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WHAT'S UP

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October Events

By Tamala Malerk

EDITOR'S PICKS

Fall is here and it's time to put on that light sweater and enjoy these fun events. Always check an event's website before traveling.



Brunch at the Ostrich Farm Stockach, Oct. 3

Go on a guided tour of the Ostrich farm where you can see not only ostriches, but deer too and feel how soft an ostrich feather is. Then, refuel with a delicious brunch of sausage, Ostrich egg, waffles, braided bread and more.



Bachata Festival Hamburg Hamburg, Oct. 6-8

Whether you want to perfect your technique in a boot camp, learn a new move in a workshop, watch performances or just party, there is something at this Bachata festival for you.



Craft and Farmer's Market Kirn, Oct. 8

Do some rare Sunday shopping at this outdoor market featuring over 80 vendors. Shop for toys, ceramics, flowers, fresh-squeezed apple juice, sausages and freshly baked bread.



Young the Giant, Live in Concert Cologne, Oct. 8

Rock out to their new songs and see if they play some of their favorite hits like "Cough Syrup" or "Mind over Matter." Go to youngthegiant.com for more dates in Germany and Europe.

©CHRISTOPHER DUBE



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75th Frankfurt Book Fair Frankfurt, Oct. 18-22

Visit tables and exhibits from presenters from dozens of countries all over the world. Take a masterclass, attend the kid's festival or a speaking engagement. 2022 speakers included Diane Kruger and Volodymyr Zelensky.



Halloween Burg Frankenstein Darmstadt, Oct. 20-Nov. 4

Prepare to be scared with 3,000 sq. meters of "pure horror!" However, Sundays are kids' days for the children (and those who prefer treats to tricks at Halloween). Keep in mind that this takes place in a muddy swamp and on 800-year-old cobblestones when planning your costume.



PLAY!-Interactive Gaming Convention 2023 Trier, Oct. 21-22

All things gaming await you at this convention! See a live stage show, shop from indie vendors, play in an e-sport tournament and more. See our Con Together: October digital article for more pop culture events in Germany.



Lords of the Sound: The Music of Hans Zimmer, Dortmund, Oct. 29

See if you can pick out the score to your favorite soundtrack during this orchestral performance. Zimmer has created music for popular films such as "Pirates of the Caribbean," "The Dark Knight," "Mission Impossible," "Madagascar" and more.

Visit lordsofthesound.com for tickets and more dates throughout Germany.

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. ■

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PHOTO of the month

Until Dec. 3, you can attend the Ludwigsburg Pumpkin Festival at the grounds of the palace. This is the “world’s largest pumpkin exhibition” and you don’t want to miss out. You will find 450,000 pumpkins with 600 different varieties. There are edible pumpkin treats, pumpkin sculptures as well as decorative and ornamental pumpkins to take home with you.

Photo by Karen Kearby

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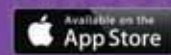
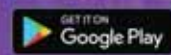
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Idstein

By Tamala Malerk

I must admit I was less than enthusiastic when my spouse asked me if I wanted to get away for the day to Idstein. Upon arriving in the town, I realized my attitude was about to change. Idstein is roughly a 90 minute drive from the KMC area, and a half-hour drive or less than an hour public transit ride from Wiesbaden. This town is a definite must visit on the list for those into interesting architecture, great food and witch lore.

Half-Timbered Buildings

In the heart of town, a majority of the buildings are intricately decorated and beautiful half-timbered houses dating back as far as the 15th century. There are hidden faces throughout the designs, and you can make it a family challenge to see who can find the most faces. These buildings house residents, hotels, restaurants, ice cream shops, graphic designers, art galleries, shops, toy stores, wineries and more. Keep your eyes peeled for "Das Schiefes Haus (Crooked House)." The name says it all for this blue house with yellow window frames.



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“ This town is a definite must-visit on the list for those into interesting architecture, great food and witch lore.



Castles and Witches

While not as well-known as the ones held in the U.S., Europe also held quite a few witch trials in the 16th and 17th centuries. Idstein found itself swept in witch-fury and between 1676 and 1677, when 35 women and eight men were executed for witchcraft. Today, a plaque in their memory sits at the foot of the Hexenturm (Witch's Tower). By walking over to the Tourist Information Center, you can trade a deposit (such as your car key) for the key to the tower and make the climb in the tower yourself. If climbing up a tower isn't for you, you can simply walk around the grounds of Idstein Castle. If just reading about castle adventures is more your speed, make sure to pay a visit to the Hexenbuchladen (Witches' Bookstore) a mere three-minute walk from the Hexenturm.

Great Food

We arrived in Idstein right around “my tummy is rumbling for lunch”-thirty, so our first task was finding food and the Taunushof Restaurant and Hotel did not disappoint. I recommend the French onion soup as well as the baked Camembert cheese with cranberries, salad and toast. My spouse highly recommends the Alfredo schnitzel. Or at least I think he does; he just kept repeating, “We need to make this at home” between bites. For the beer connoisseurs reading this, don't worry, Idstein has you covered. The Idsteiner Brewery, “Alte Feuerwache,” not only has a variety of brewed in-house beers but also some amazing food. I had the Käsespätzle, and it was in the top three (of many) Käsespätzle dishes I have eaten during my time in Germany. They also featured a menu item that I have never seen in Germany before: Brizza. This pizza dish features a mustard and cream sauce, cheese and sausage on top of a pretzel (Brezel) crust. I also indulged in dessert

which was a chocolate-lava cake served with vanilla ice cream and berries. All I can say is, leave room for dessert. You can also purchase beer and souvenirs to take home with you.

Whether you go for Instagram pictures of architecture, tower climbing adventures or on a foodie expedition, Idstein has something for everyone. ■





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An aerial night view of Bratislava, Slovakia. In the foreground on the left, a tall, white church spire with a green copper roof and a clock face stands out. The city below is a dense collection of buildings with red-tiled roofs, many of which are illuminated from within. In the background, modern skyscrapers and a bridge over a river are visible under a dark blue sky.

Exploring **BRATISLAVA** *in a Weekend*

By Erica Fowler

For your next fall trip, somewhere as historically rich and beautiful as Bratislava should be added to your plans. Historically called Pressburg, this Slovakian capital is surrounded by the Little Carpathian Mountains with elaborate fortresses placed throughout, intended to protect this small landlocked country. Slovakia is an affordable European destination. You can easily see everything you want to see if you just give yourself the time to do so.

You can travel into Bratislava by train but be flexible (bring something to read or listen to) if your train is delayed or rerouted. Once you are in the city, you can take the trams around if you need a break, just buy a ticket at a bus stop kiosk or on the tram and validate it when you ride. I recommend spending at least one day exploring the city, but a weekend is even better so you don't find yourself overly exhausted. Trust me, bring good walking shoes because Bratislava is well-known for being pedestrian friendly.



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OLD TOWN

Hit the cobblestones in the heart of the city by starting in the Old Town, or “Staré Mesto.” Check out the Old Town Hall’s city history museum and the 18th-century Primate’s Palace, which now acts as an elegant cultural center displaying paintings and tapestries. It also contains the Hall of Mirrors, where a peace treaty was signed between France and Austria in 1805. It was a peace that only lasted four years before French forces, led by Napoleon Bonaparte, returned for a second siege.

I suggest spiraling out into various squares and tree-lined streets, where you won’t miss Michael’s Tower, a fortification from the 14th century. It recently re-opened its restored weapons museum. There is also an extensive display of historical artifacts at the Museum of Jewish Culture, which highlights the long history of Orthodox Judaism in Bratislava.



ST. MARTIN’S CATHEDRAL

My favorite detail of this cathedral is the striking Gothic tower, topped with a mint green and gold trimmed spire, finished with the symbol of the Hungarian crown on top. As the coronation site of many Hungarian kings and queens, its whitewashed stone walls house a replica of the crown used for such ceremonies that are still re-enacted annually. The four chapels and nave are worth exploring every nook of, along with gorgeous stained-glass details.



SLOVAK PUB

For a menu with a variety of local offerings, the Slovak Pub will hit the spot. Sweet and savory dumplings, hearty soups and sheep’s cheese from a local farm will have you not wanting to leave (or unable to until you have a digestif, which is no problem with their full bar).



CHURCH OF ST. ELIZABETH

Also known as the Blue Church, this 20th-century church announces itself from a distance. I don’t think I’ve ever seen anything quite like it. A mixture of Art Nouveau meets wedding cake and Disney castle, it is full of bright colors and magnificent detail. While

it is worth wandering around the outside, it is often closed to tourists due to weddings or mass. Note the open hours on their website if you want to see inside as well.





FROM GREAT HEIGHTS

If you want to target locations where the view of the city is especially vast, these sites are a worthy adventure.

A key city symbol is the Bratislava Castle, which apart from being well maintained, offers great views of the city from its terraces and Baroque garden. You can gracefully walk down the wide beautiful staircases and get up close with many medieval artifacts on display in its Museum of History and become immersed in the stories they tell.

The Slavin War Memorial is hard to miss as it overlooks part of Old Town; it's worth visiting,

especially near sunset. This is also a burial site for Soviet Army soldiers who fell during World War II.

In the hilly outskirts of Bratislava, the ruined fortress "Hrad Devín" or Devín Castle overlooks the union of the mighty Danube and small Morava rivers. If you can make the 21-minute bus ride from downtown, be prepared to climb 212 meters up for a serene view of the landscape. Winding around to walk up the steep incline, you'll see the precariously perched Maiden's Tower on a rocky outcropping. Before Slovakia's currency switched from the koruna to the euro, the Maiden's Tower was featured on the 50-halier coin. Stop in the cool depths of the castle's museum before heading to a cozy place to eat some traditional food.



UFO TOWER & RESTAURANT

If you don't get queasy with heights and want a riverside view, hop up to the observation deck at the UFO Tower over the Danube River. Perched atop one side of the bridge "Most Slovenského národného povstania" or "Bridge of the Slovak National Uprising," it is 10 to 12 euros for an adult ticket to go up, depending on whether you visit during the weekend or a weekday. Here you can also dine at its sky-high restaurant, which has a higher-end price range (from 39 to 49 euros for the main course only) in exchange for a very memorable meal.



Scavenger Hunt OF A LIFETIME

STATUES, SO MANY STATUES

The city has a chance to show off its quirky and artistic side with the many statues around the city to admire. My favorite bronze statues were Čumil, a sanitation worker gazing at passersby, and The Witch, an airy figure hanging out with a bunch of crows in an empty courtyard below the castle. Perhaps you'll run into the bronzed Hans Christian Andersen or the Soldier from Napoleon's Army, too!

NAPOLEON LEFT HIS MARK

In the Old Town Hall, a cannonball is still lodged in the tower wall from the siege of 1809. In fact, throughout the buildings of the town square, some of these dense projectiles are still lodged where they came to rest all those years ago. Residents decided to leave some in place as a way to remember the eventual victory when Napoleon failed to take Bratislava (then Pressburg). ■

10 THINGS

TO REMEMBER WHEN

SHOPPING in Germany

By Tamala Malerk

Retail therapy can be a great way to spend a day. However, shopping in Germany is a little different than shopping in America. Keep these tips in mind to ensure you have a successful shopping day.



SUNDAY IS NOT THE DAY TO SHOP

Most stores in Germany are closed on Sundays. Unless you want to compete with everyone else at the Commissary and Exchange, it's best to avoid shopping on this day.

2

KEEP CASH ON HAND

This is especially true if you want to spend the day shopping at outdoor markets. Make sure to bring enough euros to cover your projected costs.



THE PRICE YOU SEE IS THE PRICE YOU PAY

There is no need to do all of that mental math before getting to the register. Tax is already included in the price you see.

4



EVENTUAL CASH BACK

If you are making a large purchase on the economy, it might be beneficial to utilize a value added tax (VAT) form. If a store takes a VAT form, you can have the cost of the taxes removed from the final price.

5



BRING YOUR OWN BAGS

Stores may not have bags, or, if they do, you will be charged for them. Remember to grab those reusable bags that you already own too many of before you head out for the day.



6

KNOW THE LINGO

Textbook German and conversational German are two different languages. I learned the German word for bag was "Tasche," which is true, but not that kind of bag. The clerk did not ask me if I needed a "Tasche;" they asked if I needed a "Tüte" and I was completely lost.

VII

GESCHLOSSEN

GERMANY IS NOT 24/7

I have spent many bored late nights perusing the \$5 DVD rack at Walmart. That isn't an option here. While areas may occasionally have a nighttime market, most stores close before 8 p.m.

KNOW WHERE TO GO

Smaller towns will typically contain smaller boutiques and shops. However, if you are looking for a mall or a large furniture store, you may need to travel to a bigger city.



8

NINE



BRING A COIN FOR THE SHOPPING CART

If you've ever shopped at an Aldi in the States, you may already be familiar with this practice. If not, you will need a euro coin or 50-cent piece to get a cart to shop with.

10

DON'T BE SURPRISED BY THE CHECK-OUT SPEED

You will be surprised how quickly the cashier will scan your items, and you will have to bag them yourself. Bag quickly or place it back into your cart, so you do not hold up the line.



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Time for Halloween, comedy and Fall Bazaar

Halloween Happenings

The Family Advocacy and Exceptional Family Member Programs hold a **Halloween Costume Party** on Oct. 24 from 3-4:30 p.m. at the Army Community Service Multi-Purpose Room. Call civ (0611) 143-548-9201 to register.

The **Wiesbaden Entertainment Center** invites all costumed revellers to join in celebrating the spooky season on Oct. 28. Children up to age 18 who come to the WEC in costume can **bowling for free** (subject to lane availability; limit two games during waiting lists). Shoe rental is \$1.50. Adults in costume can enjoy **half-price bowling** from 8 p.m. to midnight (\$2 shoe rental). Starting at 8 p.m. those age 18 and older are invited up to the Lounge for a **Halloween Costume Party** featuring spooky drink specials and the annual Halloween Costume Contest.

The **Rheinblick Golf Course** holds a **Halloween Scramble and Nightlite Putting Contest** on Oct. 28. A Halloween Costume Contest will follow play. Call civ (0611) 143-548-5485 for details.

The **Wiesbaden Sports and Fitness Center** hosts the annual **Zombie Run** starting at 9 a.m. Come dressed in your favorite spooky garb for this five-kilometer event and stick around for the drawing following the run.

Comedy Show

The Wiesbaden Entertainment Center Lounge presents another laugh-packed evening of comedy on Oct. 14 at 7 p.m. featuring comics Erin Crouch, Joel Bryant and Brian Babylon.

Fall Bazaar

Wiesbaden Family and MWR hosts the 2023 Fall Bazaar at the Wiesbaden Sports and Fitness Center Oct. 19-22. The four-day shopping extravaganza will feature products and wares from across Europe — avail-



able for purchase tax-free at the bazaar. Customers can pay in cash (U.S. dollars) or by credit card. Shopping hours are 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. on Oct. 19-21, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Oct. 22.

Winter Inspection Checks

The Automotive Skills Center offers vehicle winter inspection checks in October and November. Make sure your vehicle is ready for winter weather. Cost is \$20. Call civ (0611) 143-548-9817.

Snowworld Landgraaf

Practice your downhill skills at one of the world's largest indoor winter sports areas — Snowworld Landgraaf in The Netherlands with Outdoor Recreation. Day trips will be held on Oct. 9, Nov. 10 and Nov. 24. Cost is \$119 per person (with own gear) or \$139 per person (including rental). Bring extra Euros for lift tickets, meals and other purchases. Call civ (0611) 143-548-9801.

'Good Problems' Author

The Wiesbaden Library presents author George Harris, a U.S. Army veteran and author of the book "How to Create Good Problems," on Oct. 15 at 2 p.m.

Ice Skating

Go ice skating with Outdoor Recreation at the Frankfurt Eisssporthalle on Oct. 14, Nov. 11, Dec. 9, Jan. 20 or March 16. Call civ (0611) 143-548-9801 to register.

Seasonal Rentals

Outdoor Recreation offers an Early Bird Seasonal Rental Price for Ski and Snowboard Equipment Oct. 1-31. Patrons can use the equipment through the 2023-2024 season

(until April 1, 2024). Register at Outdoor Recreation on Clay North.

Spouse Orientation

Connect with representatives from around the garrison and take a walking tour of Wiesbaden with the Relocation Readiness Program on Oct. 18 starting at 9 a.m. at the Army Community Service Multi-Purpose Room. Call ACS at (0611) 143-548-9201 to register for Spouse Orientation.

Tour de Wiesbaden

The Relocation Readiness Program hosts a "Mini Train Tour" of Wiesbaden on the Thiermeine Bahn on Oct. 4. Register at Army Community Service or call civ (0611) 143-548-9201.

Trivia League

Trivia League is back at the Wiesbaden Entertainment Center Lounge on Oct. 11 and 25 at 7 p.m. Join the fun and show off your knowledge of everything to compete for prizes.

Couples Communication

Enhance your communication skills during the Family Advocacy Program's Couples Communication Day and Night events in October — **Relationship Green Flag Bingo Days** on Oct. 6 and 20, **Mystery Game Day** on Oct. 13 and **Love Languages Card Game** on Oct. 27. Call civ (0611) 143-548-9201 for more information and to register.





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