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The Official Press Newsletter of
the German National Tourist Office

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A Taste of Royalty

Welcome to our February Press Newsletter: A taste of royalty. We do respect your privacy. Should you no longer wish to receive our newsletter, please scroll down to unsubscribe. Thank you.

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Editors Choice: Royal Get-Away Bad Homburg

In Bad Homburg, just outside of Frankfurt, visitors can relax as royalty in the Kur Royal Day Spa. Forget all your cares and replenish your energies. Spend two nights in an elegant room and enjoy a plentiful gourmet breakfast buffet in the Hotel Villa am Kurpark. Make use of one admission for four hours of relaxation in the Kaiser Wilhelm Bad's exclusive day spa "Kur-Royal" including saltwater relaxation pool, caldarium, odorium, stone oven bath, sand-light bath, herbal steam bath, ice fountain and "Wave Dreams." Also included is one admission to the Bad Homburg Casino. Prices start at 195US\$ per person double occupancy and include value-added tax plus health resort tax. The offer is valid throughout 2008.

➤www.kur-royal.de

Special Events

Exhibition Gerhard Richter, Baden-Baden

Until May 12

More than 60 pieces of Gerhard Richter from various private collections will be on display at the Frieder Burda Museum in Baden-Baden. Richter himself is curating this exhibition.

➤www.sammlung-frieder-burda.de

Feature: A Taste of Royalty - Germany's Top Castle Restaurants

Many of Germany's castles from the Middle Ages are today home to first class modern gourmet restaurants. Three of them even hold three Michelin stars, the highest honor a chef and his cuisine can achieve.

Schlosshotel Lerbach in Bergisch Gladbach near Cologne is considered one of the best luxury hotels in Germany and certainly is one of the finest culinary addresses: The gourmet restaurant of Dieter Müller is one of Germany's five best restaurants. Visitors to Schloss Lerbach can even take a cooking class with the renowned chef. Also, original French cuisine

Precious Trinkets of Thurn und Taxis, Munich

Until March 30

Focus of this special exhibition at the Bavarian National Museum is an ensemble of 55 golden containers from the second half of the 18th century. Originating in France, Germany, Austria, Switzerland, England and Russia, they all belonged to the Duke Family of Thurn und

in a brasserie style is served by Chef André Brauner and his kitchen team in the Coq au Vin.

➤www.schlosshotel-lerbach.com

Castle Stromberg is home to the outstanding gourmet restaurant Le Val d'Or by one of Germany's star Chefs Johannes Lafer: Visitors can not only enjoy outstanding and exquisite meals, but also participate in a cooking class at Table d'Or. Or how about a Heli-Picnic: Helicopter ride to the most beautiful places in the surroundings of the castle with a delicious picnic?

➤www.relaischateaux.com

The lavishly and faithfully restored Renaissance Castle Berg located in the heart of magnificent vineyards in the Saarland close to Luxembourg is one of the top gourmet addresses in Germany. Young star chef Christian Bau is the inspiration behind the exquisite culinary creations that have earned him two years ago three Michelin Stars. His focus on traditional French cuisine without experimental extras made him the youngest addition to the small circle of top-class German restaurants.

➤www.tourismus.saarland.de

Heritage Feature: German Easter traditions and their coming to America

Many of the American traditions as we know them, including egg decorating, Easter trees and Easter egg games, were brought to America by German immigrants.

Easter Markets all over Germany are a wonderful way to rediscover traditions and rituals, to prepare for the Easter holidays, and pick up some great souvenirs, too. Most Easter Markets take place on the weekends about four to five weeks before Easter and showcase designs of international artists.

With all the delicacies and sweet treats and decorations, Easter time is excellent for a trip with your kids. Shopping during Easter time is especially fun: Local markets sell edible and decorative eggs of all sorts and chocolate bunnies are found everywhere. Special Easter cakes (in the shape of a lamb) are available at bakeries and a traditional lamb dish, this time we are talking meat, is not to be missed.

The bunny as a symbol for Easter is first mentioned in writings in 16th century Germany. The first edible Easter bunnies, of pastry and sugar, were also produced in Germany in the early 1800s. Around that time, children made nests of grass and hid them in their parents' spring gardens for the Easter Bunny to fill during the night with brightly decorated eggs.

Pennsylvania Dutch settlers brought the Easter bunny to America in the 1700s. Their children, who used their hats or bonnets to make their nests, believed that if they were good, the "Oschter Haws" (literally Easter Hare) would fill their upturned headgear with colored eggs.

The Easter egg hunt remains as much a tradition in German towns and cities as it is on the White House lawn in Washington, D.C. Children race to find the bunny's colorful eggs across the world every year.

To learn more about German American Heritage go to

➤www.germanoriginality.com

Regional Focus: Franconian Easter Wells and Lusatia's Sorbian Easter Traditions

Taxis.

➤www.bayerisches-nationalmuseum.de

Ice sculpture world exhibition, Berlin

Until April 6

The ice and snow sculpture festival is located next to the shopping mall Alexa. Impressive sights and figures - for example the famous polar bear Knut- from the classic Wonders of the World to today's Berlin are presented.

➤www.visitberlin.de

Impressionists at the Schirn Kunsthalle Frankfurt

Feb 22 - June 1

Frankfurt's Schirn Kunsthalle has a special exhibit on Impressionists on offer: About 160 works from international museums and private collections have been put together, including those from Berthe Morisot, Mary Cassatt, Eva Gonzalès und Marie Bracquemond.

➤www.schirn-kunsthalle.de

Stuttgart State Gallery, Stuttgart

Feb 23 - June 8

The Stuttgart State Gallery opens a special exhibit on 'Pop-Art' from the 1950s to 1965. This exhibit has been put together in cooperation with the National Portrait Gallery in London.

Also, with the new Stuttgart Card, visitors can save big time on Museum admission and public transportation.

➤www.tourismus-bw.de

Bach Week, Stuttgart

February 23 - March 2

A special week is dedicated for Bach's works with discussions and special concerts and church services. Highlights include the opening concert on Feb 23 at 7pm, a Service at the Memorial Church on Feb 24, 5pm, and another Service at the Stiftskirche on March 2, 10am. The Events in the churches are free, for the opening concert tickets can be purchased in advance online.

➤www.bachakademie.de

(German only)

This year, Easter comes early. Many Easter events start as early as February, or the beginning of March, with Easter Sunday falling on March 23.

The decoration of the Easter fountains and wells is perhaps the most charming custom in the Franconian Alps in northern Bavaria. Starting a few weeks before Easter, the fountain or well in many villages is cleaned and decorated with ornaments, including painted eggs. Single paper streamers or so-called "Pensala" streamers tied in bunches, are also used as ornaments. Garlands and spruce are wound around the body of the well or woven to form a frame or a crown to which the eggs are fastened. In some places real flowers are also used to decorate the wells.

The main reason for decorating the wells and springs lies primarily in the significance of water as the life-giving element for the arid plateaus of the Franconian Alps. More than 200 Easter wells can be seen in Franconian towns from Good Friday until about two weeks later. Places include Buttenheim, Pegnitz and Pottenstein. The closest bigger town in the region is Nuremberg.

➤www.fraenkische-schweiz.com (German only)

Leaving Bavaria, and traveling to the region of Lusatia, geographically a part of Saxony and Brandenburg state, is home to a people called the Sorbs, who are very well known for their Easter traditions: Bautzen, a town east of Dresden, is also called the 'Easter Town' and visitors to this region can experience some long-standing German Easter tradition this March.

Among the highlights is a visit to the local the Easter Egg markets, that display Sorbian Easter eggs which are known for their beauty and are made with special techniques. Easter events in Bautzen that are not to be missed include the procession of Easter Riders in traditional costumes who march on richly decorated horses through the town of Bautzen and the villages around on Easter Sunday. Approximately 1500 riders participate each year in this impressive tradition. Some of the horses are brought especially for this event to the region.

The so-called 'Eierschieben' is a fun event that will certainly entertain: When this tradition began in 1550, eggs, nuts, apples and sweets were pushed and rolled down a hill called 'Protschenberg' by the adults, and the children waited at the foot of the slope to pick them up. Today, the food items have been replaced by plastic eggs, which are later exchanged for little prizes: you can imagine that this is a lot of fun for everyone - old or young.

Special Deals

Schloss Reinhartshausen Kempinski Valentine's Package

Schloss Reinhartshausen Kempinski, in the Rhine valley close to Frankfurt, has a perfect Valentine combination of noble atmosphere together with the superb location. The Schlosshotel's special Valentines package includes one overnight accommodation in a deluxe room, breakfast buffet, a bottle of sparkling wine and flowers in your room upon arrival, a five-course-menu at the restaurant "Prinzess von Erbach" including all beverages, free entrance to the wellness area as well as free parking. Prices start from 380US\$ per person double occupancy. The offer is valid upon request and availability and bookable over February 14, 2008.

➤www.schloss-hotel.de

Winter in the State of Brandenburg

Brandenburg, the state surrounding Berlin, has a special winter offer: For only 85US\$ you can get a double room and breakfast for two at one of the 68 hotels in Brandenburg participating in this special offer. This is a great deal for those visiting Berlin and who wish to stay in closer proximity to the historic sites of Potsdam.

➤www.winterliches-brandenburg.de

Germany's Easter Markets

A selection of Germany's Easter Markets:

Bautzen, near Dresden

Saturday, Feb 16, 10am - 6pm

Sunday, Feb 17, 10am - 6pm
House of the Sorbs

➤www.volkskultur.sorben.com
(German only)

Erlangen, near Nuremberg

Saturday, Feb 23, 10am - 6pm

Sunday, Feb 24, 2008, 10am - 6pm

40 international artists are exhibiting Easter art. Visitors can see the most important Easter Egg traditions including the Sorbian art of Easter Egg decorations.

➤www.ostereiermarkt-erlangen.de
(German only)

Schwetzingen, near Stuttgart

Saturday, Feb 23, 11am - 6pm

Sunday, Feb 24, 2008, 10am - 5pm

For the 24th time, 50 of the best international Egghandcraftsman present their newest creations. The beautiful atmosphere of the castle is the perfect place for these individual presentations.

➤www.ostereiermarkt.com
(German Only)

Mannheim, near Karlsruhe

Saturday, March 15, 11am - 6pm

Sunday, March 16, 11am - 6pm

Luisenpark Mannheim, Festhalle Baumhain
40 artists from all over Germany, France, the Netherlands, Hungary and Russia come to display their latest crafts.

➤www.ostereiermarkt.com
(German Only)

Satzvey Castle, near Cologne

Sunday March 24, 11am - 7pm

Satzvey Castle is one of the most beautiful and best maintained moated castles of

Picasso Tours and Emirates Hamburg Special

Make use of this fantastic offer as long as it lasts!

Stroll the Alster Lake, visit the new BallinStadt Emigration World and see where the Beatles started their career at the Reeperbahn. Discover Hamburg with this winter special by Picasso Tours and take advantage of the non-stop connection from New York to Hamburg offered by Emirates Airlines. The package includes an economy class roundtrip flight from New York to Hamburg and three nights accommodation in the Stella Maris Hotel or Hotel City House in Hamburg including breakfast. This offer is valid for travel until March 31. Prices start from 570US\$ double occupancy.

➤www.picassotours.com

Book 3 days - pay 2 days at the InterCity Hotel in Düsseldorf

Enjoy a short break in Düsseldorf. Do some shopping, visit the famous museums or go for a boat trip on the river Rhine. The offer includes three overnight stays in a comfortable room, a sumptuous breakfast buffet, a welcome drink and free use of the local public transport. Prices start from 270US\$ per single room per night. The offer is valid throughout 2008. The airlines Air Berlin/LTU have great offers to fly to Duesseldorf.

➤www.duesseldorf.intercityhotel.com

Steigenberger Winter Treat

There are many good reasons for a trip to Bad Reichenhall, in the wonderful nature of the surrounding Berchtesgarden region, the wide range of sport and wellness possibilities. The skiing area "Goetschen" is only 20 min. away from the Steigenberger Axelmannstein. The grand hotel, surrounded by a 30,000 m² park with its own lake, offers its guests exclusive comfort and service. Enjoy two overnight stay including breakfast, one dinner within halfboard, free use of the pool and wellness area as well as a day skipass at Göttschen Ski Center. The offer is valid until March 15th. Prices start from 249US\$ per person double occupancy.

➤www.bad-reichenhall.steigenberger.com

North Rhine-Westfalia. Every year the castle holds an Easter market where it exhibit Easter eggs and spring-themed local arts and crafts.

➤www.burgsatzvey.de

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