



News from Germany

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Baden-Württemberg's Capital of Culture and Shopping

The state of Baden-Württemberg in southeastern Germany is the birthplace of Schiller; home to the Black Forest; the Swabian Alps; cuckoo clocks; Mainau, the garden island; Mercedes-Benz; the international resort town of Baden-Baden and several of Germany's and the world's top spas. But one of the focal points of B-W's culture is its capital, Stuttgart, home to the famous Stuttgart Ballet, the Stuttgart State Art Gallery and many fine castles and buildings as well as some inspiring shopping!

In the heart of Stuttgart a unique museum building is evolving: the Art Museum Stuttgart. The central element of this unusual construction is a filigree glass cube with glass corridors that give off a wonderful view over the city and its surrounding hills while at night it floats above the Palace Square like an illuminated sculpture. The exhibition of the municipal art collection opens in spring 2005. The highlight of the municipal collection is the largest public collection of the works of Otto Dix, comprising over 300 paintings, drawings and prints.

"Swing into the New Year in German Style"

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EDITOR'S CHOICE

Swing into the New Year in German Style!

Celebrate the New Year Berliner-style at Steigenberger's New Year's Eve Ball under the theme: "Prohibition - once upon a time in Amerika!" www.steigenberger.de. Or, take off to the luxurious Hotel Adlon Kempinski Berlin to dance the evening away in glamorous style with entertainment and fireworks. www.kempinski.de. The Steigenberger Frankfurter Hof offers a swinging party while its counterpart in Hamburg will start with a champagne reception and finish with a flourish of fireworks at midnight! The elegant Kempinski in Hamburg is offering two overnight stays along with an invitation to its New Year's Eve gala, including sparkling wine receptions, entertainment, and a midnight buffet. In Munich, Kempinski's Hotel Vier Jahreszeiten is offering a special offer for one night accommodation for two persons in a double room from December 29, 2004 until January 9, 2005. Swizzle, fizzle, swoozle, bamboozle...auf Deutsch!

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FEATURED STORY

City Break: Elegance can be bought in Hamburg!

The value and individuality that can be found shopping in Hamburg, the Venice of the North, far outweigh the less favorable Euro Dollar exchange rate! Hamburg is home to Jill Sander and has shopping arcades and bargain basements that, combined with the new direct Continental flight from New York (as of June 9, 2005), and reasonable hotel accommodations can yield, in one weekend, years and years of benefits to one's closet, home and general sense of satisfaction that comes with finding unique and fun things a (ooh-la-la)broad!

Hamburg is a veritable shopper's paradise. The city center boasts a quantity of beautiful shopping arcades, glass-roofed malls and exclusive boutiques. No fewer than 15 shopping malls, predominantly under cover of elegant glass and marble, entice the visitor.

Between Gänsemarkt and Rathausplatz almost a dozen inter-linked, covered and heated inner-boulevards offer bold fashions, elegant designs or gourmet delights whatever the season. The Gänsemarkt (goose market) and Gerhof Passage, the Colonnades, the Hamburger Hof, the Kaufmannshaus (merchant's house), the post-modernist Galleria, the Alte Post (old post office), the Alster Arcades with the Melin Passage all make up Hamburg's network of shopping arcades. The most internationally sought-after couturiers, jewelers, trends and designs, porcelain and furs can be found on Hamburg's '5th Avenue', Neuer Wall. Here, a string of the most glamorous of names line up alongside one another: Cerrutti, Bulgari, Ferragamo, Cartier, Hermès, Jil Sander, Escada, to name but a few.

With the opening in 1984 of its spectacular extension designed by the British architect James Stirling, the Stuttgart State Art Gallery has been one of Germany's most popular museums. Built originally in the Neoclassical style of the early 19th century, the "Alte Staatsgalerie" houses works from the 14th to the 19th century. The museum's focus on significant groups of works from various movements ("Les Fauves", "Die Brücke", "Der Blaue Reiter", "Cubism") and on outstanding groups of works by individual artists (Picasso, Beckmann, Schlemmer, Beuys, Kiefer, Baselitz) accounts for the high international profile it enjoys today.

Stuttgart's Old Castle, built around 1320, has a magnificent Renaissance inner courtyard which is acknowledged by experts as the finest piece of architecture of its kind in Germany. The Stuttgart State Theatre incorporates the world-famous Stuttgart Ballet, the award-winning Stuttgart State Opera, which was named Opera House of the Year for fourth consecutive years. But now on to the culture of shopping!

Stuttgart is home to two of Germany's top clothing designers: Hugo Boss and Ulli Knecht, both of whom are sought after men's designers. Klett Passage, across from the train station, is an underground mall full of upscale shops. Although the Schulstrasse became the first pedestrian zone in Germany in 1953, the Königstrasse, a delightful ½ mile pedestrian shopping mile, up from the train station, is more well-known. The more recent glitzy chrome and glass Calwer Arcade lies

Sitting in the midst of all the international flair radiated by the "Mö", is a veritable Art Nouveau treasure: the Levante Passage in the Levantehaus, developed in the year 2000 following the complete restoration of the Levantehaus.

The best weekly markets are to be found from morning until mid-day in Isestraße (Tuesdays and Fridays), at Goldbekufer (Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays), at Großneumarkt (Wednesdays and Saturdays) or at Hofweg (Thursdays). And, to top it all off, visitors not resident in EU countries can claim value added tax paid while shopping in Hamburg.

Shoppaholics Anonymous: Hamburg's elegance can also be found at lesser prices. Outlets such as Convent, Vintage & Rags, Fair & Fair, Secondella and Waescherei among many others sell high quality brands far below the regular prices...shhhh!! For more information on shopping in Hamburg, go to www.hamburg-tourismus.de.

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REGIONAL FOCUS

Munich Hotel Openings

The new five star Dorint Sofitel Bayerpost Muenchen, a member of the Accor Hotel Group, officially opened its doors on October 2004. Located in downtown Munich, the hotel is a short walk from the city center. It has a neo-classical façade from 1896 as the building served as a post office until 1993. There are 396 modern rooms in the nine story building, and some rooms have a stunning view of the Alps. Features the trendy bistro, Suzie W. Two more Dorints, Dorint Novotel Muenchen City (children under 17 are free if they stay in parent's room) and Dorint Novotel Muenchen Messe also just opened close to the Munich Fairgrounds. For further information, go to www.sofitel.com.

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FESTIVALS & EVENTS

Musical Preludes to 2005

New Year's Concert by Candlelight

01-Jan-2005 - Lehnin (Brandenburg)

The Cistercian abbey at Lehnin, a last resting place for members of the Houses of Askanien and Hohenzollern, is an outstanding example of European medieval architecture. This rural abbey academy has an air of tranquility that enables visitors to experience the relationship between architecture and spirituality, as embodied in music. www.lehniner-sommermusiken.de.

Musica Italiana 2005

13-Jan-2005 - 16-Sep-2005 - Großregion Saar-Lor-Lux (Saarland)

The Saar Music Festival encompasses the Saarland, Lorraine, Luxembourg and Rhineland-Palatinate. Appropriately for 2005, Germany's Year of Italian Culture, the theme this year is "Musica Italiana". www.musikfestspiele-saar.de.

Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra concert highlights

20-Jan-2005 - 22-Apr-2005 - Munich (Bavaria)

Concerts by the Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra in Munich are considered by many to be the pinnacle of musical achievement. www.muenchentickets.de.

