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### Through the Eyes and Ears of a Child: Germany's Castle Festivals

Welcome to our January 2008 press newsletter: Through the Eyes and Ears of a Child: Germany's Castle Festivals. We do respect your privacy. Should you no longer wish to receive our newsletter, please scroll down to unsubscribe. Thank you.

#### Editors Choice: Great Deals, Medieval Knights and Classic Fairy Tales Await Visitors

There is no better time to beat the winter blues and the high Euro than with the great airline deals from [AirBerlin/LTU](#) and [Singapore Airlines](#) both of which have flights starting as low as \$299 round trip. Nonstop and direct flights take you from major US gateways including NYC and Miami to Frankfurt, Berlin, Stuttgart, Duesseldorf and more. Or how about an air inclusive seven day ski package to Berchtesgaden starting at \$1,245 - more details below in our Special Deals section.

In 2008, we will be focusing on the multitude of incredible castles and gardens in Germany. One of the many ways families and children, especially those who dream of knights and shiny armor, can enjoy a unique experience in Germany participating in festivals.

Two favorites are the medieval jousting festival in Kaltenberg and the re-enactments along Germany's Fairy Tale Route in the land of the Brothers Grimm.

For more information please continue reading our special castle festival feature.

#### Feature: Through the Eyes of a Child: Germany's Castle Festivals

Germany's Castles come alive every year with the celebration of festivals, medieval weddings, classical concerts, jousting tournaments, fairytales and even Christmas markets. Explore Germany's castle festivals through the eyes and ears of a child. Here is an overview of Castles and their festivals throughout the year.

#### Special January Events:

##### Exhibition Duane Hanson, Voelklingen

Oct 20, 2007 - Mar 30, 2008

The world heritage site, Voelklinger Huette, the large Ironworks complex in Saarland, serves as venue for an exhibition that currently displays 26 works of the world famous Pop-Art-Artist Duane Hanson. Duane Hanson (1925-1996) was one of the most important American sculptors of the twentieth century and became famous in the 1960s and '70s for his lifelike sculptures of everyday people that were cast from live models. Voelklingen is the only stop of a Duane-Hanson-world-tour in middle Europe. The exhibition marks the final of the project 'European Capital of Culture 2007, Luxemburg and Greater Region'. [www.voelklinger-huette.org](http://www.voelklinger-huette.org)

##### Piet Mondrian - Depiction to Picture, Cologne

Dec 14, 2007 - Mar 30, 2008

One of the most spectacular events is the 'Rhine in Flames' festival. From May 3 through September 9 visitors can enjoy a series of mind-blowing pyrotechnical spectacles where fireworks and bengal fire (a blue flare) light up the river's many castles and palaces along the prettiest stretches of the mighty River Rhine. [www.rlp-info.de](http://www.rlp-info.de)

The 'Heidelberg castle illuminations' are held several times each year, in 2008 on June 7, July 12 and September 6, whereby the castle walls turn blood red in the glow of torches and huge, brilliant fireworks displays are launched from the Old Bridge, bathing the entrance to the Neckar valley in a stunning panoply of light and colour. In 1878 even Mark Twain attended this extraordinary event.

The 'Potsdam Palaces by Night' festival takes place in Potsdam's romantic baroque park and castle Sanssouci, just outside of Berlin. On the summer's night of August 16, visitors can marvel at the magnificently illuminated palaces and parks, enjoy an opulent program of theatre, music, literature, dance and cabaret, and treat themselves to a meal prepared by the best chefs from Potsdam and Berlin. [www.schloessernacht-2008.de](http://www.schloessernacht-2008.de).

At Hannover's 'International Fireworks Competition', captivating color and light effects cast a magic spell across the evening skies above the Herrenhausen Royal Gardens on six evenings this summer. The Great Garden provides the magnificent setting for the musical firework displays and for a lively program of entertainment and events. In 2008, the competitions take place on May 10, June 14, August 30, September 13 and 27. [www.hannover.de](http://www.hannover.de)

Jousting tournaments and medieval markets are also very popular and take place in castles and towns all over the country. The 'Kaltenberg Knights Tournament' in Bavaria is the largest tournament of modern times and takes place on the weekends (Fri - Sun) between July 5 and 27. Approx. 120,000 visitors come to Kaltenberg Castle each July to see the Great Tournament, stroll across the largest medieval market and to see an eight hour program set on seven stages. [www.rittturnier.de](http://www.rittturnier.de)

Please don't forget to mark your calendar for Luther's Wedding, central Germany's biggest historical spectacle, taking place every year in June. From June 6 to 8, one of Germany's most delightful festivals attracts 100,000 visitors and celebrates the marriage of Martin Luther to Katharina von Bora in 1525. The highlight of this three day event is a large parade through the streets of Wittenberg where around 1,000 participants dress in historical costumes. [www.wittenberg.de](http://www.wittenberg.de)

And from August 22 to 24, the 'Luther Festival' takes place in Eisenach. A whole quarter is transformed into a series of scenes from the late Middle Ages in honor of the great reformer Martin Luther. Craftworkers, people in historical costume, traveling players and entertainers recreate the fascinating atmosphere of a medieval market while Luther's life story is staged at original open-air venues. [www.luther-das-fest.de](http://www.luther-das-fest.de) (German only)

For lovers of the performing arts, Germany's castles and palaces provide fantastic backgrounds for a number of extraordinary music and theater events. Castle Moritzburg just outside of Dresden comes alive once again in 2008 from August 9 until August 24 at the 'Moritzburg Festival' with the wonderful sounds of Jan Vogler and his roster of international musicians. For two weeks, soloists from all over the world will present works of chamber music in Volkswagen's Transparent Factory, the Schloss Moritzburg, the Frauenkirche and the Evangelical Church in Moritzburg. [www.moritzburgfestival.de](http://www.moritzburgfestival.de).

A special highlight are also the concerts in Germany's Cinderella castle Neuschwanstein. Every September visitors can enjoy a series of classical concerts in these fairy tale-like surroundings. [www.schwangau.de](http://www.schwangau.de)

One of the largest and most important Mondrian collections worldwide will be shown by the Museum Ludiwg. The collection from the Gemeentemuseum, the Hague, illustrates the artist's progression from his Impressionist and Cubist beginnings right through to the "Neoplasticism" so typical of him and also named by him. [www.museenkoeln.de](http://www.museenkoeln.de)

### **Gourmet Festival, Sylt**

Jan 17 - Jan 20, 2008  
Food lovers of the truffle-and-foie-gras class flock to the elegant island of Sylt, Germany's Hamptons, as the Gourmet Festival gathers top international chefs to prepare elaborate feasts at several top hotels and restaurants. The event attracts star chefs from around the world. Each day also brings a special themed event and diners can enjoy a tip-top à la carte dinner from the visitors at any of the luxury hotels. [www.gourmet-festival-sylt.de](http://www.gourmet-festival-sylt.de) (German only)

### **Carnival in Mainz**

Jan 31 - Feb 5  
Carnival is the most important popular festival in Mainz. The carnival campaigns begin on New Year's Day with a procession of Carnival regiments through the center of town. Thereafter, numerous carnival sessions in and around Mainz lead up to the 'crazy climax', which is the world-famous Mainz Carnival Parade. This takes place on the Monday (Feb 4) before Lent and is watched live by over half a million visitors. [www.mainz.de](http://www.mainz.de)

### **Carnival in Duesseldorf**

Jan 31 - Feb 5  
This is one of the biggest and most ebullient carnival bashes in Germany. Duesseldorf is turned upside down as more than 6000 revelers parade through the city, dressed in screaming colors and uniforms with more than 60 wagons and 120 horses. Share the experience with more than a million spectators. [www.karneval-in-duesseldorf.de](http://www.karneval-in-duesseldorf.de)

Children might especially enjoy a visit to 'Germany's fairy tale-route' which stretches from Hanau in the south to Bremen in the north. It meanders past places where the Brothers Grimm have lived and worked, as well as places and landscapes in which their fairy-tales were set. Open-air plays, puppet festivals and fairytale festivals on several castles along the route take visitors on a journey to this fantastic world. [www.deutsche-maerchenstrasse.com](http://www.deutsche-maerchenstrasse.com)

At Christmas season ' medieval Christmas markets' take place in some of Germany's castles and enchant the young and the old. Two of the most unique markets are the ones on Wartburg castle near Eisenach, Thuringia. ([www.wartburg-eisenach.de](http://www.wartburg-eisenach.de)) and Satzvey Castle in North-Rhine-Westphalia ([www.burgsatzvey.de](http://www.burgsatzvey.de)).

### **Carnival in Cologne**

Jan 31 - Feb 5

Carnival fans will be on the loose, when the Street Carnival reaches its climax. The highlight of Carnival revelries is the Rose Monday parade on 4th February under the motto: "Jeschenke für Kölle - uns Kulturkamelie" - "Cologne gets treats - some cultural sweets." [www.koeln.de](http://www.koeln.de)

### **Regional Focus: Germany's Castle Route**

Over 70 castles, palaces and castle ruins line the Castle Route, evidence that it does justice to its name. The castle route runs from Mannheim, near Heidelberg, to Prague, with stops along the way at Wimpfen Imperial Palace, the largest fortified Stauffer palace north of the Alps, historical Rothenburg and Bayreuth's Margravian Residences.

For centuries the buildings have survived the vicissitudes of history and stand as reminders of emperors, kings and princes, of poets and thinkers, robber knights and romantic tales of chivalry.

Today some provide a colorful backdrop for open-air theater and concerts, for medieval banquets and historical markets. Others are still lived in by the aristocratic descendants of their former owners or their respectable middle-class successors and are partially open to visitors. Museums invite you to a journey through time, giving you impressions of life as it once was, periods of war and peace and the artistic achievements of various epochs. Four-poster beds and suits of armor recreate the atmosphere of by-gone days, as do splendid terraces with magnificent views, romantic restaurants and inviting castle courtyards, all of them part of the stylish hospitality offered by countless castle and palace hotels and restaurants. [www.burgenstrasse.de](http://www.burgenstrasse.de)

### **Heritage Special: German American Politicians and their Legacies**

For centuries, German Americans have always participated in U.S. politics actively; amongst them are U.S. presidents and influential statesman including Truman, Hoover, Eisenhower, Schurz, Kissinger and Steuben.

In the mid-1800's, many of the so-called "Forty-Eighters" moved to America after the failed liberal revolution in 1848. Carl Schurz was one of them. He became known in the Republican Party and supported the campaign of Abraham Lincoln who eventually appointed him Ambassador to Spain.

He later became a United States Senator to Missouri; served as President Rutherford B. Hayes Secretary of the Interior and after retiring in 1881, he moved to New York City, where he became editor-in-chief as well as a proprietor of the New York Evening Post. Schurz is still considered one of the most influential German-American politicians of his time. In his hometown of Erfstadt-Liblar you will find a monument to Carl Schurz, and a memorial at the Castle Gracht in his birthplace of Liblar as well as a portrait and a relief on the southwest side of the "Paulskirche" in Frankfurt.

German American presidents include: Hoover, Truman and Eisenhower.

U.S. President Herbert Clark Hoover (whose family name originally was Huber, a very common German name) was born 1874 into a Quaker family of German and Swiss descent in West Branch, Iowa. Hoover was actually the first president to be born west of the Mississippi.

President Harry S. Truman's great-great-grandfather lived in Lachendorf near Celle. Elected vice president in 1944, Truman became president upon Roosevelt's sudden death in April 1945 and was immediately faced with the problems of the post-war adjustment. Truman attended the Potsdam Conference at Cecilienhof.

Today, visitors to Potsdam can step into the rooms where the famous conference was held and even spend a night in the hotel in the beautiful palace. Potsdam's history also is inextricably tied to the Prussian King Frederick the Great and his residence-gardens of Sanssouci in Potsdam - a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1990 and are well worth a visit and an excellent day trip from Berlin.

And then there is "Ike": David Dwight Eisenhower who was born in 1890 in Texas to a German family, the third of seven sons. The Eisenhower family was originally of Pennsylvania German descent, and Eisenhower's German ancestors came to America in 1732, settling at York, Pennsylvania.

Among other things he was responsible for broadening the Social Security system, creating the Department of Health, Education and Welfare and for creating the National Interstate Highway System that America vastly depends on today.

A famous statesman, known for his Realpolitik, is Henry Alfred Kissinger who played a dominant role in United States foreign policy between 1969 and 1977.

Henry Alfred Kissinger was born Heinz Alfred Kissinger in 1923 in Fürth in Franconia (Bavaria). He and his family fled from persecution by the Nazi regime during the Third Reich era, and moved to New York in 1938. Henry Kissinger became a United States citizen in 1943.

Kissinger served as National Security Advisor and Secretary of State during the Nixon and Ford administrations. He was awarded with the Nobel Peace Prize along with Le Duc Tho in 1973.

A number of U.S. cities and counties are named for General Steuben, otherwise known as Friedrich Wilhelm Ludolf Gerhard Augustin von Steuben, Freiherr von Steuben, who was born in Magdeburg, Prussia. He became an officer at a young age in the Prussian army and was a member of the infantry. In 1777, Steuben emigrated to the United States, where his personality and successes came to the attention of Benjamin Franklin. Steuben reported to Washington at Valley Forge and was commissioned to train the troops. Speaking no English, he communicated with the soldiers in French. Steuben's influence on military structure and organization is still felt today. Steuben participated in the 1781 siege of Yorktown, where the British met final defeat.

Today Steuben parades are held in New York, Philadelphia and Chicago. In his hometown Magdeburg in Thuringia, a statue commemorates Friedrich von Steuben. A plaque at the Post Office remembers the great son of the city; additionally there are several busts in the museum and the city hall.

For more see: [www.germanoriginality.com](http://www.germanoriginality.com)

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## Special Deals

### Holidaze Ski Tours - Berchtesgaden

Join in the winter fun in the Bavarian Alps! Garmisch-Partenkirchen is Germany's most popular skiing area and candidate for the Winter Olympic Games in 2018.

As Germany's highest skiing area (2,000-2,830 m / 6,561 - 9,285 ft) and glacier region Garmisch-Partenkirchen has snow from November till May and offers winter enthusiasts ideal conditions for a great variety of winter sports such as skiing, snowboarding, cross-country skiing and sledding as well as the new trend sport snowshoeing.

This great value package from Holidayze Ski Tours includes round trip air transportation from JFK to Munich, meet and greet service at Munich Airport, 7 nights accommodation in a 3-, 4- or 5-star hotel (Alpina, Mercure, Obermühle or Reindl's Partenkirchner Hof) as well as breakfast buffet. Prices start at \$1,245 double occupancy. Additional fees and taxes apply. [www.holidayze.com](http://www.holidayze.com)

### King Ludwig Winter Journey

Fairy tales will come to life during this romantic 3 day journey for two with Picasso Tours. Hohenschwangau Castle (Castle of the High Swan County) was the childhood home of King Ludwig II of Bavaria, built by his father, King Maximilian II. The eccentric Ludwig commissioned many of fairy-tale style castles that are the hallmark of Bavaria including the famous Neuschwanstein Castle. This winter sojourn package showcases both these masterpieces of architecture in great romantic style. Two nights accommodation at the hotel of choice, a welcome bottle of wine, a daily breakfast buffet as well as a Musiculinaria 5-course dinner and a traditional Bavarian four-course dinner served at Schlosshotel Lisl & Jägerhaus in Hohenschwangau are all included. Travel dates are from November 2007 until March 2008 and prices without airfare start from \$384 per person in double occupancy. [www.picassotours.com](http://www.picassotours.com)

### Cologne - Carnival Package

You would like to attend one of the numerous shows, to enjoy a Carnival ball, or to experience the street Carnival during the "Crazy Days" in Cologne?

Then take advantage of the Kölle Alaaf Package. 1 overnight stay in a hotel including breakfast, a 24-hour Köln WelcomeCard including free rides on all local free-of-surcharge public transports within the municipal area, and a city-centre map will help you to enjoy the events to the fullest. A "Kamellebüggel" bag to collect sweets, a false nose as well as a carnival t-shirt will be provided as well. Prices for accommodation and WelcomeCard vary according to the desired length of stay and hotel category. In standard category with one overnight stay and one WelcomeCard. The package is available for as little as € 91.50 per person in a double room to € 126.50 for a single room. The offer is valid from January 1 until February 4 except during trade fairs. [www.koeln.de](http://www.koeln.de)

### Contact Information

For comments and enquiries, contact Victoria Larson, PR Manager, at the German National Tourist Office:

Victoria Larson  
German National Tourist Office  
122 East 42 Street, Suite 2000  
New York, NY 10168-0072  
Tel: (212) 661 7200 ext. 223  
Email: [victoria.larson@d-z-t.com](mailto:victoria.larson@d-z-t.com)  
Internet: [www.cometogermany.com/mediaroom](http://www.cometogermany.com/mediaroom)

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