



The Official Newsletter of the German  
National Tourist Press Office

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We are delighted to launch our newly designed official newsletter packed with useful tips and ideas on Germany. Please note, 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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#### Editor's Note: Lenten Escape: Strong Beer Season

It's "Strong Beer Season" in Munich! For four weeks, especially strong, "doppelbock" beers are served during Lent after the end of Fasching. The tradition, "spring health cure," started with the monks who since time immemorial brewed an especially "nourishing" beer during Lent to strengthen the body weakened by Fasting. The story goes that when Napoleon sold the monks' brewery to a private businessman who took advantage of the "winter time blues" to produce a "doppelbock". The festival takes place from March 9th to April 1st this year. The official opening with many prominent guests takes place when the first barrel is tapped in the restaurant "Paulaner Wirtshaus" on the Nockherberg. It is also celebrated in, among other places, the "Löwenbräu Cellar", where the program includes groups in local costumes and a stone-lifting competition. ➤ [www.muenchen-tourist.de](http://www.muenchen-tourist.de).

#### Theme: Easter Traditions

#### Special Deals

Take advantage of US Airways current Germany specials where for \$480 and up, you can fly from all USAirways airports in the US into one German city and out of another! Fly into Frankfurt and enjoy some apple wine and then zip on down to Munich and take in the Pinokothek museums and sip the strong ➤ [www.usairways.com](http://www.usairways.com)

#### Airline World Cup Deals

LTU Airlines has several special flights lined up from \$698 roundtrip from JFK to Duesseldorf, the company's hub in Germany and deals are available from Miami and Los Angeles as well. ➤ [www.ltu.com](http://www.ltu.com). And, Lufthansa is offering a GloBall Airpass which is a ticket for World Cup fans based outside of Germany to explore the country with flexibility. For as little as 60 Euros per flight, travelers can choose to purchase between 3 and 10 flight segments, and make changes to their itinerary at

German Easter Markets all over Germany are wonderful way to rediscover traditions and rituals, and to prepare for the Easter holidays (see special events below). 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.

The origins of the German Easter traditions are not certain but some say they can be traced back to payments in kind by peasants to their lords; others say it goes back to the pagan worship of the maiden-goddess of fertility, "Eastee," or "Eastre," "Eostre" or "Ostara" and the coming of spring. The egg and rabbit were symbols of fertility and new birth to the Germanic tribes. The Germanic tribes lit bonfires to welcome Spring, and in many towns today, men in towns and cities across Germany collect wood, sometimes old Christmas trees, and create piles for Easter night's (Saturday) celebration.

Parents give their children Easter eggs - colored and boiled eggs - Easter bunnies and other sweets. The children still hunt for eggs as they did in the 1500s. Real eggs that have been blown, painted and decorated are hung from the branches of an egg-tree. An inseparable part of the holiday is the Easter meal with an Easter cake in the shape of a lamb is enjoyed after the Lenten fast. In some villages people hold an Easter walk.

## Feature: Hamburg's Famous Soccer Players Leave Legacy

Hamburg is becoming known for its shopping, its world class restaurants with home-grown recipes, its five-star design hotels and hip boutiques. But hidden below the city's fashionable veneer, is a World Cup Fever that is beginning to make itself heard. All of the city is abuzz with the coming championship and its famous soccer legacy.

Hamburg, and its gleaming 50,000 seat AOL arena, will be the venue for five matches during the 2006 World Cup, including the first phase matches involving Argentina and Italy and one of the quarter finals. Hamburg boasts not only that it will be home to the U.S. Soccer team for the World Cup this year, but also is proud of its outstanding roster of soccer players, including Franz Beckenbauer, Uwe Seeler and the Englishman, Kevin Keegan.

Franz Beckenbauer, a.k.a, the "Kaiser," and now Germany's President of the World Cup Organizing Committee, played two years for Hamburg from 1980 to 1982. This was just after his stint with the New York Cosmos where he played along side Brazilian soccer star, Pele. Beckenbauer was captain of the German team in 1974 when it won the World Cup in Munich after a successful penalty kick by Gerd Mueller. And, Beckenbauer was coach of the German team when they won the World Cup in 1990.

Then there is the famous Uwe Seeler who is said to hold the Hamburger's affection like no other player. In 1961, Seeler turned down a fantastically lucrative offer to play for Inter Milan and decided to stick with his Hamburg team, a club he loved. All in all, Seeler played 72 times for his country and scored 43 goals and put in four appearances at the World Cup. In fact, he shares a record with Pele in that he actually scored in all the World Cup games. Seeler is now a living legend in Hamburg and the city's official ambassador to the World Cup.

any time. The GloBall Airpass must be purchased in conjunction with an international/intercontinental ticket to Germany on Lufthansa or another Star Alliance carrier. Visit [www.lufthansa-usa.com/soccer](http://www.lufthansa-usa.com/soccer) for more information.

## Enjoy a Low Cost Weekend in Hanseatic City of Bremen

Just a hop, skip and a jump from Hamburg, Bremen offers much for visitors. Take in Bremen's charming market place, town hall, Cathedral, Liebfrauen Church, Böttcherstrasse, and the many statues of the Bremer City Musicians. Enjoy the beautiful Rhododendron Park. Double rooms for 143.50 Euros each will get you 2 overnight stays in comfort class rooms, including a rich breakfast buffet, an aperitif before the evening meal along with a 3-course menu in the hotel's own "Fleming's Restaurant," an evening meal on the pancake ship "Admiral Nelson," a round trip of the city and free use of local public transport in Bremen. For more information, go to [www.steigenberger.de](http://www.steigenberger.de). Valid through the end of the year.

## Easter Markets

Throughout Germany, there are many beautiful Easter egg markets open on weekends. Local craftsmen display their decorated eggs and there are often other traditional Easter goodies on sale, including basquets, arts and crafts and bunnies. [www.ostereiermaerkte.de](http://www.ostereiermaerkte.de) (no english version available)

## Easter Egg Market in Hameln, Lower Saxony

March 4-5  
Beautiful Easter eggs of the region will be on display for

Then there was Kevin Keegan, an inimitable Englishman, a small but powerful forward nick-named Mighty Mouse, and now said to be Liverpool's greatest export to Hamburg - even better than the Beatles who produced their first record in Hamburg in 1961. At the age of 26, Keegan abandoned his English roots and was persuaded to play for Hamburg and led the team to the Bundesliga title in 1978, the first time ever for the Hamburg team.

### Regional Focus: The Sorbs and Easter

In eastern Germany near the border with Poland, the Sorbs, a Slavic minority that has lived for generations in this area, celebrate Easter with a parade called the "Kreuztritt" (Cross Walk). The men of the village dressed in traditional costumes of black jackets and top hats, ride horses in a circle from town to town announcing the resurrection of Christ. The Sorb's Easter celebration can be seen in every town in this area called Lusatia.

But it is not only Easter; the Sorbs practice a great variety of customs and traditions that differ slightly from village to village. Most of the customs practiced throughout the year originate from pre-Christian times. While you are visiting Sorbs areas you may encounter women dressed in the traditional Sorbian wear. Especially on the weekends you will see young women and many children in festive dresses portraying and preserving old Sorbian customs.

### Contact Information

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

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**Next Issue:** Automobile Trips, Specials and more!

sale and viewing.

### Sorbs Easter Market, Bautzen in Saxony

March 11, 18, 19, 27  
Colorful and traditional Easter eggs from the Sorbs will be on display with a special exhibit, "The Best Eggs of the past 50 Years."

### Easter Market in Nuremberg

March 31 - April 17  
About 80 Easter egg decorators are selling their self-made products on the traditional "Haeferlesmarkt".

### Easter Market in Castle Schwetzingen in Baden-Wuerttemberg

March 18-19  
Fifty of the best Egg craftsman from seven nations present their newest creations. The beautiful atmosphere of the castle is the perfect place for these individual presentations.

### Easter Eggs from Vogt, Sirgensteinhalle in Baden-Wuerttemberg

March 25-26  
About 20 craftsman of this region show the different techniques to paint Easter ornaments on the eggs.

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