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SATURDAY, 27 APRIL 2024

STARS AND STRIPES.
WHAT'S UP

A Stars and Stripes Community Publication

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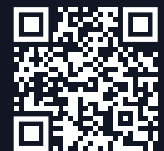
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**CONNECT ON
YOUR PLATFORM
OF CHOICE**

By Tamala Malerk



GERMANY

- Spring Festival | Nuremberg | March 30–April 14
- Art and Garden | Böblingen | April 13–14
- Spring Festival | Munich | April 19–May 5
- Medieval Market | Freisen | April 27–May 1
- BUGA24 | Mannheim | April–Oct. TBD
- Medieval Market in the Gartenschau | Kaiserslautern
May 4–5
- B2Run | Kaiserslautern | May 6
- The Green Sauce Festival | Frankfurt | May 11–18
- Handel Festival | Halle | May 24–June 9
- Carnival of Cultures | Berlin | May 17–20
- Classic Open Air—Europe’s Greenest Concert Hall |
Nuremberg | July–Aug. TBD
- Potsdam Palace Night 2024** | Potsdam
Aug. 9–10

Sansoucci Park comes alive with live music, guided tours, readings, variety shows, dance, theater and more. When the sun sets, marvel as the palace glows with illumination and an animated light show. For tickets and information, visit potsdamer-schloessernacht.de.

- Imagination and Medieval Days | Saarbrücken
Aug. 15–18
- Berlin Beer Week | Berlin | Sept. 1–10
- Medieval Festival | Selb | Sept. 6–8
- Tannenwald Camp (Biking and Camping) | Dahn
Sept. 13–15
- Onion Market | Weimar | Oct. 11–13
- SantaCON Munich | Munich | Dec. 7

AUSTRIA

- Südsteiermark-Classic** | Gamlitz | April 25–27
- Considered one of the top three “most important” events in Austria, this classic vehicle race has more than 200 teams competing for 160 coveted starting spots. Cheer on your favorite car as it passes you on the route. Enjoy great food and wine while you watch.
- Summer Night Concert | Vienna | June 7
 - UCI Mountain Bike World Series | Salzburgerland
June 7–9
 - Silvretta Classic Rallye | Montafon | July 4–7
 - KAT100 by UTMB | Kitzbühel Alps | Aug. 1–3
 - Ischgl Ironbike | Ischgl | Aug. 2–3
 - Imperial Days | Bad Ischl | Aug. 9–18
 - Race Around Austria | 560-Kilometers around Austria
Aug. 11–18
 - Vienna Classic Days | Vienna | Aug. 24–26
 - E-Bike World Cup for Anyone | Ischgl | Sept. 6–7
 - Red Bull Dolomitenmann | Lienz | Sept. 9
 - KLANGWOLKEN 2024 (Clouds of Sounds) | Linz | Sept. 9
- ## LUXEMBOURG
- Éimaischen Festival | Luxembourg City | April 1
 - Wäimoart (Wine Market) | Grevenmacher | April 5
 - ING Night Marathon | Luxembourg City | May 11
 - Wine Taste Enjoy | Moselle River | May 19
 - Hopping Procession | Echternach | May 21
 - Useldeng in the Middle Ages | Useldeng | June 15–16
 - Summer in the City | Events in Luxembourg City
All summer

- Wiltz Festival | An der Schwemm | June–July
 - National Day in Luxembourg | Events around
Luxembourg | June 22
- ## ESTONIA
- Grand Race around Lake Viljandi | Viljandi | May 1
 - Tartu Forest Marathon | Elva | May 10–12
 - Gardening and Flowering Days | Jäneda | May 25–26
 - Kevad Battles Sports Festival | Pärnu | May 25–26
 - Cross-Country Bike Marathon at Alutagus | June 1
 - Saaremaa Peony Festival | Saaremaa | June 8–30
 - Midsummer Eve at the Estonian Open Air Museum |
Tallinn | June 23

- Lighthouse Concert | Ida-Viru County | July 27
- Seto Kingdom Day | Seto | Aug. 3
- Supeluse Fair | Pärnu | Aug. 3
- Ironman Tallinn | Tallin | Aug. 25

ITALY

- Artichoke Festival | Chiusure | April 21–25
- The Floral Displays of Spello | Spello | June 1–2
- The Palio (horse race) | Siena | July 2 and Aug. 16

LIECHTENSTEIN

- Farmers Market on the Village Square | Eschen-Nendeln
Saturdays: April 27–Sept. 7
- Midsummer Unplugged | Schaan | June 20
- Summer in the Yard: Luigi Panettonne—
Elvis Aloha from Hawaii | Vaduz | June 27
- Children and Youth Camp | Ruggell | July 21–27
- Children’s and Youth Camp for Advanced Learners
Ruggell | Aug. 4–10
- State Holiday: Folk Festival | Vaduz | Aug. 15 ■



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Spotlight On



The Bollenstreek

By Kat Nickola



Visiting the Bollenstreek, the flower bulb region of The Netherlands, is a springtime ritual that must be experienced at least once. This geographical area stretches from Leiden to Haarlem and encompasses the heart of the historical province of Holland. There are hundreds of tulip fields in the area, the most well-known being those owned by the Keukenhof Gardens. However, there is a lot more on offer in the Bollenstreek beyond the tourist attractions.

For a perfect Dutch-style spring outing, try biking. Cycle routes abound in The Netherlands and the paved trails are well marked. It is easy to simply hop on your bike with a string of villages in mind and follow the signs to create a route between them. For an outdoor adventure involving tulip fields, windmills, and a pop out to the beach, try an all-day 30 km loop between the towns of Voorhout, Lisse (where you will pass Keukenhof), Noordwijkerhout and Noordwijk. Bike rentals are available from the nationwide OV-fiets bike system at the Voorhout train station. See www.ns.nl/en/ov-fiets for details. ■



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Eat • Stay • Love

Bernkastel-Kues

By Tamala Malerk



EAT The Alter Klosterhof has been feeding people since 1456. Here, you can feast on regional favorites such as onion cake and tarte flambée. For a special date night, we recommend the Rotisserie Royale restaurant. They offer a rotating multi-course seasonal menu served with wine. If the set menu does not whet your appetite, they also offer meals à la carte with a variety of choices including mushroom tarts, fried salmon, beef, lamb and duck. End your evening with an affogato, indulgent Grand Manier Orange parfait with pear in red wine or the Rotisserie surprise. For a more adventurous meal, make your way to the Schützenhaus, the “Balcony of Bernkastel.” Here, you can sip wine and enjoy fine meals inspired by the Dutch-German ancestry of the owners 65 meters above the old town with a 365-degree panoramic viewpoint of Bernkastel-Kues. .

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Eat • Stay • Love



STAY

For the ultimate relaxing stay, go to the Lifestyle Resort Zum Kurfürsten. They offer one to seven-night options so you can stay within your time limits and budget. You can also relax at the spa without staying overnight. They have four pools, 10 saunas, a women's only spa and a private spa. They offer traditional Chinese medicinal treatments, fitness equipment and outdoor sports. When you get hungry, there are multiple bistro and bar options to fuel you.

For a smaller, quaint hotel experience, check out Christiana's Wine and Art Motel. As an homage to the Moselle wine region, each of the 17 rooms is dedicated to a regional winemaker. It is located in the Bernkastel-Kues town center, so it is a great starting point no matter how you are spending your time. For those visiting Bernkastel-Kues for outdoor adventures, bernkastel.de offers hiking and biking holiday travel packages that include transportation, overnight stays and guided tours.



LOVE

Bernkastel-Kues is known for its hiking and biking scene. With its prime location, there are fantastic views of Landshut Castle, the Mosel river and the vineyards. In fact, you can hike nine kilometers from Mount Olympus (not the one where Zeus lived) to Landshut Castle. For a bit of a challenge, climb up the ruins of the castle which dates back to the fourth or fifth century CE. The ruins can also be reached by shuttle or car if you aren't up for the hike. If you need more inspiration, bernkastel.de offers a list of their five most beautiful walks that range from 4.3 to 7.4 kilometers and are moderate to difficult.

Bernkastel-Kues also offers 690 kilometers of cycling paths and is very bike-friendly. There is a cycle-repair shop, places to rent bikes and e-bikes, and plenty of e-bike charging stations.

If hiking and biking aren't your thing, there are still plenty of ways to enjoy the outdoors in Bernkastel-Kues. Meander around the town center and enjoy the shops and restaurants housed in the unique and beautiful architecture. If you visit during the first weekend of September, check out their annual five-day Middle Moselle Wine Festival. From Thursday to Monday, meet the wine queen, shop the craft market, eat sweets, check out the fairground and, of course, drink some wine. ■





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CAMPING ADVENTURES

IN SCOTLAND

By Kat Nickola

For the wilder side of Europe, one of my favorite places is The Highlands and Islands of Scotland. Not only are there dramatic lochs, coastlines, peaks and glens but those magical spaces are available to anyone with the tenacity to venture into them.

Yes, you can wild camp in your tent out in the woods, on a beach or by a loch. You may also kayak along any body of water, or mountain bike on any trail. Scotland is one of the least prohibitive, most outdoor-friendly countries I've ever been to.

The Scottish Outdoor Access Code establishes the legal right for people like you and I to enjoy the wildlands without being bogged down with permits and complex rules. Most importantly, it also outlines what our responsibilities are as outdoorsy people. If you are familiar with the leave-no-trace policy in the U.S., then you understand the basics. You must bring all you need into the wilderness and leave nothing when you pack up and go. In Scotland, where farm property is also accessible, you are also expected to be respectful of animals, croplands and privacy.

Understand your rights and responsibilities
at www.outdooraccess-scotland.scot

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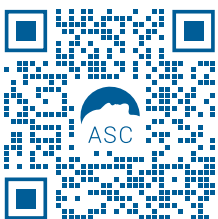
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IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO DETERMINE THE BEST PLACE TO WILD CAMP IN SCOTLAND. THE CHOICES ARE JUST TOO MANY.



BEST DAY HIKE

Rivaling its popular and crowded neighbor to the south (Glen Coe) for beauty points, Glen Nevis is my choice for the best day hike in The Highlands. My family lucked into a sunny warm day for this 2.25-mile route tucked into the far end of the glen. We drove up the Glen Nevis road as far as it would take us and parked in the small dirt lot. From there, the trail leads east as the valley gets narrower and narrower until it forms a gorge, takes a 90-degree turn south and opens onto the upper glen. But we diverged.

After a picnic lunch by the river, not far from the car park, we crossed the Water of Nevis and followed the less-traveled route up and over the adjacent hill. This route was steep and rocky and a bit tough to navigate at points, but when we emerged above the glen we had open views of Ben Nevis, the highest peak in Britain, and Glen Nevis's Steall Falls, the second-highest waterfall in the U.K. We lay in the grass on the hilltop for a long while soaking up the warm sun and marveling at the tranquility of the green valley below and the rocky hills above.

Eventually, our teenagers wanted to keep moving. They practically ran the downhill stretch to the river where they promptly got soaked and happily went barefoot the rest of the day. We explored an old rope bridge across the river and stopped to skip stones for a while. On the hike out, we used the primary trail as it hugged the steep sides of the glen. The trail is wide, but there was a precarious drop-off along the edge, and the heavily churning waters were loud as they carved their way along the gorge below. Barefoot and pleasantly tired, my son reached the car first after running the rest of the way.

RUNNER-UP:

Coire Gabhail, the lost (or hidden) valley of Glen Coe. This four-mile out-and-back trail is another beautiful hike with a bit of a scramble into a historic and bucolic glen. Keep in mind that this trail can get very crowded.





BEST WILD CAMPING

It is impossible to determine the best place to wild camp in Scotland. The choices are just too many. However, for a family outing with my teens, we tackled an overnight backpacking trip to Camasunary Bay on the Isle of Skye. This magical place has a beautiful natural sandy beach at the end of an open grassy glen. The rocky mountain peaks and ridges of Blabheinn and Sgurr na Stri bound the glen at the southern edge of The Cuillin, Skye's impressive mountain range.

The trail begins in the hamlet of Kilmarie and is three miles in each direction. It is a moderately difficult trail with 644 feet of elevation gain and loss as it wanders up and over Am Mam pass.

Once we adjusted to the steepness and stopped stumbling over rocks, my family appreciated the incredible views from the trail. We first wandered through croft land full of grazing sheep with the dramatic scree slopes of The Cuillin in the distance. Complaints ceased after we heaved ourselves over the pass and had our first look

at Camasunary Bay below us. The bright blue water, green slopes and rocky peaks wouldn't have been out of place in Hawaii.

We set up our tent on the meadow above the beach and got down to the serious business of relaxation. My teenagers messed around in the water where the shallow tidal flat made for a warmish wade. We buried my son in the sand. We sat around and read to the sleepy sound of the waves and the wind. We napped in the tent. We watched deer wander by. Eventually, the sun set, and we slept like rocks.

RUNNER-UP:

Strath na Sealga glen. For a longer backpacking trip, this glen has it all when it comes to scenery. It is roughly eight miles into the edge of the loch, which is surrounded by rocky peaks. The Shenevall bothy (camper cabin) can get full, so I recommend bringing a tent.

BEST RESOURCES

MAPS AND GUIDES

I found the Walkhighlands website, www.walkhighlands.co.uk, to be the best resource for good hikes in the area. It has detailed descriptions and various map formats to suit your navigation preferences. There is even a free app with downloadable Ordnance Survey (OS) trail maps.

ACCOMMODATIONS

A bothy is a basic camper cabin – typically an old croft home or repurposed barn - available for hikers to communally use overnight for simple sleeping and shelter. Visit the Mountain Bothies Association website at www.mountainbothies.org.uk, to find bothies throughout Scotland.

AIRPORTS & TRAVEL

Both Glasgow and Inverness airports are accessible. From Germany, a flight to Inverness will usually require a layover. However, it is a good option if you'd like to drive along the Great Glen to see Loch Ness or explore the history at Culloden. Glasgow has convenient direct flights from Frankfurt and is a great choice if you want to drive through the scenery of Loch Lomond and Glen Coe.



What happens when a company that specializes in amusement park installation and an agency that prides itself in quality gourmet food combine their talents? An experience that "Forbes" has referred to as "one of the world's ten most unusual restaurants." It is the high-end and exclusive event of the year in Brussels, Belgium:

DINNER

in the Sky

By Tamala Malerk | Photos by dinnerinthesky.com



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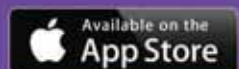


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A crane is used to hoist you, the other dinner guests and staff members 150 feet into the air while you enjoy a fantastic meal. The 360-degree seating and kitchen area allows the guests to interact with the chef of the day. From May 30 to June 23, Brussels will welcome 25 of Belgium's best chefs to provide you with your choice of lunch, dinner or tapas.

Lunch and dinner packages will run you 325 euros per person and include a champagne reception, a four-course meal, food and wine pairing, beverages, and a coffee and digestif in the VIP Lounge when you are back on the ground. You will spend 90 minutes in the air enjoying the meal.

If you still want to enjoy the experience, but don't want to spend that much money, there is a Tapas and Cocktails option for 175 euros per person. This option includes 60 minutes of airtime, three cocktails, three dégustations (tastings of small portions) and coffee in the VIP Lounge.

If you are celebrating a special event, you can make your experience even more special with champagne or a birthday cake in the sky. Just make sure to add it when you book your tickets.

If you cannot make it to Brussels this summer, you can also experience Dinner in the Sky in Limburg this September. ■



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April 2024

MWR GO

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Wiesbaden Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation



Go shopping, travel or learn a new skill in April

Spring Bazaar

U.S. Army Garrison Wiesbaden Family and MWR hosts the 2024 Spring Bazaar April 18-21. Vendors from around Europe will have their wares on display at the Wiesbaden Sports and Fitness Center. It will be open April 18-20 from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m.; April 21 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Mini Job Fair

Looking to connect with potential employers during your job search. Come to the Mini Job Fair on April 2 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Army Community Service Multi-Purpose Room (Bldg. 7790 in Hainerberg Housing).

Visit Paris

Wiesbaden Outdoor Recreation offers a trip to Paris on April 11-14. Cost is \$739 per person age 12 and up; \$699 for children ages 3-11; \$539 for children up to age 3. Price includes round-trip bus transportation, two overnights, two breakfasts and an orientation tour of Paris. Call civ (0611) 143-548-9801 or stop by Outdoor Recreation on Clay North.

Four-Person Scramble

The Rheinblick Golf Course holds Four-Person Scrambles throughout the year. Four-Person Scrambles will be held in 2024 on: April 13, May 11, June 15 and July 13. Make your own team for this scramble format event. Shotgun start is at 9 a.m.

Trivia Spring League

The Wiesbaden Entertainment Center Lounge's Trivia Spring League starts on April 24 at 7 p.m. Compete for prizes and bragging rights.

'Tuck Everlasting'

The Amelia Earhart Playhouse presents the magical drama "Tuck Everlasting" on April 5-6, 12-13, 19-20 and 26



at 7:30 p.m. and matinee performances on April 7, 14, and 21 at 2 p.m. Purchase tickets at the Wiesbaden Arts and Crafts Center or the Playhouse.

AI Everyday

Come to the Wiesbaden Library on April 14 at 2 p.m. to learn how AI can make your life easier. Find out about everything from polishing up emails to analyzing information, vacation planning to writing cover letters — tasks that can be streamlined thanks to Artificial Intelligence. This session will also include a demonstration of ChatGPT 4.

Baby Fair

Army Community Service's Family Advocacy and New Parent Support Programs host a Baby Fair on April 18 at the ACS Multi-Purpose Room (Building 7790 in Hainerberg Housing). The Baby Fair will be open from 10 a.m. to noon and 1-3 p.m.

Makerspace Construction

The Wiesbaden Library hosts another edition of Makerspace on April 21 at 10 a.m. Participants of all ages are invited to "come Makedo" with the staff — work on cardboard construction art projects and more.

TOPPERs Awards Show

The Installation Management Command-Europe hosts the annual Tourna-

ment of Plays Awards Gala on April 27 at the Wiesbaden Sports and Fitness Center. The event recognizes outstanding achievement both onstage and backstage — everything it takes to put on a first-

rate production. It includes performances from theaters around the command and a dinner. Call the Amelia Earhart Playhouse at civ (0611) 143-548-9812 for details.

Youth/Adult Golf Lessons

Youths are invited to learn the sport of golf during Youth Golf Academy lessons throughout the summer. Cost is \$15 per session. Adults can get more comfortable with the game of golf during Spice Up Your Golf lessons throughout the summer. Cost is \$25 per session. Call civ (0611) 143-548-5485 for more information.

Amsterdam Trip

Outdoor Recreation hosts a trip to Amsterdam April 26-28. Trip includes round-trip transportation, two overnights and two breakfasts. Call civ (0611) 143-548-9801.

Live Band in the Lounge

Enjoy live rock and pop music performed by the band, Reset, on April 26 at the Wiesbaden Entertainment Center Lounge.

Where's Rocket?

The Wiesbaden Library invites patrons to look for and find the library's mascot, Rocket, during National Library Week, April 7-11. Rocket is hiding among the library shelves — find him during opening hours and receive a small prize.

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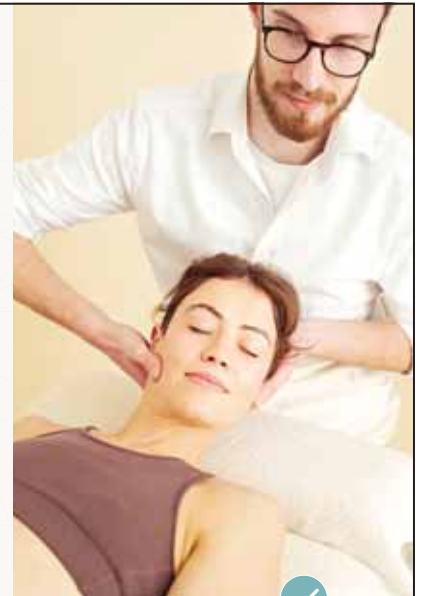
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EUROPEAN

Holiday Villages

By Kat Nickola

Vacations don't need to be overscheduled sightseeing tours. Sometimes what you really need is simple relaxing downtime with your family and a place with activities and services that facilitate family fun. In Europe, holiday villages fill this niche and then some.



A holiday village is a purpose-built vacation resort that offers accommodations, activities, time out in nature and indoor pursuits to bring families together. Visualize a family-oriented summer camp, but with conveniences that both kids and adults want like lively evening events, restaurants and adrenaline options. This is quality time galore!

Reservations at a holiday village typically include your accommodation, use of facilities and some of the activities. Food at restaurants or on-site grocery stores costs extra, and most visitors self-cater to some extent. The accommodations range from glamping tents to luxury homes and nearly always include a basic kitchen. The most common room on offer is somewhere in the middle: a small equipped cabin.

Four well-established companies have holiday villages throughout Europe, and each has its own vibe.

Centre Parcs | www.centerparcs.eu

The villages at this Dutch-run company have the most upscale options on this list with cottages, fancy treehouses and luxury homes tastefully secluded and surrounded by nature. Centre Parcs guarantees that each park is 90 percent natural. There are numerous included activities like petting farms, adventure trails, playgrounds, sports fields, skate parks, evening entertainment and big indoor water parks called AquaMundo. There are also plenty of other paid activities like spa visits, ropes courses, paddleboarding, horseback

riding, paintball, archery and craft workshops. Each park will have cafés and restaurants plus a small grocery store.

EuroParcs | www.europarcs.com

Another Dutch-run chain of holiday villages called EuroParcs is less expensive than Centre Parcs, but still offers plenty to do. Here, the focus is on outdoor pursuits and proximity to local area attractions. Accommodations range from camp pitches and glamping tents to cabins and tiny houses. They are often purposely located near tourist sites and cities so it's easy to venture out. At the parks, there are sports fields, playgrounds, kids clubs and trails. Many also have pools, natural swimming lakes or wellness centers. In addition, there will be a restaurant and snack bar for meals you don't feel like cooking inside your rental.

Eurocamp | www.eurocamp.co.uk

Canvas Holidays | www.canvasholidays.co.uk

Both of these British companies call their holiday villages campsites, but don't let that deter you. There is no campsite available for a tent or RV. Instead, the word "camp" is used to refer to a fun family outdoors-focused experience; visualize grilling out at a nice state park while the kids play at the playground or your teenagers take a kayak out on the lake. Accommodations are in well-equipped mobile homes. Most of these holiday villages will have a pool, sports facility, small café, grocery store, and evening entertainment. Some take the resort feel up a notch with water parks or beachside locations. ■

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