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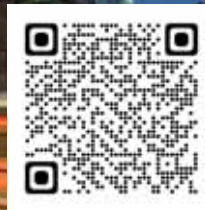
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# PLAN AHEAD

By Katie Wells



## BAVARIA

**Nürnberger Volksfest,  
Nürnberg**

**AUG. 29–SEPT. 14, 2025**

Twice a year on the fairgrounds by Dutzendteich Lake in Nuremberg, the smell of classic Franconian fair food draws up to two million visitors for festival fun. There is dancing, music, and tried and true culinary specialties like the Nürnberger sausage (I like to add a dash of horseradish and mustard to mine). Guests from different countries around the world are invited every autumn to share aspects of their culture whether it be food, drinks or artisanal crafts. Over the two weeks, there are a variety of events planned such as a keg tapping, parades, brass bands and fireworks. There will be a family day for visitors with kids where rides on carousels, roller coasters and one item at each stand will be half off.



## KAISERSLAUTERN

**Dürkheimer Wurstmart,  
Bad Dürkheim**

**SEPT. 12–16, SEPT. 19–22, 2025**

This is one BIG festival, just 40 minutes from Kaiserslautern, it has been celebrated for over 600 years and has had many transformations: from a church festival to a medieval fair to a sausage market to what is now a sausage and wine festival (the largest in the world). Despite the name, wine is the highlight at the festival today and there are plenty of varieties to try. I recommend a Schorle which is a spritzer cut with sparkling water. The wine is served by the half-liter in a *Dubbeglas*, or dotted glass which a local butcher invented to better grip his beer while he worked. Much like Christmas market mugs, the Dubbeglas have a pfand and you can choose to keep yours as a collectible. The fest features plenty of things to do for all ages: towering rides, carnival games, food, fireworks, live music and the crowning of the newest wine princess.



## STUTTGART

**Flammende Sterne Fire-  
works Festival, Ostfildern**

**AUG. 22–24, 2025**

The 21st Flaming Stars Fireworks Festival will be a thrilling show and competition where pyrotechnics teams visit from all over the world to light up the sky with unique designs and vibrant colors hoping to be named the winner. While fireworks and laser shows are the main attraction, each evening, at 6 p.m., there will be additional festival flair and a market to shop. Live music will fill the air, fire artists and other performing artists will dazzle crowds and the Ochsenfurt play construction site will have a selection of games, hands-on activities as well as a puppet show for families and children. Purchase tickets online at [flammende-sterne.de](http://flammende-sterne.de). There are two options: a “day ticket” which grants you access to the event area and a “seat ticket” which includes sectioned-off seating to watch the fireworks displays more comfortably.



## WIESBADEN

**Museumsuferfest,  
Frankfurt**

**AUG. 29–31, 2025**

During the last days of summer, fall swiftly approaches on the scenic museum embankments of the Main River during this cultural festival. Every year, a unique and creative program is curated. The museums have special offers and stay open late into the evenings. Visitors can shop from many stalls offering international culinary specialties and high-quality handmade crafts. You can take a break from the festival to turn your attention to the river and watch the dragon boat races (the second oldest of their kind in Germany). When ready to rejoin the fun, explore the Art Meadow and Antiquarian Book Mile or listen to music as you stroll the Organ and Choir Mile as well as visit Sound in the Monastery. Don't miss the musical fireworks display on the last evening of the festival. ■

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# German Car Brands



By Kat Nickola

**G**ermany has been at the forefront of car manufacturing since the invention of the four-stroke internal combustion engine in the 1870s. Created by Nicolaus Otto and Karl Benz, that engine was put into a coach and the German auto industry exploded...well, until the 1920s. Post World War II saw a slow expansion, but some great marketing and the idea of high-quality German engineering put the country's cars on the world stage once again.

The biggest German car brands:

**Audi** | founded in 1909—Legal battles with former partners led company execs to take a son's advice and chose the Latin word "audi," which means to listen.

**BMW** | founded in 1916—Bayerische Motoren Werke (Bavarian Motor Works) traces its roots to the Bayerische Flugzeug-Werke (Bavarian Aircraft Works) building aero engines.

**Mercedes-Benz** | merged in 1926—The first Benz car was made in 1886 while the first Mercedes came in 1901 and was named for the daughter of an entrepreneur in the company.

**Opel** | founded in 1862—Started by Adam Opel, the brand began as a sewing machine factory, then bicycle manufacturer before turning to cars in 1899.

**Porsche** | founded in 1931—Contracted by the Nazi party to create what would become the VW beetle, Porsche is still coming to terms with its namesake's legacy.

**Volkswagen (VW)** | founded in 1937—VW was originally established by the Nazi party's German Labor Front but later became an icon of Germany's reform and reconstruction. ■

## Bonus:

**MAN** | founded in 1893—Rudolf Diesel partnered with Maschinenfabrik Augsburg-Nürnberg (MAN) to put his namesake engine in the company's first truck.

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**Sylvia Holzapfel**







# CARS IN STUTTGART

By Katie Wells

## MERCEDES-BENZ MUSEUM

In Stuttgart, Germany, Karl Benz is often accredited as the inventor of the car. In 1885, he created the first petrol-powered automobile, the Benz Paten-Motorwagen. “Mercedes” was the name of the daughter of the Austrian entrepreneur who commissioned Benz’s first vehicle, thus the brand name Mercedes-Benz was born. You can find nods to the influence Mercedes-Benz has had in Stuttgart all throughout the city, like the

rotating logo on top of the train station. The museum has been open to the public since 2016 and is one of the largest corporate museums in the world.

When visiting the **Mercedes-Benz Museum** visitors can opt to take two tours. One tour leads through the museum, which is a tribute to Karl Benz. Guests walk through motoring history realizing that this established brand

had a hand in everything from ambulances to old-school buses to the luxury models we see today. There is even a Legend’s exhibit. Nearby, there is also the option to do a factory tour where you can watch the car production and manufacturing on the assembly line. The **Mercedes-Benz Factory** could be deemed a small city as it employs 35,000 people and a bus is needed to get around the lot. Good thing Mercedes also makes buses.





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# CARS IN STUTTGART

## PORSCHE MUSEUM

Ferdinand Porsche was the inventor of this highly sought-after luxury sports car. Like Mercedes-Benz, Porsche has become synonymous with Stuttgart culture, and the company logo is made up of elements from the coats of arms of Stuttgart and Baden-Württemberg. The **Porsche Museum**, located in a unique glass building, has approximately 95 carefully curated original vehicles. A few iconic models include: the Porsche 356 “No. 1” Roadster, the Porsche 911 of various generations, the Porsche 550 and the Porsche 917. The museum tour takes you through the history in chronological order.

The factory tour allows car aficionados to look behind the scenes at the headquarters in Zuffenhausen. For the duration of the tour, individuals and groups accompany a sports car through production. There are three tours to choose from on the website and you may want to book online in advance as this tour is often sold out.



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*“Stuttgart  
is a perfect  
city for car  
enthusiasts!”*

## MOTORWORLD

**Motorworld** was once the state airport of Württemberg and is now the perfect space to hold several hundred specialty vehicles and bikes as well as a collection of shop and display rooms any car lover would love to amble around. There is a wide variety of classic cars for enthusiasts to admire including luxury brands like Lamborghini. For those wanting to live out “Fast and Furious” dreams, there is a racing simulator, and you can experience sitting in the cockpit of a racing car. Shops sell luxury and branded items so if like most of the population you can’t afford to be a fancy car collector, you can at least be an accumulator of fancy car collectibles.

To really make your trip to Stuttgart all about cars, right next door to Motorworld is the **V8 Hotel Superior** and **V8 Hotel Classic** where you can sleep in a bed made from vintage car parts and dream about flying around a race-track at top speed. There are distinctively themed rooms featuring different parts of a car’s story, each with original parts and illustrations making for a very unique stay. ■



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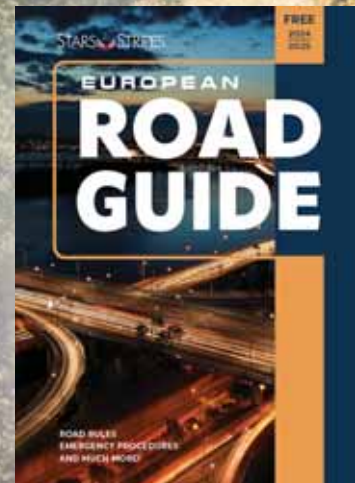
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# CHASING

## THE CHECKERED FLAG

By Kat Nickola

**V**ou are cheering from a stand of packed bleachers as 20 compact, open-cockpit, one-seat racing cars blitz past with a flurry of noise and the smell of rubber; this is Formula One (F1) racing.

In Europe, most auto racing is governed by the Fédération Internationale de l'Automobile (FIA), whose headquarters is in Paris, France. In addition to advocating for automotive interests and safety, the FIA oversees hundreds of motorsport competitions around the world. The organization regulates and judges a large variety of events, from maintaining land speed records to esports, karting activities, rally races, historic car series, endurance events and the world-famous F1 circuit races.







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## WHAT IS CIRCUIT RACING?

A **circuit** in F1 racing parlance is the paved route that the cars will compete on. This may be at a specially built track or along public streets that have been closed for the race. These routes vary in length, but an F1 race is almost always 305 kilometers long, so the race covers multiple laps along the circuit to complete the requirement. One exception is the circuit in Monaco, which is only 260km long.

The **FIA Formula One World Championship** is the world's premier auto race series and has a prestigious history. Its origin lies in the old European Grand Prix motor races that began in 1901 and became increasingly popular until the outbreak of World War II in 1939. Following the war, the old automobile organization was re-branded as the FIA and the "International Formula" brought together the various Grand Prix races under a single series. The first championship race was held in 1950 at Silverstone in the U.K.

The **formula** in F1 racing refers to the required car specs. These include crash test standards, a mandatory safety cell for the cockpit and fuel, engine restrictions, the type of tires and physical details like the car's size and weight (with the driver). Car engineers use these standards to design a racing vehicle that adheres to the regs while also innovating for better performance.

## 10 TEAMS OF TWO DRIVERS

Teams are owned by car manufacturers or private companies and have numerous additional sponsors. Drivers choose a number and use it on their vehicles during their entire career, although the reigning champ may choose to use the number one. Fans may be loyal to a team or a driver, neither or both, it just depends on why they watch. Some fans love the driver drama; some follow drivers from their home country. Other fans enjoy the technical auto innovations and race weekend excitement.

### 2025 F1™ Teams and Drivers

- **Alpine** | Pierre Gasly (10), Franco Colapinto (43)
- **Aston Martin** | Lance Stroll (18), Fernando Alonso (14)
- **Ferrari** | Charles Leclerc (16), Lewis Hamilton (44)
- **Haas** | Esteban Ocon (31), Oliver Bearman (87)
- **Kick Sauber** | Nico Hulkenberg (27), Gabriel Bortoleto (5)
- **McLaren** | Oscar Piastri (81), Lando Norris (4)
- **Mercedes** | George Russell (63), Kimi Antonelli (12)
- **Racing Bulls** | Liam Lawson (30), Isack Hadjar (6)
- **Red Bull Racing** | Max Verstappen (1), Yuki Tsunoda (22)
- **Williams Racing** | Alexander Albon (23), Carlos Sainz (55)

## RACE WEEKEND

F1 race weekends are held all over the world from March until November and follow the same general schedule.

### Friday

- **FP1 & FP2** – "Free Practice" sessions let the driver get to know the track while the team can test run new setups for their car.
- **Sprint Qualifying** – Sometimes FP2 is replaced with this set of short races to determine the starting order for the next day.

### Saturday

- **FP3 or F1 Sprint** – On special "Sprint Weekends," FP3 is replaced with an extra exciting, 100-kilometer race called the F1 Sprint.
- **Qualifying** – This is a series of three short races (Q1, Q2, Q3) that determine the starting order for the Grand Prix.

### Sunday

- **Grand Prix** – The main event! A 305-kilometer race requiring at least one pit stop for a full tire change. They last roughly two exhilarating hours and end with the infamous checkered flag.





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## F1™ CHAMPIONS

At each Grand Prix race in the series, drivers who finish in the top 10 are awarded points based on their placement. There are chances to earn extra points as the driver with the fastest lap (and in the top 10) and as the winners of a Sprint.

The driver with the most points during the year's series will earn the **Driver's Championship** title. Because drivers are paid employees, they do not win cash prizes from the FIA. Instead, they will usually receive bonuses from their team or from sponsors. In addition, drivers can use wins to negotiate higher-paying contracts in the future.

The big money is won with the **Constructor's Championship**. This is a financial award given to the team with the highest points amassed from both of their drivers. The amount of money up for grabs depends on the revenue FIA received for F1 races that year; it is typically a multi-billion-dollar sum. Roughly 50 percent of this revenue is put into a prize pot. At the end of the season, teams are each distributed a percentage of the yearly pot based on both their total points ranking and some preferential bonuses. The prize money stakes are accepted by all teams and reestablished in a periodic negotiation known as the Concorde Agreement.

## WHERE AND WHEN TO GO

**Formula 1** events can be expensive, but they will often include access to all races happening on the course that day (or weekend). For example, you may get to also watch Formula 2 (F2) or Formula 3 (F3) events; these are second and third-tier feeder teams. There are 24 worldwide races across the F1 championship series, and here are a few within road-tripping distance of those stationed in Germany.

- **FORMULA 1 MSC CRUISES AUSTRIAN GRAND PRIX 2025** | June 27-29  
Red Bull Ring, Spielberg
- **FORMULA 1 MOËT & CHANDON BELGIAN GRAND PRIX 2025** | July 25-27  
Circuit de Spa-Francorchamps
- **FORMULA 1 HEINEKEN DUTCH GRAND PRIX 2025** | Aug. 29-31  
Circuit Zandvoort
- **FORMULA 1 PIRELLI GRAN PREMIO D'ITALIA 2025** | Sept. 5-7  
Autodromo Nazionale Monza

## BUDGET OPTIONS

- Try getting tickets to a **Formula E** race instead. Gaining popularity, these races are only for high-level electric racing cars.  
[www.fiaformulae.com](http://www.fiaformulae.com)
- Go to a local race at the **Nürburgring** in the northern Rhineland-Pfalz ([nuerburgring.de](http://nuerburgring.de)), the **Hockenheimring** near Heidelberg ([www.hockenheimring.de](http://www.hockenheimring.de)) or **Norising** in Nürnberg ([norising.de](http://norising.de)).
- Attend a rally. The rougher sibling to F1 racing, rally car races are time trials across dirt or mixed-use roads. The **Central European Rally** ([www.centraleuropeanrally.eu](http://www.centraleuropeanrally.eu)) is in October near Passau.
- For a **schedule of FIA events**, visit [www.fia.com/international-sporting-calendar](http://www.fia.com/international-sporting-calendar). Note that the website doesn't provide venue links; you must do a quick web search to buy tickets. ■

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# SATISFY YOUR **NEED FOR SPEED** AT THE **HOCKENHEIMRING**

By Allie Smeeth

**D**o you have what it takes to be a race car driver? Well. If you want to test your skills, the Hockenheimring is the place for you. Whether you decide to take part in solo-driving experiences or watch one of the many motor races, service-members and their families will enjoy the thrill of driving like never before.

## HISTORY

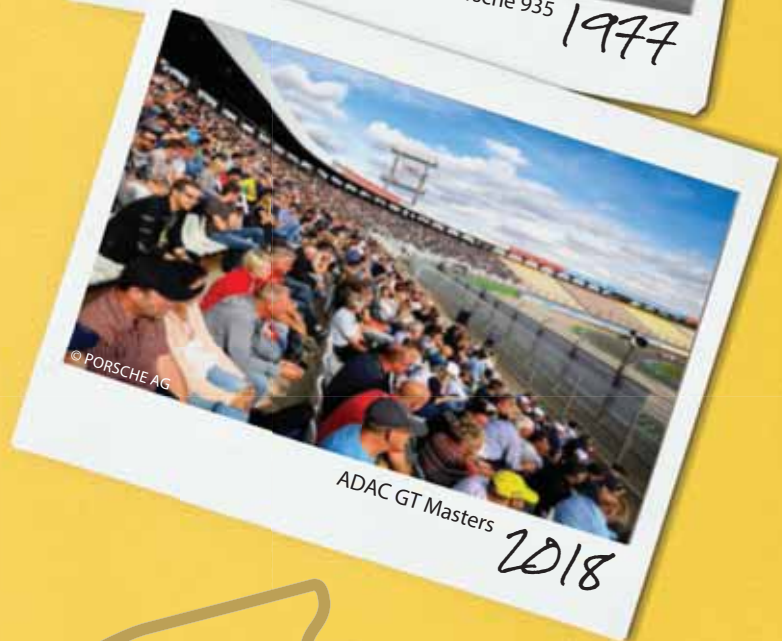
Initially created for the town of Hockenheim, Ernst Christ's rink has become world-renowned. Since its 1932 opening, the Hockenheimring's track and seating arena have been remodeled numerous times. These reconfigurations created today's complex, which can entertain up to 120,000 spectators at a time!

**TRIANGULAR COURSE:** After obtaining support, construction for Hockenheim's first triangular rink began on March 23, 1932. After two months of building, the track hosted its first motorcycle race on May 29. The opening of this rink greatly impacted the town of Hockenheim and the world of racing.

**OVAL COURSE:** Once the rink turned six, the foundation decided to do a little remodeling. This revamping resulted in the rink's Kurpfalzring. The Kurpfalzring was not only wider than the original track, but it was also safer. The increased width of the track enabled racers to travel at higher speeds and also provided spectators with better views of the course.

**OBEYING THE LAW:** In the early 1960s, Hockenheimring got another makeover. This reconfiguration was brought on because of the town's Mannheim-Walldorf motorway. The new motorway rearranged the layout of the road to Stuttgart, Karlsruhe, Walldorf and Heilbronn. This highway's system circled the rink, which caused Christ to come up with a new track. Christ's system incorporated a new Motodrom concept, which provided a better venue for guests and competitors.

**MAN VS. NATURE:** Although the updated rink provided a spacious environment for racers and spectators, the route was problematic. At the time, the track dipped in the woods, which made it difficult for guests to observe the races. To eliminate this issue, the Hockenheimring Besitz company put in a request for funding to expand the track. After gaining approval, construction began. Despite being two kilometers shorter than the original, Hockenheimring has continued to entertain spectators and provide a safe driving atmosphere for racers.





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## EVENTS

Each year Hockenheimring hosts a variety of racing events like the 1000 km, motorcycle and public performance races.

**THE NEED FOR SPEED:** During NitrOlympX, spectators experience the rush of dragsters hitting speeds up to 500 km/h. Once the afternoon events are over, stick around for the Saturday night show. During the event, drivers perform various stunts and ignite the sky with colorful flames from their tires.

**THE OLDIES:** Travel back in time during the annual Hockenheimring Classics event, happening each September. Throughout the afternoon, spectators can observe old motorcycles

and sidecars race along the track. After the show, make sure to stop by and get autographs from the drivers.

**RACE'N'ROLL:** Test your driving skills on these days. An experienced trainer is on-site, and you can drive the car of your dreams. Experience and price levels vary. Prices begin at 399 euro.

**FIT ON TRACK:** A couple of times a year, the track is open to those who want to walk, jog, bike, hand-bike and in-line skate on the track.

**GLÜCKSGEFÜHLE FESTIVAL:** This is not only a place to race, but to rock out! This music festival is the largest in Germany. In September 2025, artists include the Black Eyed Peas, Apache 207 and Neelix. ■



NitrOlympX

2019

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Hockenheimring Classics

2019

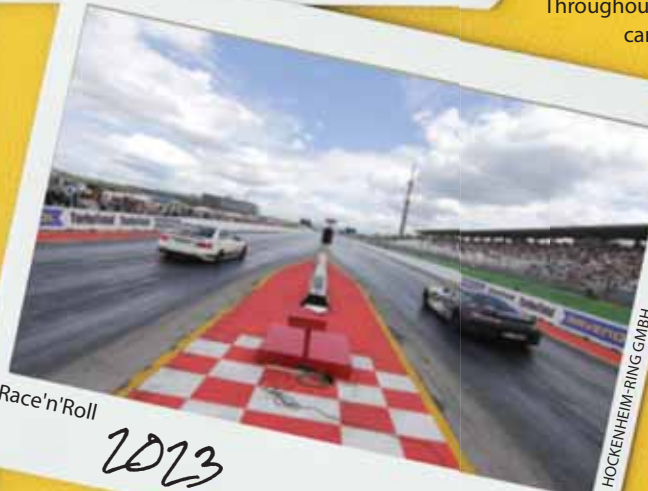
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Fit On Track

2023

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Race'n'Roll

2023

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MÜRREN, SWITZERLAND

Photo by Karla Sweeney



The cows (and people) who live in the car-free village of **Mürren, Switzerland** dwell high above the Lauterbrunnen Valley in an idyllic alpine meadow where they can take in panoramic views of famous rocky peaks like the Eiger. ■



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