





# GERMANY

Going to

Germany—it's the land of beer, bratwurst and Mercedes Benzes, right? Well, sure. But it's also a country celebrated for its dazzling mountain scenery, meticulously preserved castles, and a deep appreciation for art and culture. Add to that a long and compelling history, some fine wine and the 2006 World Cup soccer tournament, and you've got the potential for a great vacation.

A country half the size of Texas with 82 million people, Germany lies in the heart of Europe and shares borders with nine other countries. Comprised of 16 states, the country offers every kind of setting, from gleaming modern cities and restored medieval towns, to bustling harbors and the Black Forest. Germany boasts world-class art museums in all its major cities, a music scene with equally dynamic classical and contemporary modes, and the invigorating aura of an energetic people who play almost as hard as they work.

**IT'S MORE** than just bratwurst.  
Visitors to Germany find  
world-class sports,  
enchanted castles  
and cosmopolitan cities.

by Catherine Pierre, with Theodore Fischer



## BERLIN

Split down the middle during the Cold War era, Berlin is once again the capital of a reunited Germany. With a population of 3.5 million, it is a vast city: Germany's next three largest cities—Munich, Frankfurt and Hamburg—could fit within its borders.

As the east side of the city opens up, this is a fascinating time to wander its streets and take in its history. Many of the city's buildings and monuments still bear the scars of World War II air raids. Gleaming new skyscrapers sprout up where the older buildings were reduced to rubble. Potsdamer Platz, one

of the busiest squares in Europe before the war, is now being reborn as Berlin's commercial district, with stunning new architecture including Hans Kolhoff's Potsdamer Platz No. 1 and Helmut Jahn's Sony Center.

Many of Berlin's attractions hearken back to its dark history. Brandenburg Gate, built in 1791, epitomizes much of the city's past: Napoleon's army marched through it; so did Hitler's; during the Cold War it was a cordoned-off section of the Berlin Wall.

Though the Wall came down in 1989, one graffiti-covered section still stands along Mühlenstrasse, and a brick pathway traces what was once its route around the city. Checkpoint Charlie, the border crossing celebrated in so many spy novels, retains its original Cold War signage. A museum at the site recounts the many heartbreaking stories of East Berliners' attempts to escape to the freedom of the West. Exhibits include the flying, driving and smuggling devices they invented for their

**Photos: Germany's Black Forest region (previous page). Left to right below: Brandenburg Gate, Berlin Television Tower ("telespargel"), a still-standing section of the Berlin Wall known as the East Side Gallery (top), Potsdamer Platz (bottom), Checkpoint Charlie.**



## When To Go

Germany has a temperate climate with four distinct seasons, all of them relatively mild. Daily high temperatures average no higher than the mid-70s Fahrenheit (22-23 degrees C) in summer, with frequent rainy and overcast days, especially in northern Germany. Winter temperatures average in the mid-30s F (0-2 C) although it can get much colder in the Alps and Germany's Black Forest region.



(often unsuccessful) crossings, as well as an explanation of just how far the government would go to stop them.

On a lighter note, the Television Tower (nicknamed “telespargel” or “television-asparagus” because of its odd shape) was built in 1969 and was a symbol for East Berlin. At 368 meters, it is one of the tallest structures in Europe. At the top is a revolving restaurant that, on a clear day, offers unrivaled views of the city in all directions.

Despite the weight of the past, Berlin is a lively and cheerful city with great shopping, restaurants and night life. Europe's largest department store,

KaDeWe, is on the Kurfürstendamm, a gracious 19th-century boulevard. Berlin's other great thoroughfare, Unter den Linden (Under the Linden Trees), is a former imperial mall that runs from Brandenburg Gate through the renewed shopping districts of the city's east side.

## HAMBURG

The 1,200-year-old city of Hamburg, located on the Elbe and Alster rivers, is famous for its port, one of the largest in Europe. The city's many canals and waterways make boating one of the favorite pastimes here, and a harbor tour is a great way to get an

up-close-and-personal tour. Highlights include the Fish Market, which dates to 1703 and is the oldest open-air market in the city, and the Oevelgönne historic harbor, a fleet of 20 beautifully restored historic ships.

The people of Hamburg know how to have fun, and the city is renowned for its theater district—next to New York and London, this is one of the most important stops for musicals—with literally hundreds of theaters, concert halls and music and cabaret venues. There is also the St. Pauli district, the place to go to experience Hamburg night life. Full of bars, discos, shops and restaurants, St.





Pauli is also the home of the Reeperbahn, the red-light district where the Beatles performed in the '60s.

## MUNICH

Munich is Germany's third largest city (after Berlin and Hamburg) and, after Berlin, its second most popular visitor destination. The capital of the southern state of Bavaria, Munich is a (comparatively) laid-back city known for tree-lined boulevards and jaunty blue-and-cream-colored trams.

The heart of Munich is Marienplatz, a midtown square built around a statue of the Virgin Mary, Munich's patron

saint. (München, the city's German name, means "monks.") Enameled copper characters in the glockenspiel in the square's Neues Rathaus (New City Hall) perform dances to ward off the plague and enact a wedding daily at 11 a.m., noon and 5 p.m.

Munich's great houses were built by the Wittelsbach family, Bavaria's rulers for 700 years. In town, they inhabited the Residenz, where the family's collection of rare items made of precious metals and stones is on display in the

Schatzkammer (Treasury). Four miles west of the center of the city, Schloss Nymphenburg summer palace admits the public to 16 of its ornate rooms and the Royal Stables Museum filled with gilded coaches.

Of course, Munich is also home to the vast beer halls that each year host the world-famous Oktoberfest, which takes place this year from September 16 to October 3. The festival dates back to 1810, when Bavaria celebrated Prince Ludwig I's wedding. Now, more than 6

**Photos left to right: Munich beer hall during Oktoberfest (top), Munich Town Hall (bottom), Neuschwanstein Castle in Bavaria.**





million visitors flock to Munich each year to enjoy the festivities, consuming more than 1 million gallons of brew—including dunkle (dark), helles (light) or Radler (half beer, half lemon-lime soda). Whatever your pleasure, all German beer (by a law established in 1516) is made with only four ingredients: malt, water, hops and yeast.

Get away from Munich for a trip to Neuschwanstein, a Disney-esque fairy-tale castle that is Bavaria's most popular tourist attraction. It took Ludwig II—the “Mad King of Bavaria”—more than 17 years (1869-86) to build the castle, which honors German chivalry



## INDUSTRIAL STRENGTH

By Theodore Fischer

Germany's prosperity is founded on diligence and industry. Here are attractions that demonstrate German ingenuity and engineering prowess.

**Brauerei Beck (Beck Brewery), Bremen.**

Guided tours of brew house, stables and museum of internationally renowned beer in the familiar green bottle.

**Gutenberg Museum, Mainz.** Exhibits in the reconstructed workshop of Johannes Gutenberg (1394-1468) trace the history of printing. Highlights include Gutenberg's original hand press and two Gutenberg Bibles.

**Imhoff-Stollwerck Museum, Cologne.**

Presents saga of chocolate-making history around the world; the exhibit includes a miniature chocolate factory and a fountain dispensing free samples.

**Mercedes-Benz Museum, Stuttgart.**

The first Mercedes (1902) and the first motor-bicycle are on display at the museum, located near the world's oldest automobile plant. Also in Stuttgart: the Porsche Museum.

**Speicherstadt, Hamburg.** The world's largest self-contained warehouse complex (447,000 square yards of floor space) on the Hamburg waterfront is an area of canals and Victorian buildings where industrialists store goods tax-free until the price is right. The on-site Speicherstadtmuseum tells the story.

**Staatliche Porzellan-Manufaktur (National Porcelain Factory), Meissen.**

Extremely popular guided tours of Meissen porcelain studios and workshops. The nearby Schauhalle displays the world's largest Meissen porcelain collection.

**Wutachtalbahn, Blumberg, Black Forest.** Convoluted steam railway line with horseshoe curves, three long viaducts and five tunnels built in late 1880s to move German troops to the French front.



**Garmisch-Partenkirchen, Germany's most popular ski resort.**

## ROADTRIPS

By Theodore Fischer

Germany's intercity autobahns have no speed limits, but sometimes it's more fun to get into the slow lane for a leisurely look at the German countryside:

### **Romantic Road (Romantische Strasse) -**

A drive through medieval Germany, the Romantic Road winds from Würzburg in the Franconian wine country to Füssen on the edge of the Bavarian Alps, past a series of picturesque towns: Rothenburg, Germany's best-preserved walled city; Dinkelsbühl, a medieval town surrounded by a moat; and Augsburg, a 2,000-year-old center of commerce. (180 miles)

### **Fairy-Tale Road (Märchenstrasse) -**

The Brothers Grimm tour of northwest Germany begins outside Frankfurt at Hanau, the brothers' birthplace. The road hits Kassel, site of the Bruder Grimm Museum; Sababurg, where the Sleeping Beauty legend originated; and Bremen, where the eponymous town musicians dwelled. (370 miles)

### **German Alpine Road (Deutsche**

**Alpenstrasse) -** Enjoy breathtaking views of the mountains, lakes, forests and castles of the Bavarian Alps. Highlights include the medieval village of Berchtesgaden; the famous spa towns Bad Reichenhall and Bad Wiessee; the 9,720-foot Zugspitze, Germany's highest peak; Mittenwald, a quintessential Bavarian resort town; Garmisch-Partenkirchen, Germany's top ski resort; and Lindau, on the shores of Lake Constance (Bodensee). (300 miles)

**Mosel Valley Road -** Follow this Rhine tributary through Germany's wine country, with tasting stops at the wine village of Cochem; the medieval wine town Beilstein; Zell an der Mosel, which produces Schwarze Katze (Black Cat) wine; colorful Bernkastel-Kues—to Trier, Germany's oldest city. (120 miles)

and composer Richard Wagner. Alas, Ludwig died after having lived in his new home for only 172 days.

Fans of football—or soccer to our American friends—will want to be in Munich on June 9 for the 2006 FIFA World Cup opening ceremony, which will take place in the new FIFA World Cup Stadium. The tournament is coming to Germany for the first time in 32 years. Matches will take place in a number of cities, with the final at Berlin's Olympiastadion on July 9.

## FREIBURG

Founded in 1120, Freiburg balances its stunning medieval architecture with a cosmopolitan university-town atmosphere. Perhaps the most famous site here is the gothic cathedral, called the Münster; which took more than 300 years to finish (in 1513). Climb to the top of its striking, 381-foot tower for gorgeous views of the historic Old Town; the former customs and trade building, called the Kaufhaus; and the two medieval city gates.

### Dixon in Germany

Dixon Germany was started to meet the needs of the German market by supplying a full range of couplings and adapters, including many coupling designs and materials specifically requested by German customers. To reinforce our commitment to the local market, Dixon Deutschland GmbH was created in 2002 and now serves other northern European countries such as Belgium and Holland.

The Dixon Germany team of seven are located a short drive from Cologne and Bonn in Troisdorf, perfect for next-day delivery to the whole of Germany and neighboring countries.

**Dixon Deutschland GmbH  
Niederlassung Deutschland  
Gosdesberger STR 20B  
D-53842 Troisdorf - Spich  
Germany**



Located in Southern Germany, Freiburg has a warm climate and is one of the country's sunniest cities—which is good, because its location just outside of the Black Forest makes this a great place to enjoy the great outdoors. With mountain ranges, natural and manmade lakes, and vast meadows and woodlands, the Black Forest is one of the most popular places for Germans and tourists alike to come for skiing, hiking, water sports and scenic drives.

For day trips, travel northwest to the Kaiserstuhl region of the Rhine River Valley, where the warm weather and good soil make an excellent place to grow grapes for wine. You'll find beautiful old towns here, as well as wineries and wine bars. Freiburg is also part of the "cultural triangle," where Germany, France and Switzerland meet, making this a great home base for day trips to those areas.



## FRANKENSTEIN'S CASTLE

Located in Darmstadt, the castle made famous by Romantic writer Mary Shelley was No. 2 on the Travel Channel's list of "Best European Castles" this year. Its most famous inhabitant was Johann Konrad Dippel von Frankenstein, an 18th-century alchemist who, according to legend, tried to create a new human from body parts he stole from local cemeteries. A trip to Darmstadt should include visits to Mathildenhöhe artists colony and Rosenhöhe Park (a rose garden), but best to go at Halloween, when the castle holds its annual bash to celebrate Frankenstein's monster.

## The Top Brass



*The Right Connection™*

[www.americancouplings.com](http://www.americancouplings.com)

When you need the best in brass fittings, think of Dixon. The Dixon Brass Division offers American brass hose fittings, couplings and adapters for even your most challenging applications. Plus you get impressive service and immediate delivery.

For more information, call 800-323-4440 or visit [www.americancouplings.com](http://www.americancouplings.com). When it's got to be right, it's got to be Dixon.

- Hose Fittings
- Welding Connectors
- Brass Ferrules
- Pipe Fittings
- Garden Hose Fittings
- Compression Fittings

### Dixon Brass

40 Chestnut Avenue, Westmont, IL 60559 USA

800-323-4440 • 630-323-4442

Fax: 800-628-7259 • 630-323-4120

©2005 Dixon Valve & Coupling Company