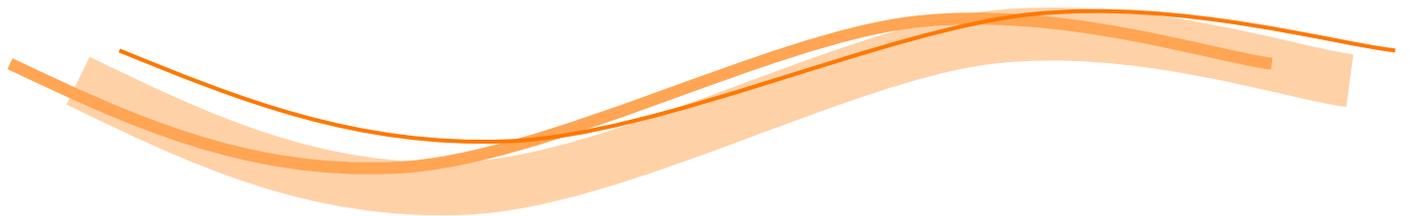




# GERMANY & INSIGHT VACATIONS





<p><b>GERMANY</b></p>	<p>Germany is one of Europe’s most exciting and most visited destinations. It’s a place that is all at once surprising – spectacular – unexpected – and diverse. There’s fascinating history that stretches back to Roman times while today Germany is still at the heart of economic and political discussions on the world stage. It’s a country known for wonderful cities like Berlin - yet a staggering 48 per cent of the country is subject to some form of nature conservation. It’s a country with 39 UNESCO World Heritage sites ranging from medieval towns to examples of twentieth century industrial architecture. And it is blessed with an extraordinary heritage of customs and traditions as beloved as Christmas Markets and Cuckoo Clocks, and as delicious as Frankfurt Green Sauce and Black Forest Gateau!</p> <p>Germany is packed with traditions and festivals. No matter what time of year you decide to visit you’ll find a packed calendar of events. You can visit fascinating museums and galleries and take in stunning architecture that spans medieval to modern and everything in between. Germany is also rich in natural beauty with over 130 national parks, UNESCO biosphere reserves and nature parks to explore. It has one of the best bicycle and walking trail systems in the world with a staggering 200,000 kms to explore. And nature is never far away even in the small towns and cities of Germany. For instance Hamburg has a canal system with more bridges than Venice and you can kayak right through the city!</p> <p>No wonder that the United Nations World Tourism Organization places Germany in the top ten on its list of international tourism destinations.</p> <p>Any month and any year that you choose to visit there will be amazing things to see and do. If you travel to Germany in Winter you have the added bonus of the famous <b>Christmas Markets</b> with artisan handicrafts, music, Christmas Carols and fabulous food – all set against a background of picturesque medieval towns and the smell of pine, roasted chestnuts and mulled wine.</p>
<p><b>Location</b></p>	<p>Germany lies in the heart of Europe, bordered by Switzerland and Austria to the south; France, Luxembourg, Belgium, and the Netherlands to the west; Denmark to the north; and Poland and the Czech Republic to the east. It has a coastline of 2,389 km.</p>
<p><b>Geography</b></p>	<p>Germany has the second largest population in Europe (after European Russia) and is seventh largest in area. The territory of Germany covers 357,021 km<sup>2</sup>, consisting of 349,223 km<sup>2</sup> of land and 7,798 km<sup>2</sup> of water. Elevation ranges from the mountains of the Alps (highest point: the Zugspitze at 2,962 metres) in the south to the shores of the North Sea (Nordsee) in the north-west and the Baltic Sea (Ostsee) in the north-east. Between lie the forested uplands of central Germany and</p>

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	<p>the low-lying lands of northern Germany (lowest point: Wilstermarsch at 3 metres below sea level), traversed by some of Europe's major rivers such as the Rhine, Danube and Elbe. Because of its central location, Germany shares borders with more European countries than any other country on the continent. Its neighbours are Denmark in the north, Poland and the Czech Republic in the east, Austria and Switzerland in the south, France and Luxembourg in the south-west and Belgium and the Netherlands in the north-west.</p>
<b>Name</b>	The Romans gave it the name of Germanus, meaning "neighbours," originally bestowed by the Gauls.
<b>Population</b>	82 million in Germany and 3.4 million in Berlin
<b>Language</b>	German; but much English is spoken
<b>Currency</b>	The euro (€) is the single European currency used in Germany. 1.00 Euro = 1.53 Canadian Dollars as at Feb 2014
<b>Tipping</b>	If a restaurant bill says "Bedienung", that means a service charge has already been added, so just round up to the nearest euro. If not, add 10% to 15%. Round up to the nearest mark for taxis. Bellhops get 1€ (\$1.50) per bag, as does the doorman at your hotel, restaurant, or nightclub. Room-cleaning staffs get small tips in Germany, as do concierges who perform some special favors.
<b>Government</b>	<p>The Federal Republic of Germany is a democracy with a liberal market economy, religious freedom and freedom of the press. It is a member of the European Union (EU) and of NATO.</p> <p>The Federal Republic of Germany is a federation of individual states. There are 16 "Bundesländer" which are federal states with their own government. They have their own regional constitutions which have to comply with the principles of a republican, democratic and social state governed by the rule of law as laid down in the Basic Law (Germany's federal constitution). This guarantees that all German people have the same rights, obligations and living conditions.</p>
<b>Documentation</b>	Your passport must be valid for at least another four months after entry into Germany or the Schengen area.
<b>Time zone</b>	Germany operates on Central European time (CET), which means that the country is 6 hours ahead of Eastern Standard Time (EST)
<b>Health</b>	<p>Germany does not pose any major health hazards. The heavy cuisine may give some travellers mild diarrhea, so take along some anti-diarrhea medicine and moderate your eating habits. The water is safe to drink throughout Germany.</p> <p>German medical facilities are among the best in the world. If a medical emergency arises, your hotel staff can usually put you in touch with a reliable doctor. Medical and hospital services aren't free, so be sure that you have appropriate insurance coverage before you travel.</p>
<b>Safety tips</b>	Normal precautions required, otherwise Germany is considered a safe destination for travellers

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<b>CLIMATE</b>	
<b>General climate</b>	Germany is not prey to dramatic climatic extremes, although there are regional differences. The most reliably good weather is from May to October, with high summer a good bet for mid 20°C shorts-and-t-shirt conditions, even in the north. Autumn is a good time to visit Germany. As the tourist scrum disperses and the forests turn golden, it's not too stifling to be active but still warm enough to leave you thirsty for a few well-deserved steins. Winter is frosty and wet, especially in the south, with snow rarely settling for long except in the high country.
<b>Today's weather</b>	10 degrees Centigrade and cloudy in Berlin (6 Feb, 2016)
<b>Best time to visit</b>	The most popular tourist months are May to October, although winter travel to Germany is becoming increasingly popular, especially to the ski areas in the Bavarian Alps. Germany's climate varies widely. In the north, winters tend to be cold and rainy; summers are most agreeable. In the south and in the Alps, it can be very cold in the winter, especially in January, and very warm in summer, but with cool, rainy days even in July and August. Spring and fall are often stretched out.

<b>PLANNING</b>	
<b>Flights</b>	Germany's three major airports Frankfurt, Munich and Düsseldorf ensure the country is well connected both nationally and internationally. Find the connection that best suits your needs with airlines such as Air Canada or Lufthansa which have direct flights from Canada. Flying time is approximately 7 hours Toronto to Frankfurt from Toronto
<b>Cities</b>	<p>The five largest cities in Germany are:  <b>Berlin</b> (capital of Germany) with 3,391,000 inhabitants  <b>Hamburg</b> with 1,737,000 inhabitants  <b>Munich</b> with 1,398,000 inhabitants  <b>Cologne</b> with 976,000 inhabitants  <b>Frankfurt am Main</b> with 657,000 inhabitants  <b>Leipzig</b> is one of the largest cities in the East</p> <p><b>Frankfurt am Main</b>  Frankfurt and Toronto celebrate the anniversary of a long partnership as twin cities.  Frankfurt has one of the oldest and largest Christmas Markets in Germany and is well known for its festive atmosphere and old-world charm.  And Frankfurt of course gave its name to the Frankfurter sausage – and has some other great culinary traditions as well, such as apple cider wine and Green Sauce which is made from hard-boiled eggs, oil, vinegar, salt, sour cream, and generous amounts of seven fresh herbs, namely borage, sorrel, garden cress, chervil, chives, parsley, and salad</p>

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burnet.

Handkäs' with music... Handkaese is a German regional sour milk cheese. It gets its name from the traditional way of producing it: forming it with one's own hands. It is a small yellow cheese with a pungent aroma. Handkaes' mit Musik is served in a dressing of vinegar and oil, topped with chopped onions and caraway seeds, plus bread and butter. The "Musik" refers to the "gas" that raw onions usually generate! And the strong artistic traditions of Frankfurt are also embodied in the many Festivals that take place here. There are some special events planned for next year to mark the anniversary of the reunification of Germany.

The Museums Embankment Festival takes place in Frankfurt on August 30<sup>th</sup> 2015 and will be a spectacular art and culture festival on both sides of the River Main. It ranks amongst Europe's largest cultural celebrations. It features workshops and guided tours held at the museums as well as live music, stage performances and international cuisine on offer along the riverside.

And it is a very exciting time in Frankfurt with the reconstruction of the city centre going on that will restore some of the medieval heart of Frankfurt. The historical old town of Frankfurt, nestled between the cathedral and city hall, is currently being reconstructed according to the original plans. Here, time-honoured structures and new buildings will be combined to form a new quarter reminiscent of its historical predecessor. The Archaeological Garden, a Roman building site unearthed in the middle of the old town, will find itself structurally protected by the city's new municipal centre. You can plan your trip to Frankfurt at [www.frankfurt-tourismus.de](http://www.frankfurt-tourismus.de).

**Cologne (Köln)**, the largest city in the Rhineland, is so rich in antiquity that every time a new foundation is dug, the excavators come up with archaeological finds. Devastating though the World War II bombing was, reconstruction brought to light a period of Cologne's history that had been a mystery for centuries. Evidence showed that Cologne was as important and powerful during the early Christian era as it was during Roman times and the Middle Ages. Cologne traces its beginnings to 38 B.C., when Roman legions set up camp here. As early as A.D. 50, the emperor Claudius gave it municipal rights as capital of a Roman province. In the early Christian era, a bishopric was founded here and a number of saints were martyred, including the patron of the city, St. Ursula. During the Middle Ages, as Cologne became a center for international trade, Romanesque and Gothic churches were built with prosperous merchants' gold. Today there is much to see from every period of the city's 2,000-year history - from the old Roman towers to the modern opera house. But Cologne is also a bustling modern city and is

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	<p>becoming the fine-art capital of Germany</p> <p><b>Düsseldorf</b> is a wealthy city - the richest in Germany. It's big and commercial, full of banks and industrial offices and skyscrapers, but it's also refreshingly clean. Düsseldorf got its start as a settlement on the right bank of the Rhine, but today it's spread out on both sides - the older part on the right, and the modern, commercial, and industrial part on the left. Five bridges connect the two sections, the most impressive being the Oberkassel. Parks and esplanades line the riverbanks. After 85% of the right bank was destroyed in World War II, Düsseldorf followed a modern trend in reconstruction, and today it's the most elegant metropolis in the Rhine Valley.</p>
<p><b>The River Rhine</b></p>	<p>The Rhine River begins at the Rheinwaldhorn Glacier in the Swiss Alps and flows north and east approximately 1,320 km. The glacier is located northeast across the mountains from the town of Andermatt in the Uri canton (state/province). The Rhine begins as a tumultuous Alpine stream churning through deep gorges, and although the river's flow is moderated somewhat as it passes through the Lake of Constance (Bodensee), the river remains a torrent westward to Basel. Just south of Chur, Switzerland, the Hinter Rhine, flowing north-westerly from the glacier, joins the Vorder Rhine streaming from Lake Tuma, to form the Rhine proper at Reichenau. The river then flows north to Lake Constance and west through Schaffhausen to Basel, Switzerland. Near Schaffhausen it plunges 23 m over a spectacular waterfall, the Rheinfall. At Basel the river turns north and enters the Rhine Graben, a flat-floored rift valley lying between the Vosges Mountains on the west and the Black Forest (Schwarzwald) on the east. Strasbourg, France, a focal point for merging water routes from the Paris Basin, is located at the valley's northern extremity.</p> <p>With the junction of the Main River at Mainz, in Germany, the Rhine's seasonal regime becomes more stabilized. Along its course from Bingen to Bonn is a beautiful stretch of the Rhine Valley. The river has cut the deep, steep-sided Rhine Gorge through the Rhineland Plateau and the Rhenish Slate Mountains. This picturesque gorge, with terraced vineyards and castle-lined cliffs, has often been called the "heroic Rhine," renowned in history and romantic literature. It is complete with fairy tale castles and vineyards snuggled in the overhanging rock face, known as the Mittelrhein. The river flows past Bonn, Germany and becomes the Lower Rhine and emerges onto the North German Plain before it empties into the North Sea. Leading cities on the stream's banks are Cologne, Düsseldorf, and Duisburg.</p> <p>At the Netherlands frontier, it divides into two parallel distributaries, the Lek and the Waal, as it crosses a wide, marshy plain and a great delta</p>

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	<p>before entering the North Sea. Much of this area is at or below sea level, but dikes contributed to its becoming one of the most densely populated and important economic regions on the continent. Rotterdam, the leading port of continental Europe, is located near the river's mouth. It passes through or borders on the countries of Liechtenstein, Austria, Germany, France, and the Netherlands.</p> <p>It is navigable from the North Sea to Basel, Switzerland, a distance of some 800 km. Eighty percent of its ship-carrying waters pass through Germany. The entire distance cannot support ocean going vessels and they must end their journey in Cologne, Germany. Cologne is located between Koln and Bonn. From there cargo must go by barges pushed by smaller ships until the Rhine reaches the three point intersection of the borders of France, Germany, and Basel, Switzerland.</p>
<p><b>Boats</b></p>	<p>It is also possible to travel to Germany by sea. A number of ferries and cruise liners ply the North and Baltic Seas. The most important North Sea ports are Bremen/Bremerhaven, Hamburg, Emden and Wilhelmshaven. The most important Baltic ports are Kiel, Rostock and Lübeck-Travemünde.</p> <p>Perhaps Germany's most beautiful features are its lakes and rivers. The mighty Rhine is the country's most traveled waterway. German cruise ships also run on the Main River between Mainz and Frankfurt; on the Danube from Nürnberg to Linz (Austria), going on to Vienna and Budapest; and on the Mosel between Cochem and Trier.</p>
<p><b>Trains</b></p>	<p>Whether you travel first or second class, you'll find that the trains of <b>GermanRail</b> (DB Rail; tel. 0800/1507090; <a href="http://www.bahn.de">www.bahn.de</a> ) deserve their good reputation for comfort, cleanliness, and punctuality. All are modern and fast. A snack bar or a dining car, serving German and international cuisine as well as good wine and beer, can usually be found on all trains except locals.</p> <p>For city sightseeing, you can leave your baggage in a locker or check it at the station's baggage counter. In many cities, GermanRail provides door-to-door baggage service, allowing passengers to have luggage picked up at or delivered to their hotels. Accompanying baggage can be checked for a nominal fee. Suitcases, baby carriages, skis, bicycles, and steamer trunks are permitted as baggage. Insurance policies of various kinds, including a travel medical plan, are also available.</p> <p>About 20,000 InterCity (IC) passenger trains offer express service every hour between most large and medium-size German cities. IC trains have adjustable cushioned seats and individual reading lights, and often offer telephone and secretarial services. Bars, lounges, and dining rooms are available, too. A network of EuroCity (EC) trains connecting Germany with 13 other countries offers the same high standards of service as those of IC.</p> <p>Germany's <b>high-speed rail network</b>, known as InterCity Express (ICE)</p>

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	<p>trains, is among the fastest in Europe, reaching speeds of 280kmph. One of these trains runs from Hamburg via Würzburg and Nürnberg to Munich; another from Frankfurt via Stuttgart to Munich; and yet another from Berlin via Frankfurt to Munich. Each train makes stops along the way. ICE significantly reduces travel time, making transits north to south across the country easily possible in the course of a single day. Some 200 east-west connections have been added to the GermanRail timetable to link the Deutsche Bundesbahn (west) and the Deutsche Reichsbahn (east). Additional connections make Leipzig and Dresden more accessible.</p> <p>Germany's world class rail system is the envy of the world and an efficient and environmentally friendly way to travel around Germany. <b>Rail Europe</b> makes it seamless - they represent over 35 Railroad companies and package tickets and rail passes across Germany and right across Europe. Book with confidence as Rail Europe have been in business for over 75 years in the North American Market. You can buy seat reservations and pay in dollars before you leave North America – so no fluctuating exchange rates and no surprises. Traveling by train will enhance your entire European experience. Enjoy leisurely gourmet dining and gaze through panoramic windows as you are whisked from city centre to city centre. Plus the train is a low-impact, energy efficient form of travel that preserves the regions and natural areas you cross.</p> <p>Tel: 1800-361-7245 Website: <a href="http://www.RailEurope.ca">www.RailEurope.ca</a></p>
<b>Car Rental</b>	<p>All major car rental companies are represented in the major cities and the larger airports and driving the modern road system in Germany is a delight – especially the autobahns.</p>
<b>Buses</b>	<p>An excellent, efficient bus network services Germany. Many buses are operated by Bahnbus, which is owned by the railway. These are integrated to complement the rail service. Bus service in Germany is particularly convenient during slow periods of rail service, normally around midday and on Saturday and Sunday. German post offices often operate local bus services (contact local post offices for schedules and prices).</p>
<b>Passes</b>	<p><b>The Berlin Welcome Card</b> is available as a 5-Day-Pass. Visitors can now choose any of the six different tickets offered, depending on the length of their stay and their sightseeing preferences. The 5-day pass complements the 48 and 72-hour Welcome Cards. The card grants free public transportation inside Berlin's city limits, as well as a city guide booklet, and some 140 discount coupons, offering at least 25% reductions on sights, participating restaurants, shows, and tourist attractions. (<a href="http://www.berlin-welcomecard.de">www.berlin-welcomecard.de</a> ).</p>

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	<p>You can buy a <b>German Rail Pass</b> from a travel agent before you leave home. The pass allows 4 days of travel in 1 month and costs \$449 first class or \$361 second class (as at Feb 2016) For Rail Europe: <a href="http://www.raileurope.ca">www.raileurope.ca</a></p>
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<p><b>ACCOMMODATION TYPES</b></p>	<p>Germany offers a range of accommodation to suit every taste and pocket, from youth hostels to castle stays, from guesthouses and inns to hotels in every category. See <a href="http://www.ComeToGermany.com">www.ComeToGermany.com</a> to get detailed information.</p>
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<p><b>Lifestyles</b></p>	
<p><b>Kids</b></p>	<p>Germany is ideal for family holidays - everyone feels at home here from toddlers to grandparents.</p> <p><b>Berlin's 170 museums</b> also have plenty on offer for children - for example, there are museums where touching the exhibits is actively encouraged, such as the Deutsche Technikmuseum (German Technical Museum Berlin), where fully operational historical machines and models are displayed and their workings explained. There are also many other places where art and the world can be discovered through play</p> <p><b>Germany's major rivers</b>, the Rhine, the Danube and the Elbe, are fascinating both by water and on land. Their banks are dotted with medieval castles and palaces where ancient myths and legends come to life. But family holidays on the smaller German rivers also appeal to all ages. There is the Moselle that flows through the historic, 2,000 year-old town of Trier, the Main that passes the modern city of Frankfurt, as well as the Weser, Havel and Nahe rivers. The conditions on the river Lahn are ideal for canoeing, and a cycle route runs through the magnificent scenery along the Neckar.</p> <p><b>Taunus Wonderland</b> has lots of kids' attractions and is just half an hour's drive from Frankfurt. Time flies when you're climbing the padded tower, enjoying the fairytale forest or exploring the haunted castle. For animal lovers there is a petting zoo and a prehistoric forest with dinosaur show. Action-hungry youngsters can look forward to a whirlwind wildwater ski ride and the Taunus Lightning roller coaster <a href="http://www.taunuswunderland.de">www.taunuswunderland.de</a></p>
<p><b>Teens</b></p>	<p><b>Berlin</b> is a dream city for young adults: let them explore the special website: <a href="http://www.visitberlin.de/young/index.en.php">http://www.visitberlin.de/young/index.en.php</a> Here they'll find up-to-date information for trips to Berlin... Berlin at night: hostels and accommodation... Berlin cool: parties and clubs... Berlin in trend: shopping and fashion... Berlin hip: sports, fun and events... Culture in Berlin: sights and museums.</p> <p>At Germany's theme parks teens can have the time of their lives. They can take their pick from the best roller coaster in the world, a flying</p>

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	<p>carousel with spectacular sea views or breathtaking stunt shows packed with movie-style action.</p> <p>Visitors to the <b>Movie Park Germany</b> shouldn't be surprised to suddenly find themselves on a film set following film directors' instructions or witnessing spectacular stunts. The spot is on film here in Bottrop in the middle of the Ruhr Region. Who wouldn't have fun getting to the bottom of the mysteries of the Bermuda Triangle, or living to tell the tale of a hot pursuit in a flight simulator? And there are breathtaking roller-coaster rides for whoever's got nerves of steel. <a href="http://www.moviepark.de">www.moviepark.de</a></p>
<b>Romance</b>	<p>The ruins of <b>Heidelberg Castle</b> rise majestically on the site of a medieval castle complex high above the lanes and the picturesque jumble of roofs of the old town. The architecture contains elements of the Gothic and Renaissance periods and have been rightly listed as one of the most romantic spots on the planet.</p>
<b>Honeymoons &amp; Weddings</b>	<p>Germany's romantic castles, rivers and scenery make it the ideal honeymoon destination for couples seeking a romantic break from it all. Why not become King and Queen of the castle and book into one of Germany's many castles and palaces for the night? Take a cruise along Germany's rivers and view picturesque castles perched on hilltops. Rent a car and follow Germany's Romantic Road, home to the fairytale "Disney" castle of <b>Neuschwanstein</b>. Or book into one of Baden-Baden's stunning hotel spas and relax with a His &amp; Hers Massage before enjoying a night at the city's Casino. The list is endless and a honeymoon in Germany unforgettable</p>
<b>Zoomers</b>	<p>River cruises in Germany are a perfect way to see many of Germany's highlights in a stress-free, relaxed and convivial way – check out the details in the separate sections in Destinations.</p>

<b>UNIQUES</b>	
<b>Surprising</b>	There are over 500 galleries and 6000 museums in Germany!
<b>History</b>	<p>9 B.C.-A.D. 9--Romans attempt to conquer Teutonic tribes.            486--Clovis founds Frankish kingdom, ruling from Paris.            496--Franks converted to Christianity.            800--Pope crowns Charlemagne in Rome.            962--Pope crowns Otto I as Holy Roman Emperor.            1152-90--Frederick Barbarossa's reign leads to a greater centralization of power, but his invasion of Italy is beaten back by the Lombard League.            1158--Munich founded by Henry the Lion, duke of Saxony.            1241--Hanseatic League founded to protect the trade of such cities as Bremen, Hamburg, and Lübeck.            1432--Maximilian I, "last of the German knights," becomes Holy Roman Emperor, the beginning of the hegemony of the Hapsburgs.            1456--Johannes Gutenberg prints the first book in Europe using</p>

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	<p>movable type.          1517--Martin Luther nails his "Ninety-Five Theses" to a church door in Wittenberg, beginning the Protestant Reformation in Germany.          1618-48--Thirty Years' War devastates Germany, as Protestant forces defeat Catholic Hapsburgs.          1740-86--Prussian might grows under Frederick the Great in the Age of Enlightenment.          1806--Armies of Napoleon invade Prussia, which is incorporated briefly into the French Empire.          1813--Prussians defeat Napoleon at Leipzig.          1815--At the Congress of Vienna, the German Confederation of 39 independent states is created.          1862--Otto von Bismarck (1815-98) becomes prime minister of Prussia.          1870-71--Germany invades and defeats France in the Franco-Prussian War.          1871--Wilhelm I is crowned emperor of the newly created German Empire; Bismarck becomes chancellor.</p>
<b>Books</b>	<p><b>1989 The Berlin Wall – My Part in its Downfall</b> (Arcadia Books, 2009) by Peter Millar is an excellent and very entertaining book about the momentous events surrounding the fall of the wall.  <b>Lonely Planet's Germany</b> – a comprehensive guidebook  <b>Mark Twain's A Triumph Abroad</b> (Hippocrene Books, 1989). The American humorist's travels through Germany are comically detailed.</p>
<b>1000 Places to see before you die</b>	<p>Too many to detail them all, but here's a few:          Brandenburg Gate, Berlin – Unification symbol          Berlin Philharmonic – world famous orchestra          The Berlin Museum Scene – art and culture extravaganza          Sans Souci – Royal Rococo palace just 24kms from Berlin          The Rhine Valley – legend and history          Baden-Baden – the summer capital of Europe          Cologne's cathedral Quarter – 1000 years of European art          Heidelberg's Schloss – romance personified</p>
<b>Must Sees</b>	<p>No matter what time you visit Germany - such is the richness of Germany's heritage that it has no less than 39 UNESCO World Heritage Sites spread throughout the country for visitors to enjoy. UNESCO World Heritage Sites are chosen because they are either awe-inspiring wonders of nature or the finest of mankind's achievements.          See the special section on world heritage sites at the end of these notes.</p>

<b>SPORTS ACTIVITIES</b>	<b>I have to give special mention to the fact that Germany won the World Cup in 2014 in Brazil and so are the current World Champions!</b>
<b>Golf</b>	Most German golf courses welcome visiting players who are members

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	<p>of courses at home. Weekday greens fees are usually around 45€ (\$56), rising to as much as 85€ (\$106) on Saturday and Sunday. For information about the various golf courses, write to the Deutscher Golf/Verband, Victoriastrasse 16, 65011 Wiesbaden (tel. 0611/990200; <a href="http://www.golf.de/dgv">www.golf.de/dgv</a> ).</p>
<p><b>Fishing</b></p>	<p>Wherever they go in Germany, anglers will come across plenty of places with large, varied fish stocks. All of Germany's regions have any number of lakes, rivers, brooks and canals offering a combination of excellent water quality and large, varied fish stocks. From a little rowing boat on a lake to some serious deep-sea angling - in Germany, you can do it all. For information about the choice of rivers and lakes - and about angling regulations, which vary from region to region (close seasons, etc.) - visit <a href="http://www.anglerverband.com">www.anglerverband.com</a> (German only) or contact the regional angling associations.</p> <p>Fishing permits: To go angling in Germany, you have to have a certificate of competence (fishing permit), though people whose permanent residence is outside Germany are exempt from this regulation. For more information, contact the fishing associations of the individual federal states. In addition to a fishing permit, you also need to have authorisation to fish in a particular stretch of water during a specific period. This can be purchased locally from the owner or leaseholder (generally an angling club). Local tourist information offices can tell you where to do this.</p>
<p><b>Sailing &amp; Windsurfing</b></p>	<p>The North Sea and the Baltic have a whole string of places that could have been designed with sailing and windsurfing in mind. Top of the North Sea destinations - for experienced windsurfers especially - are Sylt, Amrum and St. Peter-Ording, resorts that also have plenty of après-surf. For sailors and windsurfers who prefer fewer waves, the Baltic is ideal: a true sailing paradise. Sailing on the Schlei is a real insider's tip. Kiel Bay, Lübeck Bay and the Flensburg Firth are good for combining sailing with some city sightseeing or one of many international sailing events.</p>
<p><b>Hiking</b></p>	<p>Germany is a traveller's paradise with its romantic forests, picturesque hill and mountain landscapes, and tranquilly embedded seas. From hikes along tidal shores to trips through the low mountain regions all the way to mountain-top tours, everything is possible. Along many of these routes are hotels and inns that provide specialized accommodations for hikers. Many trip-organizers offer comfortable "hiking without luggage" packages.</p> <p>The <b>Rheinsteig</b> trail runs 320 km along the right bank of the river Rhine between Bonn, Koblenz and Wiesbaden along predominantly narrow paths and challenging inclines, uphill and downhill, leading to forests, vineyards and spectacular views. The Rheinsteig is a wonderful area for hiking. But it is also demanding: the steep paths are both challenging</p>

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	<p>and pleasurable. This exceptionally well sign-posted and closely networked trail offers opportunities for ambitious long-distance walking tours or for a variety of short tours. It can easily be reached by train, boat and car and is near several airports. The Rheinsteig offers the most beautiful portal to the cultural richness of the Rhine Valley. The cultural history of Middle-Europe the Rhine's romantic epoch and many historical landscapes all come together into this one small area. You will find 40 castles, stately homes and fortresses in the upper middle-Rhine Valley, between Bingen and Koblenz. This concentration of culture is unique in the world, and has been declared a World Human Heritage site by UNESCO since 2002. The Rheinsteig opens onto two wine producing areas, both rich in tradition: Mittelrhein and Rheingau. In the daytime the rambler enjoys the inns and rural wine cellars, in the evening the restaurants and the rambler-friendly hostels</p>
<p><b>Cycling</b></p>	<p>The brochure "<b>Discovering Germany by Bike</b>" presents a variety of offers on the most attractive routes and regions. Sign posts, bike-friendly overnight accommodations, good bicycle travel maps and main information centres are only some of the important points covered in this brochure.</p> <p>In Germany you can bike through green valleys and past rivers while enjoying rural landscapes and villages. Allgemeiner Deutscher Fahrrad-Club, P.O. Box 107747, 28077 Bremen (tel. 0421/346290; <a href="http://www.adfc.de">www.adfc.de</a> ), offers complete information on biking in Germany.</p>
<p><b>Diving</b></p>	<p>You might not think so at first, but diving in Germany can be an amazing experience. Wreck diving and cave diving in the Baltic are increasing in popularity (<a href="http://www.nordic-experience.de">http://www.nordic-experience.de</a> , <a href="http://www.kreidefelsen.de/">http://www.kreidefelsen.de/</a>).</p>
<p><b>CULTURE</b></p>	<p>Traditionally, Germany has been known as the country of composers, poets and philosophers - Germany continues to set trends today, producing innovative ideas and internationally relevant contemporary art.</p> <p>Original and innovative ideas form and prosper mainly within the arts and creative industries, and they do more than merely enhance Germany's image: they represent the latest economic growth sector.</p> <p>Take <b>architecture</b>. The arresting designs of the country's recently built car museums, for example, and Berlin's many new landmarks – for instance, the Reichstag and the Jewish Museum -- have already proven themselves. But visitors will also fall for such architectural gems as the Fünf Höfe shopping centre in Munich, designed by Herzog &amp; De Meuron, or the Elbe Philharmonic Hall in Hamburg, by the same firm of architects, which became a tourist draw even while under construction.</p>

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	<p><b>Fashion-minded</b> visitors can revel in the latest creations from innovative German labels - Wunderkind, c.neeon and TalkingMeansTrouble, for example. Fashion shows, such as the Mercedes-Benz Fashion Week in Berlin, and such flagship trade fairs for the interior design industry as 'imm' in Cologne are catalysts for new trends.</p> <p>The urban environment inspires such designers as 45 Kilo, from Weimar, Sebastian Herkner, from Frankfurt, and Studio Aisslinger, from Berlin. Berlin's Kreuzberg district or Hamburg's Schanzenviertel area have long come of age and developed into fashionable places with alternative vibes – 'musts' on the itinerary of every city slicker, be they young or young at heart.</p>
<p><b>Arts</b></p>	<p><b>Germany's Art, Music and History</b>          With over 5,000 art and exhibit houses there is something for everyone; Berlin's Museum Island is just one outstanding spot amongst many others. You can listen to classical music in stunning locations; follow in the footsteps of Goethe in Weimar, Bach in Leipzig and Luther in Eisenach. Or, you can tour one of Germany's many scenic routes, enjoy one of the many concerts and festivals well known in Germany's culture, or visit one of the country's internationally acclaimed museums.</p> <p><b>Germany's Culture</b>          Get in touch with some of the great artistic thinkers and leaders in the early 20th century like Carl Spitzweg, Max Beckmann, and Franz Marc. You'll be able to learn more about different kinds of German music that can be heard at many opera houses, musical theaters, jazz clubs, and pop/rock events. And you'll get more information on the spectacular world-famous Museum Island in Berlin, which houses the Altes Museum, the first public museum in the Prussian state. Go to <a href="http://www.cometogermany.com">www.cometogermany.com</a></p>
<p><b>Music</b></p>	<p>In the field of music, Germany's influence is noted through the works of, among others, Bach, Mozart, Händel, Telemann, Schütz, Beethoven, Mendelssohn Bartholdy, Humperdinck, Nicolai, Lortzing, Brahms, Schumann, Wagner, Pachelbel, Offenbach, Furtwängler, Eisler, Reger, Strauss, Hindemith, Orff, Stockhausen, Henze and Lachenmann. Today, the musical scene in Germany is as vibrant as ever. Every major city has an opera house and an orchestra, many of them world-renowned. New composers are encouraged, and productions are often at the cutting edge.</p> <p><b>Cologne Philharmonic</b> is an architectural showcase was completed during the late 1980s. The concert hall features a soaring roof, enviable acoustics, and some of the finest classical music along the country's western tier. The building is the home of two separate orchestras, the Gürzenich Kölner Philharmoniker and the Westdeutscher Rundfunk</p>

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	Orchestra. Pop and jazz programs are also presented.
<b>Theatre</b>	<p><b>Berlin</b> is home to the best in light entertainment - musicals, the vaudevilles, the <b>Friedrichstadtpalast</b>, Europe's largest show theatre with its legendary high-step line of girls and breathtaking stage shows, plus entertainment galore at any number of exciting smaller venues.</p> <p><b>Theater der Stadt Frankfurt</b>, Untermainanlage 11 (tel. 069/1340400; U-Bahn: Willy-Brandt-Platz), has three stages. One belongs to the Frankfurt Municipal Opera, whose productions have received worldwide recognition in recent years. Two stages are devoted to drama. If your German is adequate, you may want to see a performance of Städtische Bühnen/Schauspiel (tel. 069/1340400), a forum for classic German plays as well as modern drama. A variety theatre, Künstlerhaus Mouson Turm, Waldschmidtstrasse 4 (tel. 069/40589520; U-Bahn/S-Bahn: Merianplatz), hosts plays, classical music concerts, and dance programs almost every night of the week.</p>
<b>Museums</b>	<p>From science and technology, cinematic history, photography and sculpture, to emigration and depictions of everyday life in the former GDR - the depth and breadth of the topics covered by Germany's prestigious museums is astounding. Thrilling worlds of discovery are revealed in its many interactive museums. Joining in and trying things out is all part of the fun.</p> <p><b>The Topography of Terror</b> in Berlin was completed as a site of remembrance and learning in 2010, 65 years after the end of World War II. The exhibition and documentation centre, as well as a comprehensive outdoor exhibition, will be located on the grounds along Niederkirchner Strasse; the actual location of Hitler's SS- and Gestapo headquarters. From here, between 1933 and 1945, the Nazi regime orchestrated the genocide of the European Jews, and the systematic persecution of political opponents. Architect Ursula Wilms designed the modern concrete and glass building as a transparent cube with a strong indoor-outdoor reference, putting the focus on the 11 acre historic space, rather than the architecture itself. The building provides four exhibition halls for temporary and permanent exhibitions, as well as a research library, and state-of-the-art event and lecture spaces. Open since 1987, the Topography of Terror began in a temporary exhibition pavilion, and later as an outdoor exhibition in the nearby excavated walls of the notorious Gestapo "house prison" cellars. The open-air exhibition will remain part of a historic walkway and feature 15 stations providing information about the time and the place. The Topography of Terror Foundation encourages active confrontation with the darkest chapter in German History, and its impact since 1945. With more than 500,000 visitors per year, the Topography of Terror is one of the most visited sites in Berlin. Admission will be free. <a href="http://www.topographie.de">www.topographie.de</a>.</p>

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	<p><b>Museum Ludwig in Cologne</b> is a stunningly upgraded museum and home of one of the world's largest collections of the works of Pablo Picasso, bested only by the Picassos in Paris and Barcelona. Irene Ludwig, widow of the late German art patron Peter Ludwig, for whom the museum is named, donated 774 works of Picasso to the museum.</p> <p><b>The Städel Museum, Frankfurt:</b> This is Frankfurt's most important art gallery, containing a fine collection of most European schools of painting. The first floor features French Impressionists such as Renoir and Monet, along with German painters of the 19th and 20th centuries. Note in particular Kirchner's <i>Nude Woman with Hat</i>. Also on the first floor is Tischbein's <i>Portrait of Goethe in the Campagna in Italy</i>. If you're short on time, go directly to the second floor to view the outstanding collection of Flemish primitives, 17th-century Dutch artists, and 16th-century German masters such as Dürer, Grünewald, Memling, Elsheimer, and many others.</p>
<p><b>The Berlin Wall</b></p>	<p>After more than 28 years of German division, the Berlin Wall fell overnight from November 9 through 10, 1989, marking a historical event of global significance. Thanks to the peaceful revolution and the Fall of the Wall, millions of people were united to form one country of Germany. The balance between East and West was re-established. Experience history where it unfolded and discover a piece of virgin soil in Germany, which the Fall of the Wall elevated to a symbol of fresh starts, hope and a new future. You, too, can become a border-crosser and visit historical locations: St. Nicholas' Church in Leipzig, the numerous GDR museums in Thuringia or the Wall Trail and the legendary Checkpoint Charlie in Berlin, the capital which presents itself in a whole new light since reunification. As a tourist destination Germany has become a country without borders, attracting visitors from all over the world. A country which is unique in the way it connects the past, present and future; a country which also cordially invites you to visit the relics of that time and relive history.</p> <p><b>Checkpoint Charlie</b> Checkpoint Charlie was the former border crossing point between East and West Berlin after the construction of the Wall in 1961 where a sign "You are leaving the American Sector" marked the entrance to the eastern part of Berlin occupied by the Russians. This was the only border crossing point for the Allies, foreigners, employees of the Permanent Representation and officials of the GDR during the years 1961 to 1990. The border sign and a soldier's post are still in place, today. Together with the museum "Haus am Checkpoint Charlie", they tell the history of the Berlin Wall.</p>

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	<p>Friedrichstrasse at Zimmerstrasse 10969 Berlin</p> <p><b>East Side Gallery</b>          The Berlin Wall was once a popular target for graffiti sprayers on the west side during the time of division. Later, famous artists have also immortalized themselves on the east side of the longest remaining section of the wall at Mühlenstrasse. This largest open-air gallery in the world was opened on September 28, 1990, between Ostbahnhof (Eastern Railway Station) and the Oberbaum Bridge.          Muehlenstrasse 110243 Berlin</p>
<p><b>Festivals</b></p>	<p><b>The Cologne Carnival</b> is one of the biggest street parties in Europe - the famous Altstadt (old town) is transformed into a dazzling and colourful celebration, with what seems like the entire population of the city in fancy dress. Prepare for lots of dancing and partying in the streets, pubs and bars and plenty of Kölsch, the delicious local beer. At 11.11am on 11 November, Germany's "fifth season", Karneval, begins and the whole country goes barking mad. But the craziness reaches its real climax the week before Ash Wednesday.          At 11.11am on 19 February the main carnival week in Cologne is declared officially open with the Women's Carnival Day, when the women of Cologne are deemed in charge of the city. On Carnival Sunday (22 February) a parade of local school children takes place. Then on Monday 23 February it's the turn of the main event (known in Germany as Rosenmontag), when a cavalcade of 42 groups with 79 fabulously decorated lorries, 67 tractors and 126 bands (approximately!) starts out on a six-kilometre route through the centre of Cologne. Keep an eye out for the lorries carrying huge effigies lampooning Germany's politicians. The day after (Shrove Tuesday), various parades take place in Cologne's suburbs, but if you're unaccustomed to partying Cologne-style you should probably just prepare for a hangover instead! It all draws to a more sedate close on Ash Wednesday when the tradition is to eat fish - pick any pub or restaurant on this day and you'll find it on the menu.</p> <p><b>Carnival in Düsseldorf</b> is one of the biggest and most ebullient party seasons in Germany. The climax is the Rosenmontag parade, when more than 6000 revellers dressed in screaming colours and uniforms make their way around the city. One of the highlights is the Altweiberfastnacht on the Thursday before Ash Wednesday, when the women of the city storm the town hall at 11.11am, planning to take control of the city for a day. A street carnival through the Old Town follows. The following Sunday sees a carnival making its way along Düsseldorf's main shopping street. The more outrageous the costumes, the better. To wrap it all up there's the main parade on the Monday</p>

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	<p>(Rosenmontag), when sweets are thrown out into the crowds from the decorated floats.</p> <p>May 1st in Brocken: On the night of April 30 to May 1st there are over 20 villages which celebrate the so called “<b>Walpugisnight</b>”. Legend has it that witches gather every year on the Mount Brocken to dance here. It is a great festival and everyone dresses up as witches in great mountain scenery.</p>
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<b>ATTRACTIONS</b>	
<b>Beaches</b>	<p>Go north from the Rhine region to the rugged North Sea and the gentler Baltic: life at an island pace, bracing air, more than 1,000 kilometres of beach and plenty of sun. Add to that, a never-ending choice of sports, spectacular events and nightlife into the early hours...</p> <p>The North Friesian islands are the most north-westerly holiday destination in Germany, consisting of the three sunny islands of Amrum (with the widest sandy beach in Europe), Föhr (with a particularly mild climate due to the Gulf Stream) and Sylt (Germany's largest island), plus the unique, tiny Hallig islands.</p>
<b>Wildlife and National Parks</b>	<p>'Holidays in the heart of nature in Germany' is the name of the 2016 global campaign being run by the German National Tourist Board (GNTB). Central to the sales and marketing activities are the 130-plus national parks, UNESCO biosphere reserves and nature parks in Germany. Incredible pictures and unexpected facts about these protected landscapes show Destination Germany as you've never seen it before can be found on their website at <a href="http://www.germany.travel/en/leisure-and-recreation/natural-landscapes/natural-landscapes.html">http://www.germany.travel/en/leisure-and-recreation/natural-landscapes/natural-landscapes.html</a></p> <p>Here are some of the highlights of the natural landscapes in Germany...</p> <p><b>UNESCO World Heritage Wadden Sea Lower Saxony, Hamburg, Schleswig-Holstein</b></p> <p>In 2009 the Wadden Sea – Germany's most significant natural environment and the most diverse habitat of birds in Europe – became a UNESCO World Natural Heritage site. This unique ecosystem in the far north of Germany is characterised by its coastal mudflats created by the ebb and flow of the tides, its broad beaches, salt marshes and dunes, and its countless animal inhabitants. When the tide is out and the water is at its lowest, you can walk along the seabed – where just hours earlier you would have needed diving equipment. A great way to discover this unspoilt natural landscape is on a long mudflat walk led by an expert guide.</p>

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### **Jasmund National Park and chalk cliffs, Rügen Island Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania**

This captivating part of north-east Germany boasts a unique chalk landscape, moors and centuries-old beech forests, and is a habitat for diverse flora and fauna. Germany's largest island is fringed by ten kilometres of chalk cliffs, reaching up to 117 metres in some places. Not to be missed are the famous Königsstuhl chalk cliffs. The Jasmund National Park walking route is an easy loop of just under ten kilometres, which guides walkers along the cliff-top trail from Lohme to Königsstuhl, passing through unspoilt beech forests offering splendid views of the sea. Other attractions include Ranzow lighthouse perched high above the cliff coastline and Lake Hertha with its ramparts that date back to the Slavic era.

### **Uckermark Lakes Nature Park Brandenburg**

The park is dotted with over 200 lakes that provide a natural habitat to ospreys, cranes, beavers, otters and even European pond turtles. Moors, streams and countless little bodies of water lend the landscape its charm and richness, and make it the perfect place to explore on a leisurely bike ride, walk or kayaking trip. For something a little different, try a rafting holiday. You don't need a licence and the rafts even serve as accommodation. Whether you're travelling as a couple, a family or a group of friends, a rafting holiday is the ultimate way to unwind – perfect for swimming, fishing, or just lazing in the sun.

### **Barnim Nature Park Berlin, Brandenburg**

Located north of Berlin, Barnim Nature Park comprises large areas of forest, idyllic lakes, untamed rivers and pristine moors. There is so much for visitors to discover, including the heritage-listed Finow Canal (a fine example of historical engineering) and the Konik and fjord horses which, together with Scottish Highland and Uckermark cattle, are the defining breeds of this part-pasture, part-forest landscape. Through Barnimer Land at a leisurely pace: train rides on a traditional steam locomotive can be booked for the stretch of the Heidekrautbahn railway that runs between Berlin, Wilhelmsruhe Damm station and Basdorf/Schmachtenhagen.

### **Harz National Park Saxony-Anhalt, Lower Saxony, Thuringia**

Located within Germany's most northerly mountain range, the Harz National Park is a popular area for walking and skiing. At 1,142 metres tall, Mount Brocken is the literal and figurative high point of the myth-enshrouded Harz mountains, and the summit can be reached either in walking boots or on the steam-powered Brockenbahn railway. The Goethe Trail and the Witches' Trail are a fantastic way to explore

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legendary forests, mysterious moors and unspoilt rivers. Narrow paths, steep descents, rocky passages – the Harz has everything to set a mountain biker’s heart racing. The mountain biking package breaks that are available range from the three-day Sport & Fun Trip to the Luxury Package that includes the hire of an e-bike.

### **Kellerwald-Edersee National Park Hessen**

Covering around 5,700 hectares in the green heart of Germany, this national park is one of the last remaining unbroken expanses of pristine deciduous forest in central Europe. Beech trees, large-leaved limes and centuries-old oak, mountain elm and ash trees, together with swathes of orchids and Cheddar pinks, dominate this landscape, which is only half an hour from Kassel. Edersee wildlife park is home to indigenous wild animals that were once commonly found in this national park, including wolves, lynx and wildcats, bison, red deer and wild horses, who all roam in spacious enclosures. Golden eagles, vultures and eagle owls can be seen in flight during daily displays set against the magnificent backdrop of Lake Edersee.

### **Hainich National Park Thuringia**

What was once a military exclusion zone is now Europe’s largest continuous expanse of mixed deciduous forest and a home to rare animals such as wildcats, black storks and Bechstein’s bats. The Hütcheroda Wildcat Village, with its viewing enclosure, information centre and Hainich viewpoint, provides an excellent opportunity to find out more about these shy residents of the national park. Situated within the Thiemsburg area of woodland, the Hainich Park treetop trail takes visitors to a height of 44 metres where they can explore an otherwise inaccessible part of the national park — an unspoilt wilderness in the heart of Germany.

### **Saxon Switzerland National Park Saxony**

South-east of Dresden, the unusual eroded landscape of the Elbe Sandstone Massif takes visitors on a journey of discovery back to the Cretaceous period — rock formations, deep valleys, table-top mountains and gorges dominate the region and provide a habitat for rare animal species such as eagle owls, otters and dormice. The Bastei rocks are famed for the view they offer of the Elbe, and the river itself also makes a great way to explore this breathtaking landscape, whether by kayak, rowing boat or paddlewheel steamer. Saxon Switzerland is the birthplace of free climbing, which came about because hooks or similar climbing aids are not allowed to be used on the fragile sandstone. The region’s own climbing rules and grades of difficulty make it all the more special for climbers who reach the top here.

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### **Hunsrück-Hochwald National Park Rhineland-Palatinate and Saarland**

Germany's newest national park opened as recently as the spring of 2015. Slender beech trees, mysterious moors, graceful wildcats, rocky screes, colourful flower meadows and imposing boulder landscapes are all features of Saarland and Rhineland-Palatinate's first national park. The best way to explore the region is along the Saar-Hunsrück-Steig, a 410km walking trail. Sections nine to twelve run straight through the Hunsrück-Hochwald National Park. They pass via the Celtic circular stone wall, through beech forests, over the Dollberg hills, on to the moors surrounding Mount Erbeskopf and up to the ruins of Wildenburg Castle, where indigenous woodland animals, wildcats and wolves can be seen in a 10-hectare wildlife enclosure.

### **Bliesgau UNESCO Biosphere Reserve Saarland**

In the south-eastern corner of the Saarland lies a mosaic made up of vast orchards, exquisite beech forests, swathes of orchids and beautiful riverside meadows. They are features of the gently rolling hills that provide a habitat to little owls, red kites, lizard orchids and rattle plants. Walking trails, cycle tracks and bridle paths trace the history of Roman and Celtic settlements, and St James' Way also goes through the region. The district of Gersheim is known for its orchids, with around 30 of Germany's 60 indigenous varieties growing in this relatively small area. Guided tours of the orchid meadows run from early May to early July.

### **Black Forest National Park Baden-Württemberg**

Made a national park as recently as 2014, the Black Forest reaches higher than 1,000 metres above sea level in some places and is known for its bracing climate and precipitation. Spectacular views stretching into the distance, sprawling coniferous forests, deep cirque lakes and dark moorlands give the landscape its unmistakable character. The northern Black Forest is at its most untamed and beautiful in the woodland nature reserves, some of which were established over a hundred years ago. Visitors to the Black Forest National Park can join one of the ranger tours on offer: the shortest is the route along the circular Lothar trail, which runs every weekend during peak season. There are also tours lasting several hours, including excursions to the Allerheiligen waterfalls, the Wild Lake or Mount Hornisgrinde.

### **Rhön UNESCO Biosphere Reserve Bavaria, Hessen, Thuringia** Known as the 'land of endless horizons', this former border region

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certainly lives up to its name these days and its distinctive upland scenery offers walkers, adventurers and leisure-seekers a whole host of options. Extraordinary rock formations and ancient woodland, orchards, flower-filled meadows and fields of happily grazing Rhön sheep define the landscape, as does Mount Wasserkuppe, which is famed for its gliding heritage. As a Sternenpark ('star park'), the Rhön reserve includes many areas offering clear views of the starry sky at night. Stargazers can see to the very depths of the universe from here – something which is possible in only very few regions of Germany.

**Elbe Riverside UNESCO Biosphere Reserve Schleswig-Holstein, Lower Saxony, Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania, Brandenburg, Saxony-Anhalt**

A unique blend of natural and man-made landscapes extending from the Middle-Elbe lowlands to the North German Plain: unspoilt riverside scenery and cultural heritage line the banks of this mighty river as it makes its way through five states all the way to the North Sea. Cranes, Nordic geese and lapwings make this reserve their home, alongside storks, beavers, otters and white-tailed eagles. Guided kayak tours are ideal for getting up close to the flora and fauna of the Elbe riverside, with the riverbanks revealing traces of beavers, common shelducks and families of greylag geese.

**Eifel National Park in the Hohes Venn Nature Park – Eifel Rhineland-Palatinate, North Rhine-Westphalia**

This nature park, which straddles the German-Belgian border, offers a varied landscape of forests, rivers, lakes and mountain ridges, not to mention castles, palaces and millions of wild daffodils. The water here played a pioneering role in ancient times when the Roman Eifel aqueduct ran through the region. Nowadays its route can be traced along the 111km Roman Canal Walking Trail that stretches from Nettersheim to Cologne. In the heart of the nature park lies Eifel National Park, North Rhine-Westphalia's only national park. Visitors can find out more about life in the different Rhineland regions on a trip to the LVR open-air museum in Kommern, where they can explore 60 or so buildings from days gone by. These include farmhouses, windmills, workshops, and village community buildings such as a schoolhouse, a bakery, a dance hall and a chapel.

**Berchtesgaden National Park Bavaria**

The national park that encompasses Mount Watzmann, the 'Sea of Rocks' and the Hagen mountains is one of the oldest conservation areas in the Alps. The excellent water quality of the famous Lake Königssee is a reflection of the unspoilt nature of this mountain region.

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	<p>Ibex, marmots, eagles, mountain hare and Alpine salamander roam freely around this incredible landscape. Keen botanists will find such flower varieties as dragon’s mouth, rock jasmine and dwarf alpenrose. The Mount Watzmann mountain lodge trek promises hikers spectacular sights and fascinating insights: the highlights of this four-day mountain lodge tour include Lake Königssee, Mount Watzmann and the ‘Sea of Rocks’. Hikers can round off their trip by crossing Lake Königssee on an electric boat.</p> <p><b>Schlei Estuary Nature Park Schleswig-Holstein</b>          Idyllic villages, vast meadows, yellow rape fields and secluded swimming bays make the most northerly nature park in Schleswig-Holstein an ideal place for relaxation. The Schlei river is an ancient and defining feature of the region and of the town of Schleswig. Running more than 40 kilometres inland from the Baltic Sea, it provides a habitat to a diverse range of species because its waters change from salt water to brackish water. An array of masts, sails, ropes and the occasional fur seal – you don’t have to be a seafarer to enjoy the sights of the museum harbour in Kappeln. Many boat owners even offer visitors the chance to climb aboard and discover the German and Danish waters.</p>
<p><b>Parks</b></p>	<p><b>Berlin's Botanischer Garten</b> includes the Botanic Museum Berlin. With an area of 43 hectares (110 acres) and around 22,000 different plant species it is one of the largest and most diverse gardens in the world. The Tiergarten is Berlin's largest park located in Mitte and was designed by Peter Joseph Lenné. In Kreuzberg the Viktoriapark provides a good viewing point over the southern part of inner city Berlin. Treptower Park beside the Spree in Treptow has a monument honoring the Soviet soldiers killed in the 1945 Battle of Berlin. The Volkspark in Friedrichshain, which opened in 1848, is the oldest park in the city.</p> <p><b>Frankfurt</b> has a lot of parks. Locals like to point out that while the city has no Central Park as New York does, it is itself a central park. A botanic city ring has replaced the enclosing city walls of old Frankfurt. Along the Main is a park landscape where you'll see bankers taking their lunch break beneath statues of heroes from the past. The <b>Palmengarten</b>, Siesmayerstrasse 61 (tel. 069/21233939; U-Bahn: Westend; bus: 32), is a park and a botanical garden. During the last decade, the gardens have been renewed and the conservatories and historic greenhouses completely reconstructed. You can admire a perennial garden, an expanded rock garden, and a beautiful rose garden. A huge gallery that serves as an exhibition hall for flower shows and other botanical exhibitions surrounds the 1869 palm house. In recent years, new conservatories have been added: The Tropicarium is</p>

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	<p>a complex for tropical vegetation; the Sub-Antarctic House displays plants from southern Chile, Argentina, and New Zealand; and the Entrance Conservatory houses insectivorous plants and bromeliads. Collections of orchids, palms, succulents, water lilies, and many others are also on display.</p>
<b>Gardens</b>	<p>Most German towns have gardens as an integral part of their urban life and this is particularly true in the Rhine region.</p> <p>The <b>Herrengarten in Darmstadt</b> was laid out at the end of the 16<sup>th</sup> century and is a particularly beautiful example.</p>
<b>Castles</b>	<p>The castles and palaces which Germany has to offer you are all original. There are not just a handful of well-preserved ones, but several hundred from all epochs and of every genre. Each has its own long and thrilling history, which is being kept alive within its walls.</p> <p>Set in an idyllic garden landscape, <b>Augustusburg</b> Castle (the sumptuous residence of the prince-archbishops of Cologne) and the Falkenlust hunting lodge (a small rural folly) are among the earliest examples of Rococo architecture in 18th-century Germany</p> <p>The <b>Grandhotel Schloss Bensburg</b> 14 km from Cologne offers a romantic stay in a 300 year old Baroque castle on top of a hill  <a href="http://www.schlossbensburg.com">www.schlossbensburg.com</a></p> <p>My personal favourite is <b>Burg Eltz</b> - near where the Rhine meets the Moselle, Burg Eltz is a medieval castle nestled in the hills between Koblenz and Trier, Germany. It is still owned by a branch of the same family (the Eltz family) that lived there in the 12th century, 33 generations ago. It's one of just three castles on the left bank of the Rhine in Rhineland-Palatinate which have never been destroyed.</p>
<b>Cathedrals</b>	<p><b>Cologne Cathedral</b> is one of the world's great cathedrals - the spiritual and geographical heart of the city. It's the largest Gothic cathedral in Germany. From the top of the south tower, you get panoramic views of the city and surrounding area. Construction began in 1248, in order to house the relics of the three Magi brought to Cologne in 1164 by Archbishop Reinald von Dassel, chancellor to Frederick Barbarossa. After the completion of the chancel, south tower, and north-side aisles (around 1500), work was halted and not resumed until 1823. In 1880, the great enterprise was completed, and unlike many time-consuming constructions that change styles in midstream, the final result was in the Gothic style, true to the original plans.</p>
<b>Historic Sites</b>	<p><b>Beethoven House in Bonn's</b> pride and joy. Beethoven was born in 1770 in the small house in back, which opens onto a little garden. On its second floor is the room where he was born, decorated only with a simple marble bust of the composer. Many of Beethoven's personal</p>

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	possessions are in the house, including manuscripts and musical instruments. In the Vienna Room, in the front of the house overlooking the street, is Beethoven's last piano. The instrument was custom-made, with a special sounding board to amplify sound for the hearing-impaired composer.
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<b>OTHER ACTIVITIES</b>	
<b>Shopping</b>	<p>There are so many things that make a shopping tour around cities like Cologne particularly special: German "originals", for example, such as BOSS, Meissen porcelain, Faber-Castell and Adidas. Traditional products such as Nuremberg gingerbread and the excellent German wines are also well worth seeking out.</p> <p><b>Cologne Water</b> - The word cologne has been a part of the common language since the introduction many years ago of the scented water called Kölnisch Wasser (eau de cologne). Eau de Cologne, Glockengasse 4711 (tel. 0221/9250450; U-Bahn: Neumarkt), sells the scented water first developed at this address by Italian chemist Giovanni Maria Farina in 1709. Originally employed to hide the stench of aristocrats who rarely bathed, cologne is now simply a sweet-smelling tradition and a cheap way to take home a little piece of Cologne. The smallest 25-milliliter flacon costs a mere 5€ (\$7.50).</p> <p><b>Krebs Glas</b> has been responsible for preserving the centuries old tradition of the little glass town of Lauscha. They have combined artistic handwork with the latest trends to become one of the leading manufacturers of mouth-blown glass Christmas ornaments in every shape and colour.</p>
<b>Markets</b>	<p><b>Christmas Markets</b></p> <p>Dresden may have one of the strongest claims to be the first genuine Christmas market, dating back to 1434. Today, during the four weeks of Advent that lead up to Christmas, almost any town of moderate size in the German-speaking world has at least one Christmas market. Larger cities usually have many, with Berlin boasting around 60! All of these markets offer Glühwein (hot mulled wine) and other warming drinks, gingerbread hearts, decorative craftworks, and other typical Christmas items.</p> <p>Twice a week on many places throughout <b>Berlin</b> there are markets that sell mostly fruit and vegetables. One of the best is the Turkish market on Maybachufer. The big market halls, where you can buy everything from fruit and vegetable over meat and dairy products to clothing are typical for Berlin. Each weekend too, many flea-markets invite you to look for great bargains. The most popular one is the Kunst- und Trödelmarkt on Straße des 17. Juni, but also along the Kupfergraben near the Museumsinsel there are many stalls with art objects, books</p>

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	<p>and records.</p> <p>In <b>Bonn</b>, a market called the Flohmarkt, at Rheinaue, Ludwig-Erhard-Strasse (tram: 66), is where you'll find all manner of secondhand goods and collectibles. It's held the third Saturday of each month April to October. A weekly market, Wochenmarkt, on the square of the same name, is held Monday to Saturday. You can enjoy a good lunch here, buying cooked food as you walk along inspecting the produce and various flea market items.</p> <p>Flea markets are held in <b>Cologne's</b> inner city. The most appealing are held within the Alter Markt (U-Bahn: Hauptbahnhof), at irregular intervals throughout the year, usually at least once a month (ask at the tourist office). More regular are the outdoor food and vegetable markets, the largest of which is held on the Wilhelmsplatz, in the Nippes district (U-Bahn: Florastrasse), Saturdays 8am to at least 2pm.</p>
<p><b>Nightlife</b></p>	<p><b>Berlin:</b> Berlin's nightlife has an outstanding reputation. Every day new music trends are created in the clubs, but also the clubs itself are again and again new invented. As Berlin doesn't have a closing hour, the party in the clubs goes all night long.</p> <p>The place to go for nightlife in <b>Düsseldorf</b> is the Altstadt. This .8 sq. kms of narrow streets and alleyways, between Königsallee and the Rhine River, is jam-packed with restaurants, dance clubs, art galleries, boutiques, nightclubs, and some 200 song-filled beer taverns.</p> <p>Düsseldorfers refer to a night cruising the Altstadt as an Altstadtbummel.</p> <p>For <b>jazz in Cologne</b>, go to Klimperkasten (also known as Papa Joe's Biersalon), Alter Markt 50-52 (tel. 0221/2582132; U-Bahn: Hauptbahnhof). It is an intimate jazz and piano bar open from 11am to 3am, with live music every night beginning around 8pm. The jazz is also hot at Papa Joe's Jazzlokal, Buttermarkt 37 (tel. 0221/2577931; U-Bahn: Heumarkt).</p> <p>A 110-year-old bar in Cologne, Päßgen Bräuhaus, Friesenstrasse 64-66 (tel. 0221/135461; U-Bahn: Friesenplatz), serves its Kölsch brand of beer, along with regional cuisine. Seating is available indoors and out.</p>
<p><b>CUISINE</b></p>	<p>Out of over <b>1200 breweries</b>, from the North Sea to the Alps, flow 5000 different kinds of beer on tap. A meal is also as versatile as the beer in Germany. Whether fresh fish from the traditional Hamburg fish market, or potatoes, the apples of the earth - which have been served either as salt potatoes, stewed potatoes or as potato-cakes since the 18th century - nothing more could be missing from a menu. However, what would Germany be without sausage - with plenty of mustard - prepared plain-boiled, boiled with spices, raw or as bratwurst?</p> <p>For breakfast or at snack time, one of 300 healthy kinds of bread and fine pastries, made famous by German bakers, await you. You can also</p>

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	<p>drink natural mineral water again and again. It bubbles here from 550 sources. The true connoisseur praises the German wine, some dry and some sweeter, but always smooth and filigree like nowhere else in the world.</p>
<p><b>Food</b></p>	<p><b>Thuringia Rostbratwurst sausage:</b>          The recipe is over 600 years old and only some of the ingredients are known: finely minced pork, salt and pepper, cumin, marjoram and garlic. The rest is a well-kept secret known only to the 3000 butchers in Thuringia.          And the sausage is of course only one of many culinary traditions in Germany – for instance <b>Black Forest Gateau</b> which is also one of my favourites... But there is everything food wise from Gherkins to Chocolate and Beer to Gingerbread.... Like:          Spreewald gherkin          The Halloren chocolate factory is the oldest producing factory in Germany since 1804....          Rittersport chocolate 1912....          Berliner Weisse – is an either red or green beer usually taken with a shot of raspberry or woodruff-flavored syrup to cut the brew's tartness.          Aachener Printen – a very popular kind of ginger bread          Some of the best inexpensive places to eat (and drink) in Cologne are beer taverns. Come to <b>Bräuhaus Sion</b>, Unter Taschenmacher 5-7 (tel. 0221/2578540; U-Bahn: Heumarkt; tram: 5 or 7), if you want a traditional local tavern where the beer is good, the wood paneling smoky with time and frequent polishing, and the food portions generous</p>
<p><b>Wine</b></p>	<p>German wine does not grow next to olive trees and cork-oaks. It grows on the same degree of latitude as Newfoundland. The difference is that it is nursed by the warm climate of the Gulf Stream. This results in wines with fruity acidity and a wide range of wonderful scents.          There are 13 German wine growing regions: Rheinhessen, Palatinate, Baden, Mosel-Saar-Ruwer, Württemberg, Franconia, Nahe, Rheingau, Mittelrhein, Ahr, Hessische Bergstraße, Saale-Unstrut and Saxony: Mosel, Saar and Ruwer in the west with tangy Riesling and Müller-Thurgau, the Elbe in the east with Rivaner and delicately fruity Weißburgunder and Grauburgunder.          You will find a true paradise for the wine connoisseur when you travel the Rhine route from Lake Constance in the south to north of Bonn. People drink solid Gutedel, powerful Rulander, which today is called Grauer Burgunder and in the sunny Kaiserstuhl region fruity Weißherbst (rosé wine). The fertile Rhineland-Palatinate tempts not only with Rivaner, but also with full-flavoured Morio, Muskat, Kerner and Scheurebe. Rheinhessen's Silvaner offers more than just Liebfraumilch - the white wines range from mild to spicy and elegant. These can also be found in the neighbouring Nahe region.</p>

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	<p>Additionally red wine is cultivated between Landau and Mainz. Mainly smooth Portugieser but powerful Dornfelder as well. The volcanic and slate soil of the northern part of the Ahr region mainly yields the fruity Spätburgunder. Overall, general three quarters of the German wines are white wines.</p>
<p><b>Rhine Wine</b></p>	<p>Most of Germany's vineyards owe their existence to the Rhine river. It flows past a wide fertile valley past the Baden vineyards. The Pfalz, on the east facing slopes on the Haardt Mountains is the most southerly of these Rhine wine regions. Next comes the Rheinhessen with its finest vineyard sites around the Neirstein on the so-called Rheinfront or Rheinterrasse. North of Mainz, the Rhine meets the mass of the Taunus Mountains and is forced west along a short stretch between Weisbaden and Assmannshausen. This area is called the Rheingau. At Bingen, the Nahe River flows in and along its banks where some of the best south-facing vineyards are located. North of Bonn is the tiny river Ahr, which is a tourist spot with its own vineyards. All of these German regions produce different styles of wine, but in general, Rhine wine is fuller and richer than Mosel wines. As in the Mosel, the primary grape is the Reising, but there are other varieties of grapes too. There are a few Weissburgunder (pinot blanc) and some Chardonnay. The German wine research center at Geisenheim has created many new vine hybrids, such as Ehrenfelser, Scheurebe, and Kerner. They are not as popular as the native Rheingau.</p>
<p><b>Restaurants</b></p>	<p>So many to choose from! Here's a few suggestions for that special meal in the Rhine region:</p> <p><b>Frankfurt: Weinhaus Brückenkeller:</b> Located in the heart of the Altstadt, this is one of Frankfurt's leading restaurants and a favorite spot of well-heeled North American visitors. Tables are candlelit, and strolling musicians encourage singing. Here the age of Bismarck lives again. Franconian carvings adorn the alcoves, and huge wooden barrels are decorated with scenes from Goethe's Faust. The food is light and subtle. A typical meal may begin with cream of sorrel soup or more substantial roast gooseliver with green beans, perhaps a small salmon cake with caviar crème. The Tafelspitz (boiled beef) is the best in town. Filet of roast turbot with a white-wine cream sauce and a parsley risotto, or saddle of lamb served with mashed potatoes flavored with truffles and pimento, are also delicious. For a perfect finish, try the soufflé of strawberries with vanilla sauce. The evening meal includes homemade sourdough bread. The wine cellar holds 285 selections of German wines, including the Rhineland's best. Personal attention and efficient service are hallmarks.</p> <p><b>Zur Lese, Bonn:</b> This restaurant's polite service and outdoor terrace with a sweeping view over the Rhine attract many local residents, especially in the afternoon, when visitors drop in for coffee, cakes, and</p>

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	<p>glasses of wine after strolling in the nearby Hofgarten. Elegant, well-prepared lunches are also offered. Dinner is served in the cafe. A menu of German specialties (with English translations) includes pork with curry sauce and the chef's superb Gulasch Lese (goulash).</p> <p><b>Dusseldorf: Rheinturm Top 180 Restaurant</b> - This futuristic restaurant is set atop the spool-shaped summit of the city's tallest tower (172m/564 ft.) and revolves slowly, affording a 360-degree panorama of Düsseldorf's buildings and parks. Most people come here for the view, but the food is good and includes grills, game dishes, fish, and soups. Try the slices of smoked duck breast with creamy savoy cabbage or rolls of salmon stuffed with turbot filling and served in Riesling and saffron sauce.</p>
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<b>MORE INFO</b>	
<b>Brochures</b>	<a href="http://www.germany.travel/en/ebrochures.html">http://www.germany.travel/en/ebrochures.html</a> for online brochures
<b>Websites</b>	Website: <a href="http://www.Germany.Travel">www.Germany.Travel</a> Facebook: <a href="https://www.facebook.com/GermanyTravelDestination">https://www.facebook.com/GermanyTravelDestination</a> Twitter: <a href="https://twitter.com/germanytourism">https://twitter.com/germanytourism</a>

<b>PERSONAL EXPERIENCES</b>	<p>Rhine Valley; Frankfurt; Heidelberg; Berlin; Dresden; Black Forest; Cologne; Trier; Hamburg; Munster; Munich; Munster.</p> <p>Here is a "Magic Moment" from my very first trip to Berlin:</p> <p><i>"It's 1976 and I am in Berlin on a two month long student camping trip across Western and Eastern Europe. Here are my travel journal notes on the transition from West to East at that time... Today's the day we cross the Berlin Wall! Travelled up BismarkStrasse, once a main thoroughfare and now cut off with the Victory Column and the adjacent Brandenburg Gate. A Russian tank patrols their War memorial even here in West Berlin. Spent time in the Escape Museum with it's thrilling tales of triumph and failure of East Germans trying to get over the wall. Then on to the Viewing Platform positioned to give an unrestricted view of the Wall and No Man's Land. And now the Wall itself and Checkpoint Charlie. Queue for an hour and everyone around me looks like a spy out of a John Le Carre novel... I wonder if I look like one too? Slowly processed through to East Berlin. It's like a bleak parallel universe on the other side. Ruined buildings, supermarkets with empty shelves, drabness everywhere...and all so close to the colour and life of West Berlin..."</i></p>
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<b>UNESCO SITES IN</b>	<b>UNESCO World Heritage</b> – the greatest legacies of mankind and
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<p><b>GERMANY</b></p>	<p>Mother Nature. Only the finest monuments to human and natural activity have the honour of bearing the UNESCO World Heritage title. And Germany is home to some of the finest of these.</p> <p>Some 2000 years of history have left lasting traces in Germany – silent yet eloquent witnesses to mankind's achievements and the wonders of nature. There are no fewer than 40 places in Germany on the UNESCO World Heritage list. They range from historical buildings and cathedrals of industry to exceptional natural landscapes and even whole towns. Because every visit to a UNESCO World Heritage site is a journey back in time to a shared cultural history.</p> <p>Discover the lure of the finest historical sites, and go in search of mankind's heritage. In Germany, you'll find what you're looking for 38 times over.</p> <p>For travel tips and more details on the 40 German UNESCO World Heritage sites, go to <a href="http://www.unesco.germany.travel/en/">www.unesco.germany.travel/en/</a> .</p> <p>Here some details of my top ten of these magnificent visitor attractions:</p>
<p><b>Abbey of Corvey</b></p>	<p>Built between 822 and 885 A.D. by French Benedictine monks under the auspices of Franconian Emperor Charlemagne and later, his son Louis The Pious, the Abbey of Corvey became an important cultural and political outpost in the Carolingian empire. Corvey's Westwork, the west-facing abbey entrance with its two spired towers, watches over the bucolic scenery along the Weser river, displaying the intricate brick and stone architecture of the era, a northern European building style referencing Roman architecture, with few remaining examples.</p> <p>For more information on Corvey, visit <a href="http://www.unesco.de/welterbe-corvey">www.unesco.de/welterbe-corvey</a> and <a href="http://www.schloss-corvey.de/en/">www.schloss-corvey.de/en/</a> .</p>
<p><b>Maulbronn</b></p>	<p>The former Cistercian abbey of Maulbronn is not only the most complete and best-preserved monastic complex north of the Alps, it is also a particularly representative example of medieval architecture. Construction of the monastery began in 1147.</p> <p><a href="http://www.germany.travel/en/towns-cities-culture/unesco-world-heritage/maulbronn-monastery-complex.html">http://www.germany.travel/en/towns-cities-culture/unesco-world-heritage/maulbronn-monastery-complex.html</a></p>
<p><b>Lorsch Abbey</b></p>	<p>The famous Carolingian gate hall or 'king's hall' in Lorsch is one of Germany's most important pre-Romanesque architectural relics. The original function of the building is unknown, but the magnificent decorations on its walls and on the upper floor give an idea of what other magnificent buildings that must have once stood at Lorsch Abbey, which was founded around 764 AD.</p> <p><a href="http://www.germany.travel/en/towns-cities-culture/unesco-world-heritage/lorsch-benedictine-abbey-and-altenmuenster.html">http://www.germany.travel/en/towns-cities-culture/unesco-world-heritage/lorsch-benedictine-abbey-and-altenmuenster.html</a></p>
<p><b>Speyer</b></p>	<p>The magnificent Romanesque imperial cathedral in Speyer is the town's best-known and most prominent landmark. Built by emperors - construction began around 1030 - the cathedral was a symbol of their power and served as their final resting place.</p>

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	<a href="http://www.germany.travel/en/towns-cities-culture/unesco-world-heritage/speyer-cathedral.html">http://www.germany.travel/en/towns-cities-culture/unesco-world-heritage/speyer-cathedral.html</a>
<b>Messel</b>	The Messel Pit Fossil Site holds some of the richest deposits of mammal fossils in the world. To date, geoscientists have unearthed approx. 50,000 individual finds from the former volcanic crater lake, which was formed around 47 million years ago. <a href="http://www.germany.travel/en/towns-cities-culture/unesco-world-heritage/messel-pit-fossil-site.html">http://www.germany.travel/en/towns-cities-culture/unesco-world-heritage/messel-pit-fossil-site.html</a>
<b>Upper Rhine Valley</b>	Upper Middle Rhine Valley is included the UNESCO list of World Cultural Heritage in recognition of its status as one of the world's oldest and most magnificent cultural landscapes. The romantic river valley is lined with castles and palaces. It extends from the old Roman town of Koblenz, via the myth-enshrouded Loreley rock, to Bingen and Rudesheim, and includes the steep vineyards that are home to the famous Rhine wines. <a href="http://www.germany.travel/en/towns-cities-culture/unesco-world-heritage/upper-middle-rhine-valley.html">http://www.germany.travel/en/towns-cities-culture/unesco-world-heritage/upper-middle-rhine-valley.html</a>
<b>Cologne</b>	Building first began in Cologne in 1248 on what eventually became one of the finest ecclesiastical buildings in the world and the epitome of high-Gothic cathedral architecture in its purest possible form. <a href="http://www.germany.travel/en/towns-cities-culture/unesco-world-heritage/cologne-cathedral.html">http://www.germany.travel/en/towns-cities-culture/unesco-world-heritage/cologne-cathedral.html</a>
<b>Brühl</b>	The Augustusburg Palace and Falkenlust Hunting Lodge, along with their gardens, are a fine example of German rococo architecture. Work on Augustusburg Palace began in 1725. It was the favourite residence of Clemens August of Bavaria, Elector and Archbishop of Cologne (1700–1761). <a href="http://www.germany.travel/en/towns-cities-culture/unesco-world-heritage/bruehl-castles-of-augustusburg-and-falkenlust.html">http://www.germany.travel/en/towns-cities-culture/unesco-world-heritage/bruehl-castles-of-augustusburg-and-falkenlust.html</a>
<b>Essen</b>	In its heyday, the Zollverein Coal Mine Industrial Complex in Essen was one of the largest and most modern collieries and coking plants in the world. Regarded as 'the most beautiful colliery in the world', the complex is a testament to the modern architectural movement of the 1920s and 1930s and the rise of heavy industry. <a href="http://www.germany.travel/en/towns-cities-culture/unesco-world-heritage/essen-zollverein-coal-mine-industrial-complex.html">http://www.germany.travel/en/towns-cities-culture/unesco-world-heritage/essen-zollverein-coal-mine-industrial-complex.html</a>
<b>Wadden Sea</b>	The Wadden Sea is located on the North Sea coast covering an area of about 10,000 square kilometres. The diversity of the Wadden Sea landscape makes it a unique habitat for more than 10,000 species of plants and wildlife. Mussel beds, dense sea grass meadows and soft mudflats provide food for many animals. The area is a sanctuary for twelve million birds. <a href="http://www.germany.travel/en/towns-cities-culture/unesco-world-heritage/the-wadden-sea.html">http://www.germany.travel/en/towns-cities-culture/unesco-world-heritage/the-wadden-sea.html</a>

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<b>Lübeck</b>	<p>Lübeck, the Queen of the Hanseatic League, was founded in 1143 as 'the first western city on the Baltic coast'. The Hanseatic League was a 13th to 17th-century trading group formed by cities along the coast of Northern Europe. Today Lübeck has a medieval ambience and cultural and historical attractions harking back to Lübeck's glorious past as a free imperial and Hanseatic city.</p> <p><a href="http://www.germany.travel/en/towns-cities-culture/unesco-world-heritage/luebeck-historical-centre.html">http://www.germany.travel/en/towns-cities-culture/unesco-world-heritage/luebeck-historical-centre.html</a></p>
<b>MORE UNESCO SITES IN GERMANY</b>	<p>After my top ten, here are the other 30 sites to plan tour trip to Germany around...</p>
<b>Würzburg Residenz Palace and Court Gardens</b>	<p>Würzburg Residenz Palace is generally considered the purest and most remarkable of all baroque palaces in Germany. Built between 1740 and 1770 and enhanced by the magnificent gardens between 1765 and 1780, it exemplifies a glittering era and is one of the most spectacular royal palaces in Europe.</p> <p><a href="http://www.germany.travel/en/towns-cities-culture/unesco-world-heritage/wuerzburg-residenz-palace-and-court-gardens.html">http://www.germany.travel/en/towns-cities-culture/unesco-world-heritage/wuerzburg-residenz-palace-and-court-gardens.html</a></p>
<b>Wilhelmshöhe Park</b>	<p>Covering 240 hectares in the north Hessen city of Kassel, baroque Wilhelmshöhe Park is designed in the style of an English landscape garden and is Europe's largest hillside park. Together with Wilhelmshöhe Palace, it forms a unique whole that combines culture, nature and landscape architecture in perfect harmony. It dates from 1696 when Landgrave Karl of Hesse-Kassel aimed to elevate the Kassel princes over the other ruling houses of the day.</p> <p><a href="http://www.germany.travel/en/towns-cities-culture/unesco-world-heritage/bauhaus-and-its-sites-in-weimar-and-dessau.html">http://www.germany.travel/en/towns-cities-culture/unesco-world-heritage/bauhaus-and-its-sites-in-weimar-and-dessau.html</a></p>
<b>Bauhaus and its sites in Weimar and Dessau</b>	<p>As a university of design, the Bauhaus School revolutionised 20th century art and architecture around the world. Today the original buildings in Weimar and Dessau, along with a range of museums and exhibitions, provide an insight into a movement that still seems innovative today.</p> <p><a href="http://www.germany.travel/en/towns-cities-culture/unesco-world-heritage/bauhaus-and-its-sites-in-weimar-and-dessau.html">http://www.germany.travel/en/towns-cities-culture/unesco-world-heritage/bauhaus-and-its-sites-in-weimar-and-dessau.html</a></p>
<b>Classical Weimar</b>	<p>For centuries, Weimar in Thuringia was at the centre of intellectual life in Germany: the city experienced its heyday in the early 19th century when it was home to no fewer than three of Europe's leading intellectuals – Goethe, Schiller and Herder. Around 1800, in a new era of tolerance, education for the masses and Humanist views, Weimar became a focal point of European intellectual thought and Weimar Classicism.</p> <p><a href="http://www.germany.travel/en/towns-cities-culture/unesco-world-heritage/classical-weimar.html">http://www.germany.travel/en/towns-cities-culture/unesco-world-heritage/classical-weimar.html</a></p>
<b>Wartburg Castle</b>	<p>Large, imposing and steeped in history: high above the town of</p>

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	<p>Eisenach sits Wartburg Castle, one of the best-preserved medieval German fortresses and almost 1,000 years old. It is possibly Germany's most famous castle, and certainly one of its most important. The impressive ceremonial hall and the surviving 12th century Palas – a perfect example of late-Romanesque architecture – still bear traces of Wartburg's former glory. In 1521-22 Martin Luther, posing as 'Squire George', sought and found refuge here.</p> <p><a href="http://www.germany.travel/en/towns-cities-culture/unesco-world-heritage/wartburg-castle.html">http://www.germany.travel/en/towns-cities-culture/unesco-world-heritage/wartburg-castle.html</a></p>
<b>Völklingen Ironworks</b>	<p>The Völklingen Ironworks are the world's only surviving smelting works from the Golden Age of the iron and steel industry in the 19th and 20th century. In 1994 these gigantic ironworks covering an area of 600,000m<sup>2</sup> became the first industrial monument to be inscribed in the UNESCO World Heritage list. Today, they are a cultural attraction, themed discovery park and science centre rolled into one.</p> <p><a href="http://www.germany.travel/en/towns-cities-culture/unesco-world-heritage/voelklingen-ironworks.html">http://www.germany.travel/en/towns-cities-culture/unesco-world-heritage/voelklingen-ironworks.html</a></p>
<b>Roman monuments, the Cathedral and Church of Our Lady in Trier</b>	<p>Founded as Augusta Treverorum in 16 BC, Trier is Germany's oldest town and a true monument to history. Historical buildings of international standing, remarkable churches and magnificent Roman remains all make a visit to this romantic city on the Moselle an unforgettable experience. Trier, which is over 2,000 years old, presents an amazing range of cultural and historical attractions for art lovers and history buffs alike.</p> <p><a href="http://www.germany.travel/en/towns-cities-culture/unesco-world-heritage/roman-monuments-the-cathedral-and-church-of-our-lady-in-trier.html">http://www.germany.travel/en/towns-cities-culture/unesco-world-heritage/roman-monuments-the-cathedral-and-church-of-our-lady-in-trier.html</a></p>
<b>Historic Centres of Stralsund and Wismar</b>	<p>The grandeur and riches of the Hanseatic League in the 14th century could hardly be more vividly illustrated than in the historic centres of Stralsund and Wismar. Both towns boast virtually unchanged medieval layouts and extensively preserved architectural heritage from the brick Gothic period.</p> <p>A total of six brick parish churches alone in Stralsund and Wismar, on the Mecklenburg-Western Pomeranian coast, offer a representative cross-section of Gothic church architecture in the late Middle Ages.</p> <p><a href="http://www.germany.travel/en/towns-cities-culture/unesco-world-heritage/historic-centres-of-stralsund-and-wismar.html">http://www.germany.travel/en/towns-cities-culture/unesco-world-heritage/historic-centres-of-stralsund-and-wismar.html</a></p>
<b>Frontiers of the Roman Empire: Upper Germanic-Rhaetian Limes</b>	<p>The longest and one of the most impressive archaeological monuments in Europe, the Limes marks former Roman boundaries from the Rhine to the Danube over a distance of 550km. Around 2,000 years ago its forts, watchtowers, walls and palisades protected the mighty Roman Empire from the Barbarians.</p> <p><a href="http://www.germany.travel/en/towns-cities-culture/unesco-world-heritage/frontiers-of-the-roman-empire-upper-germanic-rhaetian-limes.html">http://www.germany.travel/en/towns-cities-culture/unesco-world-heritage/frontiers-of-the-roman-empire-upper-germanic-rhaetian-limes.html</a></p>
<b>Monastic Island of</b>	<p>Three Romanesque churches from the 9th to the 11th century attest to</p>

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<p><b>Reichenau</b></p>	<p>the significance of the former Benedictine abbey on the Monastic Island of Reichenau in Baden-Württemberg. Founded in 724, it quickly developed into one of the most important monasteries in southern Germany. The monastic tradition can still be seen today in the unique religious festivals and processions that take place on the island.  <a href="http://www.germany.travel/en/towns-cities-culture/unesco-world-heritage/monastic-island-of-reichenau.html">http://www.germany.travel/en/towns-cities-culture/unesco-world-heritage/monastic-island-of-reichenau.html</a></p>
<p><b>Old Town of Regensburg and Stadtamhof</b></p>	<p>Regensburg, the town of emperors and kings, offers impressive perspectives of around 2,000 years of history. The only example of French Gothic cathedral architecture east of the Rhine, Regensburg Cathedral has a wealth of medieval stained glass that is unparalleled in Germany and just one of many architectural monuments that make Regensburg in Bavaria the best-preserved medieval city in Germany.  <a href="http://www.germany.travel/en/towns-cities-culture/unesco-world-heritage/old-town-of-regensburg-and-stadtamhof.html">http://www.germany.travel/en/towns-cities-culture/unesco-world-heritage/old-town-of-regensburg-and-stadtamhof.html</a></p>
<p><b>Collegiate Church, Castle and Old Town of Quedlinburg</b></p>	<p>Quedlinburg, which enjoys an idyllic location, was an important royal and imperial town in the Middle Ages. With its historical layout and over 1,300 timber-framed houses from a period spanning six centuries, Quedlinburg is a fine example of a beautifully preserved medieval town. It also boasts a wealth of art nouveau architecture. The Collegiate Church of St. Servatius is the burial site of the first German king, Henry the Fowler, and his wife Mathilde.  <a href="http://www.germany.travel/en/towns-cities-culture/unesco-world-heritage/collegiate-church-castle-and-old-town-of-quedlinburg.html">http://www.germany.travel/en/towns-cities-culture/unesco-world-heritage/collegiate-church-castle-and-old-town-of-quedlinburg.html</a></p>
<p><b>Palaces and parks of Potsdam and Berlin</b></p>	<p>The beautiful city of Potsdam is part of an extraordinarily rich and attractive landscape: expansive parks, majestic tree-lined avenues and some 150 buildings from the 18th to the 20th century all combine to make an outstanding cultural treasure. Extended to include architectural monuments in neighbouring Berlin, today's World Heritage site dates back to 1745, when Frederick the Great commissioned Sanssouci Palace to be built as his summer residence.  <a href="http://www.germany.travel/en/towns-cities-culture/unesco-world-heritage/palaces-and-parks-of-potsdam-and-berlin.html">http://www.germany.travel/en/towns-cities-culture/unesco-world-heritage/palaces-and-parks-of-potsdam-and-berlin.html</a></p>
<p><b>Prehistoric Pile Dwellings around the Alps</b></p>	<p>Nine pile dwellings are located on the shores of Lake Constance in Baden-Württemberg. Nine more are listed in Upper Swabia, south of Augsburg and at Lake Starnberg. They represent an archaeological legacy that dates back almost 7,000 years. In Unteruhldingen on Lake Constance north of Friedrichshafen, wooden posts in the water still serve as reminders of the houses that once stood there. This special type of construction was an early settlement form in Europe. They provided protection against enemies and predators, access to the water for fishing and the nearby shores for farming.  <a href="http://www.germany.travel/en/towns-cities-culture/unesco-world-heritage/prehistoric-pile-dwellings-around-the-alps.html">http://www.germany.travel/en/towns-cities-culture/unesco-world-heritage/prehistoric-pile-dwellings-around-the-alps.html</a></p>

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<b>Muskauer Park</b>	<p>Prince Hermann von Pückler-Muskau – bohemian, travel writer and landscape gardener of great renown – designed Muskauer Park, one of the most beautiful landscaped gardens in the world, in the early 19th century. Covering around 830 hectares, it is made up of a number of smaller parks on either side of the German-Polish border, each with its own character.</p> <p><a href="http://www.germany.travel/en/towns-cities-culture/unesco-world-heritage/muskauer-park.html">http://www.germany.travel/en/towns-cities-culture/unesco-world-heritage/muskauer-park.html</a></p>
<b>St. Mary's Cathedral and St. Michael's Church in Hildesheim</b>	<p>St. Michael's Church and St. Mary's Cathedral in Hildesheim near Hannover are two outstanding examples of early-Romanesque architecture. Both churches symbolise the heyday of religious art in the Holy Roman Empire, exemplify the creative skill of Bishop Bernward, and are blessed with a wealth of famous historical art treasures. The first cathedral building on the site of Hildesheim's St. Mary's Cathedral was built as early as 872.</p> <p><a href="http://www.germany.travel/en/towns-cities-culture/unesco-world-heritage/st-marys-cathedral-and-st-michaels-church-in-hildesheim.html">http://www.germany.travel/en/towns-cities-culture/unesco-world-heritage/st-marys-cathedral-and-st-michaels-church-in-hildesheim.html</a></p>
<b>Mines of Rammelsberg, Historic Town of Goslar and Upper Harz Water Management System</b>	<p>Reminders of Germany's earliest industrial heritage – these sites document around 1,000 years of mining history. The Mines of Rammelsberg on the outskirts of the beautiful old town of Goslar were once the largest interconnected repositories of copper, lead and zinc ore in the world. Energy for the mine was supplied by the Upper Harz water management system, the world's foremost pre-industrial water management system for the mining industry.</p> <p><a href="http://www.germany.travel/en/towns-cities-culture/unesco-world-heritage/mines-of-rammelsberg-historic-town-of-goslar-and-upper-harz-water-management-system.html">http://www.germany.travel/en/towns-cities-culture/unesco-world-heritage/mines-of-rammelsberg-historic-town-of-goslar-and-upper-harz-water-management-system.html</a></p>
<b>Luther memorials in Eisleben and Wittenberg</b>	<p>500 years after the Reformation, the atmosphere of those times can still be felt in Eisleben and Lutherstadt Wittenberg. This is where you'll find unique Luther memorial sites such as the house where the Church reformer was born, the house where he died, the monastery where he lived and the church to which he nailed his 95 theses. Martin Luther was born on 10 November 1483 and he died on 18 February 1546.</p> <p><a href="http://www.germany.travel/en/towns-cities-culture/unesco-world-heritage/luther-memorials-in-eisleben-and-wittenberg.html">http://www.germany.travel/en/towns-cities-culture/unesco-world-heritage/luther-memorials-in-eisleben-and-wittenberg.html</a></p>
<b>Garden Kingdom of Dessau-Wörlitz</b>	<p>As the first English-style landscape garden in mainland Europe, the 18th century Garden Kingdom of Dessau Wörlitz unites garden design and architecture in perfect harmony. Here you'll find manor houses, more than 100 buildings of varying sizes and a range of sweeping parks and gardens, all spread over an area of 140 square kilometres on and around the banks of the rivers Elbe and Mulde.</p> <p><a href="http://www.germany.travel/en/towns-cities-culture/unesco-world-heritage/garden-kingdom-of-dessau-woerlitz.html">http://www.germany.travel/en/towns-cities-culture/unesco-world-heritage/garden-kingdom-of-dessau-woerlitz.html</a></p>
<b>Town hall and</b>	<p>It is one of the most beautiful town halls in Germany: the magnificent</p>

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<p><b>Roland statue in Bremen</b></p>	<p>facade is a textbook example of the Weser Renaissance architecture typical of northern Germany. At 10.21 metres, the Roland statue is the tallest free-standing sculpture of the German Middle Ages. It represents Hanseatic freedom - and the distance between the knees is exactly one Bremen 'elle', a historical unit of measurement.  <a href="http://www.germany.travel/en/towns-cities-culture/unesco-world-heritage/town-hall-and-roland-statue-in-bremen.html">http://www.germany.travel/en/towns-cities-culture/unesco-world-heritage/town-hall-and-roland-statue-in-bremen.html</a></p>
<p><b>Berlin Modernism Housing Estates</b></p>	<p>Appearing between 1913 and 1934, Berlin's six Modernist housing estates, with their promise of 'light, air and sunshine' for residents, provided a welcome antidote to the gloomy tenement buildings of Wilhelmine Germany. Their clean lines made them hugely influential in 20th century architecture and town planning.  <a href="http://www.germany.travel/en/towns-cities-culture/unesco-world-heritage/berlin-modernism-housing-estates.html">http://www.germany.travel/en/towns-cities-culture/unesco-world-heritage/berlin-modernism-housing-estates.html</a></p>
<p><b>Berlin Museum Island</b></p>	<p>The unique collection of galleries and museums on Berlin Museum Island house treasures from 6,000 years of human history. Elevated to UNESCO World Heritage status in 1999, and located in Berlin's historical centre, the complex is the centrepiece of the city's museum network and is Europe's largest cultural investment project.  <a href="http://www.germany.travel/en/towns-cities-culture/unesco-world-heritage/berlin-museum-island.html">http://www.germany.travel/en/towns-cities-culture/unesco-world-heritage/berlin-museum-island.html</a></p>
<p><b>Germany's Ancient Beech Forests</b></p>	<p>Without human intervention, beech trees would still cover large areas of continental Europe. Today, unspoilt lowland beech forests are found nowhere else in the world but in Germany. The Ancient Beech Forests of Germany offer a fascinating, romantic and incredibly diverse picture of the original European landscapes.  <a href="http://www.germany.travel/en/towns-cities-culture/unesco-world-heritage/germanys-ancient-beech-forests.html">http://www.germany.travel/en/towns-cities-culture/unesco-world-heritage/germanys-ancient-beech-forests.html</a></p>
<p><b>Margravia Opera House in Bayreuth</b></p>	<p>The Margravia Opera House is regarded as a triumph of 18th century baroque theatre design. Visitors find the splendour of its interior simply awe-inspiring. The most beautiful baroque theatre remaining in Europe, it was built by Giuseppe Galli-Bibiena and his son Carlo, the most famous theatre architects of their day.  <a href="http://www.germany.travel/en/towns-cities-culture/unesco-world-heritage/margravia-opera-house-in-bayreuth.html">http://www.germany.travel/en/towns-cities-culture/unesco-world-heritage/margravia-opera-house-in-bayreuth.html</a></p>
<p><b>Bamberg Old Town</b></p>	<p>A centre of imperial and episcopal power for almost a thousand years, Bamberg stands on seven hills surrounded by beautiful countryside. Dominated by its imperial cathedral, the town is a unique and superbly maintained masterpiece of urban design, uniting medieval and baroque architecture. It provides a fascinating example of how central European towns were built up around the basic layouts established in the early Middle Ages  <a href="http://www.germany.travel/en/towns-cities-culture/unesco-world-heritage/bamberg-old-town.html">http://www.germany.travel/en/towns-cities-culture/unesco-world-heritage/bamberg-old-town.html</a></p>

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<b>Fagus Factory in Alfeld</b>	<p>Built in 1911 to designs by Adolf Meyer and Walter Gropius, the Fagus Factory is widely regarded as the first truly modernist structure. The glass and steel facade and the huge, wrap-around corner windows free of supports lend the building an elegant feeling of lightness.</p> <p><a href="http://www.germany.travel/en/towns-cities-culture/unesco-world-heritage/fagus-factory-in-alfeld.html">http://www.germany.travel/en/towns-cities-culture/unesco-world-heritage/fagus-factory-in-alfeld.html</a></p>
<b>Aachen Cathedral</b>	<p>Aachen Cathedral was the very first site to be granted UNESCO World Heritage status in Germany, and with good reason: built in around 790 to 800, the cathedral is of world importance in terms of the history of art and architecture, and is one of the great examples of church architecture. The final resting place of Charlemagne, it was also where German emperors were crowned for 600 years.</p> <p><a href="http://www.germany.travel/en/towns-cities-culture/unesco-world-heritage/aachen-cathedral.html">http://www.germany.travel/en/towns-cities-culture/unesco-world-heritage/aachen-cathedral.html</a></p>
<b>Wieskirche Pilgrimage Church</b>	<p>The Pilgrimage Church of the Scourged Saviour at the foot of the Alps is considered a perfect example of Bavarian rococo architecture. The church's exuberant interior decor is unparalleled in richness and refinement. Around one million visitors come to look, marvel, pray, attend services, enjoy the summer concerts and, of course, for quiet contemplation. The foundation stone for the current church was laid in 1746.</p> <p><a href="http://www.germany.travel/en/towns-cities-culture/unesco-world-heritage/wieskirche-pilgrimage-church.html">http://www.germany.travel/en/towns-cities-culture/unesco-world-heritage/wieskirche-pilgrimage-church.html</a></p>
<b>Speicherstadt and Kontorhaus District with Chilehaus, Hamburg</b>	<p>Speicherstadt and the adjacent Kontorhaus district are two densely built urban areas in the centre of the port city of Hamburg. Speicherstadt, originally developed on a group of narrow islands in the Elbe River between 1885 and 1927, was partly rebuilt from 1949 to 1967. It is one of the largest coherent historic ensembles of port warehouses in the world (300,000 m<sup>2</sup>). It includes 15 very large warehouse blocks as well as six ancillary buildings and a connecting network of short canals. Adjacent to the modernist Chilehaus office building, the Kontorhaus district is an area of over five hectares featuring six very large office complexes built from the 1920s to the 1940s to house port-related businesses. The complex exemplifies the effects of the rapid growth in international trade in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.</p>

<b>INSIGHT VACATIONSTO GERMANY</b>	<p>For over 35 years Insight Vacations has been known as the provider of some of the world's finest escorted tours. They are particularly regarded as experts in touring Europe - with tours covering 43 countries they offer more European nations than any other any operator. They are also the leading escorted tour operator in the Eastern Mediterranean as well as offering tours in North America, North Africa, Nepal, Bhutan and Sri</p>
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	<p>Lanka.</p> <p>You can be confident that Insight will bring you quality hotels, luxury transport and the most in-depth local knowledge. Enjoy unique escorted vacations, with signature business class travel, expert Tour Directors and hand-picked hotels in the best locations.</p>
<p><b>Insight's Germany</b></p>	<p>Insight has a "Germany program" of 20 itineraries if you include multi country vacations and their popular Christmas Market tours.</p> <p>In summer, the carefully crafted "<b>Best of Germany</b>" itinerary from Insight Vacations is a great way to makes sure that you take in all the must see sights and top experiences. A comprehensive tour of Germany, it goes to all the main sites and provides and understanding of the history of the country. Guests will enjoy a culinary stop in Rothenburg, meet a local craftsman in the Black Forest, learn about World War II history in Dachau, Berlin and Dresden and enjoy stunning scenery and a taste of Germany's unexpected frivolity in Bavaria.</p> <p>Your Tour Director takes care of all the travel details and excellent local guides educate you with fascinating history lessons and insider stories. On this escorted journey with Insight Vacations you will enjoy many memorable meals of excellent German cuisine with your like-minded fellow travelers. You don't have to worry about baggage handling and you travel in a luxury, air conditioned coach enjoying free WiFi. And, suitably relaxed, take in the best that Germany has to offer.</p> <p>In winter Insight Vacations offer itineraries that visit the famous German <b>Christmas Markets</b>. Open-air street markets have a long history in Germany dating back long before anyone celebrated Christmas. In Europe in the Late Middle Ages special winter markets offered townspeople a chance to stock up on food and supplies to tide them over the cold months. With time, craftspeople began selling baskets, toys and woodcarvings. There were also booths for almonds, nuts, roasted chestnuts, gingerbread and other baked goods.</p>
<p><b>What makes Insight Different?</b></p>	<p>Insight is a premium tour - like traveling in business class. These premium tours reach back to the "Golden Age of Touring"</p> <p>What makes Insight different?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Smaller groups – maximum 40 guests</li> <li>- More legroom and comfort</li> <li>- First-class hotels in central or scenic locations</li> <li>- More inclusions and sightseeing</li> <li>- More meals - delicious dining and more choice</li> <li>- Impeccable service</li> </ul>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- International fellow guests</li> <li>- Insight tours are better value, and often actually cheaper when you compare with buying the individual trip components</li> <li>- Insight tours are leisurely, some with 2 or 3 night stays in each city</li> <li>- Insight's average age is 47 years old</li> <li>- Significant free time is built into every tour</li> <li>- Insight offers 6 distinct touring styles – see below</li> <li>- Insight sells only through travel agents such as <a href="http://tripcentral.ca">tripcentral.ca</a></li> </ul>
<p><b>Insight Touring Styles</b></p>	<p>Insight Vacations premium tours offer you the chance to experience Europe's finest cities, sights, hotels and culinary delights. Whether you want to explore Europe at a leisurely pace, experience as much as possible or get off the beaten track, Insight Vacations offers a complete range of six touring itineraries to suit all holiday dreams.</p> <p><b>Discovery Tours</b> are designed to provide a balanced 'snapshot' of several countries in one itinerary.</p> <p><b>Regional Experiences</b> are for those seeking to focus on a specific region or country.</p> <p><b>Easy Pace Tours</b> contain predominately three or four nights in each city centre for exploring at leisure.</p> <p><b>Country Roads Tours</b> visit all the main sights but also take you off the beaten track;</p> <p><b>Insight Gold</b> is an exceptional range of uniquely tailored deluxe tours. You'll appreciate luxury hotels, dine in authentic restaurants and enjoy leisurely days with premium included sightseeing.</p> <p><b>City Breaks – Select Choices</b> is a unique series of linked city-stay itineraries bringing freedom, choice and flexibility while avoiding the hassles, headaches and unforeseen costs normally associated.</p> <p><b>Special Interest Itineraries</b> - Insight Vacations bring you several exclusive departures that allow you to hone in on some of the most notable things a destination or region is known for.</p>
<p><b>History of Insight Vacations</b></p>	<p>In 1978, its first year, the company had a handful of staff in London and carried just 5700 passengers. Today, Insight has a team of professionals throughout the world, plays host to over 100,000 guests per year and has offices in the USA, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, Singapore and the UK. The company has also appointed specialist agents in Argentina, Brazil, Mauritius, India, Malaysia, Hong Kong, Thailand, Philippines, Indonesia, Korea, Taiwan and China.</p>

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	<p>Insight has achieved many important Tour Operator 'Firsts' over the years including, in 1983, being the first scheduled tour operator to win 'the Queen's Award for Export Achievement' from Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II.</p> <p>Rediscovering a Golden Age - Insight invites you to rediscover the Golden Age of European Travel</p> <p>Group touring in Europe was started in 1841 by an Englishman, Thomas Cook, when he took a party from Leicester to Loughborough, a grand journey of 12 miles and back! In the golden age of touring that followed, those early travellers expected and received personal service, well planned itineraries, good quality, well located hotels and enjoyed the benefit of travelling in small select friendly groups - with no attention to detail spared. Since then, much has changed, not all for the better!</p> <p>In this fast paced world of the 21st century, most of these desirable touring principles have been forgotten - but not by Insight. They are justifiably proud of their commitment to give you that something 'extra' when you travel with them, and for 2016 they are featuring the very best. All Insight tours feature itineraries perfectly paced for your complete satisfaction.</p>
<p><b>Who goes on an Insight Vacation?</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Average age is 47</li> <li>- Core over 55</li> <li>- Baby boomers - free time and central hotels are important</li> <li>- 65% are past Cruise vacationers – Insight is like Land Cruising</li> <li>- Discerning clients</li> <li>- 5% are single - no supplement</li> <li>- Average of two Honeymooners per Europe Tour</li> <li>- More Families - discounts and Super Savers are popular</li> <li>- Guests are often “time poor, not money poor”</li> </ul>
<p><b>Brochures</b></p>	<p>You can view the brochures online here or request copies by post:  <a href="https://www.insightvacations.com/ca/tours/request-a-brochure">https://www.insightvacations.com/ca/tours/request-a-brochure</a></p>
<p><b>Special Offers</b></p>	<p>Check here  <a href="https://www.insightvacations.com/ca/special-offers/red-hot-deals">https://www.insightvacations.com/ca/special-offers/red-hot-deals</a>  for details of their current special deals – there is always an offer to tempt you!</p>
<p><b>Best of Germany Tour</b></p>	<p>The “Best of Germany” itinerary is a carefully crafted journey that takes you to the bright lights of Berlin, delightful historic small towns such as Medieval Rothenburg, and the spectacular scenery of the Bavarian Alps and the Rhine Valley.</p> <p>With Insight you know that you get the very best tour possible, and often</p>

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more than other operators provide. A special highlight of this itinerary is an included overnight stay in Rothenburg – Europe’s best preserved medieval town. You stay at the Hotel Eisenhut, which consists of four patrician houses from the 12th and 18th centuries, furnished with select antiques and original artwork. And when you travel through the Bavarian Alps to King Ludwig’s Neuschwanstein castle you don’t just visit the castle. You meet with an historian and leave the castle by horse and carriage!

Here is the detail of the itinerary – it is a perfect tour if it is your first visit and you are looking for an introduction to the diverse and unexpected delights of Germany.

### **The Best of Germany Tour**

Day 1: Your Journey Begins  
Board your flight.

Day 2: Welcome to Berlin  
Embrace a journey of cosmopolitan cities, historic old towns and breathtaking natural scenery. On arrival at Berlin's Tegel Airport, transfers leave for the hotel at 10:30 & 12:30. Visit the KaDeWe department store, the shopping centre of West Berlin - which during 40 years of division, became the shop window of the West. Later, join your Tour Director for a Welcome Reception with the opportunity to mingle over a pleasant evening of dinner and wine.  
Hotel: Swissotel Berlin  
Welcome Reception and Dinner

Day 3: The Spirit of Berlin  
(Relaxed Start) Morning sightseeing with a Local Expert takes you along the Ku'Damm to the Memorial Church. Drive through the Tiergarten to see Norman Foster's glass-dome that crowns the reconstructed Reichstag building. Continue on past the Brandenburg Gate, symbol of the reunification and down the Unter den Linden, past the Humboldt University and Opera. Stop a while on Museum Island before enjoying an afternoon at leisure in this once divided city. Perhaps take the opportunity to visit the glorious palace of the Prussian Emperors at Potsdam?  
Hotel: Swissotel Berlin  
Buffet Breakfast

Day 4: Dresden, a Baroque Phoenix on the Elbe  
(Relaxed Start) Hear about the origins of the legendary German

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autobahn network in the morning as you travel south to Dresden. Join a Local Expert to see the splendours of the city. From the Frauenkirche, which has risen again from the destruction of World War II, walk past 'The Procession of the Dukes', a mosaic of colossal proportions on the Royal Palace façade. See the enormous cathedral, Semper Opera House and Baroque Zwinger Palace.

Hotel: Swissotel Dresden AM Schloss  
Buffet Breakfast

#### Day 5: Medieval Rothenburg

Venture to Rothenburg-ob-der Tauber, the most well-preserved town on the Romantic Road. Plunge back into the 16th century as you walk through narrow cobbled streets lined with high-gabled houses to the market square, dominated by its Renaissance town hall. With an artisan baker, enjoy a demonstration and learn the history of the traditional pastry Schneeballen (snowball), followed by a tasting. Afterwards, the rest of your day is free to explore the quaint town. For your Dine-Around experience tonight, choose from a selection of restaurants within the walls of the Old Town.

Hotel: Eisenhut, Rothenburg  
Buffet Breakfast, Dine-Around

#### Day 6: Nuremberg and the Bavarian Capital of Munich

It's only a short drive to Nuremberg, still entirely enclosed by its fortifications. Witness the charming blend of stone and timbered dwellings in the Old Town as well as the massive ramparts. Perhaps shop for delicious Lebkuchen (gingerbread) before crossing the Danube to reach fun-loving Munich? An introductory orientation will show you the university, Victory Arch and the Marienplatz, where crowds gather at the Town Hall to watch the antics of the Glockenspiel. At night, perhaps consider dinner at one of Munich's famous 'Bier Kellers'?

Hotel: Hilton Munich Park  
Buffet Breakfast

#### Day 7: Munich & the Jewels of the Bavarian Alps

In the morning, travel to Oberammergau in the Bavarian Alps, home of the Passion Play since 1634. See the immense theatre and colourfully-painted chalets then continue along part of the Alpine Road amidst beautiful scenery to the Wieskirche, a masterpiece of Bavarian Rococo. Continue to Neuschwanstein, the fairytale castle spectacularly perched on an Alpine mountainside. A local historian will show you Ludwig II's favourite castle. Visit the exuberantly decorated apartments, including the Throne Room and Lohengrin Grotto. Upon leaving the castle, descend the mountain by traditional horse and carriage. Return

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to Munich for a free evening.  
Hotel: Hilton Munich Park  
Buffet Breakfast

Day 8: Lindau on Lake Constance and into the Black Forest  
(Relaxed Start) Enjoy a leisurely morning departure before travelling through lush, rolling dairy country to Lindau, an island in Lake Constance connected to the mainland by a causeway. Stroll through the narrow streets past old inns and half-timbered houses, to admire the fantastic backdrop of the Swiss and Austrian Alps across the lake. Take a delightful drive along the shores of Lake Constance, lined with orchards and vineyards, to the Black Forest. Your hotel is nestled amid the trees alongside the clear waters of Lake Titisee.

Hotel: Maritim Titisee  
Buffet Breakfast, Dinner

Day 9: The University City of Heidelberg and Mainz

The Black Forest is the land of cherry cake and cuckoo clocks, where traditional farmhouses dip their thatched roofs almost to the ground. Stop a while in one of the centres of the wood-carving industry to meet skilled masters of the trade who still make cuckoo clocks by hand, a tradition passed down over 300 years. Then head through the valleys, where villages and isolated farms nestle beside fast flowing streams, before travelling north to Heidelberg. Enjoy the outlook from the heights of the castle fortress before venturing inside to see the Great Wine Vat, with its associated tales of the dwarf court jester, Perkeo. Spend time in the vast and insightful Apothecary Museum, before enjoying panoramic views of Heidelberg and the Neckar Valley. Your hotel is in the nearby town of Mainz, a bustling and important town since the time of the Romans.

Hotel: Hilton, Mainz  
Buffet Breakfast

Day 10: Castles of the Rhine Experience

(Relaxed Start) Begin the day with a relaxing cruise past steep-sided vineyards, half-timbered taverns, the hilltop castles and the notorious Lorelei Rock. Alight at Boppard and continue to Koblenz where a gigantic equestrian statue of Wilhelm I guards the junction of the Rhine and Moselle. Camera at the ready as you return along the eastern bank. Enjoy the scenic views from the mighty Niederwald Monument. In the evening, round off your German experience with a farewell Celebration Dinner overlooking the River Rhine, complete with the local wine. Prost!

Hotel: Hilton Mainz  
Buffet Breakfast, Celebration Dinner

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	<p>Day 11: Auf Wiedersehen Frankfurt Your journey comes to an end after breakfast. Departure transfers arrive at Frankfurt Airport at 08:00 and 10:00. Buffet Breakfast</p>
<b>My Insight Experience</b>	<p>I travelled with Insight in India in November 2014 after a gap of many years – what a difference! My two week journey with Insight Vacations took me to Delhi, capital of the sub-continent, across Northern India to the holy city of Varanasi, the oldest continually inhabited city in the world. I travelled to Khajuraho’s carved temples, to the palaces of Orchha and of course to Agra, home of the world’s most beautiful building, the Taj Mahal. From there, on to the great abandoned city Fatehpur Sikri, and then south and west into Rajasthan, to the Pink City of Jaipur. I travelled by air, by coach, by boat, by train, by cycle rickshaw and even by elephant! It was a magnificent journey and allows me to unreservedly recommend Insight Vacations. See my photos on Pinterest at <a href="https://www.pinterest.com/TravelShow/india/">https://www.pinterest.com/TravelShow/india/</a> And see my Travel Blog at <a href="http://www.chrisrobinsontravelshow.ca/Blog/tabid/400/EntryId/86/India.aspx">http://www.chrisrobinsontravelshow.ca/Blog/tabid/400/EntryId/86/India.aspx</a></p>

<b>Singles</b>	<p>If you wish to share with another tour member you can advise Insight Vacations at the time of booking. Insight believes that traveling solo doesn't have to cost you more. They will try to match you with someone of the same sex in order to avoid having to pay the single supplement. If they are not able to provide a suitable roommate, they will provide a single room at no extra cost.</p>
<b>Tour Director</b>	<p>This is Insight’s appointed tour escort who manages your entire trip, and is responsible to see that your vacation runs smoothly. He or she travels with you, coordinating your day-to-day itinerary, hotel check-in and language translation; as well as giving practical advice on everything from ‘do’s and don’ts’ to the best restaurants and sights.</p>
<b>Hotels</b>	<p>All Insight hotels are carefully selected to be appropriate for your tour and for the destination. They are mainly First Class, Superior First Class and Deluxe standard, but some will be selected because they particularly reflect the region or country. Even in the more remote areas such as the Scottish Highlands and islands or countryside areas around Europe, Insight chooses from the best touring hotels available. It's worth remembering that room sizes in Europe, UK &amp; Ireland tend to be smaller than in many areas of the world, and can vary within the same hotel, particularly in older, character hotels.</p>
<b>Meals</b>	<p>Insight tours feature an abundance of dining experiences. You'll enjoy included three course Table d’hôte dinners where we arrange the ideal</p>

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	<p>complement of local foods such as soups and salads, pasta, paella, fish, chicken or various meats, plus appetizing desserts and coffee or tea. In Scandinavia, Spain, Germany and elsewhere, mouth-watering buffets are often provided.</p> <p>On some tours Insight features a <b>'Dine-Around Evening'</b> with a choice of two or three restaurants. Your Tour Director will advise you of each menu so you can pre-select and make your reservation. Even if your first choice is unavailable you will enjoy any of the other delicious options also with wine, beer or soft-drinks.</p> <p>Other tours may offer a <b>'Highlight Dinner'</b> at a restaurant, which usually features a menu typical of the region, similarly with wine, beer or soft-drinks.</p> <p>Hearty breakfasts are always included, from delicious traditional full-cooked breakfasts in Britain and Ireland to substantial buffets or continental style breakfasts as is the usual custom throughout Europe. In North America breakfast will consist of a full American breakfast. Should you require special dietary menus your tour director can arrange these for you when informed in advance.</p>
<b>Luggage</b>	Handling is included for one suitcase per person.
<b>Tipping</b>	<p>On an Insight Vacation, some gratuities are included in the price of your trip: baggage handling, meal service for all meals listed in the tour itinerary, and hotel service charge. Room service, however, is not included in the tour price.</p> <p>Tipping is a widespread practice in Europe and is a customary way of acknowledging service. Here are some guidelines:</p> <p>Taxi fare, on meter 10-15%          Restaurant, total bill 10-15%          Tour Director €4.00 per person per day          Motor-coach Driver €2.50 per person per day          Local Sightseeing Guide €1.00</p>
<b>Coaches</b>	<p>Insight's coaches are safe and comfortable and the drivers are highly experienced professionals. To give each passenger an equal opportunity, they rotate seats daily. A non-smoking policy is in place. Regular rest stops are provided so that you can stretch your legs.</p>
<b>Passports</b>	<p>The Chris Robinson Travel Show always advises listeners to carry their passport with them at all times. This ensures against loss or theft in hotels. For added protection, keep a photocopy of your passport in your suitcase. Hotels are sometimes required to hold your passport in order to comply with local regulations.</p>
<b>Sustainable Travel</b>	Protecting the environment and the people and places Insight visit is a

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	<p>top priority for the company. They want to help ensure these remain for future generations to enjoy and are committed to ensuring they minimize the environmental impact of their own operations around the world.</p> <p><b>Insight’s Responsibility</b>          Every time we travel, whether by car, train, plane or coach, we are burning fossil fuels and contributing greenhouse gases into the atmosphere. And while there are many ways to travel while on holiday, by choosing an Insight escorted tour, you are opting for one of the most environmentally friendly ways to go. Their website has a grid that shows you the amount of carbon dioxide emitted per km for a passenger traveling on various forms of transport which clearly shows coach transport as emitting significantly less carbon dioxide than other forms of transport. It’s over five times more efficient than car travel for instance. With carbon dioxide being one of the main causes of global warming, it’s good to know that buying an escorted tour holiday is a better way to travel.</p> <p>They are reducing the carbon footprints and environmental impact of their offices by introducing recycling, energy reduction and waste minimisation projects as well as supporting local community projects where they live and work. Insight staff are involved in making a difference and starting in 2008 they are encouraging staff to spend two working days a year volunteering for charitable projects.</p> <p><b>Conservation Foundation:</b> To demonstrate commitment and ongoing investment, Insight are supporting and contributing to The Leading Travel Companies of the World Conservation Foundation <a href="http://www.tlwc.com">www.tlwc.com</a> a not-for-profit organisation that will invest in supporting long term sustainable tourism.</p> <p>The Insight group of companies is donating US\$1 million per year to fund much-needed conservation, community and sustainable tourism projects that will create a better world for future generations to enjoy. To ensure every dollar goes to people and places in need, each project is carefully vetted by the Foundation's Members of the Board.</p>
<p><b>Contacts</b></p>	<p><b>Address:</b> Insight Vacations, 33 Kern Rd, Toronto, Ontario M3B 1S9  <b>Website:</b> <a href="http://www.insightvacations.com">www.insightvacations.com</a>  <b>Tel:</b> 1-866-747-8120  <b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:info@insightvacations.ca">info@insightvacations.ca</a>  <b>Connect with Insight Vacations on facebook:</b>  <a href="https://www.facebook.com/InsightVacations">https://www.facebook.com/InsightVacations</a>  <b>Follow Insight Vacations on Twitter:</b> <a href="https://twitter.com/insightvacation">https://twitter.com/insightvacation</a></p>

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