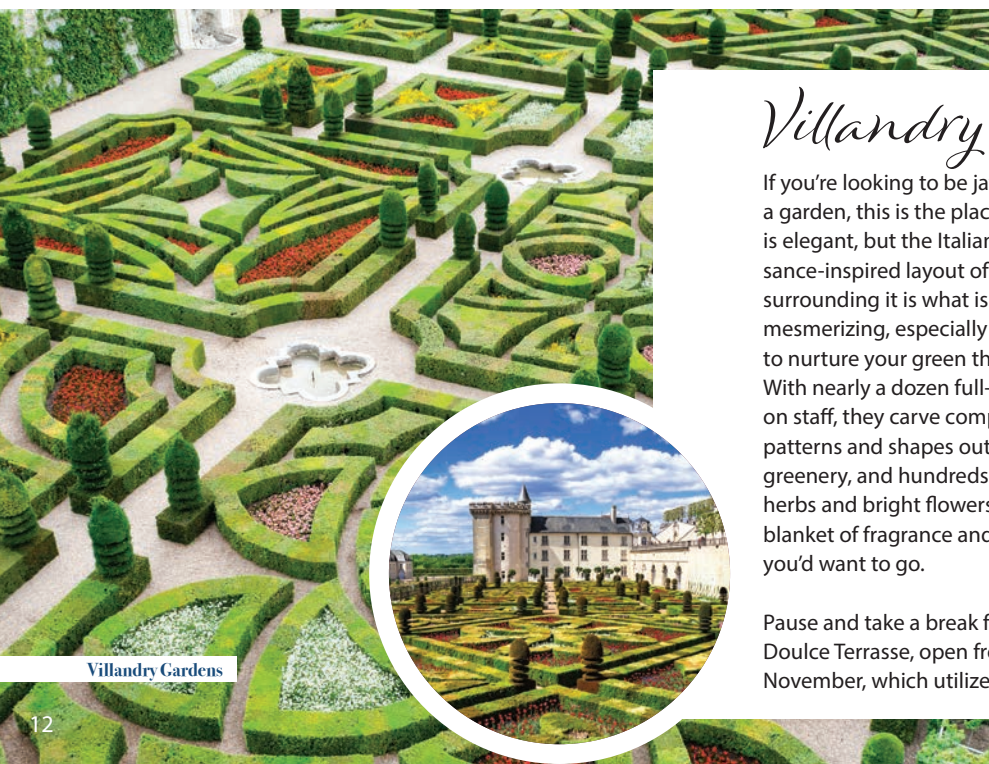
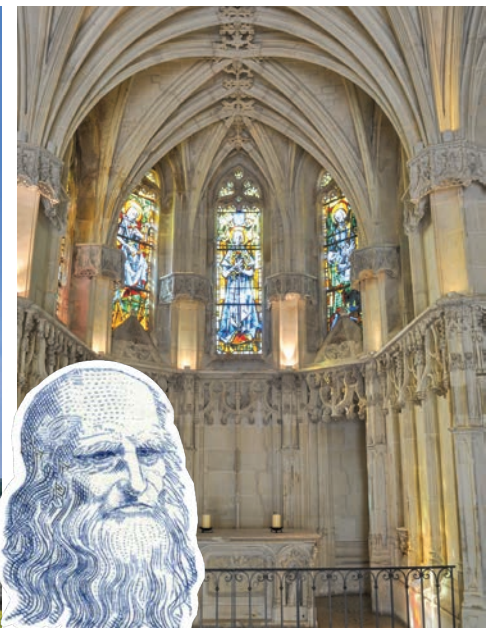
On a warm day, you can partake in a Loire River dip like the locals do, plus explore the old town. Not far from Amboise, there's a fantastic zoo called ZooParc de Beauval, which is great if you have kids who need an environment change. Be sure to try new dishes right from the source, such as fresh escargot, 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



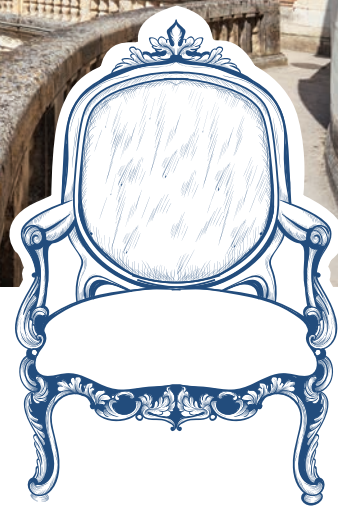
Louis XIV Ceremonial Bedroom

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.



Volunteering at a Thrift Store

IN THE KMC

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 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 Ellen van Kampen-Hissink from Ramstein Enlisted Spouse Association's (RESA) Thrift Store, and she shared some insights into what it was like to volunteer with the store.



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Volunteering at a Thrift Store

IN THE KMC

Ellen has been with the thrift store since summer 2021 but began working with thrift stores in 2018 at SHAPE Belgium and has been an avid thrift shopper herself for 20 years. At SHAPE, she noticed that the thrift store sponsored the sports programs her sons participated in, and her interest grew from there. The RESA thrift store is a mix of employees and volunteers, and everyone handles a variety of tasks. Ellen does everything from “running carts,” which is taking the sorted donated items and placing them on the sales floor, to being an extra set of hands in the store and offering her multi-lingual skills to communicate with German-speaking customers.

Volunteering with thrift stores allows people to not only give back to their local community but also provides them with a new and stronger skill set. Retail, book-keeping and customer service skills gained through volunteering “look good on a resume” and offers volunteer hours for soldiers who need them for promotion opportunities, according to Ellen.

When asked about the fulfilling aspects of volunteering with a thrift store, Ellen stated that her work “makes me feel appreciated” and provides a “sense of belonging.” With a constantly PCS’ing population, there is always an opportunity to meet new people looking for a coffee pot or some seasonal clothes while they wait for their household goods to arrive. The low prices of the items in the store allow families to make the most of their purchases and can help turn their temporary residences on or off-post from “a house to a home,” according to Ellen.

Ellen shared stories of children coming into the store with one to three dollars and just watching the joy on the children’s faces when they realize that they can “buy something on their own.” The

nature of the products also allows for less waste. Why throw away that perfectly good 220-volt microwave when you go back to the States when you can donate it and help reheat leftovers for another family? Also, knowing that your donations help fund programs and organizations across the entire Kaiserslautern Military Community (KMC) can come with a good feeling, too.

The thrift store is a vital component to the community of the post. Profits from the three KMC thrift stores have provided \$115,000 in scholarships in the past year to the military community. On-installation organizations registered with Ramstein’s 86th Force Support Squadron can apply for welfare grants to fund their programs and events.

The thrift store is constantly receiving new and used items for the community; yet there is not much space to store non-seasonal items and the thrift store kindly requests that you hold onto that jacket that your child grew out of this winter until the cooler weather comes. Do not fret if your donated item doesn’t make it to the sales floor; it is still helping the local community. RESA works with local charities and organizations to get the items into the local German area.

The thrift store is always looking for help. They are open Monday and Friday 9 a.m.–2 p.m. and Wednesday 2 p.m.–7 p.m. High school students 16 and older who are looking to volunteer for scouts, school or college applications are encouraged to participate in the store’s Summer Hire Program. Anyone interested in volunteering at the thrift store can go to their Facebook page, www.facebook.com/RESAThriftShop, contact the thrift store manager, Paul Berger at resa.manager@gmail.com, or simply visit the store and sign up. ■



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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.

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 Britanica.com. Nowadays, people dance the night away, either up on mountains or at sea level, from April 30 to May 1 (Dance into May).



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.

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. ■



USAG Rheinland-Pfalz

Halftime
SPORTS BAR

NO
ENTRY
FEE



Karaoke NIGHT

every 3rd Saturday
of the month: 6 - 10 PM

Landstuhl Community Club
Landstuhl Post, Bldg. 3780

MORE INFORMATION

🌐 kaiserslautern.armymwr.com
☎ 486-7244 or 0151-587-236-59





International School Westpfalz

NEW!
Cambridge
Advanced A-level
Program
(Years 11-12)

- English speaking all-day school from kindergarden to year 12
- Internationally recognized and established programs
- Experienced, highly qualified learning facilitators
- Individualized learning in a respectful, stress-free and creative atmosphere
- Before and after school care available 7.00 until 8.30am and 3.45 until 5.00pm