

STARS AND STRIPES

FREE

# WHAT'S UP

DECEMBER 2019

WHAT TO SEE | WHAT TO DO

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GERMANY'S TRADITIONS

ALL THINGS CHRISTMAS

DAY TRIPS FROM GERMANY

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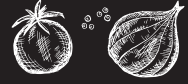
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THE STORY GAVE RISE TO THE TRADITION OF SECRET GIFT-GIVING UNDER THE COVER OF NIGHT.

# Germany's TRADITIONS

By Jessica Zen and Kristi Adams



**Get ready to sing "O Tannenbaum, o Tannenbaum, wie treu sind deine Blätter!" to get in the holiday spirit in Germany! From St. Nicholas Day all the way to Christmas Day, there are many reasons to look forward to the coming of Christ.**

In Germany, St. Nicholas is based on the Catholic saint, St. Nicholas of Myra – a wealthy, benevolent saint who had a penchant for secretly leaving gifts, particularly under the cover of darkness. Born into a wealthy family on March 15, 270, Nicholas quickly developed a reputation for secret gift-giving as well as a variety of miracles. He died Dec. 6, 343 A.D., hence the reason his feast day is observed on Dec. 6.

One legend tells the story of St. Nicholas secretly helping a man who had three daughters, but could not afford a proper dowry for them. With no dowry to offer a potential husband, the father feared for prospects of his daughters. Nicholas heard of the father's plight and secretly threw three bags of gold through the man's window. The story gave rise to the tradition of secret gift-giving under the cover of night.

In preparation for St. Nicholas, German children leave cleaned and polished boots and shoes near doors and windows on the evening of Dec. 5 and awake to find presents and goodies. To this day, along with other gifts and sweets, children will often find oranges in their shoes, as a nod to the bags of gold left by St. Nicholas so many years ago.

Dec. 6 is often the "big day" for presents and gift-giving in German culture, with a smaller celebration on Christmas Eve. Although St. Nicholas traditions may vary a bit in Germany by region, it's common for many villages to host a St. Nicholas Day parade, and many churches observe a St. Nicholas Day mass.

**SPENDING TIME WITH FAMILY IS EXTREMELY IMPORTANT, SO MANY TRAVEL ON THIS DAY AND MOST BUSINESSES ARE CLOSED.**

Christmas Eve is dedicated to putting up the tree and attending mass. "Weihnachtsbäume," Christmas trees, are generally fir, spruce or pine and is decorated with tinsel, glass ornaments and a star or angel christening the top. Nativity scenes are placed

below the tree. Gifts are opened and many people go to mass on Christmas Eve, traditionally at midnight, though earlier services are provided for families. Spending time with family is extremely important, so many travel on this day and most businesses are closed.

Christmas Day is a time for indulging in a feast with family. Eating traditional dishes like carp and potato salad or roasted goose stuffed with apples, chestnuts, onions or prunes brings families together at the dinner table. Both Dec. 25 and 26 are legal holidays and businesses are closed. Dec. 26 is a quieter day and time for peaceful contemplation of the presence of the Christ Child.

With so many opportunities, you can celebrate all month long! Share the story of St. Nicholas with your children, attend a Christmas Eve mass and spend some quality family time together eating a Christmas feast. Germany has some fabulous traditions we can all adopt! ■

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# GERMANY DAY TRIP

By Jessica Zen

# Cochem

Winter is a spectacular time for a day trip to Cochem. Spend the day basking in the romance of a magnificent medieval castle while meandering through the cobblestoned streets in this charming town in the Moselle River Valley of Germany.

## A LITTLE HISTORY

Situated in the middle of the Riesling wine region, the town of Cochem is full of beauty and splendor during the winter months. The half-timbered buildings topped with slate roofs give a quintessential small town village vibe, while the narrow winding streets lead visitors to paths unknown. Even more drama is added to the landscape as snow blankets the town and a low, hovering fog creates an air of mysticism. Christmas decorations adorn the town, creating a festive ambiance as the tree in the town square sparkles with lights and ornaments. Above it all, the Reichsburg Cochem stands tall and proud.

This imperial castle, originally built around 1000, overlooks the town and river from its perch on a vine-covered hill. Though it was once a medieval structure of defense, it has since been renovated in the late 1860s to reflect the Neo-Gothic style. Visitors can awe at the many towers from the outside, or take a guided tour of the interior.

Castle tours in English from Nov. 5 - Jan. 6 are daily at 1:00 p.m. From Jan. 7- Feb. 16, tours are on Wednesdays, Saturdays and Sundays at



**THE HALF-TIMBERED BUILDINGS TOPPED WITH SLATE ROOFS GIVE A QUINTESSENTIAL SMALL TOWN VILLAGE VIBE, WHILE THE NARROW WINDING STREETS LEAD VISITORS TO PATHS UNKNOWN.**

2 p.m. Feb. 17 - Mar. 8 tours are daily at 2 p.m. During Advent, there is a special Christmas program where actors dress up as Mary and Joseph and search for shelter. The archangel announces the birth of Jesus to the world, accompanied by the sound of trumpets. If you just can't get enough Christmas magic, head to the Christmas market in the town, where the Glühwein grapes are locally grown, brewed and of the highest quality.

## SERIOUS LEISURE TIME

While strolling through the town during winter, revel in the chilly air while you look for unique details like a merman on the side of a building or a knight carved out of wood holding a restaurant menu. If you're tired of being out in the cold, head to Family Winery Rademacher for a wine tasting and cellar tour. The winemaker will share his knowledge on the craft of creating delicious white wines. Various options are available, but the standard wine tasting lasts just over two hours and is 12.60 euros to taste six wines.

If the family is in tow, head to Moselbad, an indoor water park that is great for both adults and children. Kids will love playing in an area

with a waterslide, indoor wave pool and adventure pool. Adults can escape to two dry saunas, a steam sauna or the "samarium," a hot steam bath, for some peace and quiet. There is also a cozy log fire burning that invites visitors to grab a cocktail and stay a while.

## GETTING THERE

Cochem is approximately two hours northwest of Kaiserslautern and an hour and a half west of Wiesbaden. Visit for the day or spend the weekend exploring the wine region.

From an ancient medieval castle to a modern waterpark, Cochem is not to be missed when planning your winter travel itinerary. Wander through the Christmas market stalls or stroll by the river. No matter what you decide to do, you'll always have special memories of time well spent in Cochem. ■





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# TOP FIVE

By Jessica Zen

WHEN YOU JUST CAN'T GET ENOUGH OF THE MAGIC THAT COMES WITH THE HOLIDAY SEASON, THERE ARE STILL MARKETS IN FULL SWING AFTER CHRISTMAS DAY. CHECK OUT THESE FIVE MARKETS TO KEEP THE SEASON ALIVE LONG AFTER THE GIFTS HAVE BEEN RIPPED OPEN!



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## WINTER WORLD, BERLIN

Visit the Potsdamer Platz from Nov. 1 - Jan. 5, to experience Berlin's largest winter sports center with Europe's largest mobile toboggan run, ice skating rink and curling. The toboggan run is 230 feet long and 39 feet high, while the ice skating rink is over 5,000 square feet. This is a great area for kids who want to take free skating lessons on Saturdays or Sundays. Open 10 a.m. - 10 p.m. daily, Christmas Eve until 2 p.m. Admission and ice rink use are free, toboggan run is 1.50 euros.

INSPIRED BY BROTHERS GRIMM, THIS FAIRYTALE MARKET WILL FOCUS ON "LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD" FROM NOV. 25 - DEC. 30. THROUGHOUT THE MARKET YOU'LL FIND ODES TO THE STORY ADDED TO THE TRADITIONAL HOLIDAY DECORATIONS.



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## FAIRYTALE CHRISTMAS MARKET, KASSEL

Inspired by the Brothers Grimm, this fairytale market will focus on "Little Red Riding Hood" from Nov. 25 - Dec. 30. Throughout the market you'll find odes to the story added to the traditional holiday decorations. Children will love the Heaven Workshop, where they can tinker, paint and craft to their heart's desire. Wander through Königs, Friedrichs and Opernplatz at a market that has been celebrated since 1767! On Thursdays at 6 p.m. take a guided tour of the market and the former royal residence. A hot drink is included in the tour price of 11 euros. Admission to the market is free and is open daily from 11 a.m. - 8 p.m. The food stands are open until 10 p.m. Closed Dec. 24-26.



3

### BOGENHAUSER CHRISTMAS MAGIC FOREST, MUNICH

The area of Cosimabad is transformed into a magical Christmas forest from Nov. 22 - Jan. 6. Here you'll find unique jewelry, wooden figures, ceramics and handcrafted lamps amongst brightly-lit pagodas. Don't miss visiting one of the larger tents for the integrated Glühwein Festival that offers 25 different mulled wines, varying from alcohol-free to organic. Open Monday - Thursday from 3 p.m. - 9 p.m., Friday 3 p.m. - 10 p.m., Saturday 12 p.m. - 10 p.m., Sunday 12 p.m. - 9 p.m. Holiday hours vary. Admission is free.



4

### CHRISTMAS MARKET, BERCHTESGADEN

Situated in the Bavarian Alps is a charming village that's enough to draw visitors in. Add some holiday cheer and you're in for a truly magical time while you take in the views of the snow-covered mountains and browse through Christmas decorations. Here you'll find original Berchtesgaden Christmas tree decorations crafted in the spirit of centuries-old, folk-art traditions. Check out a performance by the local brass ensemble in front of the royal castle or view the live nativity scene. Go for a horse-drawn carriage ride or just listen to merry carolers singing songs of joy and peace. Open Nov. 28 - Dec. 31. Open daily until Dec. 23 from 12 - 8 p.m., on Dec. 26 from 12 - 6 p.m., Dec. 24 and 31 from 10 a.m. - 3 p.m. Closed Dec. 3, 4, 10, 11 and 25. Admission is free.

LOCATED IN THE BAVARIAN ALPS, THIS MARKET COULD NOT BE IN A MORE BEAUTIFUL SETTING. THE VILLAGE CHARM ALONE IS ENOUGH TO DRAW VISITORS IN.



5

### NEW YEAR'S MARKET, SPEYER

Located in front of the Alten Münze (Old Mint) on Maximilianstrasse, this quaint New Year's Market basks in the glory of the imperial cathedral Kaiserdom. From Jan. 1- 6, you can browse festively decorated wooden stalls hosted by eight towns, watch artists and craftsmen at work and shop until you find the perfect trinket. Behind the stalls are beautiful pastel-colored gabled houses, cafes and boutiques. Feast on roasted almonds, bratwurst, gingerbread cookies and mulled wine. Admission is free. If you've got extra time, stroll along the Rhine River or visit the cathedral, which is the oldest of three remaining Romanesque cathedrals in Germany. If you want to get out of the cold, find a wine tavern and enjoy some regional specialties.

#### TIP

.....  
If you plan on visiting during New Year's, the market is open on New Year's Eve from 11 a.m. - 3 p.m. and New Year's Day from 1 - 9 p.m.



# Merry Christmas

&  
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# Winter Wonders of SWITZERLAND

By Jessica Zen



Switzerland is one of the greatest places to visit during the winter months with its breathtaking landscapes, picturesque villages, and an incomparable, magical atmosphere. Whether you want to ski, hike unwind at fancy spas or indulge in tasty Swiss delicacies, Switzerland has something for everyone. Plan your winter getaway to some of the best resort towns the country has to offer.

## GRINDELWALD

The charming Swiss village of Grindelwald is located at the base of the north face of the Eiger Mountain. Grindelwald's quaint shops, numerous restaurants, and abundance of winter activities make it a perfect location to explore the wonders of Switzerland. Enjoy the surrounding mountainous views while you ski, hike or simply relax in the village.

A part of the Jungfrau region, one of Europe's most popular skiing destinations, Grindelwald is directly linked to the Wengen ski area and offers 132 miles of ski terrain with over 50 ski runs and 20 chairlifts. Skiing enthusiasts of all ages and skill levels will appreciate the vast array of ski runs in the Bernese Alps. Families often find Grindelwald a prime location for children to learn to ski. The Bodmi slopes are gentler for beginners and the ski school can be easily accessed from the base village. While the beginners enjoy the tamer slopes, intermediate skiers can be assured that there is something for them as well. The majority of runs are red and blue. Though experts may find that there aren't many black runs, they will find plenty of run and glacier skiing.

Skiing isn't the only draw to Grindelwald in the winter. For those who prefer not to be strapped into ski boots but still want some fresh air, dazzle your senses with a hike on the First-Waldspitz-Bort trails. This series of mountain trails feature simultaneous views of snow-covered huts, forests, and valleys, all while the cliffs of the Wetterhorn and Eiger dominate the backdrop. The hike takes approximately two and a half hours, but don't worry about getting hungry. The mountain restaurant Waldspitz is just waiting for you to refuel on the patio while delighting in the lake scenery. Don't miss the First Cliff Walk, a lookout platform for thrill seekers that hovers 147 feet above the valley, offering a marvelous view of the Eiger.

If you are seeking a winter getaway that doesn't include traipsing through the snow looking for an adrenaline rush, consider relaxing at Belvedere. This four-star hotel is home to a spa and wellness center that will melt away all your problems. The spa area has a swimming pool, whirlpool, salt water jacuzzi, Finnish sauna, glacier steam bath, heat mine gallery, and much more. In addition to the pools and saunas, the spa offers massages for a total relaxation experience. Finish up with a facial and feel fresh as a spring daisy, despite the cold weather.

## ZERMATT

Surrounded by the peaks of the Pennine Alps, including the famous Monte Rosa and Matterhorn, Zermatt also offers a plethora of activities. Though the small town only boasts three main streets, Zermatt has numerous cross-streets filled with restaurants and hotels just waiting for tourists to come knocking on their doors. It takes a mere 30 minutes to walk across this remarkable town, which is convenient, as only a very few battery powered cars are allowed. However, electric shuttles are available.

To begin your Zermatt adventure, hop on the world's first fully electrified cog railway, the Gornergrat Bahn. It is Europe's highest open-air cog railway and transports passengers from Zermatt station to the summit of Gornergrat. After a scenic 30 minute ride to the top, be prepared for a photo opportunity of a lifetime. The panoramic view showcases Monte Rosa, Switzerland's highest peak, Gorn Glacier, and the Matterhorn.

If you don't want the experience to end, consider staying at the 3100 Kulmhotel Gornergrat, where you will find a restaurant, astronomical observatory, chapel and shops.

From the top of the Gornergrat there is access to multiple hiking trails. Strap some snowshoes on your feet and explore Challenge Trail. This leisurely trail is close to the railway and descends about 985 feet, for a pleasant hour-long hike. Exceptional views of the railway and the snow-covered landscape are guaranteed.

After all that fresh air and exercise, pamper yourself with some serious down time at one of the many local spas. Hotel Eden Wellness has an indoor pool and spa to ease the most tense of muscles. Book an appointment in the evening for a massage, holistic therapy, gemstone therapy and much more to wrap up a successful winter day.

## ST. MORITZ

Nestled in the Engadin valley, the glamorous village of St. Moritz has earned international fame for hosting the Winter Olympics not once, but twice. Lake St. Moritz adds even more village appeal with its White Turf horse races, snow polo, and ice cricket tournaments. Throw in some devilish ski runs, après ski clubs, and a bobsled run for the perfect combination of winter activities. This swanky village resort area has something for everyone.

For a skiing experience you won't soon forget, check out Diavolezza. Legend has it that once upon a time a lovely, red-haired she-devil lived on this mountain. If the legend is true, she certainly left some particularly hellish runs for the more experienced skiers. The runs on Diavolezza include over 13 miles of red and six miles of black. This snow-covered behemoth is not for the faint of heart!

For some après-ski activities, consider going to the Alpina hut on Corviglia Mountain. This rustic hut sits on a large rock overlooking the town and the lovely Engadin valley. Relax with a drink from the snow bar outside while you soak up some rays on the sun terrace. If you are craving more than just a drink, the hut restaurant serves local specialties and traditional home-style Swiss dishes.

A trip to Switzerland just isn't complete without trying traditional cheese fondue and an Engadine walnut tart. Reserve a table at Restaurant Engiadina for a truly spectacular taste of local cuisine. Their menu offers a variety of cheese fondues, along with other traditional favorites. After enjoying the fondue, finish off the night with dessert at Confectionary Hanselmann. Here you can find the famous Engadine walnut tart, a local favorite that confectioners have been perfecting for years. Filled with crème, caramel and walnuts, this sweet treat is sure to leave you feeling satisfied.

Switzerland has so much to offer during the winter months, from skiing to relaxing at the spa, there are enough activities to keep everyone entertained for days. Spend some time exploring where Swiss watches, army knives, chocolate, banks and yodeling originated. You'll return from your trip invigorated from all the fun you had flying down the slopes and over-indulging in delicious food. Why wait? Start planning your getaway to experience the winter wonders of Switzerland today! ■



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# Bucket List

## — German Christmas Market Edition —

By Elizabeth Jones

Experiencing German Christmas markets are bucket list items of their own thanks to their magical atmospheres. However, figuring out what the must-visit markets are as well as the must-dos can be a stressful task. Keep it simple and follow this German Christmas market bucket list to ensure all of your holiday dreams come true.

- 1.** Pay a visit to Germany's top markets — Nuremberg, Cologne, Dresden, Heidelberg and Rothenburg ob der Tauber.
- 2.** Make time for the quaint markets of Bernkastel-Keus, St. Wendel, Rüdesheim and Bamberg.
- 3.** Take the kiddos to experience the Weihnachtsbäckerei.
- 4.** Indulge in "Flammkuchen" (thin, baked dough topped with cream, onions and small pieces of meat) and "Kartoffelpuffer" (potato pan cakes with apple sauce).
- 5.** Drink Glühwein while the kids sip on "Kinderpunsch" (hot fruit juice).
- 6.** Sink your teeth in "Dampfnudel" (a sweet bread roll served with warm vanilla or cherry sauce).
- 7.** Collect the Glühwein mugs from each market you experience.
- 8.** "Glühbier" (mulled beer) is a rarity at markets, so grab some the moment you spot it.
- 9.** Try "Eierpunsch" — a spiked version of your favorite holiday drink, eggnog.
- 10.** Snap a selfie in front of each city's Weihnachtsmarkt sign to cherish the unforgettable memories later on.

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Have you ever been to a German Christmas market? Tell [contentteam@stripes.com](mailto:contentteam@stripes.com) some bucket-list-worthy items you would put on this list! ■



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YOURSELF

*Merry*  
LITTLE  
*Christmas*



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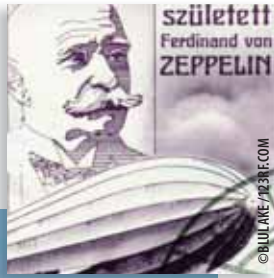
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*Make time to*  
**GET AWAY**

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# European Getaways

## *Off-the-Beaten Path*

By Stacy Roman

Home to iconic sights and landmarks, living and traveling in Europe is a dream. The lovely canals of Amsterdam, the remarkable works of the Sistine Chapel in Rome, the Acropolis in Greece – the list goes on and on. You’ve probably got a few of these postcard-worthy spots on your bucket list, but so does almost everyone else. If alpine villages, snow-capped jagged peaks and serene lakes sound appealing, discover these three off-the-beaten path destinations.

### GRINDELWALD, SWITZERLAND .....

Enveloped by impressive mountains and sheer limestone cliffs in the Bernese Swiss Alps is the charming village of Grindelwald. Tucked at the base of Eiger Mountain, this village is a prime location for adrenaline junkies all year long. In the winter, visitors can whizz down pristine slopes on one of the 12 surrounding mountains. Grindelwald also hosts the International Snow Festival in January, complete with intricate ice and snow sculptures. During the summer, take a journey back in time on the Jungfrau Bahn. The train travels a steep 9 kilometers from the base of the mountain to the highest railway station in Europe. Once at the top, head to the Sphinx Terrace and drink in the stunning vistas from the viewing platforms. If you’re craving a little winter sports action, pop over to Snow Fun Park, where visitors can enjoy sledding, skiing and snowboarding in the middle of the summer.

### LINZ, AUSTRIA .....

The third-largest city in Austria rests along the Danube almost exactly halfway between more well-known cities such as Vienna and Salzburg. Once home to Mozart, this enchanting city is full of cobblestone streets, imposing cathedrals and plenty of museums. Named a UNESCO Creative City, Linz also has an incredible up and coming arts scene. The Ars Electronica Museum is home to innovative and futuristic technology. Visitors are encouraged to explore the hands-on, interactive exhibits. Or if you’d rather discover the city, take a ride on the Pöstlingerbahn — an old cog wheel railway which takes riders to the top

of Pöstlingberg. Experience breathtaking views and sweeping panoramas of the city and the countryside below.

### FRIEDRICHSHAFEN, GERMANY .....

A little closer to home for those stationed in Germany, the lakeside hamlet of Friedrichshafen on the shores of beautiful Lake Constance is a worthy contender. For aviation buffs, significant German aviation history was made in this industrious city. Ferdinand von Zeppelin established his factory for making the gigantic namesake steel airships. Today, the Zeppelin Museum houses a replica of the infamous Hindenburg which visitors can walk through. If younger kids get a little restless, take a small 20-minute drive northeast to Ravensburger Spielaland. This amusement park has plenty of rides and attractions to expend their energy. Need a slower pace? Stroll along the Uferpromenade Friedrichshafen. Gaze across the water (yes, you’re looking at Switzerland over there) and enjoy local delicacies as the sunsets.

Living in Europe affords the opportunity of a lifetime with travel. You can conquer the bustling halls of Parliament and Big Ben in London, view Paris from atop the Eiffel Tower and witness singing gondoliers in Venice. However, you can skip the lines and crowds and head to more magical, yet slightly more obscure destinations. You never know what treasures you’ll find when you travel off-the-beaten path. ■





# Grindelwald in 24 HOURS

By Elizabeth Jones

Switzerland, the land of picturesque villages, outdoor adventures and various forms of tasty cheese is a must-visit for many people. Whether you're on an epic road trip or an express bus tour going through the country, it would be a shame to miss the scenic village of Grindelwald!

## WHAT TO DO

Travel to the top! Spend most of your time on Grindelwald's First, a small summit on the slopes of the Schwarzhorn, a mountain part of the Bernese Alps. There's an abundance of activities for everyone to enjoy. However, with only 24 hours to spend a top this summit, choose from this definitive list of great activities in Grindelwald:

### Hike to Lake Bachalpsee

The iconic Lake Bachalpsee is a less than one hour hike from the cable car station atop the summit. Follow the signs towards Bachalpsee to reach this secluded natural masterpiece.

### First Cliff Walk

The famous lookout platform protrudes 45 meters from the First summit, giving travelers a breathtaking view full of the beautiful alpine forest and sparkling waterfall below them. Travelers must walk on a bridge

placed along the cliff side of the summit.

### First Flyer

Soar through the clouds on Grindelwald First Flyer, the exhilarating zipline. Don't worry, riders are safely harnessed, so even those afraid of heights should give it a try. The adrenaline rush will kick in after the initial launch!

### First Mountain Cart

What do you get when you combine a sled and go-kart? A mountain cart! Zip down the mountain for a thrilling experience. The First Mountain Cart attraction is suitable for children up to a little over 4-feet tall.

### Toboggan Run

If you have the time, head back down from the First summit and head towards the Pflingstegg station to hop on a chairlift to reach the start of a toboggan run, which is 736 meters long and has you riding down 58 meters the mountain at speeds of 40

kilometers. The run goes in a loop meaning you can ride it as many times as you want!

## KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

**Driving to Switzerland:** Purchase a vignette.

**Currency:** Swiss francs (CHF). Euros may be accepted at various places.

**ATMs:** Train station and any bank.

**Perfect souvenir:** Swiss knife, swiss watches, cowbell trinkets.

For planning and full prices check the official Jungfrau Top of Europe website.

This 24 hour guide will show you the best of Grindelwald in a time crunch. With its unbelievable landscapes and epic, outdoor adventures — Grindelwald is a place so nice you'll likely visit twice! ■



HELLO  
*december*

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EVENTS AROUND GERMANY

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# EDITOR'S *Picks*

## December Events

By Karen Bradbury



### CHRISTMAS ON THE ISLAND OF FRAUENCHIEMSEE

**Dec. 1 and Dec. 6-8**

The Bavarian Alps and Herrenchiemsee Castle make a perfect backdrop for a Christmas market.



### BALL NIGHT

**Dec. 7 in Wiesbaden**

A smartly-dressed crowd mixes, mingles, sips sparkling wine and dances to the sounds of live pop and jazz music in the elegant setting of the Kurhaus.



### KRAMPUS RUNS

**Dec. 8 and 22 in Munich**

It's a scary Christmas at the Marienplatz when some 300 fur-clad, horned Alpine beasts race through the market, frightening shoppers in their wake.



### FOREST CHRISTMAS MARKET

**Dec. 14 - 15 in Trippstadt**

Handmade crafts, regional specialties, Alpine horn players and fire artists lend this market its unique flair.



### NIGHT OF THE PROMS

**Dec. 12 in Stuttgart**

A classic orchestra backs up pop artists from the past few decades, creating an unforgettable night of music. The show visits 10 other cities in Germany.



### CHRISTMAS CIRCUS

**Dec. 20 - Jan. 5 in Wiesbaden**

Acrobats, trapeze artists, clowns, tigers, dogs and ponies are amongst the performers set to dazzle audiences in a heated tent set up at the Gibber Kerb.



### CHRISTMAS MAGIC

**Dec. 25 - 30 in Triberg**

An icy waterfall illuminated by thousands of glittering lights is the centrepiece of this spectacle made up of concerts, shows and dazzling fireworks displays.



### NEW YEAR'S RUN

**Dec. 31 in Trier**

This Brazilian-inspired running event set to the sounds of samba drums attracts Germany's top athletes and amateurs alike. Men run 8 km, the ladies 5 km.

**PLAN  
AHEAD**

### CRAFT BEER FESTIVAL

**Jan. 10-11 in Karlsruhe**

Sip and sample the innovative and tasty creations of some two dozen of Germany's most creative brewers, ideally accompanied by the hot and tasty street food available on site. Bottled beers to enjoy back home are also on sale. Tickets go for 8 euros.



..... FOR MORE EVENTS VISIT [www.stripeseurope.com](http://www.stripeseurope.com)!



## Celebrate the holidays with MWR in December

### Tree Lighting Ceremony

Help launch the holiday season during the garrison's Tree Lighting Ceremony on Dec. 5 from 5-10 p.m. on Clay Kaserne. The event will start outside the Clay Chapel with school choir performances, the tree lighting and then proceed to the Community Activity for photos with santa, MWR giveaways, children's activities and a special buffet meal. Cost for the buffet is \$6.95 for adults, \$3.95 for children ages 6-11.

### Dueling Pianos Holiday Tour

Armed Forces Entertainment, MWR and ProTour Productions offer a special treat during the holidays — the Dueling Pianos Holiday Tour — Dec. 13 at 8 p.m. at the Vault Club and Casino. Enjoy the musical talents of Katy Marquardt, Chris Combs and Jimmy James.

### Jingle Bell Jog

Wear your favorite holiday workout gear and join the fun at this holiday-themed five-kilometer run/walk on Dec. 14 starting at 9 a.m. It's free to participate — or sign up in advance to purchase a commemorative T-shirt for \$5 at the Wiesbaden Sports, Fitness and Outdoor Recreation Center.

### New Year's Eve Party

Welcome in the New Year on Dec. 31 at the Wiesbaden Entertainment Center. The New Year's celebration will feature activities for all members of the family including Cosmic Bowling, free finger foods, a live video DJ and more. Purchase tickets at the Wiesbaden Entertainment Center.

### CYS Special Opening

Wiesbaden Child and Youth Services holds a special Saturday opening, Dec. 14, from 6 p.m. to midnight. These are for children ages six weeks to fifth-grade (must be CYS registered). Make reservations at Parent Central Services or call civ (0611) 143-548-9350.

### Ski/snowboard trips

Wiesbaden Outdoor Recreation holds trips



Photo by Karl Weisel

## Christmas Markets trips

Outdoor Recreation offers trips to the Rothenburg Christmas Market on Dec. 7, Nuernberg Christmas Market on Dec. 14 and the Heidelberg Christmas Market on Dec. 21. Sign up at the Wiesbaden Sports, Fitness and Outdoor Recreation Center. Army Community Service hosts visits to the Frankfurt Christmas Market on Dec. 5 and the Mainz Christmas Market on Dec. 19. Register at ACS or by calling civ (0611) 143-548-9201. The Wiesbaden Teen Center hosts a trip for families to the Cologne Christmas Market on Dec. 21. Stop by the Hainerberg Teen Center for details.

to Engelberg, Switzerland, on Dec. 28, Jan. 25, Feb. 29 and March 28; and to the Black Forest on Dec. 28, Jan. 11 and Feb. 1. Register at the Wiesbaden Sports, Fitness and Outdoor Recreation Center.

### BOSS highlights

Wiesbaden's Better Opportunities for Single Soldiers heads to the Ramstein Mall on Dec. 6, goes ice skating on Dec. 7, hosts Taunus movie nights on Dec. 13 and 21, and goes go-karting on Dec. 14. Stop by the Warrior Zone or call civ (0611) 143-548-9816 for details.

### 'Beauty and the Beast'

The Amelia Earhart Playhouse presents "Disney's Beauty and the Beast" with performances on Dec. 6, 7, 13, 14, 20, 21, Jan. 10, 11, 17 and 18 at 7 p.m.; Dec. 8, 15, Jan. 12 and 19 at 2 p.m. Follow the adventures of Belle, Gaston and the quirky servants of an enchanted castle in this fairy tale turned musical. Purchase tickets at the playhouse or

Wiesbaden Arts and Crafts Center.

### Winter sports registration

Child and Youth Services holds registration for basketball, cheerleading, dodgeball and wrestling through Dec. 15. Register at Parent Central Services or call civ (0611) 143-548-9350 for more information.

### Car classes

The Wiesbaden Automotive Skills Center holds a Basic Car Care Class on Dec. 1 from 10:30-11:30 a.m. Cost is \$15. A Brake Service Class will be offered on Dec. 15 from 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Cost is \$15. Call civ (0611)

143-548-9817 to register.

### Guided Meditation Class

This Guided Meditation Class will help you reduce stress, control anxiety, promote emotional health, enhance self-awareness and lengthen your attention span. The class will be held Dec. 11 from 6-7:15 p.m. at the Wiesbaden Sports, Fitness and Outdoor Recreation Center. Cost is \$10. Register at the fitness center.

### Love and Money

Enhance your financial literacy during the "Love and Money: Financial Education for Couples" class on Dec. 3. Call Army Community Service at civ (0611) 143-548-9201 to register.

### Mommy and Me Art

The Wiesbaden Arts and Crafts Center holds Mommy and Me Art on Dec. 13 and 27 from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Sign up for the free activity at the Arts and Crafts Center.

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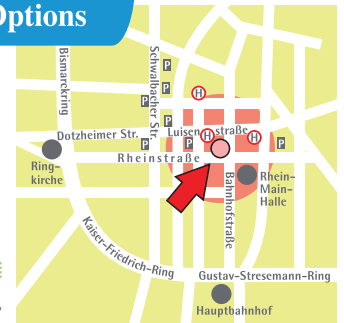
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### AMSTERDAM LIGHT FESTIVAL

**Through Jan. 19 in Amsterdam, Netherlands**  
Surprising and beautiful light installations set up alongside the canals and the Amstel River await exploration by means of a boat cruise or an evening stroll.



### BALL SEASON

**Through February in Vienna, Austria**  
Couples dressed to the nines take to the dance floors of elegant venues to waltz to the sounds of orchestral music at one of the city's some 450 annual balls.



### THREE KINGS PARADE

**Jan. 5 in Madrid, Spain**  
Melchior, Gaspar and Balthazar, the Three Kings of the East, march through the streets accompanied by floats and a cast of famous performing artists



### WINTER SALES

**Jan. 8-Feb. 4 in Paris and countrywide**  
France's seasonal clearance sales are bargain hunters' dreams. The longer an item stays on the shelf, the lower its price will go, so get your timing just right!

# Things to do next month!

## january

By Karen Bradbury



### BELALP WITCHES RACE

**Jan. 11-18 in Blatten Belalp, Switzerland**  
A week of celebrations culminates when hundreds of skiers dressed in witches' masks and costumes take to the slopes to compete in an eight-mile ski race.



### MOTOR BIKE EXPO

**Jan. 16-19 in Verona, Italy**  
Best-known brands from the international motorcycle scene show off their latest models at what's billed as the world's biggest event for customized motorcycles.



### TRADFEST

**Jan. 22-26 in Dublin, Ireland**  
The sounds of Irish and folk music performed by some of today's biggest names rings out loud and proud in the pubs of the city's famed Temple bar district.



### CHINESE NEW YEAR CELEBRATIONS

**Jan. 25-26 in London, UK**  
Usher in the Year of the Rat with parades and on-stage performances in the West End, where the largest Chinese New Year celebrations outside Asia unfold.

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# Christmas

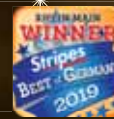
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