

LAST MINUTE OFFER for German Christmas Market Tour: The German American Connection offers a wonderful escorted 10-day tours for a small exclusive group to Berlin and East Germany at Advent – Travel to the roots of German Christmas traditions and modern crafts & art!

Travel Date: November 27 – December 06, 2009 (ONLY 5 SPOTS LEFT)

If you sign-up last minute before Friday, Oct 30th – You get \$100 off the tour price!

Tour price: \$ 2,249 (ground package, double occupancy)

Discover the magic spirit of the Advent time, explore traditional and modern German handcraft & art and listen to the magnificent sounds of church music, choirs and organs. It's the perfect destination to explore German history, culture, classical music and arts – not to forget about all the fantastic shopping opportunities! The tours take you to Germany's inspiring capital **Berlin**, to the charming Royal Prussian city **Potsdam**, to artistic glass and porcelain manufacturers in the rural **Thuringian Forest**, to fine woodcraft manufacturers in the **Saxon Ore Mountain** region Erzgebirge, to Saxony's splendor in **Dresden**, to the centre of young art and design **Leipzig** and to Thuringia's medieval capital **Erfurt**. The Advent season in late November and December is also the perfect time to savor local culinary delights at family-run restaurants. We travel in a small group of 15 guests maximum in order to provide a flexible individual travel experience. Groups are escorted 24/7 by an English speaking guide. For single travelers we offer to connect you with other single travelers who are interested in sharing a twin-bed room in order to save the single supplement.

Itinerary & Registration at http://cultourinaria.com/Christmas_Markets.html or

http://www.thegermanamericanconnection.com/Christmas_Markets.html

Passion Play 2010 Oberammergau Tour to the roots of German Christian Culture:

The Passion Play in Oberammergau is performed only once every 10 years! It the oldest festival in Germany and the most famous passion play that is still performed today. Passion Plays reenact the suffering and Crucifixion of Christ as a form of devotion. The Passion Play depicts the last five days in the life of Jesus Christ, from Palm Sunday to Easter. Oberammergau, a picturesque village in the Bavarian Alps, has faithfully performed its passion play every ten years since 1633 in fulfillment of a vow. During the Thirty Years War, Oberammergau suffered a plague epidemic that killed nearly 100 villagers. The terrified survivors begged God to spare their town from further deaths, vowing to perform a passion play in their village every 10 years. The plague disappeared with no further deaths and the villagers of Oberammergau have faithfully kept their vow to the present day. In keeping with centuries-old tradition, Oberammergau's passion play is an **authentically local production**. It is performed entirely by amateur actors who are natives or who have been residents of Oberammergau for at least 20 years and who are of good moral standing in the community. The actors begin growing their long hair and beards (no wigs allowed!) beginning on Ash Wednesday the previous year. The world-famous costumes are made locally by residents and the performance includes live animals. New in 2010, the 5-hour Passion Play performance will have an evening session implementing lighting effects and torches.

In cooperation with the German Heritage Commission Fredericksburg (Texas), The German American Connection (TGAC) has created an unique and tailor-made ecumenical tour to the **Passion Play 2010** in Oberammergau, Germany – and to the roots of German and European Christian Culture. This exclusive small group tour with a maximum of 22 travelers takes you to impressive and inspiring sites of German Culture – Catholic pilgrimage sites, Protestant Reformation and Luther sites, UNESCO World Cultural Heritage sites and much more....

Travel date: **September 08 – 22, 2010 (15-day trip)**

Tour program: Leipzig – Luther town Eisleben – Cistercian Convent St. Mary's of Helfta – Feudal Castle Querfurt – Meissen – Dresden – Castle Leuchtenburg – Erfurt – Eisenach – Fortress Wartburg – Schmalkalden – Lauscha – Dinkelsbuehl – Munich – Altoetting – Wies Church – Oberammergau – Neuschwanstein / Murnau – Speyer – Heidelberg – Montabaur – Limburg an der Lahn – Frankfurt am Main.

Tour price: \$ 2,854 (ground package, double occupancy)

Detailed information and registration available online at www.tgac-us.com

Beer Brewing manufacture in the historic forester's lodge Templin in Brandenburg:

The "Braumanufaktur Forsthaus Templin" is located in the outskirts of Potsdam, close to Berlin. It combines so many attractive attributes, that every visitor is just excited and fascinated: an interesting forester's lodge history going back to 1756, a perfect location at a scenic lake with a nice shady beergarden, an impressive tradition of – organic – beer brewing, local delicious food, numerous events and, last but not least, great fresh seasonal beer! For homebrewers and beer enthusiasts, they offer brewseminars with the local brewmaster. For everyone else, there are many historic sites to discover nearby. The original house was built by a local fustian manufacturer in 1756. During the following two centuries the building was used as a lumbering manufacture, a tavern, a forester's lodge and a restaurant. In 2002 finally two dedicated brew masters purchased the property and established a brewpub and microbrewery. Their tasty unfiltered seasonal beers are brewed according to regional traditional recipes, using historic German brew knowledge and technology. The "Braumanufaktur" is the only brewery in the states Berlin and Brandenburg, which is brewing an organic beer Pilsener style. The "Potsdamer Stange" is refreshing wheat beer and a local specialty. They also brew a light and dark Bock beer, Lager and Weizenbier. But the unique in-house brand is the "Werdersches", named after the region – an amber-colored, palatable, malt-accentuated traditional beer. The "making of" will be revealed in special brewseminars. Or just enjoy the unique taste of those freshly brewed beers at lunch or dinner with local reasonable priced culinary specialties. It's only a stone's throw – or a ride on a ferry – away from the palaces, gardens, parks and many other historic sights in Potsdam. Right in the neighborhood you will find Albert Einstein's summer house in the scenic village Caputh. According to Einstein, Caputh was a place where "one could be lazy (sei ein gutes faules Tier) and not give a damn about the world (pfeif auf die Welt)".

<http://www.braumanufaktur.de/> (only in German available)

Cultural Beer Tour in cooperation with Bier-Mania! <http://www.bier-mania.com>

European Transromanica Route in the romantic Thuringia: In Thuringia, culture and tourism are closely connected. A very special facet in the broadly diverse cultural life here is certainly the Romanesque. About 100 historic buildings remain in Thuringia from an era that put its stamp on the common European identity. The state of Thuringia is part of the transnational project "Transromanica" – a cultural experience path through Europe. There are numerous Romanesque castles, chapels, monasteries, rural churches and many other beautiful architectural treasures waiting to be discovered by you. We can only pick a few highlights: Luther fortress and UNESCO World Heritage site "Wartburg" in Eisenach, Church of Our Lady "Liebfrauenkirche" in the "Johann Sebastian Bach town" Arnstadt, Monastery Church "St Peter and Paul" in

the Thuringian capital Erfurt and the Monastery ruin Paulinzella in Southern Thuringia. Along the Transromanica you will find so many fascinating historic, cultural – and culinary treasures combined with a scenic landscape and hidden but active witnesses of traditional German handcraft such as mustard mills, glass-blowing & porcelain manufactures, flour mills, chocolate manufacture, microbreweries and so on, that you could easily spend a few weeks only in the beautiful Thuringia.

<http://www.transromanica.com/>

Getting around in Germany – Driving a car: Germany has a great variety of “Scenic Routes” such as the “Avenues Route”, the “Castle Route” and the “Fairytale Route” as examples. Citizens of non-EU states with a valid driver's license may drive in Germany for the length of their stay up to six months. It is not usually necessary to carry an international driver's license, but recommended. The legal driving age in Germany is 18, though the age requirement for renting a car is often 21. Though speed limit signs aren't posted everywhere, that doesn't mean there aren't any. In cities and town, the speed limit is 50 km/h (31 mph), unless otherwise posted. On normal two-lane highways the limit is 100 km/h. Only freeways, or *Autobahnen*, have mostly a “suggested” speed of usually 130 km/h instead of a speed limit. Speeds of 160 to 200 km/h are common on some freeways. Be aware that at some sections there are also speed limits for the *Autobahn* – watch out for the signs! Germany has relatively strict car-seat laws. Children shorter than 150 centimeters (59 inches) or under the age of 12 are required to have a car-seat when riding in the car. Seat-belts are mandatory for both children and adults. You can find more detailed information about German road regulations (general information, speed limits, right of way, parking, traffic signs, gas stations) and about car rental in Germany here on our webpage:

http://www.thegermanamericanconnection.com/Individual_Traveler_Info.html

More news & travel tips:

<http://www.tgac-us.com>