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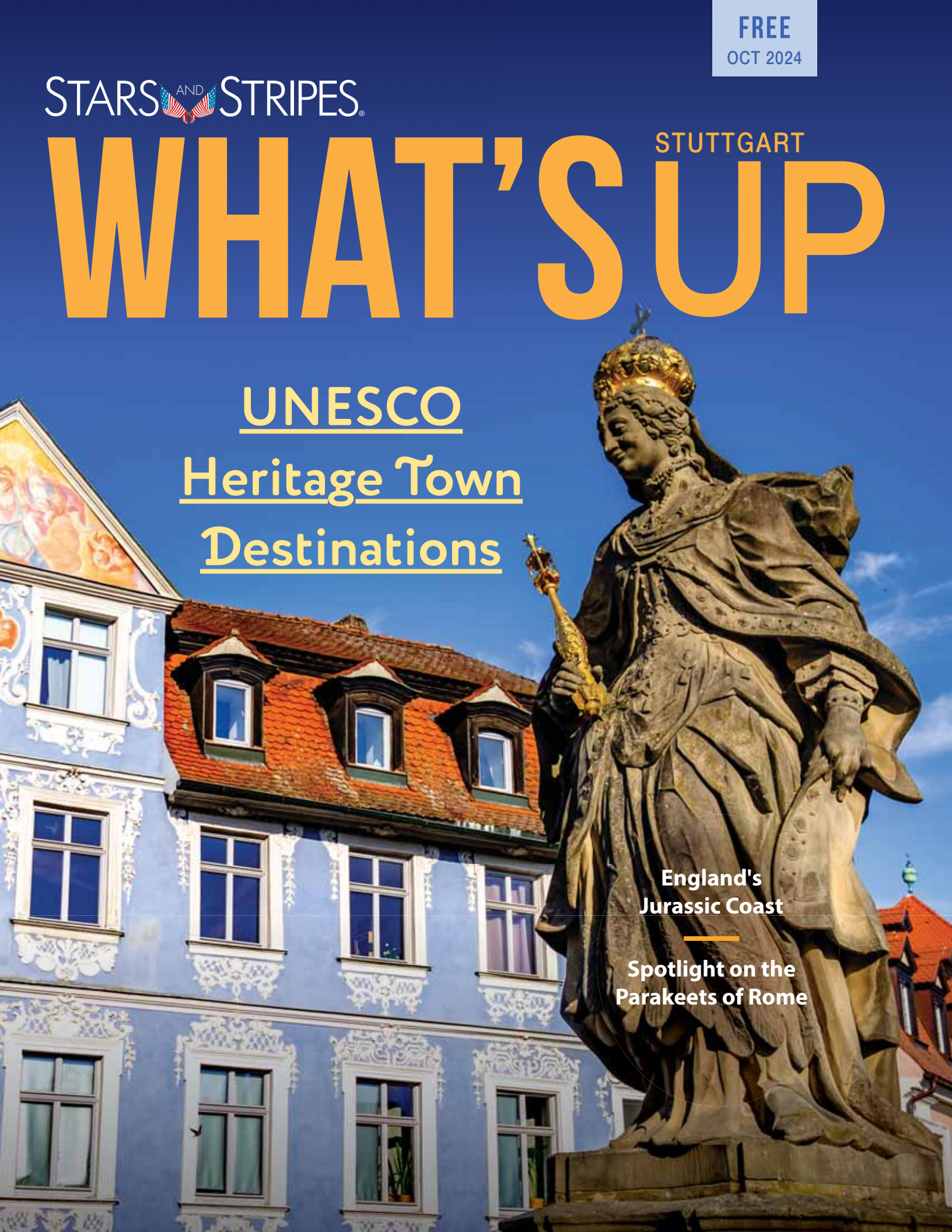
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### GERMANY

Augustusburg Castle Tour from Cellar to Ceiling |  
Brühl | April 4–Oct. 20

Theatre: "Light and Shadow" | Bamberg |  
June–Oct. 27

This light and shadow show takes viewers through the 1,000-year history of Bamberg in 90 minutes. The show is held at a small chapel in one of the oldest rooms in the city so you can feel fully immersed as you travel back in time via shadow theater to learn the history of what makes Bamberg a UNESCO World Heritage city.

UNIDRAM 30th International Theatre Festival |  
Potsdam | Nov. 5–9

London Philharmonic Orchestra | Baden-Baden |  
Nov. 10

Adventure Tour: Fascination of World Heritage |  
Bamberg | April–December

Christmas City of the North | Lübeck | Nov. 25–Dec. 30

Afternoon Dance on Christmas Day | Baden-Baden |  
Dec. 12

The Magical Music of Harry Potter | Baden-Baden |  
May 4, 2025

Rammelsberg Mine Train Tour | Goslar | Year-round

### AUSTRIA

Festival La Gacilly-Baden Photo | Baden bei Wien |  
June 13–Oct. 13

All in One Ball | Graz | Oct. 5

Christkindlmarkt Domplatz and Residenplatz  
Salzburg | Nov. 21–Jan. 1, 2025

The Salzburg Christmas market is set in the middle of Old Town Salzburg, a UNESCO World Heritage site. It is deemed one of the most beautiful and oldest Christmas markets in the world, dating back to the 15th century. This market is steeped in tradition and focused on stalls that sell many handicrafts and toys made in a traditional fashion. Regional delicacies are also available such as *Kaiserschmarrn*, a type of shredded pancake, and enormous pretzels smothered in Swiss cheese.

Tokio Hotel | Vienna | Mar. 18, 2025

Mozart Dinner Concert | Salzburg | Year-round

### IRELAND AND THE U.K.

Scottish International Storytelling Festival |  
Edinburgh | Oct. 18–31

20th Birdport Literary Festival | Dorset | Nov. 3–9

The Ba' | Orkney | Dec. 25 and Jan. 1, 2025.

Hogmanay | Edinburgh | Dec. 31–Jan. 2, 2025

ReBalance Bath: Festival of Wellbeing | Bath |  
Jan. 30–Feb. 16, 2025

Orkney Nature Festival | Orkney | May. 13–19

Keswick Beer Festival | Keswick | June 6–7, 2025

Heritage Open Days | Throughout England | Sept. 6–15

Jane Austen Festival 250th Anniversary Year |  
Bath | Sept. 13–24, 2025

Promenade in your Regency era costumes and participate in costumed balls, theatrical performances and much more to celebrate one of the world's most renowned female authors. 2025 will mark the 250th year since Jane Austen came into the world. The annual festival will be hosting



special events throughout the year to celebrate, including a Yuletide Jane Austen Birthday Ball in the Bath pump rooms in December.

## ITALY

**Pistachio Festival** | Bronte | Oct. 11–20

This festival takes place on the flanks of UNESCO World Heritage Site, Mount Etna. Pistachios have been a long-lasting culinary staple in Sicily. This annual celebration of the “green gold of Sicily” has tasting sessions, live cooking demonstrations, seminars and other entertainment. You can taste and buy many pistachio-based products such as pesto, chocolates and of course, gelato.

**International White Truffle Fair** | Alba | Oct. 12–Dec. 8

**Festival dei Popoli** | Florence | Nov. 2–10

**Feast of Santa Lucia** | Siracusa | Nov. 30–Dec. 20

**Fiesta di Sant’Agata** | Catania | Feb. 3-5, 2025

**Carnevale** | Venice | Feb. 14–March 4, 2025

**Rome Marathon** | Rome | March 16, 2025

**Vinitaly** | Verona | April 6–9, 2025

**Lemon Festival** | Cinque Terre | May 17, 2025

**Vogalonga Regatta** | Venice | May 26, 2025

## FRANCE

**Horse in Majesty Exhibit** | Palace of Versailles | July 2–Nov. 3

As an accompaniment to the Paris 2024 Olympic games being hosted on the Versailles estate, the palace will display an exhibit dedicated to horses and equestrian civilization in Europe. It is the first exhibit of this theme to be presented on this large of a scale. It will lead viewers on a tour through the palace including areas such as the War and Peace Rooms, the Hall of Mirrors and the Africa Rooms.

**Antique Book Market** | Nice | Oct. 5–19

**Nice Carnival** | Nice | Feb. 15–March 2, 2025

**Mont Saint-Michel Marathon** | Mont Saint-Michel | May 2025

**Napoleon III Celebrations** | Vichy | May 2025

**The Grand Masked Ball** | Versailles | June 8, 2025

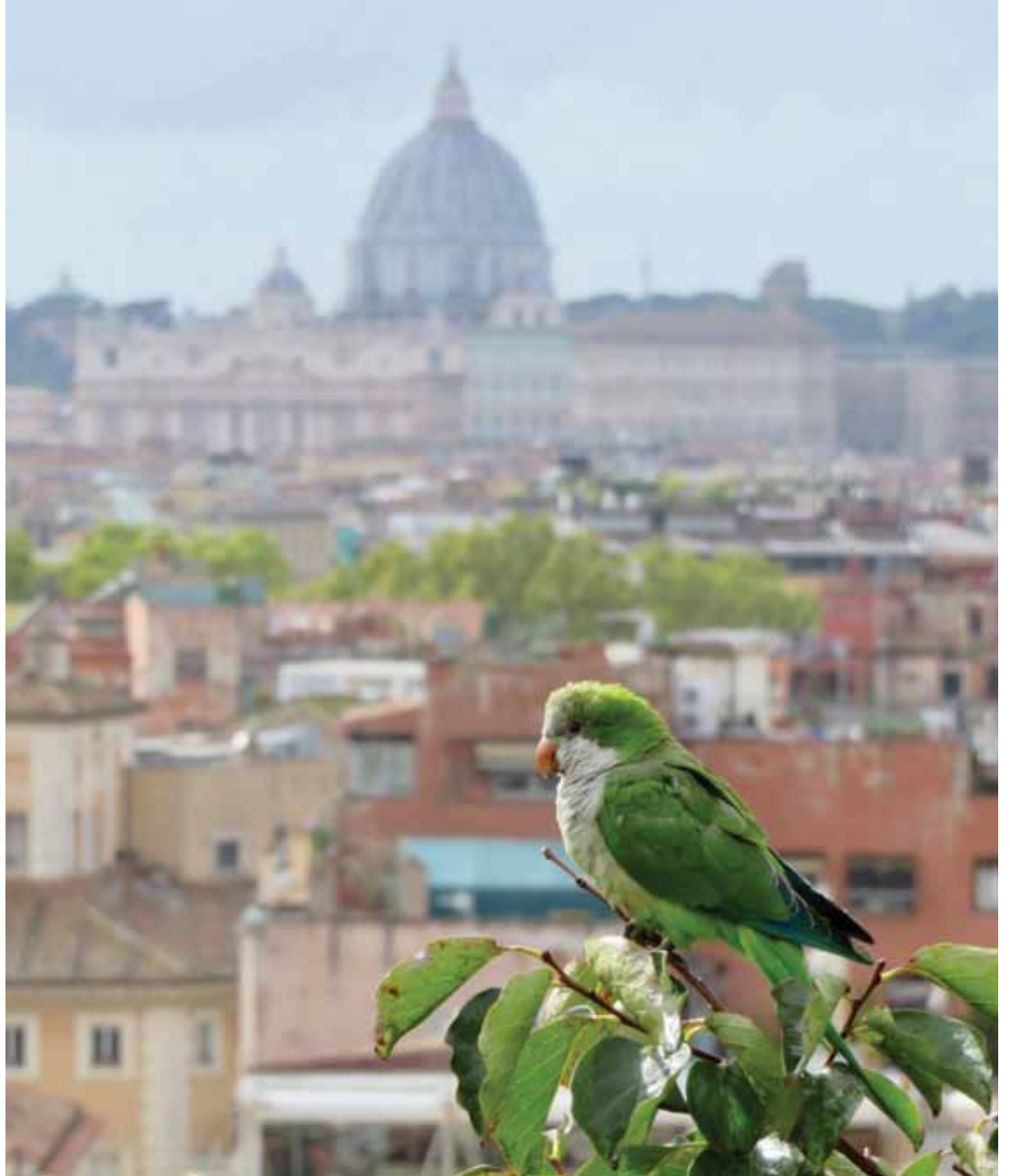


## Extra



Scan for more UNESCO events across Europe. ■

# Spotlight On



## The Parakeets of Rome

By Kat Nickola

This green Monk parakeet is one of two invasive species of parakeet that have taken over the city of Rome. While many Romans (and tourists) enjoy the birds, their presence is controversial. Some biodiversity experts claim they compete with local woodpeckers and seagulls, while others disagree and can find no evidence for damage to the urban environmental system.

Rome is one of the world's top destinations for UNESCO Heritage Sites. With so many places making the list, the entire city center is grouped into one big complex of archaeological areas, architectural works and history

that spans thousands of years. In addition, Vatican City is another massive site that preserves the art and religious influence of the Holy See.

When the parakeets moved into the Eternal City is unclear. It is assumed that sometime in the late 1970s, the parakeets escaped or were released by a private owner. Since that time, they have established breeding colonies and their pretty, bright-green plumage can be seen near all the top sites in Rome. Perhaps they are just another newcomer to add to the diverse and eclectic heritage of the city. ■



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# Baden-Baden

Story and Photos by Katie Wells



**EAT** The Black Forest is synonymous with Black Forest cake: traditionally a German cake with layers of rich chocolate sponge, cherries, cherry liquor, and a simple whipped cream. When my spouse and I visited **Baden-Baden**, my favorite restaurant **Waldgaststätte Bütthof** re-envisioned this famous staple into a molten chocolate cake with pistachio ice-cream. I still drool over the memories of this dessert. The restaurant sits in the Grobbachtal Valley and is a perfect dinner stop after a day of hiking to see the Geroldsau Waterfall. The dishes are prepared with fresh regional ingredients. I tried the special of the day, *Schweinbraten mit Kartoffelklöße*, which was a savory slow-roasted pork shoulder with potato dumplings.







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# STAY

For a true wellness and luxury retreat, you can stay at one of the many Baden-Baden heritage properties. **Belle Epoque** is a boutique hotel and an ode of elegance to the history of Baden-Baden. It is in the center of the city and just a short walk to the neighboring Caracalla Thermal Spa. The rooms are styled ornately with decor such as, Victorian and Art Deco. The nightly rate includes a breakfast buffet and afternoon tea with homemade cakes. They also host an afternoon High Tea for a separate rate. For more information, visit [hotel-belle-epoque.de](http://hotel-belle-epoque.de).

For a budget-friendly hotel, we stayed at the **Holiday Inn Express**. It was an easy walk to the center of town and other sites we wanted to see. A continental breakfast was included with the room rate and the hotel has a public underground car park. We drove, so it was nice to have close parking and know that our car was safe. For more information, visit [ihg.com/holidayinnexpress/baden-baden](http://ihg.com/holidayinnexpress/baden-baden).



# LOVE

In 2021, UNESCO named **Baden-Baden** a World Heritage Site, as one of 11 of the **Great Spa Towns of Europe**. A town of Roman origin, Baden-Baden was founded over 2,000 years ago. In true Roman fashion, **Friedrichsbad Spa** and **Caracalla Thermal Baths** are the main attractions in this town. For an anniversary trip, my spouse and I decided to pamper ourselves and book "The Day Spa for Two," a private bath and massage treatment package at Caracalla. It even included fresh fruit, orange juice and champagne. For those new to the European therme culture, it is common to have all nude baths. If you're shy like me, booking a private bath means you can experience all the benefits of the thermal spring water and 145-year bathing tradition while having privacy. We felt pampered and joked about stealing the fluffy white robes we got to wear all day. To check out both spas' day passes and other packages, you can visit [shop-carasana.de](http://shop-carasana.de).

We spent four days in Baden-Baden and still didn't get to do everything on our list. We went on the **Sommerrodelbahnen** (alpine coaster), which went surprisingly fast through the forest. You can control the speed, but the ricochet is quite thrilling regardless. And of course, we hiked to see **Geroldsau Waterfall**. After walking just a few hundred feet into the forest, I found it lived up to its reputation. The woods got much darker and cooler because of the dense trees. It was easy to see how people imagined (or maybe not) creatures peering from behind the trees and witchy huts tucked into the dense shrubbery. ■

**"We enjoyed strolling through town and seeing architecture dating back to antiquity, as well as popping into some of the many art exhibits."**



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When planning a vacation, I look for a single perfect place to settle in and enjoy the local life; a place where I can wander scenic streets and immerse myself in a landscape that oozes heritage. If you are also tired of the go-go-go vacation that involves checking boxes and seeing ALL the sites, opt for experience and culture at one of these UNESCO heritage towns. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) is a special agency that promotes the preservation of world heritage as a gateway to peace.

Each one offers something a little different, from hilltops or waterfronts to historic art and architecture. **Find one that speaks to you.**

# UNESCO Heritage Town Destinations

By Kat Nickola

## Germany

### *The Franconian gem of **Bamberg***

Look no further for half-timbered homes, a medieval dom (cathedral) and scenic bridges. The old town of Bamberg was a vital link between the Slav and Germanic peoples in the 10th century because of its location along the Main and Regnitz Rivers and their many canals and tributaries. It grew to become an important center of the Holy Roman Empire and hasn't changed much in the centuries since. Wandering for photo ops and ambience in the old town on the west side of the river will take you past many of the nearly 2,400 historic timber buildings. Visit the old Rathaus (town hall) that is still perched on a bridge over the river, tour the **Neue Residenz** palace built in grand Baroque fashion for the Holy Roman Emperor or check out the religious heritage in the cathedral. Fuel your wandering with a **Bamberger Zwiebel**, this local specialty is a serious stomach-filler with minced pork stuffed into a baked onion, topped with bacon and served over mashed potatoes with gravy. Later, settle in at a local brewery to try the **Rauschbier**—a special Franconian brew with a strong smoked malt flavor.







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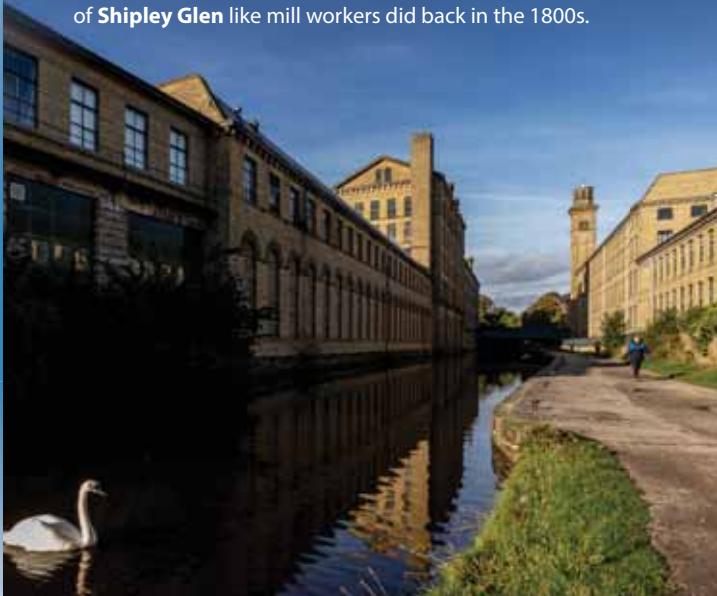


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## U.K.

### *The textile mill village of **Saltaire***

This village surrounds a textile mill from the mid-1850s. It was a self-contained community built by Sir Titus Salt to provide his workers with quality homes and facilities that supported healthy living. He moved five smaller textile factories (and the employees) out of the slums of Bradford as Victorian enlightenment ideas took off. Today, you can visit the impressive **Salts Mill** building that now houses artistic shops, restaurants and a top-floor history exhibition. The mill is situated along the River Aire and the Leeds and Liverpool Canalway, where you can still cruise the waters and walk or bike along the waterfront. In town, check out the ornate columned exterior of the Saltaire church, the plane-fronted and tidy rows of worker housing and the cute restaurants and vintage shops along Victoria and Bingley Roads. In nice weather, ramble across the river to enjoy Roberts Park, or take the historic tramway up to hike around the green spaces of **Shipley Glen** like mill workers did back in the 1800s.



## Spain

### *The spiritual old town of **Santiago de Compostela***

Stepping onto the historic streets of Santiago de Compostela is like walking into a church. It is a religious masterpiece that deeply expresses its faith. Sometime in the early ninth century, a hermit shepherd was led by a bright star to a mysterious tomb hidden in the forest. It was soon reported that this was the lost burial site of Saint James (Santiago), whose remains are believed to have been taken to the furthest reaches of his mission field. Today, you can visit Saint James' tomb in the crypt below the main altar of the **Cathedral of Santiago de Compostela**. The old town that surrounds the cathedral is full of other chapels and religious iconography adorns the Romanesque buildings. This spiritual center has been a pilgrimage site for centuries, being the end of the Camino de Santiago, or **The Way of Saint James**. The many routes begin from the furthest reaches of Europe and flow into each other like a river system to eventually converge on the town. The routes are also UNESCO heritage listed, and pilgrims continue to follow the yellow and blue scallop shells to Saint James' tomb.

***Filled with traditional wooden buildings in bright whites, reds and oranges, the Bryggen waterfront oozes North Atlantic heritage.***





## Italy

### *The Renaissance art village of **Urbino***

Situated on a hilltop in the Marche region of eastern Italy, Urbino seems to have stopped time and remained firmly rooted in the Renaissance. During the 1400s, it became a small epicenter for artists and scholars thanks to the patronage of the Duke of Montefeltro. Today, you can visit the **Palazzo Ducale** (Duke's Palace) that dominates the hilltop. It is a grand example of art, architecture and opulence. Below the palace, wander the small cobblestone streets, visit the birthplace of artist Raphael and mingle with students who still come here to study at the university founded in the 1500s. Sit at one of the **outdoor cafes** to enjoy the local specialties: truffles, soft Caciotta cheese and a glass of Bianchetto del Metauro wine from the vineyards that surround the village. Find your own artistic inspiration in the views from the city walls or down the alleyways of Urbino's steep, stair-stepped streets.



## Poland

### *The medieval town of **Toruń***

This quaint medieval walled town was overtaken by Teutonic knights in the 13th century as a home base for their military monks to spread Christianity via crusades into Eastern Europe. Their old castle was left in ruins after the local townsfolk rebelled against the Teutonic occupation, and it has remained so ever since. Originally surrounded by city walls, there are still three gates and nine towers (one casually leaning) standing along segments that make for scenic walks, especially along the Vistula River. This was the birthplace of **Nicolaus Copernicus**, and a few monuments and sites are dedicated to his memory, including a planetarium. Some of the best sights will be those you discover on your own while taking in the traditional brick townhouses or walking along the colorful pedestrian-only **Szeroka Street** full of shops and restaurants. Be sure to try some of the local gingerbread made famous during Toruń's time as a stop along the Hanseatic trading routes.

## Norway

### *The historic harbor district of **Bryggen, Bergen***

According to the Icelandic Sagas, Bergen, Norway grew along the harbor (called the Bryggen) in the Middle Ages. It became Norway's most important city. You can walk out along the waterfront to a fortress at the harbor's entrance where **King Håkon's Hall** is still used for special events. In the 1300s, the Hanseatic League established an office and Bryggen became a bustling trade town. Filled with traditional wooden buildings in bright whites, reds and oranges, this waterfront area oozes North Atlantic heritage. There are two museums that showcase Bryggen's history and traditional craft shops to poke around. Across the harbor is the fish market, now covered in a decidedly-not-original glass building, this is the best place for tasting Norwegian dishes like creamy cod fish soup and smoked salmon. For a different view, take the **Floibanen funicular** to the hilltop above town where you can see over the Bryggen on clear days or wander the misty troll-filled forest. ■





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# England's Jurassic Coast

By Nicole Shaffer

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**T**he cliffs along this portion of the English Channel provide glimpses into the Triassic, Jurassic, and Cretaceous periods, as well as the creatures that walked, scurried, swam, and crawled along them during those times. While the time of the dinosaurs came to an end millions of years ago, today's visitors to the Jurassic Coast can take a beachcombing stroll back in time and discover their very own fossil finds hidden amongst the rocky shores and slate grey cliffs of Dorset and Devon.

From Lulworth Cove and the striking Durdle Door arch formation to Lyme Bay, Budleigh Salterton and Charmouth Beach, there are numerous options for even the most amateur paleontologist. The respected and honored biologist Sir David Attenborough once noted that "it was here that fossil collecting became paleontology." This is thanks, in large part, to early collectors like Mary Anning, the 19th-century fossil collector who discovered the first plesiosaur (for a bit of education prep, check out her story before your visit).

Lulworth Cove and Durdle Door are spectacular and scenic, but the walking path to each is a steep and uneven trail. For those with young children or mobility concerns, the easily accessible beach at Charmouth is a better option. Families will enjoy the knowledgeable and helpful staff at the Charmouth Heritage Coast Center, while viewing the best preserved and most complete dinosaur fossil found in Britain, the Scelidosaurus. The volunteers and wardens provide information, fossil displays and guided walks. Entrance to the center is free, although

donations are appreciated. Parking at the center is only £6 for the day and there are free toilets behind the building, along with a fossil shop.

After exploring the heritage center, it's time to go fossil hunting! The Jurassic Coast beaches are rocky (of course, some of those rocks may be hiding prehistoric treasures!) and often muddy, so proper footwear will play a large role in the success of your day. Waterproof hiking shoes or boots like "Wellies" will help you keep your footing as you explore the beach. The best time of the day for fossil hunting is low tide as more land is exposed and accessible.

**I LIKE TO KEEP A FEW EXTRA TOWELS, FLIP-FLOPS OR SANDALS AND AN EXTRA CHANGE OF PANTS IN OUR VEHICLE JUST IN CASE THE OUTING GETS A BIT MUCKIER THAN PLANNED.**

Bring along a blanket, a picnic lunch, and perhaps even your own fossil hunting kit (we found ours online) and enjoy slowly combing along the shoreline to see who can find the first fossil! Not sure of your discoveries? The Charmouth Heritage Center desk will happily go through items and help you to discern fossil from rock. Digging into the cliffsides themselves is not allowed, but any fossils found along the beaches are yours to keep if you wish. And who knows? You might just bring home a 140-million-year-old souvenir, along with some amazing family memories. ■





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# WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A UNESCO World Heritage Site

By Tamala Malerk

**I**f you've ever read one of Stripes Europe's amazing travel articles, you have likely stumbled upon stories about UNESCO World Heritage Sites. It sounds like an impressive distinction, but what does it mean?

## What is UNESCO?

UNESCO stands for United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and was created in 1945. It's headquartered in Paris and has 50 field offices around the world. In 1972, the General Assembly of UNESCO adopted a convention called the "Recommendation Concerning the Protection at National Level, of the Cultural and Natural Heritage." This document defines, "cultural heritage" and "natural heritage" which helps to outline the types of places that make the World Heritage Site listings.

## How Does Something Become a World Heritage Site?

There is a five-step nomination and selection process when choosing a site. For a country to nominate a location, the country must have signed the aforementioned convention.

Countries create a tentative list, and from that list nomination files are created, and then two Advisory Bodies evaluate a property.

After evaluation, a property's final inscription is decided by the World Heritage Committee. A property must be of "outstanding Universal Value, demonstrating international significance; it must transcend

national boundaries and be of common importance for present and future generations of all humanity." It must also meet one of 10 heritage criteria requirements.

## Facts and Stats about World Heritage Sites

- There are currently 1,157 Sites around the world.
- Sites are designated as Cultural, Natural or Mixed.
- Sites that are considered "in danger" are designated that way because they are at risk due to potential (or already occurring) damage to property from deterioration, lack of conservation policies, decline in populations, climate issues and more.
- Germany has 51 World Heritage Sites. It was 52, but in 2009, the Dresden Elbe Valley was removed from the list due to "the building of a four-lane bridge in the heart of the cultural landscape which meant that the property failed to keep its 'outstanding universal value as inscribed.'"

Next time you come across these intriguing inscriptions on your travels, take note. A significant amount of work goes into receiving such a designation. ■



5  
Steps

## to Becoming a World Heritage Site

1. Making it onto the Tentative List
2. Create the Nomination File
3. Selection by two Advisory Boards
4. Selection by the World Heritage Committee
5. Meeting at least one of 10 criteria selection requirements







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