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STARS AND STRIPES[®] WHAT'S UP

A Stars and Stripes Community Publication

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GERMANY

Family Sunday | Stuttgart | Sundays, Open Year Round

Miniature Wonderland | Hamburg | Open Year Round

HEAVYSAURUS: The Dino Rock Band | Concerts across Germany throughout the year

This popular rock band plays kid-friendly heavy metal, and the concerts are decibel-controlled to protect their audience's ears. Though the songs are in German, the topics are universal: UFOs, chewing gum, treasure, goblins, milk shakes and, of course, dinosaurs.

The Big Meeting: Fantasy Festival | Aach am Bodensee Aug. 9–11

Museum Embankment Festival | Frankfurt | Aug. 23–25

LEGOLAND® | Günzburg | Until Nov. 3

HALLOWinter at Europa Park | Rust | Nov. 4–29

Head over to Europa Park for this two-seasons-in-one special. Enjoy ghoulish good times alongside a winter wonderland. This is perfect for families who are not ready to give up on the Halloween fun for Christmas adventures.

Nicholas in Wilhelma | Stuttgart | Dec. 8

FRANCE

ZooParc de Beauval | St. Aignan | Open Year Round

Parc de la Tête | Lyon | Open Year Round

There is so much fun here for the entire family. Explore the Forest of Asia, the Lyon Zoo, the lizard train, the small and big carousels, water activities on the lake, mini boats and mini go-karting, pedal quads, swings and so much more.

Robin's Forest, "Archery Differently" | Soulac & Montalivet | Open Year Round

Du Prem Alpaca Farm | Maleville | Open Year Round—Closed on Sundays

International Animated Film Festival | Annecy June 9 to June 15

Pyrotechnic Art Festival | Cannes | Various dates July 14–Aug. 24

The MiMa - Puppet Art Festival | Mirepoix | Aug. 1–4

Disney Electrical Sky Parade and A Million Splashes of Color | Disneyland Paris | Until Sept. 30

IRELAND AND THE U.K.

Stonebridge City Farm | Nottingham | Open Year Round

The farm is free for all visitors and there is no need to make a reservation. Go see the cows, sheep, ponies, meerkats, pigs, barn animals and more. Check out the award-winning garden and play in the play area. They have a café and shop onsite so you can eat lunch (or pack your own picnic).

AirHop Trampoline Park | Guilford | Open Year Round

Disney's Aladdin | Bristol | July 10–Aug. 11

Madagascar: The Musical | Touring throughout the U.K. Until Aug. 10

The Yorkshire Wartime Experience | Yorkshire Aug. 9–11

Puck Fair: Ireland's Oldest Festival | Killorglin Aug. 10–12

Bluey's Big Play | Bristol | Aug. 15–18

Peppa Pig's Fun Day Out | Touring throughout the U.K. Until Oct. 26

101 Dalmatians: The Musical | Edinburgh | Nov. 19–23

POLAND

ENERGYLANDIA (Poland's Largest Amusement Park) | Zator | Open Year Round

Wroclaw Zoo and Africarium | Wroclaw Open Year Round

Krakow Arcade Museum | Krakow | Open Year Round

This is the largest collection of arcade games in Poland, and you get to play them! Enjoy classics (and modern classics) such as Donkey Kong, Galaga, Pac Man, Star Wars: Racer Arcade, Frogger, Super Mario Bros, Tetris, Guitar Hero, Double Dragon, Mortal Kombat and more. Prices are by the hour, or for the most fun choose "open play" for unlimited gaming.

Jewish Cultural Festival | Krakow | June 28–July 2

AUSTRIA

ZOOM Children's Museum | Vienna | Open Year Round, Closed Mondays

House of the Sea | Vienna | Open Year Round

Swarovski Crystal Worlds | Wattens | Open Year Round

Giant Ice Caves | Werfen | May 1–Oct. 31

Fairytale Park | Unterweißenbach Season open until Oct. 20

Obir Stalactite Caves | Bad Eisenkappel Season open until Oct. TBD

Family Park | St. Margarethen im Bgld Season open until Nov. 3

ESTONIA

Future Circus | Tallin | June 6–9

ITALY

Free Children's Art Workshops at Peggy Guggenheim Collection | Venice | Every Sunday

Genoa Aquarium - Europe's Largest Aquarium | Genoa | Open Year Round

"Kong: Village of the Gentle Giant" at Naples Zoo | Naples | June 18–Aug. 29

Cous Cous Festival | San Vito Lo Capo | Sept. 20–29

Palio (Race) of the Donkeys | Alba | Oct. 6

LIECHENSTEIN

Balzer's Ranger Band | Balzers | Wednesdays, Year Round

The Mystical Powers of the Monks of Shaolin Kung Fu Balzers | June 3

THE NETHERLANDS

Hans & Gretel Pancake House | Zeewolde | Open Year Round

Candy Castle Play Paradise | Amsterdam | Open Year Round

Dutch Pinball Museum | Rotterdam | Open Year Round, Wed. Sat. and Sun.

Slagharen Wild West Theme Park and Resort | Slagharen | Open Year Round

Maritime Museum | Rotterdam | Open Year Round

NEMO Science Museum | Amsterdam | Open Year Round, Closed Mondays

Fairytale Wonderland | Enkhuizen Season open until Nov. 3

SPAIN

Cookie Making at the Chocolate Museum | Barcelona | By Reservation

Blue (formerly Smurf) Village | Júzcar | Open Year Round

Summer Camps at Madrid Zoo and Aquarium | Madrid | Weekly Camps June 23–Sept. 5

Eatra



For links and more information about all of these events across Europe, scan the QR code. ■

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Spotlight On



Molly Gallivan

By Kat Nickola

In the early 1800s, Irish widow Molly Gallivan became a local legend by opening an illegal pub, or “Sibheen,” where she sold her own homemade poitin. A distilled alcoholic beverage made from the mash of whatever was at hand—whey, grains, potatoes—Gallivan’s poitin became known as “Molly’s Mountain Dew.” And, yes, the makers of Mountain Dew used the slang term for moonshine used by rural Appalachian Irish immigrants to name their sweet soda.

Back in County Kerry, Ireland, Molly Gallivan’s small mountain farm needed additional income to provide for her seven children. As luck would have it, a new carriage road was built over the pass near her home and

soon wealthy English tourists were visiting on scenic tours. Gallivan took advantage of the crowds by opening a tea shop and selling her knitted sweaters. She further developed this into a local wool industry that supported her neighboring sheep farming families.

Today, visiting the 200-year-old Molly Gallivan cottage is a step back in time. Her smallholding still houses cows, pigs, sheep, hens and a field of potatoes on the few acres she would have rented from her landlord. The craft shop and tearoom sell locally made woolens and food. And a distiller still continues to make her famous mountain dew, which can be tasted with a traditional Irish meal. ■



Ireland has a reputation for making high-quality beverages, [scan here for a look at some historical craft breweries.](#)



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Eat•Stay•Love EUROPA-PARK

By Tamala Malerk | Photos by Europa-Park



EAT

Is there anything better than theme park food? Well, yes; but there is something fun about going into full vacation mode and spending way too much money on junk food at a theme park before hopping on a roller coaster. With

Europa-Park's many country-themed areas, there is something for every pallet here. From Greek gastronomical bites at the Taverna Mykonos, to Italian-style pizza at Pizzeria Venetia and vegan food at Jack's Deli, no one will go hungry.

However, the most intriguing eating experience is located off-site, across from Europa-Park's Rulantica waterpark, **Eatrenalin**. This is a trackless ride, so your 'floating chair' will take you on an eight-course fine dining journey through differently themed rooms such as "Umami," "Ocean" and "Universe." Eatrenalin is a pricey add-on for what can already be an expensive family trip, but you can visit Eatrenalin year-round, even when Europa-Park has closed for the season, and you have an itch for a theme park experience. Guests should plan about three hours for the entire Eatrenalin adventure and can book tickets at europapark.de.



STAY

For the most immersive and easy experience, you can stay at one of the on-site accommodations at Europa-Park. Hotel guests get entrance to the park 30 minutes early during the summer season and have access to a special guest entrance gate at the south end near the Spanish-themed area. The park has several four-star themed hotels to choose from. If you want to try your hand at camping, there is a Wild West-themed camp resort where you can stay in a cabin, teepee or covered wagon. There is also a separate camping area where families can park their RVs.

Families can also find accommodations in the tiny town of Rust that surrounds Europa-Park. We recommend staying in town on Friday night which makes it easy to walk into the park on Saturday morning. Guests staying in town will only have access to enter the park via the main entrance, on the Rheinweg in the Germany-themed area, however, you can exit by the south 'guest only' gate.



LOVE

I am not a lover of roller coasters. Actually, I love Disney's Thunder Mountain; what I can't handle is big drops and going upside down. So, I turned to fellow Stripes Europe writer Kat for her opinions on the best Europa-Park roller coasters. Her number one suggestion is **WODAN**, the wooden rollercoaster that gets as fast as 100 kilometers an hour. Even the line is fun as you go through all the worlds held together by the Norse tree of life. The runner-up coaster is the **Blue Fire Megacoaster**, which boasts that you will go from zero to 100 kilometers per hour in just 2.5 seconds.

For those of us less that are less-than-adventurous, I recommend **Pirates in Batavia**, which is similar to the Pirates ride at Disney World. The audio on the ride is in German and English so I could laugh along with the swash-buckling adventurers. I also recommend the **"Arena Football-Be Part of It"** attraction where you attempt to score goals with a giant ball while driving a bumper car and avoiding the other drivers. If you are a competitive family, like my partner and I, then hop on the Atlantis Adventure ride and shoot lasers at the mysterious creatures that pop up from the deep. ■

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FAMILY TIME IN Au-Schoppernau

By Kat Nickola | Photos by Bethany Walk



My three-year-old nephew is obsessed with vehicles. So, when he got to ride inside a fire truck, take an old steam train, and journey up the side of a mountain in a gondola, he was beyond excited. In fact, the whole family was in high spirits, as this was part of an effortless budget family vacation in the mountains around Schoppernau, Austria.

The village of Schoppernau and its nearby sister hamlet of Au are set along the Bregenzer Ache River in a verdant valley in western Austria. Often seen as a byway between the tourism of Lake Constance and the well-known outdoor spots of the higher Alps, the Au-Schoppernau tourist board has gone to great lengths to make this calm alpine valley a haven for family travel. It is roughly a five-hour drive from Kaiserslautern or Grafenwöhr, and three hours from Stuttgart, to Schoppernau.

From May to October, there are daily family activities as part of the local children's program, so you can get to know the area at your pace. The free farm experience at the Moosbrugger family's farm was a hit with my nephew who thought it was hysterical when the farmer squirted milk at his mom—straight from the cow! He even got to try some rich straight-from-the-cow milk. Other activities like family

canyoning, zipline courses and rock climbing are available at greatly reduced rates for people staying in town. The helpful employees at the local Schoppernau or Au tourist offices have all the details on local fun and will get your family signed up.

I highly recommend booking lodging via the local tourist board at www.au-schoppernau.at. We found that the website language needed to be set at "DE" (German) to see and book rooms, but the English version is great for research. Not only is it fun to find a cute "ferienwohnung," or vacation rental apartment in a local farmhouse, but staying locally for at least three nights earns you extra privileges with "The Guest-Card Bregenzerwald & Großes Walsertal." It's a long name, sure, but you get free local transportation, free gondola rides up the mountains and free use of the local pools. This covers the Bregenz Forest (Bregenzerwald) regional villages like



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Schoppernau and the biosphere reserve of the Great Walser Valley (Großes Walsertal). The card is digital, so it is possible to take advantage of the perks on the day you arrive, even before checking into your hotel.

Variety is the name of the game when it comes to accommodations. Vacation apartments in farmhouses make for quaint self-catering budget options, and often guests are invited to see farm operations. My nephew liked watching the barn cats in the Bauernhöfe (farmhouse). Higher in the hills, there are also vacation houses for rent. Many are small, converted mountain huts (Hütte), which make for great off-the-beaten track experiences. Large upscale hotels are also available, some with their own indoor pools and saunas.

The trip up the Diedamskopf gondola (Bergbahnen Diedamskopf) was super fun. An exhibition in the Bergstation at the top has kid-friendly touch-it-all interactive exhibits about life in the mountains. Kids can pop their heads up into the marmot diorama or learn about the mascot tardigrade named Egon. I learned that microscopic tardigrades, sometimes called water bears, can live frozen in ice for 30 years! In the same building, the Panorama Restaurant has an incredible view from the large outdoor seating area, and great playgrounds for the kids to enjoy while parents have a drink. They offer quick bites and local-style meals, plus special breakfast and sunset dinner buffets on certain weekdays by reservation only.



Bergbahnen
Diedamskopf
Panorama Restaurant
Reservations



After taking in the amazing views of the craggy peaks to the north, head out for a hike through the alpine meadows past cows with bells and pretty flowers. A great family trek is downhill along the special 4.2 km “mountain world to see and marvel” (Bergwelt zum Sehen und Staunen) trail. There are nature exhibits and fun rest stops like a massive wooden picture window along the way. The trail is well-signed and makes its way down to the middle station of the gondola for an easy ride down into the valley.

Along the valley, in the nearby town of Bezau, the Wälderbähnle is an old steam train that still chugs up and down its five-kilometer route a few times daily every summer. Riding this historic train is like traveling back in time to the early 1900s. Opened in 1902, the train was built to help carry lumber. Nowadays, it is like a rolling museum, and sticking his head out the window to see the rest of the curving train was a highlight for my nephew.

Visiting the Schoppernau area is slow travel at its best. It's a place to experience the mountains without the crowds, get to know a little something about farms and enjoy some family time. There is plenty to do, but no lists of must-see attractions to take away from a relaxing family vacation. ■



“Visiting the Schoppernau area is slow travel at its best.”

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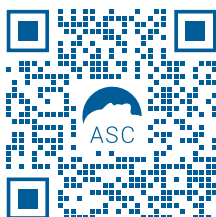
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Visiting Omaha Beach with Kids

By Diana Maria Groom

Omaha Beach in the Normandy region of France is not just a beautiful beach spot, it is also the location where the U.S. Allied troops landed on June 6, 1944, and began their assault on the German forces occupying the area. The Normandy region, however, is huge. It can be daunting to plan a trip there, especially with children. When I researched my family's visit to Normandy, I envisioned a big, busy itinerary but ended up keeping it small, and that made all the difference. When we landed at Omaha Beach, we found that sweet spot.

The first thing we did at Omaha Beach was put our feet in the sand. When the tide is out, it is a long walk to the water, but you can still see the "hedgehogs." The German military placed these iron crosses haphazardly all over the beach in an attempt to stem the tide of Allied forces. It doesn't seem real until you see the hulking pieces jutting out of the water.

That first night we dined at a tiny seaside restaurant called La Plage D'Or. The mussels were divine. As we ate and watched the large American flags flapping in the wind, our excitement bubbled over. We had endured an eight-hour drive to Omaha Beach with three children under six. We were here!

"We walked Omaha Beach each day, in the footsteps of my husband's grandfather."

If you want to travel to Omaha Beach and explore sights off the beaten path, then I recommend the seaside town of Arromanches. When we stayed there, low tide was around 5 p.m., which meant we could walk out and explore the temporary harbor pieces in the evening. These are parts of the Mulberry Harbor that was built by British forces to help with offloading cargo. At Omaha Beach, a storm after D-Day damaged the structures and they were abandoned. Now, the remnants are only accessible during low tide. While I am not sure my children remember it, I do. Watching them run up and touch the enormous concrete and steel structures that are only visible a couple of times a day was incredible.

We walked Omaha Beach each day, in the footsteps of my husband's grandfather who was a D-Day+2 Veteran. He manned the 155 Howitzer cannon which was landed two days after D-Day when it was "safer" to get the massive guns onto the beach. We ventured out to the beach in the early mornings when it was empty, except for the occasional group of horseback riders quietly making their way through the surf. While my two boys ran in and out of the waves with my father-in-law and husband, my mother-in-law and I watched my infant daughter who was enthralled with the sand. She laid on her stomach in the sunshine and happily explored, touching sand for the first time in the

spot where her great-grandfather had landed at Normandy. While he never went back to Omaha Beach in his lifetime, we felt him with us in that moment.

At the edge of Omaha Beach stands the National Guard Monument. At this location, the 29th National Guard Division stormed the beach on D-Day and overran the German defenses. My husband had recently left active duty and joined the National Guard, so this memorial left a deep impression.

Knowing my children could not handle a large busy attraction, I settled on visiting the smallest of the many museums in the area. As we pulled into the tiny parking lot of the Memorial Museum of Omaha Beach, my father-in-law's jaw just about hit the floor. My husband pulled our massive rental van into the only available parking spot, right next to an actual 155 Howitzer cannon used in the storming of Omaha Beach. Could it be his grandfather's Howitzer? We will never know for sure, but we all got goosebumps and felt his presence leading us to places meaningful to him.

We entered the museum and our children instantly lit up. From the displayed bombs to the medical uniforms and Jeep exhibit, the kids could not contain their enthusiasm. As we continued toward the end of the museum, however, something stopped my father-in-law in his tracks. He was pointing intently at a display case, as he excitedly told us, "I knew his son. He lived just down the street from us!" The display was full of items from service members who lived in his small corner of Queens, New York. We plan to return and donate some of his father's memorabilia.

On our last full day in Normandy, we had big plans to explore more sites, but as we left my five-year-old son refused. "No. I want to fly kites on the beach with Pop," he said. So, we did. Instead of a busy day driving to see more sites, my father-in-law flew kites with his two grandsons on the beach for almost three hours. They flew kites where his father had fought for world freedom. And that is what my son remembers from the trip, not the cannon or the bombs or the beach memorial. He remembers flying kites with his grandfather, and that is what is most important to us. ■



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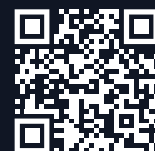
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May 2024

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Shopping, running, fishing and more this month

G-A Flea Market

U.S. Army Garrison Wiesbaden hosts a German-American Flea Market on May 4, 2024, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Lower Hainerberg. German and American sellers have the opportunity to offer their goods to a diverse audience. Visit <https://wiesbaden.armymwr.com/calendar/event/german-american-flea-market/6385389/87325>.

2024 Freedom Run

The Wiesbaden Sports and Fitness Center hosts the 2024 Freedom Run on May 4 starting at 10 a.m. The event will include a 10-Mile Run, a 5-Kilometer Run/Walk and a Children's Half-Mile Run. A bouncy castle and refreshments will be available. The cost is \$15 for the 10-Mile Run; free for all other walk/runs. Call civ (0611) 143-548-9830.

Prague Trip

Wiesbaden Outdoor Recreation offers a trip to Prague May 24-27. The Czech Republic capital is famous for its old-world charm, Gothic churches, baroque building, bridges and more. Cost is \$649 per person (ages 12 and up); \$569 for ages 3-11 and \$459 for children up to ages 3. Stop by Outdoor Recreation on Clay North for more information.

CYS Special Opening

Wiesbaden Child and Youth Services holds a special opening for children ages six weeks to fifth grade on May 17 from 6:30-11:30 p.m. in Building 1502 on Clay Kaserne. Children must be registered with CYS. Stop by Parent Central Services or call civ (0611) 143-548-9356 for details.

Fishing Course

Outdoor Recreation hosts a U.S. Forces German Fishing Course. May 16-19, 2024.



Learn what you need to know to purchase your German Fishing License and successfully fish while in Germany. Classes will be held from 6-10 p.m. May 16-17 and from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. May 18-19. Cost is \$75 for adults ages 16 and up, \$25 for ages 10-15 (minimum age is 10). Call civ (0611) 143-548-9801.

Latin Street Salsa Night

DJ Sergio will provide your favorite Latin tunes into the early hours of the morning during Salsa Night at the Latin Street Restaurant on Clay Kaserne on May 18 starting at 9 p.m. Enjoy the drink special Happy Hour all night long. Featured music will include Salsa, Merengue, Bachata, Reggaeton and R&B.

Spouse Orientation

Connect with representatives from around the garrison to learn about education, employment and other topics during the next Spouse Orientation at Army Community Service on May 21 starting at 9 a.m. Also, enjoy the free walking tour of Wiesbaden. Call civ (0611) 143-548-9201.

Fiero Code Club

Join the brand new coding club at the Wiesbaden Library. Learn about this new resource provided by the Army Library Program. Fiero Code Club will meet

every Sunday from 1-2:30 p.m. May 5-26. Each week something else will be covered including: Code Blocks (used to create video games), HTML (create a superhero advertisement) and more (maybe a session on Python). Stop by the Wiesbaden Library.

Four-Person Scramble

The Rheinblick Golf Course holds Four-Person Scrambles throughout the year. Upcoming Four-Person Scrambles are: May 11, June 15 and July 13. Make your own team for this scramble format event. Shotgun start is at 9 a.m. You must be present 30 minutes in advance for registration and payment.

Foreign Born Spouses Meet

Get together with fellow spouses to share experiences and make new friends during the monthly Treffpunkt: Foreign Born Spouses Meeting on May 8 at 11:30 a.m. at the Army Community Service Multi-Purpose Room. Call civ (0611) 143-548-9201 for more information.

Military Appreciation Meal

Active Duty Service Members (U.S. and Allied), Veterans and First Responders (U.S. and Local National) are invited to the Wiesbaden Entertainment Center every second Tuesday of the month (next one is May 14) for free food, bowling and soft drinks (or water) from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. The meals are courtesy of the Gary Sinise Foundation (no federal endorsement implied). The free bowling includes free shoe rental.



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SPEND A MAGICAL DAY WITH Harry Potter

By Stacy Roman

When J.K. Rowling first introduced the world to “the boy who lived,” she created a spell-binding, magical, wizarding world that blended with the actual “muggle” world. The Warner Bros. Studios in Leavesden on the outskirts of London is where the magic moved from the page to the screen. If you’re a Potterhead or are looking for an enchanting way to spend the day, head to The Warner Bros. Studio Tour: The Making of Harry Potter.

It's Not the Wizarding World – It's Better

On our first visit to the studio, my teenagers were giddy with excitement. They had seen photos of the Wizarding World of Harry Potter at Universal Studios and thought it would be similar. I quickly realized I needed to temper their expectations. Aside from having a broom fly into your hand, there are no rides (minus the “line ride” of get-

ting inside). But there is so much more.

We were ushered into a movie theater once we moved through the entrance and past the cupboard under the stairs. After a brief introductory movie, the set lifted, and we found ourselves immersed in an enchanting experience. There’s a vast expanse to discover from Hagrid’s Hut, Dumbledore’s office and Molly Weasley’s kitchen to the Great Hall and the Forbidden Forest. My kids loved sitting in Snape’s Potions class and the Flying Car.

While there are plenty of computer-generated graphics in the movies, the details in the set designs, props and costumes are incredible. The door panels on the Great Hall are meticulously carved, and the purposeful imperfections and flaws sewn into the fabrics and prosthetics are painstakingly perfect.

Are you feeling a bit peckish? Head to the Food Hall for a bite while sitting beneath the floating candles made famous in the Great Hall. Fancy a Butterbeer? The Backlot Café is the only place in Europe with this decadent drink on tap. If you’re in the mood for more desserts, the

Chocolate Frog Café offers plenty of chocolate, ice cream and other sweet treats. For a more elegant experience, you can opt for an afternoon tea.

Helpful Hints and Tips

Be sure to take your obligatory photo of Platform 9 ¾ at the studio. While there’s an option to do it at London King’s Cross train station, the one at the studio is more authentic, and there is usually no line. At King’s Cross, there is often a long line and crowds spilling out of the adjacent Harry Potter Shop.

There are several different options for taking the tour. The first time we went, we purchased our tickets through Viator.com. We met at Victoria Station in central London and took a coach (bus) to the studio. The second time, we did an ITT tour through RAF Alconbury. Both were fantastic options, as they included transportation and entry to the studio. However, if you want to arrange it yourself, you can purchase tickets directly through the Warner Bros. website:

www.wbstudiotour.co.uk. ■



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