

Discover

Bavaria

Bavaria for gourmets

Sustainable haute cuisine,
monastery breweries, Zoigl beer
and Sylvaner wine

Ultimate bucket list

35 tips for exciting cities,
magnificent nature, active holidays
and scenic routes

Majestic moments

From Lake Chiemsee and the
fairy-tale castle of Neuschwanstein
to Regensburg



**100 sights, tour suggestions, culinary ideas and activities
for your perfect holiday in Bavaria**

bavaria.travel

This is Bavaria

At its best

Mountains, meadows and vineyards... Neuschwanstein Castle and a cool urban flair... Munich and Nuremberg... Oktoberfest and Bavarian rap... Silvaner wine and wheat beer... *Bavaria is more. Bavaria has its very own way of life. Bavaria is an attitude: relaxed and cosmopolitan. And that's exactly what we want to show you in this brochure...*



Splash! Lakes and rivers

There are over 200 lakes in Bavaria – some as deep as 190 m (Walchensee and Königssee) and some as vast as 80 km² (Chiemsee). The region is also home to various streams and rivers. The longest are the Main (407 km), the Danube (380 km), the Isar (270 km) and the Inn (218 km). bavaria.travel/lakes-rivers

All you need is a *stein* in your hand...

The beers from over 620 Bavarian breweries owe their distinct flavour to Bavaria's "green gold" – the hops from the Hallertau region. Almost 38% of the world's hops are produced in the area between Landshut, Pfaffenhofen and Kehlheim. The first document mentioning hops-growing dates back to the year 736. At the time, hops were used medicinally. It wasn't until the Middle Ages that they were also added to beer.

bavaria.travel/gourmet-stories

Wine lovers, look out for the Bocksbeutel!

So you think the Bavarians only drink beer? Not true! 2,877 local vintners make excellent wines – almost exclusively in Franconia. The region's traditional grape varieties include *Adelfränkisch*, *Vogelfränkisch*, *Grünfränkisch*, *Kleinberger*, *Weisser Räuschling*, *Weisser Heunisch* and *Petersiliengutedel*. The most common varieties – *Silvaner*, *Müller-Thurgau*, *Bacchus*, *Riesling*, *Pinot Noir* and *Domina* – are aged in barrels or steel tanks, as well as in concrete eggs and amphorae. Good Franconian wines are still bottled in the famous "Bocksbeutel". The traditional bottle is round and bulbous – often with an oval or ellipsoidal shape reminiscent of a goat's testicle! The "new" Bocksbeutel is slimmer, less bulbous and features more angular lines, particularly at the shoulder of the bottle. This design has been used since 2016.

bavaria.travel/silvaner

Dirndls and trainers

The Bavarians love their traditions. They cultivate their customs throughout the year – from traditional sledge races to historical plays, from folk dances to Christmas markets. They also celebrate a range of folk festivals – from parish fairs and wine festivals to the famous Oktoberfest. But that doesn't mean Bavaria is stuck in the past; the region is constantly looking towards the future in search of a modern, sustainable and innovative society. Bavaria is full of contrasts – come and experience them yourself!

Bavaria is blessed with natural beauty and a rich cultural landscape, but it's also marked by a distinct urban flair. Be inspired by the region's wonderful holiday destinations – and discover and enjoy the beauties of Bavaria's towns and cities!

bavaria.travel/towns-cities

bavaria.travel

1 Franconia

Franconia spreads across the north of Bavaria with its rivers Main and Regnitz, low mountain ranges such as the Hassberge, Frankenwald, Fichtelgebirge, Spessart and Rhön, as well as famous cities like Nuremberg, Fürth, Würzburg, Bayreuth, Schweinfurt and Aschaffenburg. Franconia boasts a legendary variety of spicy sausages – Nürnberger, Hofer, Kulmbacher, Coburger and more – preferably served in a sandwich. They're often complemented with a sour sauce to create a delicacy known as "Blaue Zipfel" (blue tips).

bavaria.travel/franconia

2 Allgäu / Bavarian Swabia

Allgäu / Bavarian Swabia is Bavaria's outpost in the south-west. The Allgäu extends from Lake Constance in the west to Lech in the east, from Memmingen and Mindelheim in the north to the Alps in the south around Oberstdorf. Kempten is its urban centre. Bavarian Swabia flows into Bavaria from the "Nördlinger Ries" over the river valleys around the Danube to the foothills of the Alps in the south. The most important city is Augsburg, which is steeped in history.

bavaria.travel/allgaeu-bavarianswabia

3 Upper Bavaria

Upper Bavaria is the region with the second-highest GDP in Germany (after Hamburg). It's home to the Bavarian capital of Munich, where the state government holds its seat. In the north, Upper Bavaria borders Franconia and eastern Bavaria. The southern part of the region boasts the highest mountains in Germany: the Watzmann near Berchtesgaden and the majestic Zugspitze overlooking Garmisch-Partenkirchen.

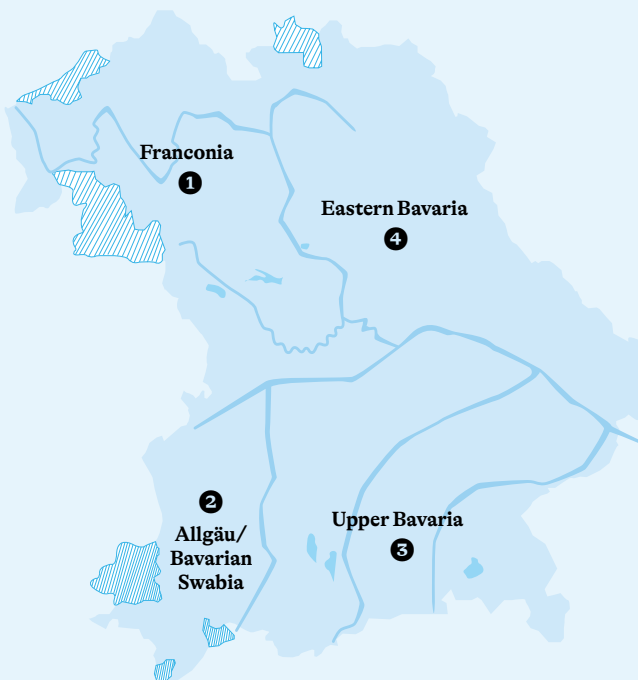
bavaria.travel/upper-bavaria

4 Eastern Bavaria

Eastern Bavaria is home to the Bavarian Forest, the largest wooded landscape in Europe. The Upper Palatinate Forest spreads out along the border. Mediterranean karst landscapes can be found in the Bavarian Jura between Sulzbach-Rosenberg and Kelheim.

The region south of the Danube, nestled between Regensburg and Passau, is characterised by the wide plains of the Danube and green, undulating hillsides. Many of eastern Bavaria's cities are steeped in history, including Regensburg, Landshut and Passau.

bavaria.travel/eastern-bavaria



Top 35

Text: Peter Pfänder



Things to Do in Bavaria

① Romantic Road or German Alpine Road?

Come and immerse yourself in the wonders of art and culture, spread over 460 kilometres and 29 charming towns. Since 1950, the Romantic Road has been winding its way through the heart of Germany. From Würzburg, it takes you through Rothenburg ob der Tauber, Donauwörth and Augsburg, culminating in the beautiful Füssen. Along the way, you'll encounter the historic town of Landsberg am Lech, the remnants of a Roman villa in Peiting, and the breathtaking Wies Church in Steingaden. If you like cycling, you should definitely make your way around the signposted long-distance cycle route. If you'd rather explore the region on foot, there's also a long-distance hiking trail through the most beautiful landscapes. Embark on a journey of discovery, immerse yourself in the beauty of nature and discover the joy of driving along almost 500 kilometres of winding roads: The German Alpine Road takes you from the tranquil waters of Lake Constance to the picturesque landscapes of Lake Königssee. Along the way, you'll find charming picnic stops blessed with stunning mountain views, refreshing hiking trails and pristine lakes that are perfect for a swim. And for a change of pace, you can visit a wide range of churches, monasteries, museums, palaces and castles.

[bavaria.travel/scenic-routes](#)

② UNESCO World Heritage Sites

Bavaria is home to 14 UNESCO World Heritage Sites, including the Augsburg Water Management System, the Würzburg Residence, the Margravian Opera House in Bayreuth, the Old Town of Bamberg, King Ludwig's fairy-tale castles of Neuschwanstein and Herrenchiemsee and the Great Spa Town of Bad Kissingen.

[bavaria.travel/unesco](#)

③ Augsburg: Bridges, Renaissance and Fugger

Augsburg's water management system is over 800 years old. It supplies drinking water and industrial water for energy production, sanitation and waste disposal. You'll find 22 attractions along the canals, including weirs, water pumping stations, power stations and wells. The water is sourced from the rivers Lech, Wertach and Singold, as well as from springs. Augsburg claims to have more bridges than Venice. In any case, there are many gushing fountains and countless watercourses. You'll definitely want to visit the Town Hall, which is right in the centre of Augsburg. The Renaissance building by Elias Holl is absolutely stunning and regarded as the most impressive secular building from the period north of the Alps. The showpiece inside is the famous Golden Hall. 500 years ago, the Fuggers, a family of extremely wealthy merchants, founded the Fuggerei to provide affordable housing for those in need. This was a visionary initiative launched by the deeply religious Jakob Fugger. The oldest social housing complex in the world is a small town within a town – with 67 houses and its own church. Even today, around 150 Catholic residents of Augsburg live here – for a basic rent of 88 cents a year and three prayers a day!

[bavaria.travel/stories/citycheck-augsburg](#)





④ Regensburg: *UNESCO-Crowned Old Town*

The Old Town is situated along the Danube, nestled between the cathedral and Bismarckplatz. It was declared a World Heritage Site in 2006 and covers less than one square kilometre. Exploring the Old Town is quite an adventure. Cobbled streets criss-cross and intersect. Many are somewhat parallel – but only somewhat. For newcomers, it's a tangle of streets, alleys, corners, turns, narrow passages and dead ends. That's what makes the medieval trading centre so attractive, as recognised by UNESCO. The "Steinerne Brücke" is a famous landmark. This magnificent medieval bridge – with round stone arches – stretches across the Danube for around 300 metres. In the Middle Ages, it was seen as a Wonder of the World – and is still a popular place to visit in Regensburg. It connects the Old Town with the district of Stadtamhof. The House of Bavarian History is an award-winning museum. It opened in 2019 and was praised for its architecture. With its modern multi-media displays, it's become one of Regensburg's most popular attractions.

bavaria.travel/regensburg

⑤ Würzburg: *Baroque and Bocksbeutel*

The Würzburg Residence is one of the most magnificent buildings of its time. The former residence of the prince-bishops, built between 1720 and 1744, later had a magnificent court garden added to it. Artists from all over Europe contributed to the building. It features elements of French palace architecture, Viennese Baroque and northern Italian palaces and sacred buildings. The Würzburg Residence has been a UNESCO World Heritage Site since 1981.

It houses a staircase with the largest ceiling fresco in the world, as well as 300 rooms. To this day, wine barrels are lined up in an endless labyrinth of corridors within the "Staatlicher Hofkeller" wine cellar, where you might feel dizzy without even tasting the goods. Don't forget to visit the Marienberg Fortress high above the River Main. St. Mary's Church (Marienkirche) dates back to the year 706. Together with the well house and cistern, which is over 100 metres deep, these impressive monuments bear witness to centuries of history. What's the best thing for foodies and wine lovers to do in Würzburg? Experience a Franconian wine tasting... Bürgerspital is a VDP winery in Franconia with more than 700 years of history and tradition. Its 120 hectares of vineyards are planted with classic grape varieties such as *Silvaner* and *Riesling*. The best white wines are bottled in the unique "Bocksbeutel".

bavaria.travel/wuerzburg

⑥ Munich: *Rubens, St. Mary or Hipster?*

The district of Maxvorstadt in Munich is an absolute treasure trove of cultural history! Just a short 15-minute stroll from the iconic Town Hall at Marienplatz, you'll find yourself immersed in a world of 18 museums and exhibition halls, 20 galleries and six renowned international colleges. The Alte Pinakothek, Neue Pinakothek, Pinakothek der Moderne, Egyptian Museum, Glyptothek, Lenbachhaus and Museum Brandhorst are just a few of the incredible local institutions housing works by Gerhard Richter, Joseph Beuys, Leonardo da Vinci, Peter Paul Rubens and other legendary artists. It's absolutely worth spending a few days checking out the museums located in the "Kunstareal". And if you want to explore the city's hipster scene, the Gärtnerplatz district, which is 500 metres south of the Viktualienmarkt, is the perfect place to start. Prepare for a charming shopping experience – with a wide range of wonderful boutiques, pop-up stores and shops! But it's the local hipsters on the streets who will truly catch your attention.

bavaria.travel/munich

7 Bad Kissingen: *Great Spa*

This place has been famous for its mineral drinking and bathing cures since the 16th century, attracting a large number of international guests between 1830 and 1930. Since 2021, it's been on the World Heritage List with ten other major European spa towns ("Great Spas"). Bad Kissingen is home to the oldest spa garden (created in 1738) and the largest collection of historic spa buildings in Europe. The Wandelhalle and the Regentenbau are great examples of early 20th-century architecture.

bavaria.travel/bad-kissingen

8 Bamberg: *Franconian Rome*

The imperial city of the prince-bishops sits atop seven hills, which is why it's also known as the "Franconian Rome". The Old Town has been a UNESCO World Heritage Site since 1993. It's a unique urban work of art from the period between the High Middle Ages and the Baroque. It has 1,200 monuments from the 11th to 18th centuries such as the Old Town Hall, built in the middle of the River Regnitz and accessible by two bridges, the beautiful rose garden with stunning views over the Old Town, the historic tanners' houses on the Old Canal and the charming fishing settlement of "Little Venice".

bavaria.travel/bamberg



9 Passau: *City of Three Rivers*

Passau is a very special place – and not just because of its location between the Danube, Inn and Ilz rivers. Did you know that Veste Oberhaus is one of the largest fortresses in Europe – and that it's been perfectly preserved in its original condition? It's home to some incredible museums and exhibitions, as well as St. George's Chapel with its stunning Gothic frescoes. And for those young at heart, there's a youth hostel. On the southern edge of Passau, you can take a stroll along the River Inn, past the striking Schaiblingsturm tower and on to the confluence of three rivers on the eastern tip of the Old Town. The Passau Glass Museum presents a unique and fascinating overview of European glass history – with around 15,000 exhibits on display. St. Stephen's Cathedral is the most important Baroque church in Germany – inspired by Italian architecture – and houses the largest cathedral organ in the world. After a fire in 1662, the current Baroque building was built between 1668 and 1693.

bavaria.travel/passau

10 Bayreuth: *Curtain up!*

The Margravial Opera House is a masterpiece of Baroque theatre architecture. Built between 1744 and 1748, it's one of the few original preserved theatre buildings of this era. It was designed by the leading theatre architect of the time, Giuseppe Galli Bibiena. The Italian-style theatre is surrounded by viewing boxes and is made entirely of wood and canvas. It's a self-supporting structure set in a stone building. It's seen as one of a kind around the world — not least because of its exuberantly carved and painted decor. If you're planning a trip to Bayreuth, you should also visit Haus Wahnfried, the representative villa that Richard Wagner lived in with his family from 1874, as well as the Siegfried Wagner House, the Hermitage Court Garden and the Rococo-style New Palace.

bavaria.travel/bayreuth



11 Kempten: *Romans and Rococo*

It's so easy to get lost in the maze of history when you've got more than 2,000 years to explore! But don't worry – the Kempten Museum in the Zumsteinhaus has got your back. Everything is explained clearly – and it's completely free of charge. If you're interested in history, you'll love the secretive underground Erasmus Chapel on St.-Mang-Platz, which was only discovered during building work in 2003. You can learn all about it in a fantastic multi-vision show. Built in the centre of Kempten in the mid-17th century, the Residence was the first Baroque monastery to be built in Germany after the Thirty Years' War. It served as both a monastery and the seat of the duke-abbots. From 1732 to 1735, a team of artists worked on the actual residential rooms, which are in the late Régence style. And from 1740 to 1742, they worked on their crowning achievement: the magnificent Banqueting Hall, one of the most magnificent examples of the Bavarian Rococo style!

bavaria.travel/kempten

12 Wieskirche: *Masterpiece*

The Pilgrimage Church of the Scourged Saviour on the Meadow is perched in front of a stunning mountain backdrop near Steingaden. It's a perfect example of Bavarian Rococo architecture. It was built between 1745 and 1754 by the brothers Johann Baptist and Dominikus Zimmermann. The interior is magnificent and flooded with light, with its stucco work and ceiling paintings creating a bright, heavenly and serene atmosphere. The decor is subtle and delicate. It was named a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1983 as a "masterpiece of human creativity".

bavaria.travel/alpine-road

13 Upper Swabian Baroque Route: *Ornate Detail*

The Upper Swabian Baroque Route is a 500-kilometre stretch between Ulm and Lake Constance, full of masterpieces from the Baroque and Rococo periods, as well as churches, monasteries, castles and stately homes, all set in the beautiful landscape of the alpine foothills. The eastern section of the themed route runs from Ulm through Bavarian Swabia and the Allgäu region, with highlights including the Benedictine Abbey of Ottobeuren (pictured below).

bavaria.travel/scenic-routes



14 Castle Road: *On the Trail of Knights*

Franconia is undoubtedly a land of castles. The holiday route runs from Mannheim to Bayreuth, crossing Franconia from the south-west to north-east, and features no fewer than 60 castles and palaces across 780 kilometres. Major attractions include the castle ruins in Rothenburg ob der Tauber, Cadolzburg Castle near Fürth, the Kaiserburg in Nuremberg, Pottenstein Castle in Franconian Switzerland and the Veste Coburg, one of the best-preserved medieval castle complexes in Germany.

bavaria.travel/castles



15 Weltenburg: *Beer, Monks and a Natural Wonder*

Welcome to Bavaria's first national natural monument! 150 million years ago, a subtropical sea covered the land here, with corals and sponges forming mighty reefs – the same stuff that makes up the rock walls of the stunning Weltenburger Enge gorge today. The Danube flows for about five kilometres between cliffs that are up to 70 metres high. The best way to enjoy this spectacle is from one of the ships that sail between Kelheim and the Abbey. The Weltenburg Abbey is located upstream at the entrance to the gorge. Founded around 600 AD, it's believed to be the oldest monastic settlement in Bavaria and the oldest monastery brewery in the world.

bavaria.travel/weltenburg

16 Blue Rider: *Franz Marc*

This movement was initiated by Russian painter Wassily Kandinsky and German artist Franz Marc. Other prominent members included Paul Klee, August Macke and Gabriele Münter. The Franz Marc Museum is housed in a modern building near the German Alpine Road, overlooking Lake Kochel. It features an amazing collection of German expressionism and post-war abstraction. The changing exhibitions recontextualise the works of the "Blue Rider" and the "Bridge" movements.

bavaria.travel/expressionism

17 Glass Route: *Crystal-Clear*

The Glass Route is a beautiful 250-kilometre trail that winds its way through the Upper Palatinate Forest and the Bavarian Forest, from Waldsassen to Passau. It's divided into five sections, each with its own unique charm. On your journey, you'll meet glassmakers of all kinds – industrial, artisanal and artistic – with showrooms and sales rooms. You'll also find various galleries and museums dedicated to the craft, including the Frauenau Glass Museum. You can see the world's tallest crystal glass pyramid, a glass forest and a glass ark, and you can even try glass blowing!

bavaria.travel/glass-route

18 Herrenchiemsee New Palace: *Like a Fairy Tale*

This castle was built at the behest of King Ludwig II from 1878. Situated on the largest island in Lake Chiemsee, it was based on the Palace of Versailles. It was a tribute to Louis XIV, the Sun King, and glorified the divine right of kings. It was Ludwig's last major construction project and his most expensive building, but he only lived in it for a few days. Following his death in 1886, work on the "Bavarian Versailles" was halted and the building remained unfinished.

bavaria.travel/herrenchiemsee



19 Neuschwanstein: *All-Time Star*

The famous fairy-tale castle right in the heart of the Ammergau Alps near Füssen in the Allgäu region is a global symbol of Bavaria and Germany. King Ludwig II (1845-1886) planned the idealised medieval knight's castle as a private retreat for himself, and Neuschwanstein Castle was built from 1869 onwards. It was fitted with the latest technical innovations of the late 19th century, including central heating and an electric bell system. King Ludwig only lived in the castle for a few months before he died in 1886 (more on p. 22).

bavaria.travel/neuschwanstein

20 High-Tech Monster: *the Slaying of the Dragon*

For some 500 years, there's been a dragon on the loose in the town of Furth im Wald... and every year in August, it attracts tens of thousands of spectators. The Slaying of the Dragon is Germany's oldest traditional folk play. It was originally performed at Corpus Christi processions during the Baroque period. The Catholic Church wanted to counter the Protestant "enemies of imagery" with a showpiece that would captivate the masses. The festival includes a historical procession, a medieval camp, a children's festival and more. The undisputed star of the show is "Tradinno", a Hollywood-style high-tech dragon bursting with special effects.

bavaria.travel/festivals-tips

21 Nuremberg: *Albrecht Dürer, Street Art and Castles*

The Albrecht-Dürer-Haus offers visitors the unique opportunity to experience the world-famous painter's original living rooms and workspace. Nuremberg Castle, a historic landmark dating back to the year 1000, comprises two fortresses: the Kaiserburg and the Burggrafenburg. 500 metres away, on Weissgerbergasse, you'll find buildings preserved in their original condition, offering a fascinating glimpse into what life was like in the late Middle Ages. The view from the nearby Maxbrücke bridge is renowned for its stunning beauty.

bavaria.travel/nuremberg



22 Munich Oktoberfest: *The World's Biggest Party*

The "Wiesn", aka Oktoberfest, is thought to be the biggest folk festival on the planet. It's held every year at the Theresienwiese in Munich. Today, 14 large and 21 small festival tents, as well as around 200 showmen and rides, pull in millions of visitors every year. One of the highlights is the traditional costume parade – featuring 150 traditional costume groups on the first Sunday of the festival. And since 2010, the nostalgic "Oide Wiesn" has brought classic rides to the party. Here's all you need to know... First of all, the one-litre mug, known as a "Mass", is pronounced like the "a" in "spa" (/maas/). And how are you supposed to eat the chicken? You can just use your hands. Dancing on the benches is fine, but not on the tables. And don't forget! You won't get beer without a seat, so it's best to reserve a table with friends. The Gäubodenvolksfest is another large folk festival in Bavaria, attracting around 1.5 million visitors. It has a fairground with 7 festival tents and lots of rides. The festival lasts for eleven days, kicking off with an extravagant procession on the Friday before the Feast of the Assumption (15 August).

bavaria.travel/folk-festivals

23 Lake Königssee: *Filmworthy!*

Lake Königssee is renowned for its pristine waters and picturesque surroundings, making it one of Germany's most beautiful lakes. Its fjord-like appearance creates a stunning natural amphitheatre. One of the most popular activities is a tour on the electric-powered boats that glide silently across the lake. They stop off at the iconic St. Bartholomä Church, a Baroque pilgrimage site situated on a scenic peninsula that can only be accessed by boat. Hiking enthusiasts will enjoy the Malerwinkel circular trail, offering one of the best vantage points for lake views. Lake Königssee offers an idyllic escape throughout the year – whether you're looking for peace and quiet or on the hunt for adventure. Although the lake itself didn't appear in *The Sound of Music*, it's connected through the region's stunning landscapes. The alpine scenery around Lake Königssee reflects the visuals that made the film iconic.

bavaria.travel/berchtesgaden

24 Neumarkt: *Maybach and Weisswurst*

Immerse yourself in the history of Maybach cars – with almost two dozen luxury vehicles on display. The collection also includes Maybach's personal belongings, documents and photos. And interactive displays and multi-media presentations offer more detailed insights into the carmaker's almost mythical status. If you'd rather get your hands on an iconic piece of Bavarian food culture, the "1st Bavarian Butchery and Weisswurst Museum" is the place to be. Here, everything literally revolves around the "white sausage" and its production. Norbert Wittmann explains the secrets behind the perfect Weisswurst (veal sausage) – and even lets you make your own snack on the sausage machine.

bavaria.travel/neumarkt



25 Nördlingen: *City Wall to Go*

Nördlingen's impressive city wall – with five gateways and twelve watch towers – stretches for 2.7 kilometres, and you can explore most of it on foot! The houses along the battlements were homes for the less privileged during the Middle Ages. But whenever the city was under attack, the rooms would be made available to soldiers. The 90-metre-high church tower, Daniel, on the market square is the jewel in Nördlingen's crown. Climbing the 365 narrow, steep steps to the top is an exhilarating experience – and the view from the top is simply breath-taking. A surprising number of young visitors are drawn to the tower by the Japanese manga series *Attack on Titan*, as cartoonist Hajime Isayama modelled the fictional city of Shiganshina on Nördlingen.

bavaria.travel/noerdingen

26 Rothenburg ob der Tauber: *So Romantic!*

Rothenburg ob der Tauber's most iconic postcard picture is the Plönlein, where a crooked half-timbered house guards the entrance to the hospital quarter in a scene reminiscent of a Grimm fairy tale. The historic ensemble also includes the fountain in front of the half-timbered house and the two towers of the city wall. The Christmas Museum shows how the festive period has been celebrated throughout the ages and how customs have changed. The permanent exhibition features objects from 1870 to 1950, including Christmas trees, decorations, candle arches, stands, postcards, paper nativity scenes, lighting, Advent wreaths and calendars.

bavaria.travel/rothenburg

27 Walhalla: *Hall of Fame*

Poets, philosophers and an awesome Danube panorama... The magnificent Walhalla has been located just 30 minutes from Regensburg since 1842 – and it's definitely worth a visit! This stunning Bavarian Hall of Fame resembles a Greek temple and recognises important (predominantly male) personalities from the fields of politics, science and art, as well as historical events – with 131 marble busts and 65 commemorative plaques. The awe-inspiring building was constructed at the behest of King Ludwig I under the direction of Leo von Klenze, with the ancient Parthenon in Athens serving as a model.



28 Landshut Wedding: *Spectacular*

Landshut is the proud venue for one of Europe's biggest and most spectacular historical pageants, which is held every four years to celebrate one of the most momentous events in history. In 1475, Duke George the Rich of Bavaria married the beautiful Jadwiga, the daughter of a Polish king, in a grand ceremony. The aim was to strengthen the alliance against the Ottomans. As the fabulous celebrations were meticulously chronicled, the wedding can be reenacted with tremendous authenticity. Every detail has been lovingly recreated – from the intricate late medieval costumes to authentic weapons, carriages, musical instruments and more. Over 2,000 enthusiastic Landshut citizens take part in the documentary play. Mark your calendars for July 2027 – it's an unmissable experience!

bavaria.travel/landshut



29 Goldsteig: *Hiking, Hiking, Hiking!*

The Goldsteig is a real haven for hiking enthusiasts. The 660-kilometre route – split into 38 stages – has been named one of the “Top Trails of Germany”, leading through the low mountain range landscapes of the Upper Palatinate Forest and the Bavarian Forest. The northern section runs from Marktredwitz through the Bavarian Forest National Park to Passau. Its literal highlight is a demanding 24-kilometre route over 12 thousand-metre peaks.

bavaria.travel/bavarian-forest

30 The Art of Glassmaking: *Fragile Beauty*

Glassmaking has had a strong presence in the Upper Palatinate and Bavarian Forest since the 14th century, because the region has a rich source of wood for energy and quartz as the main raw material. As a primordial rock, it's available everywhere. The Glass Route is split into five sections, leading to attractions related to glass, glassblowing workshops, galleries, museums and glass artists. The stops run between Waldsassen and Weiden, from Waidhaus to the Lamer Winkel, from Arber to Frauenau, from Regen to Viechtach, and from the Bavarian Forest National Park to Passau in the south. Popular hiking trails also stop at glass-making sites, including the Gläserner Steig (Glass Trail), the Glasschleiferweg (Glass Cutter's Trail) and the Glashüttenwanderweg (Glassworks Hiking Trail).

bavaria.travel/glass-route

31 Christmas Markets: *Jingle Bells*

Bavaria's Christmas markets offer more than just bratwurst and mulled wine! How about celebrating the Advent season in a princely palace, on historic market squares or in a knight's castle? The most famous market is the festive Nuremberg Christkindlesmarkt in the heart of the Old Town. The Stadtschloss in Treuchtlingen is a former moated castle in the Renaissance style, where you can enjoy a romantic Christmas market surrounded by historic buildings while indulging in regional specialties and discovering local handicrafts. Regensburg on the Danube welcomes visitors with four Christmas markets in the Old Town. You can take a guided walk along the Ecumenical Nativity Trail and discover exciting representations of the Christmas story. Musical highlights are provided by the world-famous Regensburger Domspatzen choir with concerts in the cathedral. A festive city of stalls welcomes visitors right in front of St. Stephen's Cathedral in Passau. The smell of gingerbread, mulled wine and fried sausages lingers in the air. On many days, folk music with zither and hammered dulcimer or polyphonic choral singing share the same stage as modern sounds.

bavaria.travel/christmas



32 Coburg: *Royal Touch*

The former royal seat of Coburg is surprisingly bursting with diversity across such a small area. The Veste Coburg has guarded the Coburg region since the Staufer period and, in addition to the Luther Room, also houses collections of works by artists such as Cranach and Dürer. Those interested in Luther will find two Lucas Cranach portraits of him and his wife, hundreds of original writings and Bibles, and his “Hedwig Cup”, a magnificent piece of Fatimid craftsmanship.

bavaria.travel/coburg

33 Franconian Beer: *Prost!*

Franconia is a beer lover’s dream – with more than 260 breweries, countless beer cellars and beer gardens. There are three beer routes through Franconian Switzerland to the beer capital of Bamberg, to Nuremberg and Erlangen with trips to Dinkelsbühl and Rothenburg, as well as to the historic beer town of Kitzingen and to Miltenberg.

bavaria.travel/beer

34 Zugspitze: *Colossal Peak*

The Zugspitze above Garmisch-Partenkirchen is Germany’s highest mountain at 2,962 metres. It can be reached by the Bavarian Zugspitzbahn, a rack railway built as early as 1930 that runs up to the glacier station (2,588 m) on the Zugspitzplatt, where the “Gletscherbahn” cable car takes over the final stretch to the top station. The new and spectacular “Zugspitze Cable Car” floats towards the summit from Lake Eibsee. It covers a height difference of 1,945 metres in one section – a world record! The panoramic view from the observation deck is breath-taking – you can see four hundred peaks in Germany, Austria, Italy and Switzerland.

bavaria.travel/mountain-cable-car

35 Open-Air Museum: *Time Travel*

A tour of the Franconian open-air museum in Bad Windsheim is like a journey through 700 years of Franconian everyday history. More than 100 original buildings from 700 years are located across a large area with gardens, fields, orchards and animals – from historic farms to breweries, from inns and mills to sheepfolds and craft houses. The inclusive facilities feature exhibitions that can be felt and experienced with all the senses. From time to time, you can also watch craftsmen at work like in days of old.

bavaria.travel/open-air-museums



♥ *Bavaria? It couldn't be cooler*

Experience the thrill of yoga, breathing exercises and an ice bath on the Zugspitze, the highest mountain in Germany (9,718 feet). Feel the exhilarating chill and reconnect against the backdrop of stunning alpine scenery. Plunge into a barrel of icy water and sense the glacier’s wintry embrace. With outside temperatures of -4°C, the water feels relatively warm. This invigorating challenge is a must-try for those seeking a refreshing and bold alpine adventure.

bavaria.travel/winter-holidays



Something's brewing *over there!*

Zoigl is a beer speciality brewed by everyday people in “communal breweries”. *We combined the pleasure of beer with a hike through the region's Waldnaab Valley. The canyon landscape with its granite rocks is a real stunner!*

“A non-alcoholic wheat beer? That’s where I draw the line... Thanks, but no thanks!”. Wolfgang Fischer from “Zoigl Kramer Wolf”, as the place is called, pretends to be outraged. And when he does carry the requested drink through the restaurant, a guest will often even go one step further: “And bring me a non-alcoholic shandy while you’re at it!”. What a joker...

“You need to be cut out for this job. The lockdown really did some damage. I missed my guests so much”, says the Zoigl brewer, butcher and small supermarket owner from Germany’s Upper Palatinate region, pouring his heart out to us visitors.

Fischer was thrown in at the deep end after his father’s sudden death. He had to teach himself to brew at the age of twenty-four. The brewing right (i.e. the right to brew beer in the village’s communal brewery and serve it to guests at home) is recorded in the land register in Falkenberg. Whoever owns the house is allowed to brew. “And we have to know what we’re doing. It’s not just pressing buttons on the computer”, says the self-made brewer.

And the “Zoigl Kramer Wolf” has got what it takes. He puts a freshly tapped half-pint on the table. A frothy cloud floats on the dark amber-coloured barley juice. Water droplets begin to form and roll down the sides of the glass. Well then: Cheers!

Aaahh... The beer has a light to medium body, a soft texture, a very slight bitterness and a mild finish. In a word: delicious! Now let’s sit back and enjoy the sight of the foam residue on the inside of the glass... It’s time to devote our attention to the most important theorems of “zoiglology”.



2

1

Waldnaab Valley

Hiking paradise
in the land
of Zoigl beer

2

Zoigl star

Symbol of an old
home brewing
tradition in
eastern Bavaria

3

Josef Neuber

One of just under
20 Zoigl brewers
in the region

The term “Zoigl” can be traced back to “producing” or “displaying”, but experts are not in complete agreement. Brewing rights were first granted in Falkenberg in 1467. In the past, the serving of Zoigl was signalled by a green branch on the house.

Today, a certified sign with the brewers’ hexagonal guild symbol and the inscription “Echter Zoigl vom Kommunbrauer” (real Zoigl from communal brewers) indicates the authenticity of the brew and how it is produced. The Zoigl community is not amused... Some characters like to play fast and loose with the brand, and private breweries also use the label to sell beer. That’s not a real Zoigl.

If you ask for the order of the day: “der Zoigl”. The location: “am Zoigl”. There are no reservations – you just sit in a free space. And people are on first-name terms. Last names are taboo. The beer is only on tap. The food is simple, hearty and very sausage-based. The bar is usually open from Friday to Monday.



3

While the communal breweries used to be widespread in the region and are now protected as historic monuments, they've only survived in the five places listed above. Zoigl brewers make their beer there in return for a "kettle fee". Everything is manual labour: First, malt is mashed with water and boiled over a stove fired with heavy logs in an open brew pan, then hops are added.

The brew is placed in an open, refrigerated vessel to cool overnight. And with that, the work at the "Kommunbrauhaus" is done. The brew is then taken to the Zoigl host's home, where it's fermented with yeast in a vat. The Zoigl is then cooled and matured for up to twelve weeks. Bottom-fermented Zoigl is unfiltered, of a normal alcohol content and doesn't contain any artificial preservatives. Every brewer has their own recipe, and every Zoigl tastes different.

In the past, people would serve drinks in their own living rooms. Today, the Zoigl locations also include garages, barns, hallways or

"I'm grateful that our ancestors preserved this tradition. In many other places, the communal breweries have sadly disappeared".

Karl Bauer

Restaurant owner

simply beer benches in front of someone's house. Not every Zoigl brewer has guest rooms available.

The beer specialities in the Upper Palatinate Forest are best discovered on a hike along the "Goldsteig" hiking trail. This long-distance route from Marktredwitz to Passau crosses "Zoigl Country" between Wiesau and Weiden. One of the scenic highlights includes the section along

the Tirschenreuther Waldnaab from Falkenberg to Neuhaus.

Before saying goodbye to Falkenberg, it's worth visiting Falkenberg Castle, standing strong on a prominent rock spur. In the 1930s, the Prussian Count von der Schulenburg had the former ruin converted into a castle. The well-travelled diplomat wanted to spend his retirement there. But Schulenburg, who belonged to the resistance circle of 20 July 1944, was murdered by the Nazis. A small hotel has been set up in the castle, and a museum commemorates his life and work.

The rounded, towering granite rocks that support the castle are reminiscent of fluffy wool sacks piled on top of one another. In Falkenberg, the proper name for this geological phenomenon was born: spheroidal weathering. And the Falkenberg Rock happens to be one of the most beautiful geotopes in Bavaria.

To the west of the small village, the Waldnaab meanders inconspicuously through meadows at first. An easy path follows it, before soon entering the forest and then turning



south. That's where the scenery becomes more primeval, with bushes and tall ferns. And the first "wool sacks" start poking out of the green. Dark, weathered, primeval.

The water rushes loudly. From here on, the Waldnaab carves its way through the granite of the Falkenberg massif as it has for five million years. In the process, it's created a small canyon with imposing boulders dotted along the banks and in the course of the river. And it often changes its character.

Sometimes it's idyllic and calm, other times lively and effervescent. This effect is created by "steps", which are accumulations of stones over and through which the water rushes, as well as pools, which are passages of deeper water and calmer courses.

Various rock formations immediately catch the eye, including one that has been so undercut by flood waters that it's taken on the shape of an anvil. Trees grow on its mossy top, their leaves rustling softly in the wind.

As the Waldnaab Valley approaches Neuhaus, a district of Windischeschenbach, it widens and the granite rocks become fewer. After a short climb south of Johannisthal, we reach Neuhauser Marktplatz. And that's when the thirst hits you. We walk past Zoigl signs. The Zoigl innkeeper on duty is the "Lingl-Zoigl" at the southern end of the market square. Karl Bauer took over the restaurant from his grandfather and runs it

purely as a Zoigl tavern on the side. "I'm grateful that our ancestors preserved this tradition. In many other places, the communal breweries have sadly disappeared", says the brewer as he puts a freshly tapped Zoigl on the table.

The Zoigl glows brightly and enticingly in the glass. "Our Neuhauser Zoigl is hoppier than others", says Karl Bauer. True. But it still tastes sweet and slender with a slightly tart finish. ■



1

Beer hike

The best way to discover Zoigl specialties is on a hike along the "Goldsteig" trail

2

Falkenberg Castle

The rounded granite rocks supporting the castle are reminiscent of stacked wool sacks

3

Waldnaab

The river has created a small canyon with impressive boulders on the banks and rocks in the riverbed

Castles, Lakes *and Royals*

If you travel through Bavaria from Lake Chiemsee and Neuschwanstein Castle in the south to Regensburg on the Danube, you'll come across a region steeped in royal heritage and breath-taking scenery – *with fairy tales, a hall of fame and the oldest monastery brewery in the world.*



**1+2
Herrenchiemsee
New Palace**

This castle has been a UNESCO World Heritage Site since 12 July 2025

King Ludwig II of Bavaria, a great admirer of Louis XIV of France, had a plan at the end of the 19th century. He wanted to create his own personal Versailles. At the same time, the communities around the lake presented a petition to the king. They asked him to protect the Herreninsel from deforestation. This brought the island to the monarch's attention, and he decided to build his own "temple of glory" in the form of a French-style palace. Herrenchiemsee New Palace is a piece of architectural history – even if it's

still unfinished. After all, construction was stopped in 1885.

Since 2012, Veronika Endlicher has been one of four castle attendants at the New Herrenchiemsee Palace. She and her colleagues lead guided tours. She's been passionate about old imperial buildings since she studied history at university.

Veronika is particularly fascinated by the complex history surrounding King Ludwig II and the construction of Herrenchiemsee Palace. For all his romanticism, the Bavari-



an fairy-tale and self-proclaimed “Moon King” was a visionary who was ahead of his time in many ways. His innovative and novel ideas are reflected in many elements of his castles, including Herrenchiemsee.

Herrenchiemsee: Bavaria's Versailles

People come from all around to immerse themselves in a bygone era. The rooms are large with high ceilings, while the interior is opulent and glistening in gold. “The Herrenchiemsee New Palace is the most magnificent of all Ludwig II's residences”, says Veronika. The most striking feature is the monumental staircase under an iron and glass roof. The use of materials such as iron was relatively new for palaces at the time. Ludwig II also had special systems fitted to heat water and the interior rooms.

Even the king's dining table, known as the “Tischlein-deck-dich”, could be lowered mechanically, allowing him to eat his meals without being served. The chandeliers in the magnificent Mirrored Hall could also be lowered. Like its predecessors – the castles of Neuschwanstein and Linderhof – Herrenchiemsee is a modern fairy-tale palace full of technical refinements.

Ludwig II's eye for innovation was apparent not only in his building projects; the king

wanted to fly over Lake Alpsee near Hohen-schwangau Castle in a machine known as the “Pfauenwagen”. However, his plan was thwarted due to technical difficulties. But he had more luck with his gilded royal sleigh, which was the first vehicle in the world to be fitted with a battery-powered light bulb. It's now on display in the Marstallmuseum in Nymphenburg Castle.

The nostalgic MS Ludwig Fessler takes you from Herrenchiemsee Castle to Fraueninsel in just 10 minutes. Built in 1926, it was originally a paddle steamer and is regarded as the most beautiful ship in the Chiemsee-Schiffahrt fleet. The Ludwig Fessler is an important part of the history of Chiemsee-Schiffahrt, which has been run by the Fessler family since 1848 and is now in its fifth generation.

When you arrive at the jetty, it's best to head straight for the traditional Lex family fishery on the Fraueninsel island. The Lex family has been processing and selling fish of the highest quality since 1857. The premises on the Fraueninsel, where the family home stands, have been there for 400 years. They've always been inhabited by fishermen. Today, the twins Tassilo and Florian Lex, both in their thirties, run the fishery together with their father. The family busi-

**1
Glittering splendour**
Herrenchiemsee Palace's 98-metre-long hall of mirrors is an exact replica of Versailles

**2
Frauenchiemsee Island**
Legend has it that the abbey was founded by Duke Tassilo III of Bavaria in 782

“The Herrenchiemsee New Palace is the most magnificent of all Ludwig II's residences”.

Veronika Endlicher
Castle attendant





3
Fishing with tradition
 The Lex family has been fishing on
 Lake Chiemsee since 1857

4
Fishermen beware:
 The fishing areas are closed
 during spawning season

ness is now in its sixth generation. “It’s a great privilege for me to continue our family tradition”, says Florian.

It’s 4:30 am on a July morning. We’re on the north shore of the Fraueninsel. The island is draped in a sleepy tranquillity. Only the fishermen are starting their work. Tassilo Lex and his father cast off together to empty the fishing nets. After landing the catch outside the Lex family home, the fish is processed in a small cottage. Gut, scale, fillet and smoke. Teamwork. Grandpa Lex is still itching to get involved, and so he lends a hand. At noon, the fish is sold in the small shop. The fresh whitefish sandwiches are popular: a freshly smoked fillet of whitefish with creamed horseradish and pepper or a pickled whitefish fillet with crème fraîche and onions. Straight from the lake and into your hungry mouth. It doesn’t get much fresher than this.



1
Holmer Lex:
“I’m so proud to see my grandchildren continue the family business”

2+3
Neuschwanstein Castle
2,329 objects and 93 rooms – with 184 wall and ceiling frames, 65 paintings and 355 pieces of furniture – had to be restored before the castle was named a World Heritage Site



Neuschwanstein Castle: Strengthened Landmark

We head back to the fairy-tale King Ludwig II and his most famous building, Neuschwanstein Castle. It’s located 155 kilometres west of Lake Chiemsee, within sight of the beautiful Lake Forggensee. We catch Ramona Proske sitting 4.5 metres above the floor of the royal study – right next to the wall art with fauna, flora and mythical creatures. For weeks, she’s been touching up the old crumbled areas with mixed dry pigments from her paint box.

Neuschwanstein is not only one of the most famous tourist attractions in Germany; it’s also been a massive construction site since 2017. Ludwig II’s palace has been under renovation for over seven years. This is the largest project of its kind in the building’s 150-year history – at a cost of 20 million euros. The extent of the restoration work is revealed by the figures: 2,329 objects, 93 rooms and 184 wall and ceiling fixtures. Add to that 65 paintings, 355 pieces of furniture, and 664 windows and exterior doors – not to mention 315 individual elements made of oak, pine and spruce. That’s a lot of wood!

The need for restoration was mainly due to the crowds of tourists. The first visitors flocked to the palace just six weeks after the king’s death in 1886 – and there have been over 70 million since. At its peak before the pandemic, 1.5 million visitors came every year.

As one of the people responsible for the building, Oehme sheds some light on the mega-project: “When we inspected the existing buildings, we were often blindsided”. He’s referring to unexpected discoveries such as water that had built up behind old columns or rotten wooden beams found behind colourful terrazzo tiles. “There were lots of things we didn’t expect”, he says. “You find one surprise after another”.

Oehme leads the way up to the throne room, which has been restored after five years of work. It’s the most impressive state room and the heart of the palace. The central masterpiece in the room is the one-

*“Neuschwanstein shouldn’t
present itself as a flawless
Disney castle”.*

Heiko Oehme

Project manager renovations



tonne, four-metre-high brass chandelier in the shape of a Byzantine crown, with 96 candles, interspersed with Bohemian stained glass. The experts' work on the chandelier, says Oehme, has been an almost greater attraction over all these months than the throne room itself, which features the portraits of the twelve apostles and six canonised kings, as well as a staircase made of Carrara marble.

Weltenburg and Walhalla: Beer and Marble Busts

Another piece of royal heritage is located 230 kilometres further north. The Weltenburg Narrows with the Danube Gorge is one of the oldest nature reserves in Bavaria. The breath-taking surroundings are home to major historical attractions and places in east-



1

1 Weltenburg Abbey

The Danube Gorge was formed by rushing waters 80,000 years ago. Since then, the river has wound its way through mighty cliffs on its way past the abbey

2 Walhalla

Since 1842, this building resembling a Greek temple has stood 30 minutes from Regensburg, housing 131 marble busts of important figures from politics, science and the arts



2

ern Bavaria such as the Liberation Hall above the town of Kelheim, the Weltenburg Abbey at the Danube Gorge and the Walhalla Hall of Fame near Regensburg.

The Liberation Hall is an imposing landmark atop Michelsberg Hill. King Ludwig I commissioned court architect Friedrich von Gärtner to build this monumental temple to commemorate victorious battles against the French during the Wars of Liberation between 1813 and 1815. The temple was built using local limestone.

Its exterior gallery provides tremendous panoramic views. You can see well into Lower Bavaria. And the river? The view of the quietly flowing Danube and its gorge is simply breath-taking. Depending on the season, boat tours depart from the quay near Wittelsbach Castle heading west up to 13 times

a day. The route covers almost six kilometres, taking visitors through the Weltenburg Narrows and its 80-metre-high limestone rock faces. This geotope was designated a protected area and national natural monument by King Ludwig in 1840, making it the first of its kind.

Its impressive rock formations bear names such as “the Beehive”, “Pirate Rock” and “Napoleon’s Suitcase”. The latter is said to have received its nickname when the French emperor left his luggage there while retreating. That’s quite amusing, isn’t it? But it might just be a riverman’s legend.

Weltenburg Abbey boasts a spectacular setting on the Danube Gorge with its steep rock faces. It lies around 25 kilometres south-west of Regensburg. The abbey is thought to have been founded around the year 600 by the Irish-Scottish wandering monks Eustace and Agilus of Luxeuil. It’s the oldest monastic establishment in Bavaria.

Evidence shows that beer has been brewed in the abbey since 1050. The star of the brewery is the Weltenburger Kloster Barock Dunkel. This fine, creamy, bottom-fermented beer with a powerful taste has won the “Gold Award” at the World Beer Cup in the USA no fewer than three times. And the Weltenburger Kloster Asam Bock is a three-time “Gold Medal” winner at the European Beer Star. It’s a malty, aromatic, sweet and dark Doppelbock beer. The range of beers also includes Helles, Pils, Kellerbier, Märzen and more.

The Klosterschänke tavern – with a beer pipeline leading straight to the cellar – and a beer garden lined with chestnut trees provide guests with a great place to sit and enjoy the liquid delights on offer. The beers can also be paired with Bavarian dishes in the “Weltenburger am Dom” restaurant in Regensburg...

Regensburg: Cobbled Streets and Patrician Pomp

And Regensburg is where our royal journey ends. What does this city have to offer? The Old Town is situated along the Danube, nestled between the cathedral and Bismarckplatz. It was declared a World Heritage Site

in 2006 and covers less than one square kilometre. Don’t be fooled by its small size – a walk through the Old Town is a real adventure! Cobbled streets criss-cross and intersect. Many are somewhat parallel – but only somewhat. For newcomers, it’s a tangle of streets, alleys, corners, turns, narrow passages and dead ends. That’s what makes the medieval trading centre so attractive, as recognised by UNESCO.

As you hunt for the beautiful murals created by Regensburg artist Andre Maier in the “Kunstbar Degginger”, you may find that you keep passing the Neupfarrkirche church, where musicians, bubble magicians and jugglers entertain their audiences on warm summer evenings. Or you may see the same cafés, restaurants, boutique hotels and wine bars in the beautifully renovated Old Town buildings before ending up once again outside the Goliathhaus – with its mural of David and Goliath.

A little way downstream, in front of the Eiserne Brücke (Iron Bridge), you’ll find the beautifully designed Museum of Bavarian History, built in 2018. Various multi-media displays – often slightly tongue in cheek – explain how the various Bavarian tribes evolved over centuries to form the region’s unique identity, offer insights into the different characteristics of Upper Bavaria, Franconia and Swabia, and shed light on how the Free State of Bavaria was established. ■

Recommendations for Bavaria

16 wonderful boat trips
bavaria.travel/boat-trips

**12 of the most stunning gorges,
caves and ravines in Bavaria:**
bavaria.travel/gorges

16 fascinating castles in Bavaria:
bavaria.travel/castles

Hey there, Silvaner!



Hedges, saints, vines, flower meadows and a Hollywood swing...

An enjoyable hike through Franconia with local wine-maker Thomas Schenk. The perfect way to discover Franconian wine.

It's a warm evening in early June as we take a seat in the Lämmerberg vineyards. The sun is still high above the Pfülsen, the neighbouring hill to the west. Würzburg waves at us in the distance. The picnic bench is lavishly set. Our plates are brimming with pickled olives, salads, cheese, bread and wine. Of course, there has to be wine. Thomas Schenk's wine.

Thomas opens the dark "Bocksbeutel" bottle and hands me a glass of Silvaner from the steep-sloping, south-south-west facing "Sonnenstuhl" vineyard. I take a sip: dry, honest and straight-forward. A true Franconian.

A few years ago, Thomas Schenk and his wife Caro created a small and romantic resting place, nestled in the landscape at the edge of their winery. There are two benches, a table, and next to it a Hollywood swing hanging from the branches of a large walnut tree, pieced together from two EUR-pallets.

The place is upbeat and freely accessible for walkers to take a well-earned rest and catch their breath. We can make out the Marsberg across the valley. And below, Thomas' hometown of Randersacker lolls in the heart of Franconia's wine country.

Randersacker is a market town with 3,500 inhabitants. It's a suburb of Würzburg that has gained notoriety for traffic reports like: "... roadworks are causing congestion on the A3 motorway between Würzburg-Heidingsfeld and Randersacker. Three kilometres of slow-moving traffic in the opposite direction".

Thomas' ancestors started growing grapes here three centuries ago, but for a long time only as a hobby alongside their actual professions. Thomas' grandfather was a master wainwright. Thomas converted the old wainwright's shop in the village, where his grandfather assembled wagon wheels, into a wine-maker's tavern known locally as a "Heckenwirtschaft". It's open for business for a few weeks a year in the spring and autumn. The range of food and drink is displayed on a stone wall. The "Schoppen Rivaner feinfruchtig" costs just four euros, while the farmhouse bratwurst with cabbage and bread costs eight euros fifty.



2

1

Thomas Schenk, winemaker

"Vineyards with a 70% gradient are simply part of Franconia. We do everything by hand, investing love and an enormous amount of time"

2

Place of power...

... above the vineyards. Thomas and his wife Caro have created a small rest area at the edge of their vineyard with a swing made from EUR-pallets

3

Franconian picnic

Regional products and a wonderful Silvaner wine

The tavern below Thomas' apartment is not only a cosy meeting place for locals, excursionists and holiday-makers; it also marks the start of Thomas' wine walks, where he takes his guests through the countryside around Randersacker, as he did this afternoon.

With a well-filled backpack, we amble along Ochsenfurter Strasse, into Main-gasse and past the quaintly named "Tanzplan" square, where the townspeople used to come together to dance and celebrate. Half-timbered houses, archways and cobblestones. Randersacker oozes the charm of an old village.

We continue up the steep steps to the mountain chapel. St. Urban, the patron saint of wine-growers, watches over the entrance. We continue along the "Rose and Wine Trail", which leads over from



3

the “Teufelskeller”. Like “Pfülsen” and “Lämmerberg”, “Teufelskeller” is the name of a vineyard. The path is flanked by numerous grape varieties: ten rows of *Pinot Noir*, seven rows of *Müller-Thurgau*.

Walking at a comfortable pace, Thomas explains the origin of the names. The “Teufelskeller”, for example, is named after the Deuffel patrician family of Würzburg. The “Pfülsen”, which curves upwards like a beautiful, open eiderdown on the northern edge of Randersacker, can be traced back to the Middle High German word “Pfülle”, which can be loosely translated as an “open cushion”.

Thomas talks about the history of Franconia’s wine country. Before the Second World War, the cultivated area covered almost 40,000 hectares, but this was cut back significantly due to a lack of profitability. Today, wine grows across 6,000 hectares between Bamberg and Aschaffenburg. And Thomas owns seven of them. When he had to help his parents with the grape harvest as a child, he admits that he knew little about



the business. The path takes a slight left and bends towards the north, past a weathered hunter’s stand. “I found the whole thing pretty boring. I had no connection to it and couldn’t understand what was so great about wine-making”.

To the side of the path, a piano suddenly emerges against a natural stone wall. A neighbouring wine-grower parked it there several years ago. “You used to be able to play it”, says Thomas. Today, it’s weathered and warped, and the keys are ruined. A few notes still work: an F and an A, a bizarre cacophony in the midst of the enchanting scene.

Thomas’ love of wine-making didn’t come naturally. He only developed an appreciation over the years when he studied viticulture in Geisenheim, before returning to his hometown to take over his parents’ winery. He began to manage it ecologically and sustainably. He joined forces with a dozen other wine-makers to form the “Ethos” group.

They don’t use herbicides or insecticides – and green up the edges of the vineyard to create a natural habitat for insects. “At the end of

the day, it’s all about nature – and that includes us humans”, says Thomas. “And it’s about the future of tradition”.

The path narrows to a trail through wild undergrowth and copses, and the final few metres lead up the Lämmerberg. We’re greeted with a panoramic delight. And a rest area. A setting beyond words. Thomas and Caro often spend their evenings here themselves – sometimes alone, some-

“At the end of the day, it’s all about nature – and that includes us humans”.

Thomas Schenk
Winemaker

times with their visitors. The route is occasionally discovered by passers-by, who stop for a moment to take everything in – first in amazement, then with hesitation and finally with delight.

Thomas recently received an email from a student with a big thank-you. He'd only managed to pass his important exams because he always found so much peace and quiet to study in this unique place. You could see this as more fruits of the vineyard's labour.

On the Marsberg across the valley, Thomas has planted half a hectare of *Cabernet Blanc* on shelly limestone. Randersacker is rich in this sedimentary rock, which is not only suitable as a sub-soil for grapes, but also as a building material. Shelly limestone

from Kirchheim, less than ten kilometres to the south-west, can also be found in the structure of the Olympic Stadium in Berlin. Vast quantities were mined here until the 1950s.

Twilight slowly sets in. On the right, the ridgeway continues to Würzburg. For us, it meanders left on a small loop back towards Randersacker. Behind a bend, another stunning view opens up down to the River Main and the barrage, and in front of it the green river meadows.

The last section ends in front of Thomas' house. He never wants to leave this place again, he says. This is where he has his land and his vines. His home and his family. Wine and a walnut tree. And a glass of exotic fruity Bacchus. ■

1 **Winemaker with integrity:**

Thomas Schenk and the Ethos group work sustainably. They don't use herbicides or insecticides and plant vegetation around the edges of their vineyards to provide a habitat for insects

2 **Wine hike:**

Enjoy the views and learn about the ecology of steep-slope wines

3 **Blossoming vineyard**

For Thomas, his wife Caro and our reporter, this is the perfect place to raise a last glass



Peak Performance

Mountain farmers, alpine dairyman and mountain herdsman literally work at a high level. *They promote biodiversity in mountain meadows, preserve beautiful and valuable cultural landscapes and, last but not least, make cheese from healthy milk.*



Almen – or “Alpen” in the Allgäu – are summer pastures high in the mountains and far from the farms in the valley. The Celts wrested the high-altitude pastures back from nature. Over the course of two and a half millennia, distinctive cultural landscapes have emerged in Bavaria’s mountains.

Bavaria is home to around 10,000 hill farms and 1,400 alpine pastures. But what makes someone a “mountain farmer”? According to the EU, mountain farms, mead-

Peter Haslach

He manages the Gunzesried dairy, the oldest in Bavaria. Cheese has been produced there since 1892

ows and pastures must be located at least 700 metres above sea level or have a certain slope.

Mountain farmers are essential for the preservation of the alpine cultural landscape. And they have their work cut out for them. The animals have to be driven up to the mountain pastures, fences have to be built, the water supply has to be ensured and grazing areas have to be kept clear. They milk their cows and make cheese.



*“If we neglected nature,
everything would change
for us. We live with and
from it”.*

Armin Kling
Mountain farmer

One of the mountain farmers is Armin Kling, who is deeply rooted in his homeland, the Allgäu Alps. He is the twelfth generation of his family to run a farm in Obermaiselstein, which he manages with his parents. “If we neglected nature, everything would change for us. We live with and from it”, he says. The work of mountain farmers makes it possible to actively enjoy the landscape on a hike or a bike. “Grazing prevents our Alps from becoming overgrown”, says Armin.

Florian Karg spends the alpine summer with his wife, four children and 122 young cattle on the Plättle Alp near Bad Hindelang. The work is hard. They sleep in simple mountain huts – without electricity or hot water. They get up at the crack of dawn.

Mountain cheese is at the heart of every alpine snack. But what makes milk and cheese from the alpine pastures so special? While lowland cows are usually given concentrated feed and silage, mountain cows enjoy the finest organic food: pure grass, freshly cut from the alpine meadow, and hay



in winter. And this grass has it all: umpteenth different herbs, such as brown bedstraw, knapweed, cleaver and other delicacies.

The more healthy grass the cows eat, the higher the proportion of valuable unsaturated omega-3 fatty acids, vitamins and minerals. And the better the milk tastes! Brown vetch and other plants also do something else in a cow's stomach... Researchers at the University of Kiel have found that a diet rich in herbs significantly reduces their infamous methane emissions!

1

Mountain farmer

It's hard work maintaining the popular ensemble of green pastures, clear water and mountain scenery

2

Mountain cheese

Mountain cows feed on the finest organic food freshly picked from alpine meadows

3

Environmentally friendly farts:

Researchers have discovered that a diet in herbs reduces methane emissions





“The milk is influenced by seasons and weather. These natural characteristics are reflected in the cheese. No two cheeses are the same. It’s a ‘living’ food”, says Peter Haslach, head of the Gunzesried alpine dairy. Cheese has been made in Bavaria’s oldest alpine dairy since 1892. The dairymen only process milk from the Gunzesried Valley. Every year, 1.3 million litres of milk are turned into around 1,100 wheels of mountain cheese, each weighing in at 25 kilograms. But what’s so special about it? Ever since the cooperative was founded, it’s been owned by twelve local farmers: “The dairy keeps local agriculture alive and helps shape the village community”, says Peter Haslach.

Things are also blooming colourfully down in the valley. The wildflower meadows in the “Green Allgäu” are characterised by their great biodiversity. If you hike past the pastures, you may think that the brown cattle are plucking the grass at random. But the cows are very selective – their sense of smell is 15 times greater than ours.

According to Stefan Bentele, a proud native of the Allgäu region, his wildflower meadow is home to 87 flourishing plant species. Others might have given up on this very steep piece of land. After all, it pres-

1
Wildflower meadow
Up to 85 plant species can be found here, forming fragrant and healing hay

ents its economic challenges. “I almost overbalanced once while mowing the grass on the 65-degree slope”, says Stefan on his way back from hay-making. “I’ve been mowing this slope for thirty years. I like it. But I’m glad I only have to do it once a year. If I didn’t mow it, there’d be no flowers here. It’d be a forest”.

It’s time for a change of scenery... The Haidenholzalm lies at an altitude of 1,340 metres in the Chiemgau Alps. With her hair tied up and a long weeder in hand, Cornelia “Conny” Reiser stands in the meadow behind her hut. She’s pulling alpine ragwort out of the ground, which is full of holes from the cows’ hooves. The plant contains highly toxic alkaloids. Even in small concentrations, these can cause chronic liver damage in cows and horses.

The bright tinkling of cowbells and the dull rushing of the mountain stream are part of the constant soundtrack of the alpine pasture. From the terrace of the “Linnerkaser”, a stone hut over 200 years old, the view sweeps over the peaks of the Chiemgau Alps from the Hochgern to the Sonntagshorn.

Conny has been living on the mountain pasture since May. She’s been up since 6 am this morning – and she’s already dragged a

10-kilo salt lick stone out to the pasture. “I work as long as I can in the morning, and then I go back to the hut for breakfast. If the weather’s nice, hopefully a few people will come”, she says.

Weeding is not the only thing Conny has to do at the Haidenholzalm in the Geigelstein nature reserve. The dairymaid’s daily tasks also include scything alpine sorrel and nettles, checking the fences and animals in the pastures, and making cheese.

Alpine biodiversity can only be maintained by grazing. Alpine farming prevents the open mountain pastures and meadows from becoming overgrown with scrub and maintains a healthy habitat for light-loving plants.

Botanists have counted around 720 species of ferns and flowers on the slopes of the Geigelstein “flower mountain” in the Chiemgau Alps: gentian, lady’s slipper,

Turk’s cap lily, orchids, arnica, bearded bellflower, mountain avens and many more.

Capercaillie, black grouse, adders, smooth snakes and insects also thrive on Bavaria’s alpine pastures. And the local biodiversity also spreads its wings high into the air – golden eagle breeding pairs are predominantly found in mountain regions that are heavily influenced by alpine pastures.

One special regional delicacy is “Allgäuer Sennalpkäse”, an unmistakably strong, spicy and sometimes even smoky cheese that is produced from May to October on officially recognised summer mountain pastures.

The milk from brown Swiss cows is processed on the alpine pastures according to traditional, artisanal methods. Without chemicals or genetic engineering. The cheese wheels are hand-crafted and left to mature for up to four months. You can really taste the difference! ■



2+3

Mountain herdsman

Every year from the end of May, Conny Reiser lives on the alpine pasture with thirty cows, five chickens and a rooster. For the past ten years, the trained bank clerk has been living every summer in the 13-square-metre cabin with a kitchen, bedroom and bathroom



Queer and Proud!

The “Schwuhplattler” – a play on the German words “Schuh” (shoe) and “schwul” (gay) – is the world’s first gay association dedicated to Bavarian customs and traditions. *The award-winning dance troupe represents its homeland and advocates for diversity, tradition and tolerance.*



The “Schwuhplattler” have become a well-known part of Munich society. You can see them on TV, at the Hofbräuhaus, and of course at Oktoberfest.

This is just a normal Friday evening in the Döllingersaal of St. Willibrod’s on Blumenstrasse. The “Schwuhplattler” meet there every two weeks to rehearse. They always start by going over the basics. It’s a great opportunity for beginners and newcomers like Ole from Norway. He’s been living in Munich for a few years now. He heard about this Bavarian dance troupe from a friend, but he’s a little hesitant to get involved this evening. So, how does the dance go? When, where and how do you clap? On the thigh, on the shoe, on the heel, in the hand. And all in the right rhythm. It’s a science in itself. A dance like no other.

The group has over 110 members from around the world, including America, Brazil, Sweden and other parts of Germany such as North Rhine-Westphalia. Christian, the instructor for the evening, presents the “Heisei” for the warm-up before moving on to the “Ruhpoldinger”, the “Inzell” and the “Glöckerl”. These are all names of different variations. In between, he explains the “five-stroke technique” and barks commands like: “Stomp, stomp, one, two, three, four, change”.

During a break in the rehearsal, Sepp Stückl comes over to one of the tables at the back of the room. The 71-year-old is the man who founded the “Schwuhplattler” around 25 years ago. He’s from the Bavarian community of Uffing am Staffelsee, where he grew up surrounded by local customs, traditions and folk music. His grandad, mum and



1
Oktoberfest
The “Schwuhplattler” at their big “Wiesn” performance in the “Herzkasperlzelt” tent

2
Colourful Trio
Sepp, the founder, Paul, the “Schwuhplattler” from Kansas, Christoph, the young Franconian

dad were all members of the local “Trachtenverein”, a cultural association dedicated to the traditional costumes of the region.

Sepp was 28 when he came out as gay. The reaction from his traditional “Trachtenverein” was cold – especially when he set up the “Schwuhplattler” in Munich in 1997. There were pockets of resistance and hostility – and he wasn’t welcome at parades. “They said they couldn’t guarantee my safety”, says Sepp.

Sepp and a handful of gay “Plattler” dancers made their first big appearance in 1998: “We wondered whether they would throw tomatoes, eggs or even stones at us”, recalls Sepp. Instead, they were celebrated by the locals. One member of the audience even came on stage and asked if he could dance along.

The main thing the “Schwuhplattler” want to show is that you can remain traditional while accepting the gay community. They’re all about love for home and men. And in a place like “Liberalitas Bavariae”, why not?

Their performances in the “Herzkasperl” tent at the “Oide Wiesn” have become an established tradition – and they’re one of the highlights of the year for Paul. An original “Schwuhplattler”, the American has been part of the group from the very beginning.

“The main thing the ‘Schwuhplattler’ want to show is that you can remain traditional while accepting the gay community”.



He came to Munich from his home in Kansas in the 1980s. “It was only with the ‘Schwuhplattler’ that I really found my feet in Munich and Bavaria”, says Paul. “It made me feel like I’d found my home”.

As we say goodbye, Sepp tells us outside that there are now many heterosexuals among the 115 members. “After all, we ‘Schwuhplattler’ are very open-minded”. That’s true Bavarian tolerance in action.

Roast Chicken and Stein Towers

As the sun sets over Munich, the mood in the tents becomes boisterous and merry, with the first guests dancing and shouting from the benches. It’s getting fuller. And warmer. And stuffier. Crispy Hendl (roast chicken) is flying off the shelves. There’s a dinosaur balloon floating above the crowd somewhere. One particularly creative table is building a tower of steins.



In the thick of it, waitress Cristin and her colleagues are rushing from table to table. One guest makes a polite enquiry: “Why do you look like nurses?”. This isn’t the first time Cristin and her colleagues have heard this question – and it probably won’t be the last.

The “Schottenhamel” tent is the only one at the Wiesn where the waitresses don’t wear a traditional dirndl. Cristin and her colleagues are dressed in a black shirt and skirt with a traditional white serving apron and a bonnet on top. In the olden days, women didn’t wear a dirndl to work.

A full *Mass* weighs about 2.3 kilograms – and Cristin is only 1.63 metres tall. And with eight *Mass* glasses in her hand, she’s carrying around 18 kilograms of beer. She works 18 days straight at the Wiesn. She coordinates her breaks with her colleagues and takes them whenever she has a moment to spare.

So, how do you actually prepare for a job like this? Training? Cristin laughs. She takes a sip of apple juice spritzer and says: “When I carried my first jugs this year, there was a moment where I wished I’d trained beforehand. But it’s not that bad. You get back into the rhythm very quickly and you don’t even notice the effort after a while”.

The “Wiesn”, as Oktoberfest is known in the local area, is considered the world’s largest folk festival and, with few exceptions so far, is celebrated every year on the Theresienwiese in Munich. The foundation stone for the festive hustle and bustle was laid in 1810 to mark the wedding of Crown Prince Ludwig of Bavaria (King from 1825) and Therese of Saxony on 12 October. The celebrations included a big horse race on 17 October on the festival grounds named after the bride. This developed into an annual folk festival. Its duration was extended to two weeks and the start was brought forward to September.

Today, fourteen large and fifteen small festival tents – and around 200 showmen and fairground rides – attract millions of visitors every year (6.3 million in 2019). One

**1
Schottenhamel:**
One of 17 large and 21 small festival tents at Oktoberfest

**2
Serving the Mass**
An Oktoberfest waitress usually has to carry 10 litres of beer at a time – that’s 23 kilos!

**3
Oktoberfest atmosphere**
Crispy fried chicken and towers of beer mugs



highlight is the costume parade on the first Sunday of the Wiesn, which brings together 150 traditional costume groups. Since 2010, the nostalgic “Oide Wiesn” has also been part of the festival, featuring a range of historic rides. By the way, dirndl and lederhosen have only become a mass phenomenon at the Wiesn in the 21st century. ■

Bavaria's folk festivals

Bavaria's folk festivals have historical roots and are shaped by regional traditions. The most popular events attract hundreds of thousands of visitors year after year – and not just the world-famous Oktoberfest in Munich. 16 of the most popular beer and music festivals in Bavaria:

bavaria.travel/festivals

Watch our film on YouTube:

► tinyurl.com/Schwuhplattler



Bavarian Chefs

Bavaria is home to a large number of excellent, creative chefs who conjure up great things from local produce – ranging from alpine soul food to modern pub grub, from “nose-to-tail” game cuisine to radically sustainable creations. *We take a closer look at the pots and plates.*

1

Nina Meyer prepares crazy and unusual dishes. We meet the chef in her hometown of Balderschwang. With 400 inhabitants, it's one of the smallest communities in Bavaria. If you open your window at night, all you can hear is silence and the occasional cowbell from the fields.

After graduating from the Hotel Management School in Bludenz and plying her trade in restaurants with toques and stars, Nina returned to the kitchen of “Ifenblick”, an organic mountain hotel run as a family business. Her creations mark a turning point: *Kässpätzle* with miso onions and baked apple, glazed aubergines in a marinade of sugar beet syrup, mirin and soy sauce, steamed dumplings on apricot compote with pulled goat. But: “The ingredients aren't just thrown together to make a dish seem daring. Everything is perfectly matched”.

1

Nina Meyer

Inspirational hikes on the Balderschwanger Höhenweg trail

2

Organic cuisine with wow factor

The Allgäu meets the Far East

Nina enjoys working with both guests and suppliers. She gets a calf from organic farmer Tobias Ruppaner every four weeks and red cabbage, chard, courgettes and much more from Pia Kessler. Stefan Pfefferle personally delivers the meat of the red deer he has just hunted.

2



② Radically Sustainable: *Felix Schneider* from “Etz”

Felix Schneider has been awarded two Michelin stars for his regional, sustainable and mindful cuisine. “Everything we need grows in Nuremberg’s Knoblauchsland”, the top chef explains during our visit as he shovels earth mixed with worms onto the compost heap in his 3,000-square-metre vegetable garden near Nuremberg. Felix squints in the sun and smiles: “I want to know everything about my ingredients. To do that, I have to garden myself. What does a beet or a pea need to develop its full flavour? How crisp

can romaine lettuce be? What power is in wild dill?”. These are the questions on Felix’s mind. He needs the vegetables for his restaurant, “Etz”, which he opened in Nuremberg with chefs Stefan Frank and Thomas Prosiegel.

“Etz” is Franconian for “now”. It’s a very fitting name, as the restaurant doesn’t work with any ingredients from yesterday or the day before. Vegetables, herbs, milk, fish and meat don’t undergo any lengthy journeys that might cause them to lose their flavour and nutrients. “Etz” means accepting the region and its seasons as they are.

To ensure that there are plenty of good things to eat in winter, the ingredients have to be fermented, dried, boiled and salted in spring, summer and autumn. It’s amazing how well Felix and his team succeed in capturing the feeling of sun, rain and wind in jars and barrels.



1 + 2
Felix Schneider
Holds two Michelin stars and focuses on regional, sustainable and mindful cuisine in his “Etz” restaurant



3 Fine Local Delicacies: *Stefan Fuß*

Stefan Fuß is a chef who consistently banks on regionally sustainable cuisine – with a network of local producers – to develop innovative products and recipes. How about a combination of venison and salsify or quail with apple and Jerusalem artichoke? Or would you prefer kohlrabi with carp – the belly prepared as tartare, the back crispy, and caviar to boot?

“When guests come from abroad, they should get to know our local cuisine, such as classic roast pork”, says the landlord of the “Goldener Stern” inn in Rohrbach near Augsburg. “But I also enjoy changing things



up. Developing new dishes fulfils me”. This approach is best expressed in his “Pig Wings”.

What sounds like fast food is intriguingly slow; the chef brines the inside of the pork knuckle, cooks it for ten hours at 80°C, marinates it with homemade soy sauce and finally bakes it as tempura. It’s served with freshly grated horseradish and homemade kimchi. A revolutionary reinterpretation of the classic Bavarian pub grub.

“I want to present Bavarian cuisine in a lighter, more modern and refined way”, he says. He calls it “fine, homely cuisine”. Some producers supply him exclusively with unusual ingredients: “A gardener grows special vegetables for us, such as salsify. This is a wonderfully nutty-tasting forerunner of the black salsify”.

3 + 4 “Golden Star” in Rohrbach

The desserts are also regional and sustainable

5 Chef and host Stefan Fuß “I grew up as a tavern boy”.





1

Valentin Rottner

Cooks sustainably and uses even the bones, kidneys and spleen of deer he hunts himself

2

Gasthaus Rottner

A destination for generations of game lovers visiting Nuremberg

4 **Valentin Rottner: the Hunting Chef**



Critics describe Valentin's creations as "young" and "puristic" with "intense flavours"; they've been awarded a star by the "MICHELIN Guide". "That recognises the good work we do as a team. Of course, I was delighted that it happened so quickly", says Valentin.

As a young boy, his grandfather took him hunting. This laid the foundations for the "Waidwerk". "Being alone in the forest, surrounded by nature – hunting is my haven of peace, but also my inspiration", beams Valentin. "While hunting, I think about cooking. And that often gives me exciting ideas and new recipes".

Valentin values game not only for the hunting tradition: "We work sustainably, for example, by using more than just the coveted saddle of venison. We make an essence from the bones, and the kidneys, liver and spleen are also processed. Hunting and butchering makes me appreciate the end product even more".

The Rottners grow many ingredients in their own garden: herbs such as nasturtiums and lemongrass, as well as horseradish, tomatoes and even Jerusalem artichokes. Valentin also brings all sorts of things back from his walks in the forest. "I keep my eyes open and collect things. The wild herbs go into our meals, and we prepare our starters on the moss we gather".



**3
Hunter-gatherer**

"I keep my eyes open. The wild herbs go into our meals, and we prepare our starters on the moss we gather".

**4
Wild and tender**

For "venison, carrot, blackberry and spruce", the meat is pre-cooked at a low temperature

**5
Valentin Rottner**

"While hunting, I think about cooking. And that often gives me exciting ideas and new recipes".

5 *Alexander Huber:* Haute Home Cooking

Alexander Huber has transformed his parents' traditional inn, the "Huberwirt", into a top gastronomic address. Since 2014, he's earned a Michelin star there every year. The hilly area around the small town of Pleiskirchen has retained its natural beauty.

For many years, Alexander worked in renowned gourmet restaurants such as the "Bareiss" in Baiersbronn and the "Tantris" in Munich. In 2005, he took over the restaurant, which has been in the hands of the Huber family for 400 years. Even then, the home cooking at the "Huberwirt" was known far beyond the borders of the village.

Alexander challenged the home-style concept and helped haute cuisine find its way into the inn. His menus include delicacies such as Danube salmon, blue shrimp tartare, saddle of veal, pikeperch and pork belly. But the "Huberwirt" isn't your typical

gourmet temple. Instead of relying on a wealthy clientele alone, the Hubers offer the best of both worlds: award-winning gourmet cuisine and traditional pub grub. Two separate menus, but one and the same dining room.

Admittedly, the inn classics are also of the highest quality. But they're affordable for the average person from Pleiskirchen and beyond. That's why his audience is so wonderfully diverse. And both sides like it. It's wonderfully relaxed at the "Huberwirt" in the village of Pleiskirchen. ■



1



2

1

Alexander in his kitchen

The "Huberwirt" restaurant has been in the Huber family for 400 years

2

Genuine tradition

Eleventh-generation chef and a refiner of heritage and customs



♥ *Four Hearty* ● *Inn Classics*

Savour some regional delights. The versatile Franconian bratwurst, tradition-rich carp from eastern Bavaria, iconic Upper Bavarian Weisswurst, and comforting Allgäuer Kässpätzlen

Bratwurst

The bratwurst is also distinctive. It varies in size and spices from town to town and from region to region. It's sold "coarse" in some places and "fine" in others; sometimes it's pure pork, sometimes a combination of pork and beef or veal. The Ansbach bratwurst was first documented in 1430, making it even older than the Bavarian Beer Purity Law. You can order it raw, smoked or fried. What makes the Ansbach bratwurst different to Nuremberg's "Drei im Weggla", which consists of three Nuremberg sausages inside of a roll? The sausages are coarser and bigger.

Carp

With a carp farming tradition dating back over 1,200 years, the cultural landscape around Neustadt has over 5,000 farmed carp ponds. The annual fish harvest is primarily served in local inns from September to April. The geographic and climatic conditions in the Upper Palatinate pool region are also good, and a deliberately sparing, natural feeding system enhances the quality of

the local carp. The slow growth period guarantees fish with lean, firm flesh, which is not only easier to digest but also rich in valuable proteins and unsaturated fatty acids.

Weisswurst

"Weisswurst" sausages (made from veal meat) are the culinary icon of the whole Upper Bavaria region and are often served well before lunchtime. The filling must contain at least 51% veal. "Zuzeln" is an art form in itself – only beginners slice the sausage. Sweet mustard, a crispy pretzel and a traditional wheat beer are all part of the act. There are many rules and rituals surrounding the "Weisswurst" – all the way from preparation to consumption. Legend has it that the "Weisswurst" was invented on 22 February 1857 in the Munich inn "Zum Ewigen Licht" when the innkeeper-butcher Josef Moser ran out of tender sheep intestines for his popular sausages on Shrove Sunday of all days.

Allgäuer Kässpätzlen

A traditional dish from the Allgäu region. This hearty meal features soft egg noodles, known as Spätzle, layered with rich, melted cheese, typically Emmentaler or Bergkäse, giving it a creamy texture and savoury flavour. Often topped with crispy fried onions, it's a comforting dish enjoyed in local taverns. Kässpätzlen is loved for its simplicity and comforting taste, embodying the essence of alpine cuisine. Nutmeg and chives are sometimes added to refine the flavour.

Bucket List Bavarian Mountain Villages

Geranium-adorned houses, cosy hotels, inns and guesthouses. A church and tavern in the middle of it all. Lots of alpine culture, traditional costumes and brass bands. *These six alpine villages are easy to reach by train or bus and are ideal starting points for mountaineering and outdoor activities.*



1

Kreuth

Kreuth, south of Lake Tegernsee, has just under 4,000 inhabitants and was first documented in 1184. It lies at 800 metres in the Weissach Valley, one of the most important landscapes on the northern edge of the Alps.

The village is surrounded by the Tegernsee and Mangfall mountains. It's been a "climatic health resort" since 1971. The nearby Wildbad Kreuth, a classicist building with a sulphur spring, was used as a spa until 1973. Kreuth is officially a "mountaineering village", which means taking a sustainable approach to scenic and cultural heritage. Hikers, mountaineers, climbers and mountain bikers can enjoy flower fields and floodplains, gentle mountain slopes, challenging peaks and spectacular rock faces. The highest peak is the Halserspitz at 1,862 metres. Other peaks include the Hirschberg (1,668 m), Risserkogel (1,826 m), Rossstein (1,698 m) and Buchstein (1,701 m). There are also alpine club huts offering a range of refreshments: Tegernseer Hütte (1,650 m), Gufferthütte (1,575 m) and Lenggrieser Hütte (1,338 m). The nearby Lake Tegernsee – with various recreational facilities – is well worth a visit. The four-day hut tour around the mountain village is a special experience!

Reachable by train and bus

2

Bayrischzell

Bayrischzell is a beautiful townscape that rose to prominence through the TV series "Spring" – and the quiet location without through traffic is not its only plus point.

The village with 2,000 inhabitants is situated at an altitude of 800 metres in the Mangfall Mountains in the district of Miesbach, in the foothills of the Leitzach Valley and at the northern exit of the Ursprung Valley, which leads all the way to Tyrol. You can also reach Bayrischzell directly by train from Munich. The Baroque village church offers a magnificent view of the Wendelstein, whose summit can be reached on foot or by cable car.

The Sudelfeldpass leads up to a beautiful and versatile ski resort. In the valley, a wide network of cross-country ski trails awaits skaters and classic skiers. Some of the most appealing hiking destinations include the beautifully situated mountain lakes of Soinsee and Spitzingsee, which also transforms into a ski resort in winter, as well as the Rotwand, the highest mountain in the area (1,884 m). Numerous alpine pastures and huts invite you to stop for a bite to eat.

In summer, the nearby Schliersee is a great place for swimming, stand-up paddling and boating – or you can freshen up in the village's own open-air alpine swimming pool. Gliders take off from the Geitau airfield and paragliders from Oberes Sudelfeld. You'll be intrigued to see so many villagers in traditional costume – the "Gebirgstrachten-Erhaltungsverein" is a local heritage association that was founded in Bayrischzell all the way back in 1883. The first of its kind in Bavaria!

Reachable by train





3

Lenggries

Lenggries lies at an altitude of just under 700 metres in the beautiful Isarwinkel south of Bad Tölz and not far from the Karwendel Mountains. The town's name is derived from "langer Gries", the huge gravel banks in the Isar riverbed. The Tegernsee Mountains rise to the east, while the western side of the townscape is dominated by the Brauneck, a well-known hiking and skiing area at an altitude of 1,555 metres.

The alpine landscape around Lenggries is a diverse ensemble of high moors, lush green meadows, forested mountains and rugged rock. There's a wide range of activities on offer – from the natural outdoor swimming pool to the bike park and the high ropes course. The nature around Lenggries is a hiker's paradise with numerous alpine pastures and mountain huts. The highest peak is the Schafreuter in the Karwendel at 2,106 metres. In the south lies the fjord-like Sylvenstein reservoir, where you can take a swim and enjoy some stand-up paddling, kayaking and more.

It's still common to see people wearing traditional costumes in Lenggries – especially at impressive festivals such as Corpus Christi or Leonhardi. These events always feature singing and brass music, which can also be experienced at weekly spa concerts. You can find out a lot of interesting facts about Lenggries in the local history museum outside the town hall.

Reachable by train

4

Wallgau

In the upper Isar Valley in Werdenfelser Land, 15 kilometres east of Garmisch-Partenkirchen, Wallgau lies at an altitude of 866 metres, surrounded by the Karwendel, Estergebirge and Wetterstein mountains. The village with around 1,400 inhabitants is steeped in 1,250 years of history. Rustic farmhouses and façades adorned with striking Lüftl paintings add a touch of Upper Bavarian charm.

Traditions are kept alive with many festivals, traditional costumes and Bavarian folk music – come and watch the locals erect the maypole, set up St. John's fire and drive their cattle down from the mountain pastures. Between Wallgau and the Sylvenstein reservoir, the Isar is a wild river that constantly changes its course to create a unique landscape. Walking and cycling routes lead to alpine pastures, lakes and peaks. An extensive network of hiking trails cross through untouched, original mountain landscapes.

We'd recommend the less challenging Magdalena Neuner Panorama Trail, which leads from the town hall to the Maxhütte mountain inn. You can learn about the successful biathlete's career and take in views of the magnificent mountain panorama. It's worth checking out Wallgau's local mountain, the small Krepelschrofen, and the beautiful old farmhouses in the foothills. There are also numerous lakes to visit in summer.

Reachable by train and bus





5

Grainau

Grainau is located to the south-west of Garmisch-Partenkirchen in the foothills of the Zugspitze massif, which towers over the local landscape at an altitude of almost 3,000 metres.

The municipality is 758 metres above sea level, providing an ideal base for hikers. The high alpine landscapes in the surrounding area – with forests, lakes and rock worlds – are cherished as the most spectacular hiking region in Bavaria. With mountain ranges such as the Karwendel, Estergebirge, Wetterstein and Ammergau Alps, the choice of tours is huge – ranging from family hikes to via ferrata. If you'd rather take it easy, you can make the ascent or descent on mountain railways – and alpine pastures and huts invite you to stop for a bite to eat.

You can't visit Grainau without checking out the Zugspitze. Alpinists go on foot, but you can also "make the climb" in the new cable car or the rack railway. The view from the Alpspiz platform on the Osterfelderkopf below the Zugspitze is simply breath-taking. In summer, the crystal-clear waters of Lake Eibsee are a great place to swim. The nearby Höllentalklamm Gorge is the perfect place for a refreshment. It can be reached from the eastern end of the village, and the Partnachklamm Gorge is just a few kilometres further on. In winter, you can enjoy a whole range of outdoor activities: ice skating, cross-country skiing, tobogganing, curling, ski tours, snowshoeing, winter hiking and alpine skiing. There are two great alpine ski resorts: Zugspitze and Garmisch Classic.

Reachable by train and bus

6

Oberammergau

The world-famous Passion Play village lies in the Ammer Valley in the Ammergau Alps Nature Park at an altitude of 800 metres.

It's easy to reach by train. Oberammergau is widely known for its Herrgottsschnitzer, woodcarvers who create works of art with Christian motifs, as well as house façades ornately decorated with Lüftl paintings, including those on the Mussldomahaus, Pilatushaus and Forsthaus. Baroque paintings depict Christian or everyday themes. The parish church of St. Peter and Paul is a fine example of southern German Baroque architecture.

Oberammergau is an ideal starting point for hikes of all difficulties and for cycle routes. The Kolben chairlift and the nostalgic Laberbergbahn take guests comfortably up to heights with captivating views! Other activities include archery in a forest course, kayak and canoe routes on the Ammer, fishing at Lake Soier and more. And if you'd like to get a taste of local culture, day trips will take you to the famous royal castles of Linderhof and Neuschwanstein and to the Wieskirche, a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Reachable by train



Hallelujah, Pale Lager!

Bavaria has many monasteries. Their location, the artistic treasures they hold and the beers brewed in some of them attract many visitors. We present five destinations worthy of a “beer pilgrimage”.

1

Irseer Klosterbräu: *a View of the Brewhouse*

The Benedictine Abbey in Irsee near Kaufbeuren in the Ostallgäu region was founded in 1185 and experienced its heyday in the 18th century. The unfiltered “Kloster-Urtrunk” is the signature beer of Irsee, with a “spicy, mild” taste. Other tasty varieties include the light and aromatic dark abbey beer, the amber-coloured abbey strong beer, the abbey wheat beer with a delicate yeast flavour, and the classic abbey lager.

irseer.com

2

Klosterbräuhaus Ursberg: *Bottom-Fermented Beer*

The Ursberg monastery between Augsburg and Memmingen is a former Premonstratensian imperial abbey. The Premonstratensian monks were brewing beer in the monastery as early as 1623. The present building of the brewery dates back to 1792. The brewery’s bottom-fermented specialties are: Ursberger Märzen, an amber beer with a very mild bitterness; a Pils, with a typical hoppy aroma; a Helles, a full-bodied beer with a pleasant hoppy bitterness; and a Dunkles, a full-bodied beer with a malty aroma and a fine head.

klosterbraeuhaus.de

3

Andechs: the Holy Mountain of Upper Bavaria

The onion dome of the Andechs pilgrimage church can be seen from miles around, presiding over Lake Ammer. Benedictine monks have been organising pilgrimages since 1455. The Andechs brewing tradition can probably be traced back to them. The monks brew their beers using the traditional multiple mashing method: light, dark, wheat beer – and the respective bock beer variant with a higher alcohol content...

andechs.de/en





4

Scheyern Abbey Brewery: *Solar-Powered Brewing*

This monastery was founded in 1077. The monks moved to Scheyern in 1119, where they are still brewing beer according to traditional methods.

The beers are not sterilised or heated to high temperatures. There's a wide range of beers: traditional varieties like Helles (light, mildly hopped), Dunkel (slightly bitter), Weissbier (unfiltered and naturally cloudy) and Schyren-gold (naturally cloudy country beer brewed using solar / renewable energy).

klosterbrauerei-scheyern.de

5

Kloster Kreuzberg: *Fresh from the Barrel*

Even in pre-Christian times, the Celts made pilgrimages to the Kreuzberg. Since the Middle Ages, the 900-metre peak in the Rhön Mountains has been visited by believers. A Franciscan monastery has stood just below it since 1692, and a brewery since 1731. The Franciscans are a mendicant order, so the monastery and the inn were separate. The monks even served their beer to pilgrims free of charge until 1920. The monastery beer is almost exclusively bottled in kegs. The secret to its quality lies in its own spring water, Rhön brewing salt, aromatic hops from the Hallertau region and a recipe that has remained unchanged to this day. All the beers are unfiltered: Dunkel, Pils, Helles Hefeweizen and the Christmas Bock beer ("only for experienced beer drinkers"!).

kloster-kreuzberg.de/brauerei

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