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Spare the Bank Account this Summer and Enjoy Bavaria as a Family

Unspoiled natural surroundings, healthy air, a wealth of culture and a laid-back attitude to life - Bavaria is a family friendly vacation-destination. With special tips, deals and activities for young and old, families can enjoy a vacation without breaking the bank account. Bavaria's medieval castles, small towns and of course its town centers, provide perfect settings for everything from traditional festivals to classical concerts and exhibitions. Here are some tips how to explore Bavaria's beauty and great attractions without a financial headache.

Apartments are a great way to enjoy time exclusively with the family and spare the bank account. The regions of Garmisch-Partenkirchen, Chiemsee, Ruhpolding and Berchtesgaden offer special family packages including several nights accommodation as well as free entrance to the region's greatest attractions. Family-friendly and great-value hotels are available in abundance and they offer special deals for families as low as 35 Euro per night per person. www.berchtesgadener-land.com, www.ruhpolding.de, www.garmisch-partenkirchen.de

Farm stays in the beautiful Starnberg Five Lake Region only ninety minutes south of Munich are a fantastic and cost-effective way for a family vacation. Visitors can experience Bavaria's traditions, local life and beautiful landscapes first hand. The region is a popular destination for waterskiing, surfing and sailing. A boat cruise on Lake Starnberg or on Lake Ammer is a special way to experience the beauty of the region. The cruises pass historic locations set against an unspoiled mountain landscape. With a Family ticket (2 adults, 3 children) for 34.90 Euro this trip becomes an unforgettable memory for the whole family. www.bayern.by

Garmisch Partenkirchen is a year around climatic health resort and famous Alpine winter sports center in a stunning setting at the foot of the Zugspitze, Germany's highest mountain. Excursions over the high plateau provide a suitable challenge for mountain sports enthusiasts. There are plenty of well-maintained footpaths suitable for everyone, even for wheelchair users. A special highlight is a cable-car ride to the Zugspitze - special family rates are available. www.zugspitze.de

Chiemsee is the largest lake in Bavaria and known not only for its breathtaking landscape, but also for sailing and surfing. Chiemsee has been one of King Ludwig's favorite places and is easily accessible from Munich by train. From the town of Prien visitors can take cruises to the beautiful nunnery island of Frauenchiemsee. Prien offers a great deal for families (2 adults, 2 children). Starting at 367 Euro, they can stay for six nights in an apartment. Included in the family package are admission to museums, a boat ride to the Frauenchiemsee island, a tour of Castle Herrenchiemsee and a visit in a spa. www.tourismus.prien.de

Close to Chiemsee, the town of Ruhpolding offers a great variety of activities for the entire family within the beautiful mountain scenery for affordable prices. A highlight is climbing the summit of the Rauschberg with its breathtaking view and then riding the mountain lift back down. Families (2 adults, 2 children) can stay with the "Peak of Summer"-deal for 14 nights in an apartment for only 888 Euro. www.ruhpolding.de

Berchtesgaden National Park is one of the oldest nature reserves in the Alps. It offers visitors the opportunity to experience an enchanting and relatively unknown part of the Alps. Guided or independent walks in the national park are excellent ways to discover this wild resort. A historic viewpoint high above the Berchtesgaden area with panoramic views of up to 200 kilometers is the "Eagles Nest", Adolf Hitler's former representational residence. In the Documentation Center Obersalzberg, Hitler's former summer getaway, the visitor can see an exhibition about the Nazi regime and its rule. The road from Obersalzberg to the Eagle's Nest is a unique feat of engineering seen nowhere else in the world and a breathtaking ride.

➤www.nationalpark-berchtesgaden.bayern.de

For visitors interested in regional crafts, the Glass Road offers great activities. The route begins in Europe's "lead crystal capital" Neustadt, close to Bayreuth and the Czech border, and runs south for approximately 250 kilometers to the Passau Glass Museum where over 15,000 examples of centuries old glassware can be discovered. Visitors can watch the traditional process of glass blowing from a short distance and even take classes. ➤www.dieglasstrasse.de

Leaving Bavaria's countryside, the major cities host great attractions. Every town has a historical center and has retained its individual charm. In Nuremberg thick walls with 80 towers enclose the historical old quarter. A wealth of attractions in the old quarter bring history vividly to life - amongst them the medieval Kaiserburg Castle with its museum that offers a nine Euro family rate. ➤www.gnm.de

A walk around Rothenburg o.d. Tauber, a small town on Germany's idyllic "Romantic Road," is like taking a journey through the centuries. Its proud town hall, lofty towers, its churches and patrician houses bear witness to the town's past as a free imperial power. Visitors can relive Rothenburg's history during one of the popular "Nightwatchman Tours." The fees are six Euros for adults, four Euros for students and children under six years of age are free of charge. ➤www.rothenburg.de

The town of Coburg, in Bavaria's northern region of Franconia, not only features nostalgic half-timbered houses alongside significant Renaissance and Baroque buildings, but is also well known for the legacy of the dukes of Saxony-Coburg and Gotha. They established connections to most European dynasties, headed by the marriage between Queen Victoria and Prince Albert of England. Albert and Victoria spend many happy days in Coburg in the ducal city residence Ehrenburg and castle Rosenau. Walking through Coburg's many castles, viewing its manicured gardens and cemeteries is a great opportunity to get an insight into the world of higher European nobility. ➤www.coburg-tourist.de

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