



Supported by:



Federal Ministry
for Economic Affairs
and Energy

Germany
Simply inspiring



on the basis of a decision
by the German Bundestag

www.germany.travel

Traditions and Customs in Destination Germany



TRUE OR FALSE?

How well do you know
Germany?

www.germany.travel/tradition



tradition

What comes to mind when you first think of Germany? Designer fashion or lederhosen? Cuckoo clocks or sports cars? Cutting-edge technology or traditional costumes? Oompah bands or pop culture?

In fact, Germany is all this and more: from the North Sea coast to the Alps, from the Lower Rhine to the Erzgebirge mountains, you'll come across time-honoured customs and vibrant traditions in the midst of a modern, cosmopolitan country. Some of these traditions are already famous around the world. Others are still waiting to be discovered.

Traditions and customs follow the seasons of the year: from carnival celebrations to banish the winter blues to harvest festivals in autumn, from our famous marksmen's festivals (that have long since been less about the shooting and more about the celebrating) to the magical Christmas season. They live on in the cities and are faithfully preserved in rural regions. The one thing that they all have in common is the way they bring people together with a life-affirming sense of happiness and hospitality.

On the following pages, you'll discover a small selection of our country's many vibrant customs, traditional arts and crafts, and culinary specialities – with one example of each from every federal state.

More traditions and customs can be found online at www.germany.travel/tradition. And you can experience them all on a trip to Germany.

Happy travelling,
The German National Tourist Board

CONTENTS

Introduction	4
Baden-Württemberg	6
Bavaria	10
Berlin	14
Brandenburg	18
Bremen	22
Hamburg	26
Hessen	30
Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania	34
Lower Saxony	38
North Rhine-Westphalia	42
Rhineland-Palatinate	46
Saarland	50
Saxony	54
Saxony-Anhalt	58
Schleswig-Holstein	62
Thuringia	66
Events	70
Information and addresses	71
Production credits	74

#JoinGermanTradition

TRUE OR FALSE?

How well do you think you know Germany and its traditions and customs?

Test yourself as you go along with our true or false questions.

The answers are available online.

Discover more about traditions and customs at

www.germany.travel/tradition



... and take part in them yourself:

#JoinGermanTradition



An introduction to Germany's traditions and customs

To give you a taste of what to expect when you arrive in Germany, our brochure highlights three different aspects: regional culinary specialities that are prepared using locally sourced, seasonal produce and make full use of nature's rich bounty. Living traditions that are showcased at festivals and cultural events, creating a sense of belonging, identity and community spirit. And last but not least, our country's arts and crafts – beautiful, innovative and often practical too, they attest to the exceptional quality of products that are 'made in Germany'.

If you visit a festival and stroll past the arts and crafts stalls or sample the regional food and drink, you'll see that traditions and customs are very much alive and well in Germany.



Culinary specialities



Living traditions



Arts and crafts



Baden-Württemberg: Making time for the good things in life.

Time moves at its own pace in Baden-Württemberg in southern Germany. The region's appeal lies not only in its vibrant towns and cities but in its glorious scenery and its fascinating history, which is deeply rooted in everyday life. You can go hiking through the Black Forest, relax by Lake Constance, drive away the winter with carnival revellers, listen to the cuckoos and discover the pleasures of a slower pace of life. In Baden-Württemberg, the birthplace of the automobile, you'll be given the warmest of welcomes – just one of many reasons to visit. www.germany.travel/tradition



Traditional Black Forest bollenhut



Cuckoo clock reloaded.
The Black Forest classic that moves with the times.

The cuckoo clock has been manufactured in the Black Forest for hundreds of years and has inspired all manner of designs – from the traditional to the whimsical. You can see some of these mechanical marvels at first hand in Schonach and Triberg, the two most famous cuckoo-clock towns. There are also plenty more to discover at the German Clock Museum and on the German Clock Route in the Black Forest.

'Holy Heimat Goldbones' – a modern take on the traditional cuckoo clock by Stefan Strumbel



The Swabian-Alemannic Fasnacht.
Carnival at its most colourful.

The new year has hardly begun when all kinds of flamboyant carnival figures take to the streets. It's hard to think of a better example of a living tradition than southern Germany's Swabian-Alemannic *fasnacht* carnival, which is celebrated in large parts of Baden-Württemberg. Unlike in the Rhineland, the 'fifth season of the year' doesn't normally start here until 6 January and then there's no holding back! There are weird and wonderful processions, hand-carved masks and offbeat music – a truly authentic experience you'll never forget.

Black Forest gâteau.
One of Germany's most famous exports.

Round, layered and laced with cherry schnapps. The Black Forest gâteau is Baden-Württemberg's most irresistible temptation. There are many myths surrounding its origin, but one thing is certain. This famous cake that took the world by storm is a product of Baden-Württemberg. And there's still no better place to enjoy it than in the region where it was first made over a century ago and where bakers have been refining it ever since.

TRUE OR FALSE?
Every Black Forest gâteau contains exactly 100 cherries.
www.germany.travel/tradition1



Bavaria. Expect the unexpected.

Bavaria is a region of contrasts: a place where time-honoured customs meet bold visions for the future. You'll discover spectacular peaks, alpine pastures and azure lakes, the urban buzz of the towns and cities and opportunities to relax amid stunning scenery. Glassblowers in the Bavarian Forest and brewers in Franconia present new interpretations of traditional crafts. Lose yourself in the magical fairytale world of Neuschwanstein Castle or pamper body and soul at stylish thermal baths. It's this unexpected mix of the traditional and the modern that makes Bavaria such a wonderful place to visit.

www.germany.travel/tradition

The 'Glass Forest' on the Glass Route



Glassmaking in Bavaria. Prepare to be dazzled.

In the town of Bodenmais in the Bavarian Forest, the tradition of blowing and painting glass dates back to the 15th century. But the 21st century has long since made its presence felt here. For example, at the stylish, modern studios where grown-ups and children alike can try their hand at this age-old craft. It won't just be the glass that twinkles – you're sure to have a twinkle in your eye too!



Bavarian beer. Brewing at its best.

It sounds so simple: water, malt, hops and yeast. The German Beer Purity Law of 1516 forbids anything else to be added – and that's still the case today. What the German brewers make from these four ingredients is nothing short of incredible: 40 varieties, each as refreshing as the next, and around 4,000 different brands. The only problem is knowing which to try first in the many thousands of pubs and beer gardens found throughout the region.



TRUE OR FALSE?

The German Beer Purity Law is the oldest food regulation in the world that is still in force today.

www.germany.travel/tradition2

Alpine cattle drive. A ceremonial return to the valley.

When summer draws to an end in Bavaria, the cows – and in some places the sheep and goats too – are driven down from mountain pastures to the valley together with their young. This is cause for a thanksgiving celebration. In keeping with this age-old tradition, cattle decorated with flowers and garlands lead their herds into the villages to the sound of the cowbells – a magnificent spectacle and a poignant symbol of the unity between man and nature.

Berlin. Tradition on trend.



At the Currywurst Museum

It was once said that Berlin is not so much a city as the world in miniature. A cosmopolitan capital at the heart of a continent, creative and exciting, and a magnet for millions. Berlin encapsulates everything that's good about modern Germany – it's open-minded, enlightened and friendly, vibrant, international and diverse. A creative and cultural destination that combines the old and the new, the traditional and the modern. But in this ever-evolving city, it's good to know there's one thing you can always rely on – that the *currywurst* is here to stay. Guaranteed. www.germany.travel/tradition



Carnival of Cultures

TRUE OR FALSE?
In Berlin, there is a museum devoted entirely to the *currywurst*.
www.germany.travel/tradition3



Some like it hot.
Culinary traditions in Berlin.

The *currywurst*. It's impossible to imagine the food scene in Berlin without it. For the most authentic *currywurst* be sure to visit Konnopke's Imbiss on Schönhauser Allee. Here, the sausages are served with or without their skins and in one of five curry sauces that range in spiciness from 'heavenly' (very mild) to 'hellish' (super hot) – just as they have done since 1930.

New Year's Eve at the Brandenburg Gate. Europe's biggest end-of-year party.

What a way to finish off the old year and welcome in the new. The New Year's Eve party at the Brandenburg Gate is attended by hundreds of thousands of people who come to enjoy the live music and entertainment along the festival mile. The champagne flows freely, and the celebrations just wouldn't be complete without the traditional *Berliner* – a jam-filled doughnut. Experience it once and you'll want to go back year after year!



Clärchens Ballhaus.
A popular rendezvous for over 100 years.

Clärchens Ballhaus is a cult venue in Berlin for dancing, partying and enjoying good food, and is as popular today as it was in the Roaring Twenties. This quirky ballroom regularly hosts dances, both modern and nostalgic, with live music by bands ranging from swing to brass. A unique feature are the telephones on the tables that make it easy for guests to flirt the old-fashioned way. Who knows, perhaps you will be the most sought-after dance partner of the night!

The idyllic Spree Forest

Brandenburg. Natural beauty and Prussian pomp.

Parts of Brandenburg are so different that it's sometimes hard to believe they belong to the same region. The capital is Potsdam, a magnificent Prussian city with splendid palaces, sprawling parks and exclusive residential areas. But not far from here is the Spree Forest, an oasis of peace and tranquillity. Dense woodland, sweeping meadows and fields of billowing crops are the hallmarks of this biosphere reserve, which is criss-crossed by a network of waterways. The Sorbs – a western Slavic minority – have lived here for centuries. And at the heart of the forest is the enchanting village of Lehde, where the post is still delivered by boat. www.germany.travel/tradition

Traditional Sorbian dress. A celebration of flowers and colours.

Elaborately embroidered head scarves, exquisite floral patterns and colourful skirts are the features of traditional dress in the Spree Forest. Centuries ago, the traditional Sorbian *tracht* was part of everyday life, but today it is reserved for festivals and special occasions. The Trachtenstickerei embroidery workshop in Burg is one of the best places to see these traditional dresses for yourself, which today's young designers are carefully trying to modernise.



Spree Forest gherkins. It's crunch time.


The prince of the pickles: Spree Forest gherkins make for a tasty, tangy snack at any time of day. On the Gherkin Cycle Route, which runs for approximately 260 kilometres, you can follow the whole production process from field to fork – and discover all the mouthwatering varieties. But not all the details will be revealed. Carefully guarded family recipes hold the secrets to their distinctive flavour.



TRUE OR FALSE?
In the Spree Forest, post is delivered
by boat.
www.germany.travel/tradition4

Spree Forest punts. Craftsmanship on the water.

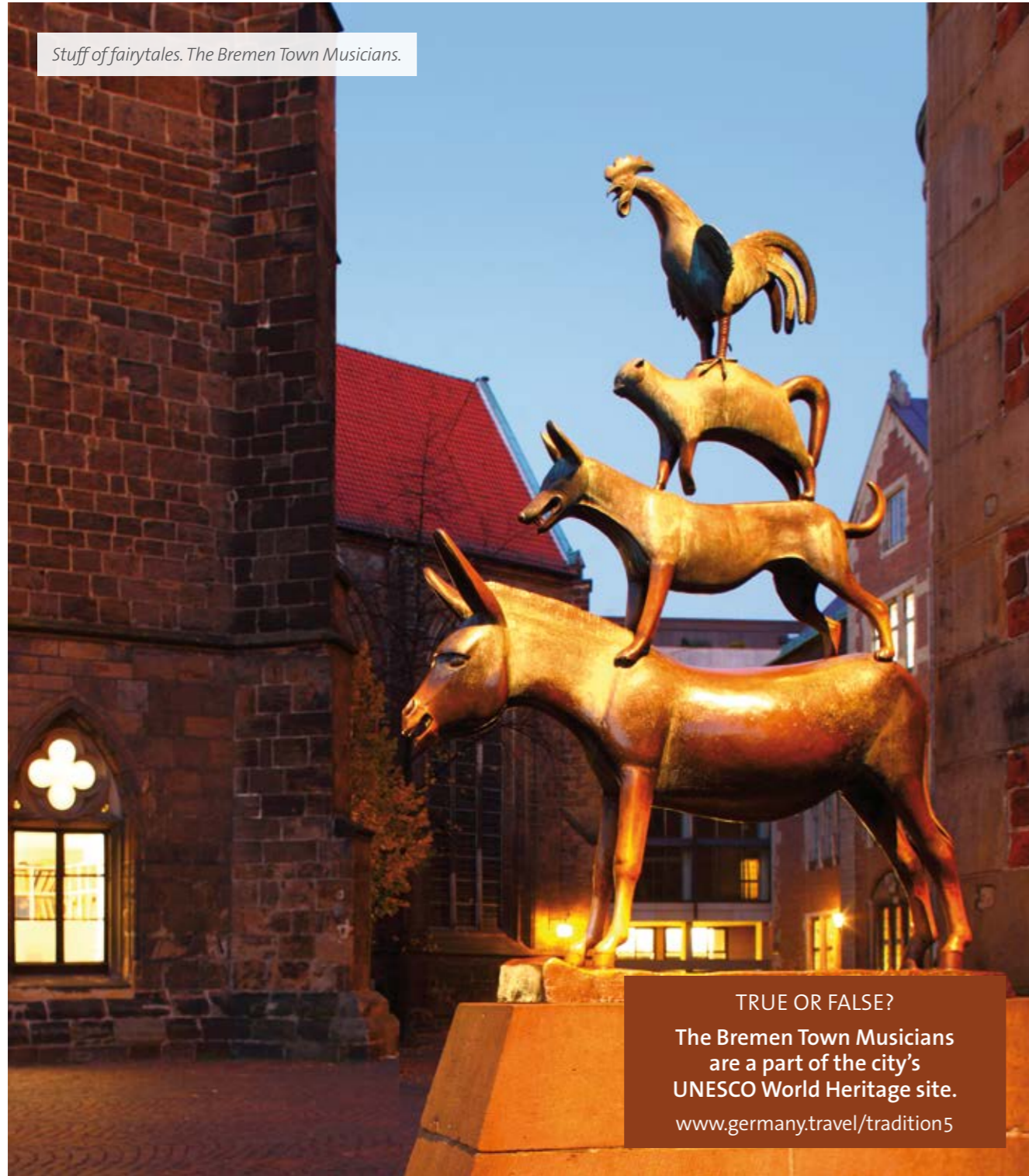
It takes an accomplished master builder around eight days to build one of the typical Spree Forest punts, which then last for 30 years. Without the skill of these craftsmen, who do demonstrations at the open-air museum in Lehde, it would not be possible to navigate the 1,500km labyrinth of waterways in the Spree Forest. A punting trip here is an absolute must, as is a canoeing trip. As soon as you climb aboard, you'll understand why.



Bremen.
Where the streets
and squares are
paved with history.

Tolerance and liberal values, which have endured over the centuries, are at the heart of life in Bremen. It's evident at every turn: Bremen is a great place to be. Preserving the past while breaking new ground – this is a principle that has served Bremen well during its 1,200-year history. The city's most famous landmarks are the majestic town hall and venerable Roland statue on the historical market square – and, of course, the Bremen Town Musicians from the Brothers Grimm fairytale. As you stroll around Bremen, you'll detect the aromas of fresh coffee, fragrant spices and locally brewed beer – the traditional traded goods of this Hanseatic city. Why not discover it for yourself? www.germany.travel/tradition

Stuff of fairytales. The Bremen Town Musicians.



TRUE OR FALSE?
The Bremen Town Musicians are a part of the city's UNESCO World Heritage site.
www.germany.travel/tradition5

Coffee from Bremen. Seduction in every sip.

The first coffee shop in the German-speaking countries opened in Bremen back in 1673. Since then, the city has been regarded as Germany's unofficial coffee capital. Half of all coffee that is drunk between the North Sea coast and the Alps originates here. A coffee always tastes best in the place where the beans have been roasted – but don't take our word for it. Come to Bremen and find out for yourself.



Shipbuilding, cars and aircraft. New horizons from the high seas to space.

It comes as no surprise to discover that Bremen has always been a leading centre for shipbuilding. But the city has pushed the boundaries of travel in other ways too. Bremen's commercial airport was the first to be built in Germany and the European module of the international space station was assembled here. And because the city is home to over 600 automotive suppliers, there's every chance that a piece of Bremen is under your bonnet.



The Bremen Freimarkt. The oldest funfair in the north.

The Bremen locals might not have a reputation for being party animals, but a visit to the annual Bremen Freimarkt will quickly convince you that these reserved northerners certainly know how to let their hair down. More than four million people come to enjoy the funfair entertainment, as well as the music and dancing in the streets, beer tents and pubs around the old quarter of Bremen. And that hasn't changed for almost a thousand years.

Hamburg. Germany's gateway to the world.

Hamburg, the proud port on the Elbe and the Alster, is considered one of Germany's most attractive cities, and deservedly so. The country's second-largest city offers visitors a winning combination: maritime heritage, art and culture of the highest calibre, fascinating museums, one of the finest ballet companies in the world, excellent restaurants, great shopping, lively nightlife and endless tourist attractions. From the warehouse district and the fish market to HafenCity and the Reeperbahn – every day there's something new to discover. Even though Hamburg is over 1,000 years old.

www.germany.travel/tradition

Port Anniversary



TRUE OR FALSE?
Hamburg's fish market is the
oldest in the world.
www.germany.travel/tradition6

Big wheel outside St. Michael's Church for the Port Anniversary

Hamburg Fish Market. For early birds and night owls.

Fresh fish and market banter: larger-than-life characters such as 'Eel Dieter' and all the other fishmongers and stallholders are reason enough to flock to the fish market on the banks of the Elbe on Sunday mornings at 6am. Bananas fly through the air, fish rolls and rollmop herrings are sold in their thousands, jazz and rock bands provide the music, and breakfast buffets can be enjoyed on the balconies.




Hamburg's Port Anniversary. Pushing the boat out.

Every year, at the world's biggest port festival, around 1.5 million people line the promenade between HafenCity and Hamburg's museum harbour to cheer on literally hundreds of ships. The traditional regatta is mesmerizing, with the Queen Mary 2 particularly majestic, and the atmosphere is second to none. If you don't catch the travel bug here – or during the biennial Cruise Days festival – you never will.



Hamburg Maritime Museum. The world's biggest private collection of nautical treasures.

Hamburg and seafaring go hand in hand. Nowhere is this more evident than on a visit to the International Maritime Museum in the Speicherstadt warehouse district – a must for anyone with a keen interest in the sea and in life on the ocean waves. You'll meet explorers, conquerors and pirates as you embark on a journey through 3,000 years of human history.

A charcoal burner in a forest. The burner is wearing a dark suit, a light-colored hat, and gloves. He is standing on a large pile of charcoal, holding a long wooden pole. The background is a dense forest with sunlight filtering through the trees, creating a hazy, atmospheric effect.

Hessen. A modern take on the good old days.

Hessen effortlessly combines modern life with the good old days. On the one hand, there is Frankfurt, an international centre of finance with a spectacular skyline, or the space centre in Darmstadt, and on the other, the fairytale world of the Brothers Grimm and the Bad Hersfeld Volksfest, the oldest fair in Germany. Take a step back in time by visiting Hessen's pretty medieval towns or the fascinating open-air museum at Hessenpark. Or savour the unspoilt charm of the Rheingau and Bergstrasse regions. Discover the many sides to Hessen – a warm welcome awaits. www.germany.travel/tradition

A charcoal burner at Hessenpark



**Frankfurt's green sauce.
Seventh heaven.**

Frankfurt's famous green sauce is made to a traditional recipe using seven herbs – no more, no less. This delicacy is usually served with boiled potatoes and hard-boiled eggs – and only from Maundy Thursday (known as 'Green Thursday' in German) through to the first autumn frost. How the people of Frankfurt manage to go without at other times is a mystery, but you can always ask one of them when you come to visit!

Apfelwein cider. The stuff of which dreams are made.

For more than 250 years, *apfelwein* cider has been Frankfurt's signature drink. It's best enjoyed in traditional inns, where friends and strangers sit close together on long benches and top up their special diamond-patterned *apfelwein* glasses from a grey-blue earthenware pitcher called a *bembel*. You'll recognise these *apfelweinlokale* by the spruce wreaths that hang above the door. Don't be afraid to step inside and join the locals – a warm welcome is always assured.



TRUE OR FALSE?

The Ebbelwei-Express exports Hessen's *apfelwein* cider throughout Europe.

www.germany.travel/tradition7

Hessenpark open-air museum. Time-honoured crafts brought to life.

The Hessenpark open-air museum in the Taunus hills offers an unmissable opportunity to experience time-honoured crafts at close quarters. In the extensive grounds you'll see historical half-timbered buildings from all parts of Hessen as well as long-forgotten breeds of domesticated animals. But the real highlights here are without doubt the live demonstrations of the region's traditional arts and crafts.





Mecklenburg-
Western Pomerania.
The romance of
the water.

Boats, seafaring and fishing have defined the land and locals here since time immemorial. With nearly 2,000 kilometres of coastline as well as 2,000 freshwater lakes, it's little wonder. Schwerin, Germany's smallest regional capital, prides itself on its seven lakes – and, of course, its spectacular castle. Swimming, sailing, windsurfing and canoeing are just as popular in Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania as walking or cycling. Amid beautiful harbours, brick Gothic architecture and the elegant buildings of the Baltic seaside resorts, you'll meet friendly locals who uphold many of their forefathers' traditions.

www.germany.travel/tradition

The Otto Lilienthal Museum. A homage to the Glider King.

Learn how humans got their wings at Anklam's Otto Lilienthal Museum, dedicated to the aviation pioneer who was born in the town. There are eight replicas of his bat-like flying machines on display, a hands-on experiment zone and the Dream of Flight exhibition featuring inspired aircraft of every kind. It will leave you wanting to take to the skies yourself!

TRUE OR FALSE?

Beach-chair racing is a popular sport on the Baltic coast.

www.germany.travel/tradition8



Störtebeker Festival. Germany's most beloved pirate takes centre stage.

A spectacular setting for a spectacular event: Ralswiek open-air theatre on Rügen island's Great Jasmund Lagoon comes into its own when it hosts the annual Störtebeker Festival – especially when the waterside stage is lit up by the fireworks that close each performance of the play. And if you find yourself secretly rooting for this erstwhile tyrant of the sea, don't worry, you're not alone!



Fresh fish. Catch of the day.

When the fishing boats head out to sea in the early hours, you can be sure that fresh fish will be on the menu by evening. Whether at home or in a restaurant, whether pan-fried, smoked, pickled or coated in beer batter, it always tastes exquisite. At the traditional herring festivals in spring, the fruits of the sea are not only eaten but celebrated in their own right. And if you believe the most delicious fish is the one you catch yourself, there are plenty of places in Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania where you can try your luck.



Parade at the Schützenfest fair in Hannover

Lower Saxony.
A procession of
beauty from the coast
to the mountains.

Lower Saxony is a region of captivating contrasts. It stretches from the North Sea coast and the UNESCO World Heritage *Wattenmeer* mudflats, across the beautiful Lüneburg Heath and all the way to the Harz, Germany's northernmost mountains. But it's not all natural beauty. Hannover, Braunschweig and Göttingen are among the cities that are well worth a visit. The long history of the individual parts of the region and the strong sense of local pride have given rise to a great number of culinary traditions and customs. These are still lovingly upheld today and there's nothing locals enjoy more than sharing them with guests. www.germany.travel/tradition

Blue printing. Dyeing fabrics the old-fashioned way.

Blue printing is a technique for dyeing linen and cotton textiles that is used to create decorative white patterns on a blue background. In the towns of Jever and Einbeck this time-honoured craft is still performed by hand just as it was 375 years ago. You can see this practice in action on fascinating guided tours – and stock up on new tablecloths or fabrics at the same time.



East Frisian tea and tradition. Warms the heart and the soul.

The traditional *teetied* tea ceremony is alive and well on the North Sea coast – and remains the typical north German way of welcoming a guest. The tea is served in a porcelain teapot, and a piece of rock sugar, known as a *kluntje*, is placed in the cup. When the tea is poured, the *kluntje* begins to crack, then a spoonful of cream is added. Sit back and enjoy – this tea ceremony is just as cosy as it sounds.

TRUE OR FALSE?

It is customary not to stir or shake
East Frisian tea.

www.germany.travel/tradition9



Schützenfest fair in Hannover. Raising smiles for centuries.

The *schützenfeste*, or 'markmen's fairs', are a big occasion in Germany and the biggest of them all has been taking place annually in Hannover for more than 500 years. For at least ten days, over 10,000 riflemen, dancers, jugglers, fairground rides and drinks stands transform the city's Schützenplatz square into one gigantic funfair. The highlight of the festival is the riflemen's parade – a twelve-kilometre-long procession through the city centre. It's an absolute must-see.



North Rhine-Westphalia. A new lease of life for former mines.

Traditional industries have all but disappeared – the sites left behind by coal mining and steel production are now filled with art, culture and smiling faces. There are plenty of opportunities to experience this for yourself. Whether at the former Zollverein mine or by the banks of the Rhine, at Cologne's carnival or on Münster's market square (arguably Germany's most beautiful), North Rhine-Westphalia is the ultimate land of discoveries. And it has the capacity to surprise you on a daily basis with its time-honoured customs and its fresh new ideas. www.germany.travel/tradition

The Zollverein mine



Cologne carnival. When the Rhineland city goes wild.

From the moment the mayor of Cologne hands power to a trio consisting of a prince, a peasant and a maiden, you know it's carnival time. The street carnival begins at 11.11am on the Thursday before Ash Wednesday. Offices and businesses close, and hordes of people stream into the city from the early morning onwards. Right up until Carnival Monday the merry mayhem knows no bounds. Why not join the celebrations?



Industrial heritage. Giving new meaning to heavy metal.

This was once the beating heart of German industry. The Ruhr valley and its people were forged by the hammering steelworks, the smoking chimneys and the vast collieries. What remains now are mighty monuments of industry where people go to enjoy cultural events and have fun. Discover a world of art hidden within a world of steel – and you might just discover something about yourself too.



Münster



Aachen Printen. The stuff of legends.

Tales of emperors, an almighty blaze and even the devil surround this baked treat. One thing's for certain. *Printen* is a gingerbread that can be hard or soft depending on how much honey is in the recipe. Whatever the texture, it always tastes heavenly, especially when topped with nuts, almonds or cherries. And because *printen* gingerbread keeps so well, it makes the perfect souvenir to take back home.

TRUE OR FALSE?

Aachen Printen gingerbread dates back to Napoleonic times.

www.germany.travel/tradition10

Rhineland-Palatinate. The good life on the Rhine and Moselle.

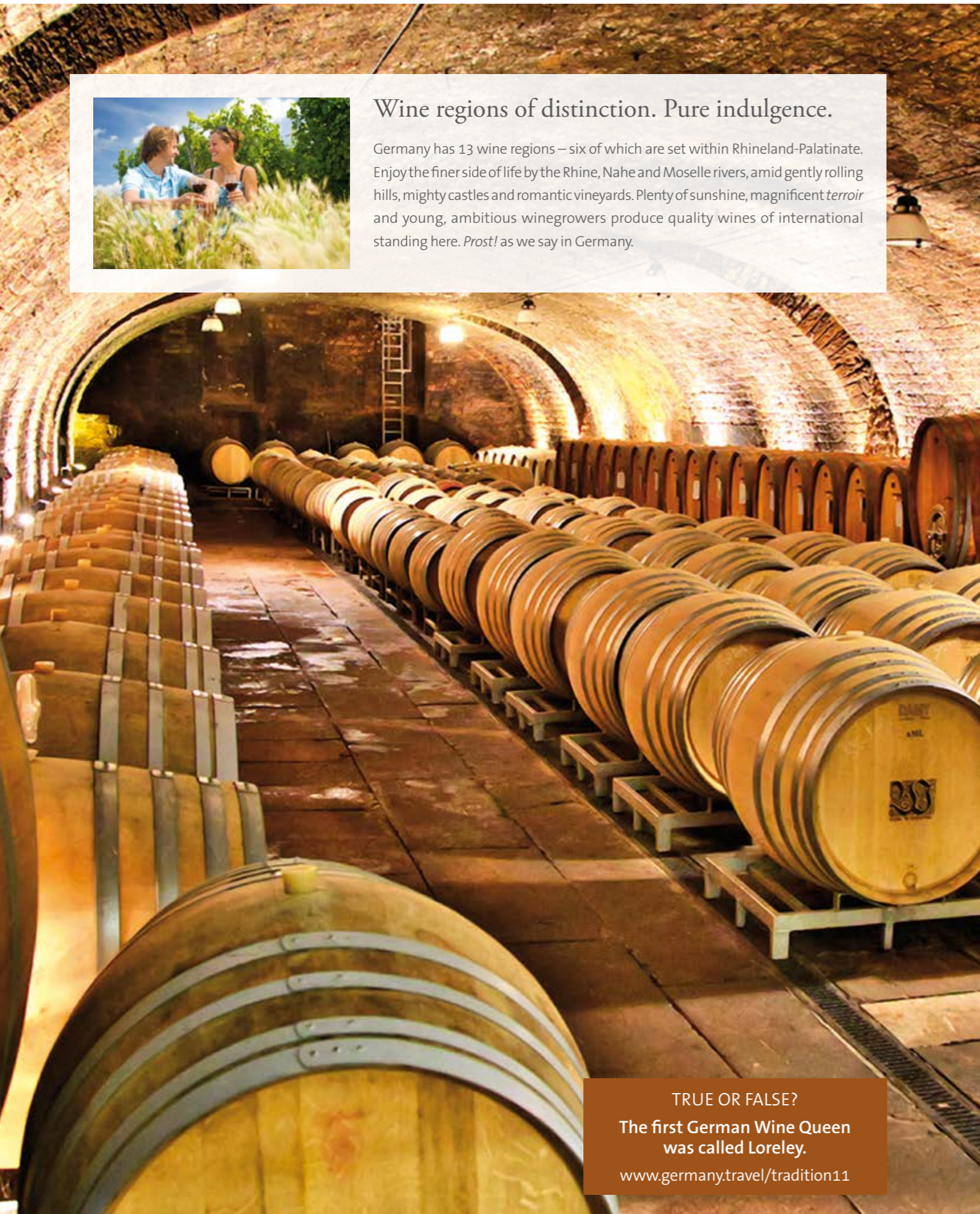
You only have to lose yourself in the views of the Rhine riverscape with its castles and palaces to realise that this scenery has hardly changed since Heinrich Heine penned his famous poem 'The Loreley' in the 19th century. Today, as in days gone by, visitors delight in the region's beauty and way of life. You'll be left awestruck in the picturesque Moselle Valley, on the German Wine Route through the Palatinate, in the hills of the Westerwald, Hunsrück and Eifel, and in the beautiful cities of Mainz, Koblenz and Trier. Or, to put it simply: all across Rhineland-Palatinate. www.germany.travel/tradition

The Rheinsteig trail in autumn



Wine regions of distinction. Pure indulgence.

Germany has 13 wine regions – six of which are set within Rhineland-Palatinate. Enjoy the finer side of life by the Rhine, Nahe and Moselle rivers, amid gently rolling hills, mighty castles and romantic vineyards. Plenty of sunshine, magnificent *terroir* and young, ambitious winegrowers produce quality wines of international standing here. *Prost!* as we say in Germany.

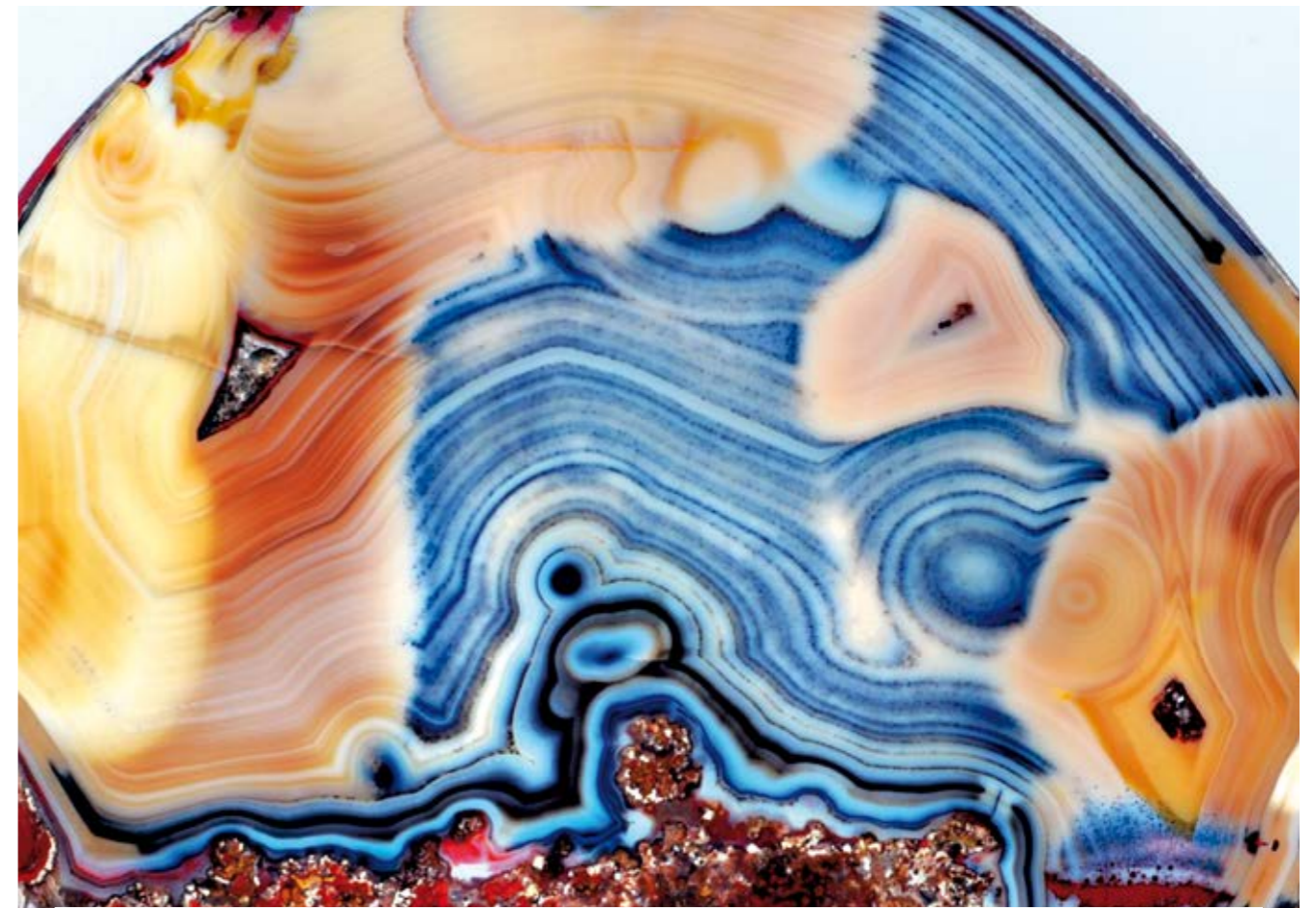


TRUE OR FALSE?
The first German Wine Queen
was called Loreley.
www.germany.travel/tradition11



Vintners' taverns. Of vine wreaths and wine.

The concept is simple. If you see a vine wreath hanging above the door of a winery, the vintner has opened up his tavern. At a certain time of year, the winemaker is permitted to open a bar serving the estate's wine. This custom, first introduced back in Charlemagne's time some twelve centuries ago, is as popular with locals as it is with tourists. And with good cause, as you'll soon discover.



Gemstones. Geological wonders 'made in Germany'.

Stones originating from the area around Idar-Oberstein and along the German Gemstone Route can be seen adorning the finest pieces in the windows of luxury jewellers the world over. Many of the region's talented gemstone artists and jewellery designers open their workshops to visitors. It's hard not to be enchanted by these glittering gems – after all, they say precious stones have magical powers.



Saarland:
A small region
that makes a big
impression.

Cream cheese balls

The Saarland, nestling between France, Luxembourg and Rhineland-Palatinate, may be small but it has a lot to offer. It has a relaxed approach to life and a distinctive cuisine – like no other in Europe – that is best enjoyed in its friendly restaurants. There are also lots of great places to visit: Saarbrücken, the UNESCO World Heritage Völklingen Ironworks and the Saar Bow are just three attractions you can reach via an exceptional network of footpaths and cycle trails. Safe to say, you'll be spoilt for choice everywhere you go and the Saarland will certainly capture your heart. www.germany.travel/tradition



Villeroy & Boch. World-famous ceramics on the Saar Bow.

What started out in 1748 as a small company in France is now one of the world's biggest ceramics manufacturers. And today, behind the baroque facade of a former Benedictine abbey, 260 years of the company's history are brought to life. The Keravision exhibition, a ceramics museum and a museum café dating back to 1892 piece together a family dynasty's story of success. It's a captivating tale that's well worth hearing.



Coal mining and industrial heritage. Relics of a golden age.

Mining in the Saarland came to an end in 2012. But its memory lives on, with a number of attractions and associations working to safeguard an extraordinary legacy. These include the Das Erbe exhibition at the Erlebnisort Reden discovery park, the Saarland Mining Museum and Velsen visitor mine. Take a trip underground for an experience to remember and for a sense of what hard labour really meant for the miners.



TRUE OR FALSE?
Many restaurants in the Saarland
can only be reached on foot.
www.germany.travel/tradition12

Culinary walking trails in the Saarland



The taste of the Saarland. Where good food matters.

Eating well is something the people of the Saarland take very seriously. Whether it's simple, honest home-cooking or innovative culinary creations, the key ingredient is top-quality local produce. It's no wonder the region has the highest number of Michelin stars per inhabitant. And there's even a gourmet marathon that combines sport and fine cuisine. That tells you all you need to know about the Saarland.



Saxony.
Worldly beauty
and heavenly
culture.

There's no finer city in Saxony than Dresden, the 'Florence on the Elbe' and once a royal seat. Visitors arrive in their droves to discover its charms and enjoy its picturesque location. Exquisite arts and crafts are as prevalent here as in Meissen, home of the famous porcelain, or in the towns of the Erzgebirge mountains with their handmade wooden ornaments. No matter where your journey takes you in Saxony, you'll get a sense of the region's 1,000-year cultural history every step of the way – thanks in large part to the many ancient customs practised here. And only here. www.germany.travel/tradition

Erzgebirge woodcrafts. Works of art in miniature.

The Erzgebirge mountains are home to a unique craft: incense burners, nutcrackers, Christmas pyramids, Christmas tree decorations and angels of every shape and size are handcrafted ambassadors of an art form that has endured over the centuries, and which appeals to people the world over, especially during the festive season. Just another reason to get excited about Christmas.



Easter with the Sorbs. A small minority with a big sense of tradition.

The small Slavic population of Sorbs continue to make their mark on Upper Lusatia through their culture, customs and way of life – especially at Easter time. Right at the beginning of the year, work starts on decorating the ornamental eggs, which you can then browse or buy at the many Easter markets. Each one is a miniature work of art, unique in design and lovingly crafted. You'll simply love Easter done the Sorbian way.



Christstollen cake from Dresden. Let Christmas begin.

The Dresden *Christstollen*: over 500 years old, but still in demand. First documented in 1474, this festive fruit cake remains a firm Christmas favourite. 130 bakers and patissiers in the Dresden area are certified to produce authentic *Christstollen*. The *stollen* lends its other name, *striezel*, to Germany's oldest and some say most beautiful Christmas market, the *Striezelmarkt*.



TRUE OR FALSE?
The ingredients of the Dresden
stollen are a closely guarded secret.
www.germany.travel/tradition13



Saxony-Anhalt.
Luther, Handel
and dancing
witches.

Seven thousand years of human history make a trip to Saxony-Anhalt a thrilling journey through the ages. Among its highlights are the regional capital Magdeburg, the beautiful Romanesque Route and no fewer than four UNESCO World Heritage sites. Events such as the Reformation Festival in Lutherstadt Wittenberg and the Handel Theatre Festival in Halle are firm fixtures in a packed calendar of cultural events. Culture takes an unusual twist for Walpurgis Night in the Harz mountains – a satisfyingly spooky high point of the year. And your best opportunity to come face to face with real witches.

www.germany.travel/tradition

'The fair witch Wadelinde' at the witches' dancing ground in Bode gorge



Halloren Kugeln. Sweet dreams are made of these.

In 1804 Friedrich August Miethe opened a small patisserie and gingerbread bakery in Halle/Saale. This would go on to become the Halloren chocolate factory, which has been producing the irresistible Halloren Kugeln chocolate balls since 1952. Halloren Kugeln aficionados start by nibbling the chocolate shell until they find the point where the dark of the chocolate meets the white of the cream. Which half should you eat first? Well, that's entirely up to you.



Salt of the earth. The essence of life since 1491.

In the late Middle Ages, the saltworkers of the saline-rich city of Halle, who were also known as the Hallors, joined together to form a tightly-knit brotherhood. Today, its members still preserve the history and traditions of their forefathers, producing salt the old-fashioned way at the saltworks and salt-panning museum, where they're happy to let visitors watch them at work.



Walpurgis Night. Bewitching behaviour.

On the night of 30 April, Walpurgis celebrations all over the Harz region last into the early hours. This tradition dates back around 1,000 years, and sees the Harz transformed into a bubbling cauldron of activity. It is the night of all nights, when witches, demons and other mythical creatures cast a spell on some 100,000 visitors. But fear not. The spooky characters are always gone by morning.



TRUE OR FALSE?
Halloren Kugeln are sprinkled with salt before they're eaten.
www.germany.travel/tradition14

Ferropolis – a vision from the past and the setting for a music festival amid 7,000 tonnes of industrial history

A time-honoured classic: eiergrog

Schleswig-Holstein. Beside the sea.

Schleswig-Holstein – hardened mariners, grand sailing ships and a yearning to explore endless seas. Feel the north wind rushing through your hair. The *Wattenmeer* mudflats, Kiel Canal and fish aplenty are the hallmarks of this beautiful region. It is also famed for Kiel Week regatta, the biggest public festival in northern Europe, and for Lübeck with its UNESCO-listed old quarter. And not forgetting the regional fare, from savoury to sweet, which is just as unique as the locals, if not more so. www.germany.travel/tradition



Lübeck marzipan. Sweet temptation of the north.

Nowhere is Schleswig-Holstein's sweet tooth more apparent than in Lübeck, home of the world-famous Lübeck marzipan. Once the preserve of the wealthy and the powerful, the marzipan is still largely produced by hand. The finished articles are available to taste and buy from traditional marzipan-makers such as Mest and Niederegger. Give in to the temptation of this time-honoured confection. Resistance is futile.

TRUE OR FALSE?

Marzipan was invented in Lübeck.
www.germany.travel/tradition15

Lübeck's Holsten Gate



The Biike bonfires. A mystic tradition from ancient times.

All of North Frisia flickers and glows when the *Biike* bonfires are lit along the coast and on the North Frisian and Hallig islands. The beacons are always lit on 21 February to drive out the winter. In earlier times they were also used to bid farewell to the whaling ships. Today, the *biike* warm the hearts and souls of visitors – as does the hearty feast of curly kale that is often served afterwards.



Ceramics in Kellinghusen. New form to an old craft.

Throughout the ages, the special light in Schleswig-Holstein has been an inspiration as well as a motif for artists. This is particularly evident in the ceramics town of Kellinghusen. A whole host of studios and workshops, as well as the Faience and Ceramics Museum, give insight into a unique world that unites the creative, the modern and the traditional.

Wet feet are a must in Schleswig-Holstein: walking on the mudflats



The image shows three tall, decorative staves of onions and flowers, known as 'Onion Staves', standing in a row. Each staff is made of a bundle of onions tied together with a decorative wreath of flowers and greenery. The onions are arranged in a vertical line, and the flowers are interspersed between them. The staves are set against a background of a white building with windows and trees with yellow autumn leaves. The sky is blue.

Thuringia.
Great poets,
great food and
a great history.

Weimar, Jena, Erfurt and Eisenach all play a big part in Germany's intellectual and cultural history – upholding great traditions whilst remaining vibrant places that are firmly rooted in the here and now. It's the same all across Thuringia, which has more to offer than just towns and cities. Once impregnable castles and romantic palaces stand atop almost every hill. A total 16,000 kilometres of walking trails and 1,700 kilometres of long-distance cycle paths are an ideal way to get to know the region and its people. Thuringia's heritage is not merely confined to the history books, but is alive and well today.

www.germany.travel/tradition

The Onion Fair in Weimar



Weimar's Onion Fair. Thuringia's biggest festival.

Every year on the second weekend in October, Weimar shows its playful side at the Onion Fair, which dates back to 1653. The event attracts over 300,000 visitors to the old quarter, and there's no escaping the onions – whether in braids, floral arrangements, soups or flans. Some 600 stalls and numerous stages await, and if you're lucky you might even meet the Onion Fair Queen.



Erfurt cathedral



Tree decorations from Lauscha. For a perfectly rounded Christmas.

Christmas in Thuringia is an especially festive affair. It's also where Christmas baubles originated. Baubles came into existence in around 1850 when glassblowers in the small town of Lauscha started producing beaded garlands and other decorations. At today's glass workshops you can watch artisans at work and also do some shopping. Because in Lauscha, it's never too early to start thinking about Christmas!

TRUE OR FALSE?

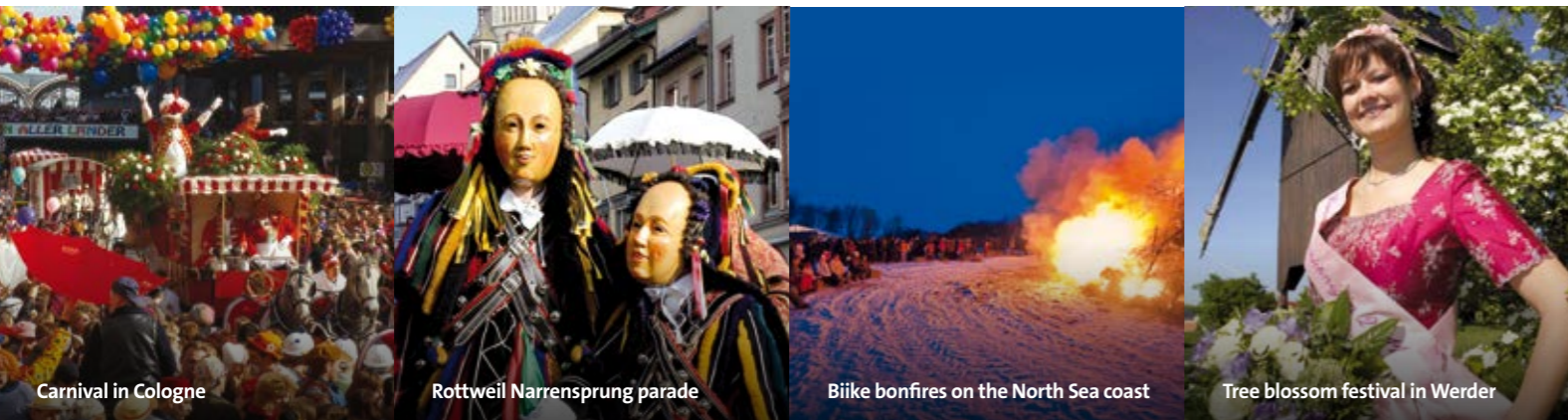
Even the great poet Goethe was partial to a Thuringian *bratwurst*.

www.germany.travel/tradition16



The Thuringian bratwurst. The original and the best.

The recipe for Thuringian *bratwurst* sausages is over 600 years old, yet the finer details are known only to Thuringian butchers. All we know is that they have to be 20cm long, weigh around 150g and be cooked over hot charcoal. It's also no secret that they taste best with authentic Thuringian mustard. To find out more, head to Germany's first *bratwurst* museum, located in Holzhausen near Arnstadt.



Celebrate, experience, enjoy

Get involved and be part of Germany's traditions and customs. For listings of all traditional events and festivals visit www.germany.travel/tradition/events.



Traditions and Customs 365 days a year

You can experience traditions and customs every day at a range of attractions up and down Germany. The websites below and on the following pages provide further information on the traditions featured in this brochure.

You'll also find over 100 articles on culinary traditions, thriving customs and arts and crafts at www.germany.travel/tradition.

Baden-Württemberg Page 6



More information about the region
www.tourism-bw.com

Cuckoo clocks
www.deutsches-uhrenmuseum.de/en
www.deutsche-uhrenstrasse.de

The Swabian-Alemannic Fasnacht
www.rottweil.de

Black Forest gateau
www.tourismus-bw.de/Regionen/Schwarzwald

Bollenhut
www.gutach-schwarzwald.de

Bavaria Page 10



More information about the region
www.bavaria.by

Alpine cattle drive
www.bavaria.by/round-up-day-lively-custom-in-the-bavarian-alps

Glassware
en.bayerischer-wald.de/Culture/The-Magical-World-of-Glass

Beer
www.bayrisch-bier.de, www.germany.travel/tradition-bier

Berlin Page 14



More information about the region
www.visitberlin.com

Currywurst
www.currywurstmuseum.com/en

New Year's Eve at Brandenburg Gate
www.berliner-silvester.de

Clärchens Ballhaus
www.ballhaus.de/de

Brandenburg Page 18



More information about the region
www.brandenburg-tourism.com

Spree Forest boats
www.museum.kreis-osl.de
www.spreewald.de

Spree Forest gherkins
www.spreewald-info.de

Traditional Sorbian dress
<http://ziehdirwasan.blogspot.de>
www.trachtenstickerei.de

PRODUCTION CREDITS

Design and layout

M.A.D. Kommunikation, Offenbach
www.madkom.com

Printed by

Vogel Druck und Medienservice GmbH,
Höchberg, www.vogel-druck.de

Translation

LingServe Ltd.
www.lingserve.co.uk



PHOTO CREDITS

Cover page: Nieselt/Schwarzwald Tourismus; Imago; Tourismusverband Spreewald archive, GLC AG; Wendt & Kühn KG, S + M Rümmler; Dominik Ketz, Rheinland-Pfalz Tourismus GmbH; Christian Wyrwa; Weimar GmbH; TASH, Wandmacher; Freilichtmuseum Hessenpark, Sascha Erdmann; www.mediaserver-hamburg.de, Spahrbier; Tourismus Zentrale Saarland; Imago; Oliver Franke, Tourismus NRW e.V.; www.bayern.by, Volker Preusser; Imago; Imago

Inside cover: Getty

Introduction pages: p. 4 TASH/Jens König p. 5 München Tourismus, photo by Pierre Rouchaleon; Imago

Baden-Württemberg: p. 6/7 Getty p. 8 Nieselt/Schwarzwald Tourismus; Stumbel/Schwarzwald-Tourismus p. 9 TMBW_Mende; Stockfood

Bavaria: p. 10/11 Ralf Eisenreich, Regen p. 12 www.bayern.by p. 12/13 www.bayern.by, Volker Preusser p. 13 Imago

Berlin: p. 14/15 Imago p. 16 visitBerlin, Sarah Lindemann; visitBerlin, Koschel p. 17 visitBerlin, Scholvien; Imago

Brandenburg: p. 18/19 Fotolia p. 20 Imago p. 21 Fotolia; Tourismusverband Spreewald archive, GLC AG

Bremen: p. 22/23 Imago p. 24 GNTB, Torsten Krüger; Jonas Ginter, BTZ Bremer Touristik-Zentrale p. 25 Lloyd Caffee GmbH; Imago

Hamburg: p. 26/27 Imago p. 28 Imago; www.mediaserver-hamburg.de, Spahrbier p. 29 www.mediaserver-hamburg.de, Spahrbier; Hamburg Tourismus, Joerg Modrow

Hessen: p. 30/31 Freilichtmuseum Hessenpark, Sascha Erdmann p. 32 Imago; Tourismus+Congress GmbH Frankfurt am Main p. 33 Tourismus+Congress GmbH Frankfurt am Main; Imago; Freilichtmuseum Hessenpark, Michael Schick

Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania: p. 34/35 Imago p. 36 Tourismusverband Mecklenburg-Vorpommern p. 37 Imago; Störtebeker Festspiele GmbH & Co.KG, Jens Köhler; Imago; Imago

Lower Saxony: p. 38/39 Imago p. 40 Ostfriesland Tourismus GmbH; Imago p. 41 Hannover Marketing und Tourismus Gesellschaft, Christian Wyrwa

North Rhine-Westphalia: p. 42/43 Matthias Duschner, Stiftung Zollverein p. 44 Oliver Franke, Tourismus NRW e.V.; Imago; Oliver Franke, Tourismus NRW e.V. p. 45 Imago

Rhineland-Palatinate: p. 46/47 Dominik Ketz, Rheinland-Pfalz Tourismus GmbH p. 48 Dominik Ketz, Rheinland-Pfalz Tourismus GmbH; Holger Bernert, Rheinland-Pfalz Tourismus GmbH p. 49 Weinreich, Rheinland-Pfalz Tourismus GmbH; Weinreich, Rheinland-Pfalz Tourismus GmbH; Deutsches Mineralienmuseum Idar-Oberstein

Saarland: p. 50/51 Tourismus Zentrale Saarland p. 52 Imago; Tourismus Zentrale Saarland p. 53 Tourismus Zentrale Saarland; Imago; Weinreich, Tourismus Zentrale Saarland



Saxony: p. 54/55 Wendt & Kühn KG, S + M Rümmler p. 56 Imago; Imago p. 57 Imago; Imago

Saxony-Anhalt: p. 58/59 Imago p. 60 Imago; Imago p. 61 Bernd Kegel; Imago

Schleswig-Holstein: p. 62/63 TASH, Wandmacher p. 64 Imago; die LÜBECKER MUSEEN p. 65 Imago; Imago; Kur- und Tourismusservice Pellworm

Thuringia: p. 66/67 Weimar GmbH p. 68 Imago; Toma Babovic p. 69 Imago; Thoma Kees p. 70: GNTB, Rainer Kiedrowski; Stadt Rottweil, Dieter Müller; Kur- und Tourismusservice Pellworm; TMB-Fotoarchiv, Y. Maecke; www.mediaserver-hamburg.de, Spahrbier; Freilichtmuseum Hessenpark; Investitions- und Marketinggesellschaft Sachsen-Anhalt mbH, photo: Jürgen Blume; Störtebeker Festspiele GmbH & Co.KG, Jens Köhler; Hannover Marketing und Tourismus Gesellschaft; München Tourismus, Frank Bauer; Tourismus Zentrale Saarland GmbH; Rheinland-Pfalz Tourismus GmbH, Rolf Schädler; Weimar GmbH, Maik Schluck; BTZ Bremer Touristik-Zentrale; Landeshauptstadt Dresden, Amt für Wirtschaftsförderung/Sylvio Dittrich; visitBerlin, Wolfgang Scholvien

Inside back page: Corbis, Kare Design GmbH

<p>Published by:</p> <p>German National Tourist Board (GNTB)</p> <p>Beethovenstraße 69</p> <p>60325 Frankfurt/Main</p> <p>www.germany.travel</p>	<p>Supported by:</p>  <p>Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy</p> <p>on the basis of a decision by the German Bundestag</p>	<p>Germany The travel destination</p> 
---	--	--

*Come and visit
the original!*



#JoinGermanTradition

www.germany.travel/tradition



German National Tourist Board (GNTB)
Beethovenstrasse 69
60325 Frankfurt am Main

Tel.: +49 (0)69 974640
Fax: +49 (0)69 751903
info@germany.travel



www.germany.travel