

Deutschland UK Special 07

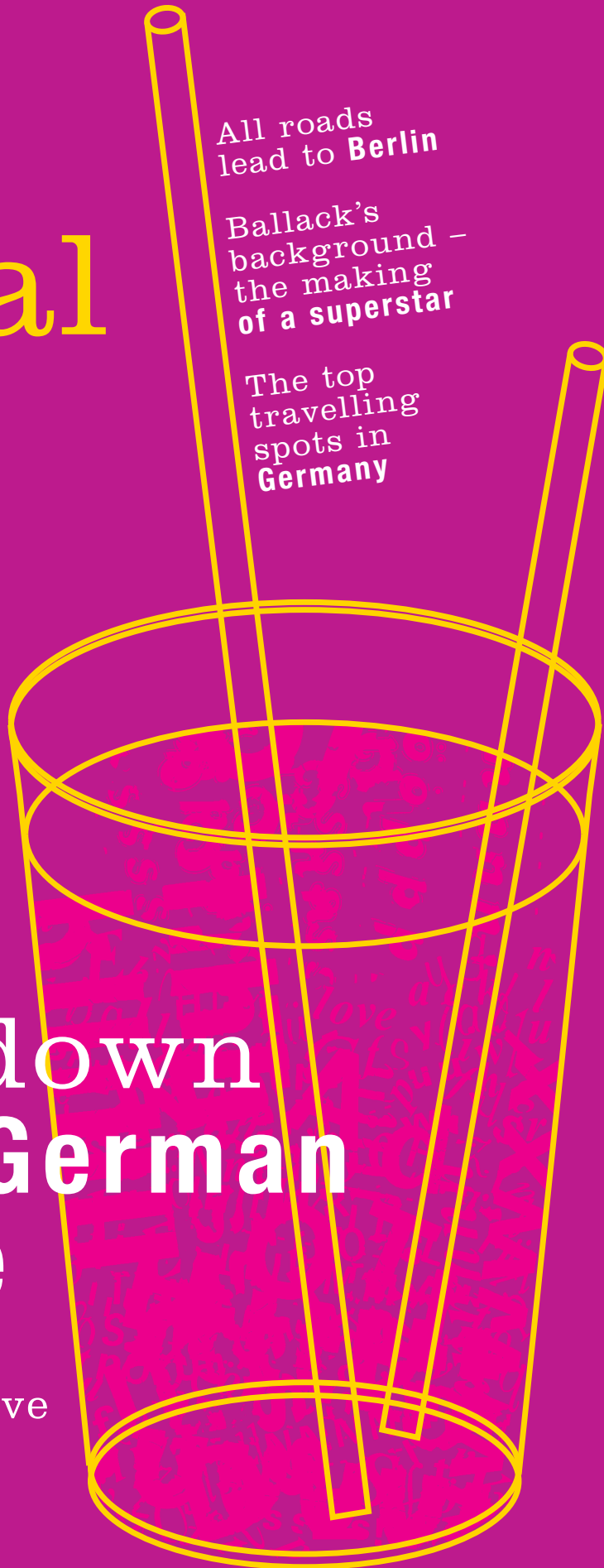
All roads
lead to **Berlin**

Ballack's
background –
the making
of a **superstar**

The top
travelling
spots in
Germany

Gulp down some **German** **Culture**

Confessions
of creative
minds in
London



★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★] 10 Reasons for Europe

What does the EU have to do with us? And why do we need it? The editors of the German weekly newspaper *Die Zeit* took a close look at these questions and came up with ten good reasons for Europe. You will find them listed throughout the magazine. Can you think of any other reasons? Then send us an email at: redaktion.deutschland@fsd.de

© 10 REASONS FOR EUROPE: DIE ZEIT 2007

Editorial

In 2006 our UK Special quite naturally focused on football. This year, in line with Germany's EU presidency, we focus on Europe. While to many Britons Europe may not seem as glamorous a topic as football, let me just make this very personal point: I was posted to London in 2006 as Germany's Ambassador to the UK, following my previous posting as German envoy to Washington. On arrival in London I immediately sensed that I had returned to Europe. I felt that I had arrived back home. Judging by the evidence of last year when many Britons came to Germany for the football, I am confident that many Britons do feel at ease in the same way when they visit other parts of *their* Europe.

Wolfgang Ischinger German Ambassador to the UK



DOMINIK GIGLER

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Frankenallee 71–81,
60327 Frankfurt am Main
Postal address:
60268 Frankfurt am Main
Germany
Tel: +49 (0)69-7501-0
www.fsd.de

Editor in Chief

Peter Hintereder

Editors

Martin Orth, Janet Schayan,
Rainer Stumpf

Art Direction & Design

Bruno Boll, Eva Hocke

Production

Stefan Reichart

Editorial Service

www.magazine-deutschland.de
redaktion.deutschland@fsd.de
Tel: +49 (0)69-7501-4352
Fax: +49 (0)69-7501-4361

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Karlheinz Hohmann

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People **★01** The EU is good because of the euro

OK, euro banknotes may not be among the prettiest in the world. In that sense, and in that sense only, we miss the many different currencies of the old days. Today nobody can deny the ease of travelling through much of Europe, which would have been unthinkable before the introduction of the single currency. Ask any backpacker who has "done Europe". Equally, the euro has brought much financial stability to the eurozone and the world's financial markets consider the euro a very safe bet indeed.

Alexandra Scott

When she plays, people have eyes and ears for the double bass only. Alexandra Scott comes from Britain, is 24, and commands the huge instrument with such virtuosity that she was appointed as solo bass player in Hanover while she was at the orchestral academy of the Berlin Philharmoniker in 2006. In private Alex also likes to listen to a bit of jazz and "anything with lots of energy to wake me up in the mornings".



STEFAN MARIA ROTHER

Tomma Abts

Feye, Taade or *Ehme* are the enigmatic titles of her paintings. They all measure precisely 48 by 38 centimetres and consist of subdued pop geometry. Tomma comes from Kiel, has been living in London for 12 years and in 2006 won what every artist would love to receive: the Turner Prize, the most prestigious British art award.



PICTURE-ALLIANCE/DPA

Here and

there

Charlotte Roche

Charlotte goes cinema: the cult presenter, born in Wimbledon, raised in the Lower Rhine region, is a symbol of cheeky music-TV. She now has her first major cinema role in *Eden*. A bittersweet story where she falls in love with a fat cook. Sounds weird? Of course it is, if Charlotte's in on the game... Showing soon in UK cinemas.



PICTURE-ALLIANCE/ZB

Paul van Dyk

The Germans are world champions after all, well, one of them is, at least: Paul van Dyk – or PvD for short. 217,000 people from over 200 nations took part in the poll held by the British magazine *DJ Mag* – and they voted PvD "No. 1 DJ in the world" for the second time. And where are his next worldwide gigs? Visit the "PAULocator" on his website.

Peggy Porschen

The sweet life of a homemade career: Elton John or Katie Melua treat their party guests to Peggy's pretty cakes. But her favourite place is in her parents' kitchen in a tiny village near Aachen. This is where she made her first gâteau experiments. She has been living in London since 1998 and is now head of Peggy Porschen Cakes Ltd.



Meet the young side of Germany

Young Germany is an English-language website which aims to inform young high potentials around the world about their opportunities in Germany





"There's something about Berlin..."



"I can't resist"



"Berlin is unpredictable"



★★]02 The EU is good

because it entrenches social equality

Under the slogan "same pay for the same work" the EU has banned gender discrimination in the European labour market. Further to that the EU boasts the tightest social safety net in the world. In an era of globalisation only the EU can ensure that much of that safety net remains intact. The EU will safeguard its citizens against unfair competition from within and from without.



Creative in Berlin – join the club

By Hugh Williamson in Berlin

Corin Arnold, a British DJ living in Berlin, recently met a DJ from Helsinki who was visiting the German capital. Even though the Finnish disc-spinner had only been in Berlin a short time, he'd already made a life-changing decision.

Arnold recalls: "The DJ told me 'I have to move here, there's something about Berlin I can't resist'. He's arriving in a few months' time. 'Join the club,' I said."

Sounds a bit extreme? Who would move house based on one short visit? Thousands of people, it seems. Berlin is full of stories of foreigners (and Germans), artists in particular, who have made Berlin their home based, well, on first impressions. And as a string of British artists living here recall, while Berlin is far from perfect, initial instincts often evolve into a strong affinity with a city that ranks as one of Europe's most attractive destinations.

There is the city's history (the Nazis, the Cold War and east-west reunited), its urban landscape (including the Brandenburg Gate and remnants of the Wall) and the whole cultural and party scene (the nightclubs, the cafés, world-class museums, the dead or alive Love Parade – and memories of last year's World Cup of course).

The *Ex-Berliner*, the city's English-language what's-on magazine, bulges every month with events from punk to performance and arty designs to designer clothes. In the techno and electronic music scene alone, dozens of clubs cater for the niches and sub-niches of this ever-evolving Berlin cult. But more importantly, it is the two Cs – creativity and cheapness – that make the place a hit with British artists. Cheapness is the easiest to pin down. "I can rent a great apartment here for 500 euros a month, while, for that money, I'd only get a tiny room in London," says Johannes Frank, co-creator of *Bordercrossing*, a new Berlin-based English language literary magazine.

The same applies to how much you earn, and how far the money goes, says Sasha Perera, British lead singer of Jahcoozii, a Berlin group that calls itself a "bass heavy



The two Berlin Cs: creativity and ... cheapness



One of the most happening places in Europe

JIRKA-JANSCH.COM/IMAGEPOINT, MAURICE WEISS/OSTKREUZ (3), ARMIN AKHTAR/OSTKREUZ, BERND KAMPPELMEYER/IMAGEPOINT, BRIGITTE LUIS/OSTKREUZ, OLIVER GERHARDT/IMAGEPOINT, PAGE 7, OLIVER KRUMES/IMAGEPOINT, JIRKA-JANSCH.COM/IMAGEPOINT



03 The EU is good

because it constantly reinvents itself

What other institution in the world can justifiably claim to be constantly reinventing itself? Born a purely economic union, the EU has turned into a union of common values. What next? Whither EU? Nobody yet knows. Only one thing is certain: the EU is unique. It will not be able to model itself on any other institution. It will break new ground wherever it is heading.

electronica trio". "At times I've survived easily on working just part-time, two or three shifts a week in a bar," says Perera, who has Sri Lankan parents and who decided in the late 1990s to "escape to Berlin" to get away from pressures in Britain to settle down with a good job. That links directly to the other "C". Because Berlin is cheap, artists have lots of time – after earning enough to survive – to be creative.

Nick Ash, a British photographer who since the early 1990s has survived in cheap accommodation all over the city – from a commune in west Berlin to trendy, if run-down flats in the revived eastern districts – says the changing city has inspired his work. One of his eye-catching projects (published in *Die Zeit*, a prestigious German newspaper) was when he walked east to west, 50km across the city, and took a picture every kilometre of the people and buildings he found. "It showed what a mixed-up but fascinating city

we live in," he says. Frank, who is German but grew up in Southend-on-Sea, agrees that the city itself spurs creativity. "You can leave for a few weeks, then when you come back, the place has already changed. That's good for writers."

In the DJ'ing and club scene, Berlin remains one of the most happening places in Europe, Arnold says, with new styles and new clubs appearing regularly across the city. He has lived here since 1988, moving to West Berlin as a resident DJ for two clubs a year before the Wall fell. He has charted the evolution since then, with the centre of gravity in the electronic music scene initially near the government quarter in Mitte, then shifting further east to Prenzlauer Berg, and then back to the west, to Kreuzberg, the city's multicultural heartland. "When I go to London, the way the scene works is like a well-oiled machine, while Berlin is more unpredictable," he says.

The creativity also has other roots. For Mark Gisbourne, a well-known British art historian and critic, it is the unpretentious nature of the city that attracted him in 2003 and has kept him here ever since. "These days London is all about lifestyle, about who is going to which exhibition opening, for instance. It is about the price and not the value of art," he says. Berlin has much less "glitz and glamour" and that is very appealing for people interested seriously in art itself. This has a practical side too. Art studios are much cheaper in Berlin than in London, and craftsmen and women who help build artworks and installations produce objects of a higher quality.

Despite all the plus points, Berlin also has its minuses. The long cold winters get many people down (but, perhaps worryingly, global warming seems to be dealing with that). The language can be a bit of a struggle at first, as can the bureaucracy. And the bikes riders on the pavements are a threat to life and limb, the British artists recall.

Ironically, the extra time for creativity in Berlin also has a downside. Having space and energy to be creative, Ash says, means there is sometimes little pressure to get things done. "Sometimes I miss the dynamism of London, the power in the city."

Like any big city the quality of art is mixed. Perera said she started her singing career – in Berlin – because, "to be blunt, there were so many bands around with crap vocals that I thought I could do better". Frank admits that, for the first edition of *Bordercrossing*, published last December, two-thirds of submissions for publication "were completely unusable", while only a small share of the rest were of really high quality.

In addition, Berlin is a city that is almost bankrupt (its reputation as "poor but sexy" holds true) which means successful artists must look around – usually beyond Berlin – for outlets for their work. *Bordercrossing* was set up because most English-language writers were publishing outside the capital. Perera has been successful in building an international appeal – "We had an amazing 2006 with trips to the US, Russia, Singapore and elsewhere," she says – while Ash is currently preparing a portfolio to present to potential clients across Germany.

That brings the next challenge – that in many ways, Berlin is not typical Germany. The country's biggest city, it is more cosmopolitan, and tolerates more social and cultural extremes, than anywhere else. "I liked Berlin when I moved here, but it never occurred to me that it was in Germany" says Gisbourne. British artists seem turned off by what they see as more conservative cities (Munich is a prime target), leaving the impression that, for many in Germany, it is Berlin or nothing. Yet despite all this, the overall quality of life in this slightly shambolic city seems to be more than enough to make British artists stick around. "You have to have a bit of chaos to be productive," says Gisbourne.

Others seem to like it too. Over 20,000 British people visit the city every month, many more than any other national group. Like the Helsinki DJ, some stick around for a few extra days, or months, or years. Who knows how long? Arnold and his artist friends say they will certainly be around to receive the newcomers.

Hugh Williamson is a *Financial Times* correspondent in Berlin.



Take a bicycle



Poor but sexy



Berlin is full of stories...



"Mixed-up but fascinating"



Berlin is cool



Changing city



Berlin or nothing?

TORRIGNE STEFANO/HEMISPHERES IMAGES/LAIF, KUNZIG/LAIF, NAGELE/LAIF, OESTRICH/LAIF, KEYSTONE, FRANCE/LAIF, JIRKA-JANSCH.COM/IMAGEPOINT, MEYER/OSTKREUZ, WEISS/OSTKREUZ, WOLTER/IMAGEPOINT, MECKEL/OSTKREUZ, PAGE 8: KAPPELMEYER/IMAGEPOINT



Markus Lupfer

A visiting semester turned into 12 years: Markus' career started at Central St Martins. Is he a German or British fashion designer? "I'm German, but my designs aren't," he says. Being successful in such a fast-moving sector is an art in itself. What's so inspiring about London? "Music, for instance, here you can experience all the trends right from the start. At the moment an underground club culture is emerging where dressing up is the in thing to do."



1 2 Oversized, light, luxurious, comfortable and sexy are the words that describe Markus Lupfer's trends for 2007. His "Markus Lupfer for Top Shop Collection" is in the shops from mid-February

By Janet Schayan Photographs Dominik Gigler

German creative minds in London

They all took different routes to London. But their reasons for staying here are very similar: creative Germans in London simply love the fact that the city is so open, so multicultural, so full of diverse influences – and permanently reinvents itself. What could be better for inspiring individual ideas? And then there's another fairly good reason that they wouldn't necessarily name themselves. Fashion designer Markus Lupfer, graphic designer Nina Nägel, designer André Klausner and the architecture trio m2r are enjoying one thing in common in London: a good deal of success.

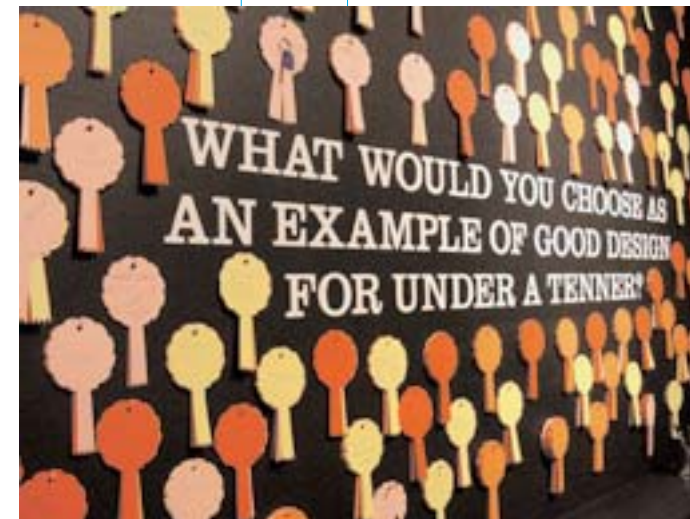
★★★★★] 04 The EU is good because of enlargement

No other union has ever had the courage to expand in quite the same way as the EU. Far from occupying or dominating neighbouring countries, the EU is welcoming its neighbours, allowing them to join the club. New members will lose some national sovereignty, but gain the right to co-determination and have a fair say in the future direction of the union. The positive developments in the new member states have led the remaining states outside the union to communicate their wish for Europeanization even more clearly.

3



4



3 **New Season Identity:** Park Studio's two designers have created the New Season promotion for the Oasis stores across the UK and Europe

4 5 **Exhibition graphics** for "Under a Tenner", an exhibition of objects chosen by 14 people with a particular perspective on design, giving examples of what they believe to be "good design" for under ten pounds. This work for the Design Museum London was important. Many new orders followed www.park-studio.com



"We worked out the concept for Park Studio in a single evening," says Nina Nägel. That certainly sounds creative. She comes from Hamburg. Together with Linda Lundin she started up her own business in 2002 to create designs that don't have to please a boss any more – "just ourselves". And customers, of course. Nina's major resource: a sensitivity towards typography. Lettering plays the key role in all of the Park Studio designs. Sometimes playful, sometimes bursting with energy, usually infectiously cheerful. And which design object does she have in her flat? "At the moment it's a golden 3-D piglet."



5

PARK STUDIO (4)

Nina Nägel





6

7

6

The Solitaire Olive Dish is in the famous MoMA museum shop collection. The noughts and crosses ashtray says: three in a row wins. Too many a day loses. The battleship napkins are for natural game players

The Mauro chair is a potential design classic

The Fono table lamp is made of finely rolled steel
www.andreklauser.com



An internship with the great Jasper Morrison? That's the dream of every design student. André Klauser was lucky enough to get just that chance shortly before he finished his studies in Münster. But how? "Well, I'm afraid it's because I was pretty stubborn," says André Klauser. And no doubt his portfolio was fairly impressive, too. In 2002 he did a postgrad course at the Royal College of Art, three years as a design assistant with Morrison, and then André opened his own studio in London. His product design always looks for that something special in the everyday world. It's witty, with a wink of the eye – and yet it is still elegant, and by no means an ephemeral design gag.



André Klauser



8



GERMAN EMBASSY LONDON

Spinnerei Leipzig in London – from cotton to culture

Six young artists from Leipzig had the unique opportunity to exhibit their works in the German ambassador's residence. The up-and-coming artists presented their paintings, sculptures and video installations to people from London's important art scene. A well-known London gallery was impressed and immediately organised a follow-up exhibition in the city's West End, where the works were on show until the end of January. The Spinnerei was once a factory where cotton was produced for 120 years. Like many companies in the eastern part of Germany, it was closed after the Wall came down. An enterprising company then bought the former factory complex and invested a lot of money to transform it into an "art factory". Today many German and international artists have their studios, galleries and residential studios in the buildings, surrounded by the inspiring old industrial architecture.

www.spinnerei.de www.london.diplo.de

Ambassador Wolfgang Ischinger (third from the right) with the young artists and the curator Bertram Schultze from Leipzig at the exhibition opening

★★★★★] 05

The EU is good

because it is based on reason

Europe is without much emotion. Its flag is boring, there is no oath of allegiance, no patriotic fervour. Europe is cool, a level-headed technocratic answer to a century of heated, emotionally charged intra-European warfare. One need not love the EU, not even like it, to admit that it constitutes the most sensible institutional solution to the question of peaceful coexistence in Europe.



m2r Architects

The Thames Walk would transform the north bank of the river into a promenade creating a new public urban space with cafés and ships' moorings

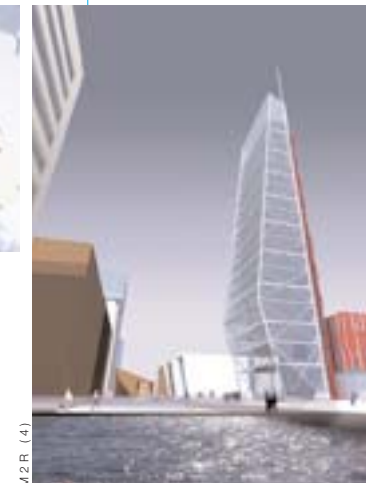
Nicky's School, a specially designed building for children with heart complaints, has flowing forms and a complete lack of right angles

The Sky Tower was designed by m2r for Hamburg

m2r stands for one May and two Rostocks. Moritz May and the twins Axel and Jörg Rostock have been a team since they studied together. Unusual: before they studied architecture all three completed a good solid training as masons or carpenters in Dresden. So they have a good idea about the basics of building. Today they run the architectural office m2r in London and are sought-after for major projects: their spectacular Thames Walk Project could well become the great attraction of the 2012 Olympic city.



10



M2R (4)

11



Mercedes Benz Museum Stuttgart



The cars are state-of-the-art. Fast, noble and chic. But what the car manufacturers of DaimlerChrysler in Stuttgart have conjured up at their new Mercedes Museum is simply spectacular. 110,000 tonnes of steel, glass and concrete have been combined to form a double helix which would have been impossible to build just a few years ago. A stupendous event, not just for car lovers. But, of course, they get their money's worth as well. 160 cars with the Mercedes star are on show in an area covering 16,500 square metres. Experimental prototypes, racing cars and individually designed vehicles for the Pope. You simply enter a lift to set off on your journey through the history of cars. The story is told by none other than the inventors of the automobile themselves.

www.museum-mercedes-benz.com



Universum Science Center Bremen



At first there's a slight rumble, then the light starts wobbling. And suddenly the walls begin to shake – it's an earthquake! The Universum Science Center Bremen turns the elements into a virtual experience. Over 4,000 square metres have been dedicated to interactive experience rooms waiting to be discovered with all of the senses. Over 250 stations guide you through the themes humankind, earth and cosmos. And it's activity all the way: learning by doing and experimenting, having fun, marvelling, asking questions. How does a rainbow develop? What are the languages of the world? The answers can be found in Bremen's silver UFO.

www.universum-bremen.de



science in germany

Have you ever taken a walk through a brain? Seen lightning strike at close quarter? Or taken a really good look at the Mercedes from Spielberg's *Lost World*? Three German museums make all this possible – with hands-on science and technology.

Deutsches Museum Munich



28,000 technology and science exhibits, 1.5 million visitors per year, and all this is happening on a sandbank in the middle of the River Isar: Deutsches Museum in Munich is unique in many respects. Where else can you find sailing ships, models of atoms, space probes, diesel locomotives, industrial robots, marine rescue vessels and aircraft directly next to each other? Visitors start up experiments and observe how a volcano erupts, or they can descend into a mine. High voltage equipment illustrates in a flash how a Faraday cage operates, and in the pharmaceutical section visitors can walk inside the model of a human cell.

www.deutsches-museum.de



Discover

UK-German Connection

A new bilateral government initiative for schools, youth & training

Following the Queen's state visit to Germany in November 2004 and a subsequent review of UK-German school and youth relations, *UK-German Connection – bringing young people together* was set up to provide a new umbrella service.

Working in close partnership with the Embassies, Education Departments, the British Council, Pädagogischer Austauschdienst and the Goethe-Institute, UK-German Connection is the first port of call for ⇒ advice on all UK-German opportunities ⇒ new grants for trips and projects ⇒ guidance on links and joint activities ⇒ celebrat-

ing and showcasing UK-German projects ⇒ fostering new ideas for cross- and extra-curricular activity ⇒ new networks for teachers and young people. UK-German Connection also incorporates the UK-German youth portal www.the-voyage.com and the kids portal www.the-voyage.com/kids

Opportunities for you!

Opportunities for pupils:

- ⇒ Discover Germany! trips
- ⇒ language and culture courses
- ⇒ German scholarships
- ⇒ Fellowships for thematic study trips
- ⇒ 6-week pupil exchanges
- ⇒ become a *voyage reporter!*
- ⇒ online: interactive features, games and quizzes, facts & figures
- ⇒ ... and more!

Opportunities for teachers:

- ⇒ group leaders on student trips and courses
- ⇒ CPD courses and work-shadowing visits
- ⇒ primary German networks
- ⇒ history trips
- ⇒ online: ideas for classroom activities, resources, information, links & tips
- ⇒ ... and more!

Opportunities for schools and youth groups:

- ⇒ grants for group taster trips
- ⇒ Open Challenge Fund for your ideas for activities
- ⇒ Project Challenge Fund
- ⇒ Challenge Fund for celebration activities
- ⇒ Joint Curriculum Projects
- ⇒ Double Club: German (German through football)
- ⇒ ... and more!

UK-German Connection – bringing young people together

is dedicated to increasing contacts and understanding between young people in the UK and Germany. It is a bilateral initiative, which has been developed and established in collaboration between the UK and German governments, the British Council, Pädagogischer Austauschdienst and the Goethe-Institut.



info / contact details:

UK-German Connection
34 Belgrave Square
London SW1X 8QB
tel: +44 (0)20 7824 1570
info@ukgermanconnection.org
www.ukgermanconnection.org

BOCK/LAIF (2), HENSELER/LAIF (3), BENNO GRIESHABER/VISUM, ATLANTIDE PHOTOTRAVEL/CORBIS

Without Europe there would be no Kyoto Protocol, the International Criminal Court would not exist and things would be very difficult for the UN. Of course the EU is not a countervailing power to the USA, but it certainly follows a different line. Its focus is on internationally binding law, diplomacy, multilateralism and "soft power". Sanctions, or even the deployment of military power, are *ultima ratio*, the very last resort.

Immigration

Oxford Circus Tube Station v. pink bicycle along the canal

By Izzy Charman, voyage reporter
Born 1981
Occupation Freelance producer

I think I can pinpoint it pretty exactly. I think it was 8:47 on a Tuesday in February, as I was fighting my way through the morning rush hour crowds of the Victoria line / Central line interchange at Oxford Circus underground station for the 678th time, that it happened. Weaving my way through the endless corridors jam-packed with averted eyes, ears blocked with iPods and legs on autopilot, and an announcement of "severe delays", I suddenly realised: this wasn't how I wanted to spend my life. I ripped out my headphones, took a run up as best I could given the crowds, and did a Dick Van Dyke-style jump for joy. My shouts of "I'm leaving you suckers behind and going to Berlin!" echoed down the concrete tunnel... OK, so maybe not quite. But in my head at least, something snapped. I knew if I didn't leave now and do something drastic I'd find myself in the same tunnel in 30 years' time.

Now don't get me wrong. I loved London. There's nowhere where there is simply so much going on, simply so much opportunity, a feeling that you really are at the centre of it all. And I had a great job, having managed to get into TV production after uni and somehow ended up making history documentaries – I got to travel, research fascinating subjects and meet amazing people. But then one project required making use of my rusty A-level German, and a little seed was planted in my mind. Wouldn't it be great to learn the language properly? Yeah...but it wasn't just that. Wouldn't it be great to do it in Berlin?

I had been to Berlin as a student, and it had blown me away. It was the sight of the ugly concrete and glass Communist Parliament face to face with the bullet-scarred imperial cathedral that made me want to study history. There was a real sense of the past spilling over into the present – be it armed guards outside a synagogue or the odd East German state-

supplied car (*Trabant*) being driven around by hip young Berliners. But more than that, the fact that Berlin had had to reinvent itself so many times gave it a real sense of energy, of a blank canvas and the chance to make your mark on it. And every time I walked through that London underground station, where the only change in a hundred years was in the design of suits worn by the world's capitalists on their way to work, the seed in my mind grew a little more. Then, on the day of my "Chim-Chiminee moment", I suddenly heard myself telling my boss I was leaving, and moving to Berlin. In a month. "Do you have a job arranged?" he asked. "Any friends or contacts there?" "No?" Hmm. But now it seemed I could hardly take it back, could I?

Most people I told were a bit surprised. Not that I was leaving London, but that of all the places in the world I could have gone to, I'd picked... Germany. Germany? Why on earth would I swap London for the world of *Sauerkraut* and *Lederhosen*? The reactions generally fell into one of three categories: something about mullets, David Hasselhoff or *Bratwurst*. Unbelievably, given the fact that most of these same people could talk in great detail about the best beaches on Ko Phi Phi, none of them had ever even been to Germany. For some reason, when dealing with the land that supposedly kept Hasselhoff in the music industry, reactionary stereotypes were deemed perfectly sociably acceptable, and true. I was, however, unperturbed.

And suddenly, one sunny afternoon in April, there I was. Not at Oxford Circus underground, but on the S-Bahn platform at Schönefeld Airport. And, yes, it was a very different view. Not a suit in sight. Apart from the odd shell-suit. Hmm. And I could make out a definite mullet... Or two... And perhaps a few denim and denim combos... I scanned the station platform more precisely. *Bratwurst* stand? Check. Opposite platform? Check again. Bemulleted, denim-clad, *Bratwurst*-chomping *Fräulein*? Check, check, check... Blimey – had everyone been right? I was now only waiting for bursts of Hasselhoff to emerge between the sausagey mouthfuls.

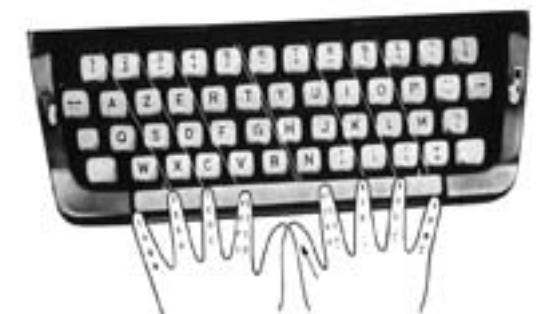
During my first few weeks, I wandered around with open ears and open eyes, trying to suss out what this place I'd turned up in was really like. Were all the stereotypes really true? Mullets and bad fashion? Yes, sometimes. Rule-following, orderly and obedient too? Most definitely. But there were also lots of surprises. Where I was used to rules, I found the "sensible" Germans to be rather liberal. Ice cream vans sell cold beer, an advert for shower gel shows – um – naked people in the shower as opposed to well-placed sponges; pubs and clubs stay open until the last person leaves. Germans *are* sensible. But sensible can be good. It is sensible to serve the customers as long as they are there, it is sensible to be able to buy beer wherever you may want to drink beer. It is sensible that your post gets delivered to your neighbour if you're not in, not to a sorting office out of town, only open for two hours when you're at work, it is sensible that the underground runs all night on weekends. Sensible? Bring it on!

But although you can take the girl out of London, you can't take London out of the girl. Despite all my good intentions, I seem to have ended up doing exactly the same thing here as I did in England: working bloody hard in a TV production company. But there are a few differences. On my first day at work, for example, I was told it was lunchtime and found that someone had cooked for us all. This makes a nice change to Marks and Sparks sandwiches, I thought, loading up a big bowl and taking it back to my desk. Sitting there with my fork in one hand as the other carried on working the keyboard, I suddenly realised that my tapping was the only sound in the office. Looking up, I saw a scathing face aimed in my direction. "Izzy, everyone else is in the kitchen..." I had committed an awful faux pas. Whereas in London, I'd get dirty looks if I dared leave my desk for lunch, here one was expected to eat sitting at a table, chatting, having "a break" in "a lunch break"... How, well, how "sensible". Sensible too, that on a Friday evening I get thrown out of the office at 5pm with the explanation: "Izzy, it *is* Friday."

So although I haven't quite lived up to what one fellow immigrant said to me when I first moved here: "People move to London for work. People move to Berlin to be crazy", I feel I have at least adopted some of the finer aspects of the Berlin lifestyle. Here, with incredibly cheap living costs, next-to-nothing rents, a culture of longer and financially supported study, work can take kind of a second priority to the more important things in life. Gradually, I feel that Oxford Circus interchange tunnel fading from my memory. In fact, I have joined the Berlin masses and purchased a bicycle. (A pink bicycle with a white basket, which, I might add, is known by my friends as "the Barbie bike".) So now at 8:47am on a Tuesday, although I'm setting off to do much the same thing, I'm cycling along the canal on a pink bicycle. And I tell you, it's the little things in life that make all the difference.

voyage reporters – get creative with the-voyage!

Would you like to become a voyage reporter like Izzy? Create articles and blogs, photo galleries and even short videos with a UK-German connection on www.the-voyage.com, the UK-German youth portal! To read Izzy's blog and see other projects by voyage reporters, have a look at: www.the-voyage.com/voyagereporters For more information on how to become a voyage reporter, just drop us a line! voyagereporters@the-voyage.com





Nützliche Vokabeln:

| | |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| WM (short for Weltmeisterschaft) | World Cup |
| sich an etwas gewöhnen | to get used to something |
| jemandem knurrt der Magen | someone's stomach is rumbling |
| Bundesligaspiel | German football league game |
| es herrscht eine tolle Stimmung | there is a great atmosphere |
| VFB Stuttgart | VFB Stuttgart football club |
| etwas kaum erwarten können | to hardly be able to wait for s.th. |
| so ein Mist | damn it |
| zur Aufmunterung | to cheer us up |
| hausgemachter Zwetschgenkuchen | homemade plumcake |
| (Oh) meine Güte | oh my goodness! |
| vergeblich | in vain |
| auf Schwäbisch | in Swabian |

Stuttgart-Tour: Die Schwaben-Metropole – Ein Kessel Buntes umringt von Weinbergen



Tom, 18, aus Manchester, ist mit einem Schüleraustausch bei Gastfamilie Maier in Stuttgart. Mit Stefan, seinem Gastbruder, fährt er los die Sehenswürdigkeiten anzuschauen. Die Stadt-tour wurde aufgezeichnet von Severine Schniepp.

9.00 Uhr - Samstagmorgen: Die erste Nacht meines Schüleraustausches habe ich super geschlafen! Stefans Familie hat ein kleines Haus mit Garten. Seine Mutter hat frische Brezeln bei der „Klinsmann Bäckerei“ um die Ecke geholt. Die Bäckerei gehört den Eltern von Jürgen Klinsmann; seit der WM werden hier noch mehr Brezeln gebacken. Sie schmecken fantastisch, auch an die Leberwurst darauf hatte ich mich schnell gewöhnt, sie ist hier sehr beliebt.

10.00 Uhr: Wie fahren mit der Bahn Richtung Innenstadt. Die Bahn ist sehr sauber und leise, überall sind kleine Müllcontainer, von denen in England kaum mehr welche stehen. Im Zentrum Stuttgarts gibt es eine interessante Mischung aus alter und moderner Architektur. Wir stehen auf dem Schlossplatz in einer großen Einkaufsstraße, der „Königsstraße“. Hier steht ein Glaskubus – das neue Kunstmuseum. Von oben haben wir eine tolle Sicht: rechts das alte Schloss, links davon das neue.

12.00 Uhr: „In Höhenpark-Killesberg findet im Sommer das Lichterfest statt, dann ist alles superschön mit Lampions geschmückt. Alle sitzen gemütlich zusammen, reden, essen und trinken“, erzählt Stefan. Auf dem Weg zum nächsten Ziel laufen wir an der Kunstakademie vorbei. Sie ist 1927 errichtet worden und zeigt einen damals neuen Baustil in Deutschland.

13.30 Uhr: Die Sonne scheint und der Biergarten ruft. Uns knurrt schon der Magen. Stefan bestellt: „Zwei Radler und zwei Schnitzel mit Kartoffelsalat, bitte“. Ich kannte Radler nicht: Bier mit Limonade gemischt, so ähnlich wie „shandy“. Die großen Schnitzel passen kaum auf die Teller. Es schmeckt super, auch der Kartoffelsalat mit Essig und Öl.

15.30 Uhr: Stefans Vater hat uns zwei Karten zum Bundesligaspiel geschenkt. Im „Gottlieb Daimler Stadion“ herrscht eine tolle Stimmung. Die deutschen Fußballfans begeistern mich, ich dachte, wir Engländer wären fußballverrückt. Zum Glück habe ich auf dem Weg ein paar Fußballlieder gelernt. Ich stehe also in einem rot-weißen Meer von VFB Stuttgart-Fans und singe mit. Dass ich Engländer bin, interessiert hier keinen. Meine Sitznachbarn umarmen mich nach jedem Tor. Lustig, diese Schwaben!

18.00 Uhr: Stuttgart ist ja bekannt für seine Autoindustrie, klar, Mercedes-Benz und Porsche kommen von hier. Als großer Autofan möchte ich natürlich ins neue Mercedes-Benz Museum. Ich kann es kaum erwarten die Automodelle zu sehen. Doch das Museum schließt samstags um 18.00 Uhr. So ein Mist! Zur Aufmunterung lädt Stefan mich auf etwas zu trinken ein.

20.30 Uhr: Stefans Mutter hat Schweinebraten mit Knödeln gekocht. Ich bin nicht mehr hungrig, doch den hausgemachten Zwetschgenkuchen muss ich noch probieren. Aber meine Güte, wie heißt er? „Zweschkeguchen“?, „Ziwtschegenkurchn“? Stefans Eltern lachen, das Wort ist aber auch schwierig auszusprechen.

23.00 Uhr: Ich bin hundemüde. Stefan versucht noch vergeblich, mit mir über den Heimsieg des VFB zu sprechen, doch mir fallen schon die Augen zu. Ich bekomme gerade noch mit, wie er auf Schwäbisch „Gutes Nächtle“ zu mir sagt.

Infos zu Stuttgart:

Die Hauptstadt von Baden-Württemberg mit 590000 Einwohnern ist eine der industriestärksten Regionen in Deutschland. Wer an Stuttgart denkt, denkt an weltberühmte Automobilwerke, an Hightech und Computerbau, den VfB Stuttgart, das Cannstatter Volksfest, das Stuttgarter Ballett, an die schwäbische Küche, an Spätzle und an Wein.

★★★★★★★★]07 The EU is good, because it is “borderless”

When you mention the European Union to a Moroccan or a Guatemalan, they begin to talk rapturously of its boundlessness. Travelling by car from Berlin to Madrid without a passport and without being checked – this is no longer particularly special for continental Europeans. EU members have the opportunity to live and work relatively problem-free in 26 neighbouring countries – a unique privilege in the world.

Word Play to send away: the Goethe-Institut in London has published some of the exotic German word creations from the Word Play Competition in a postcard booklet. www.goethe.de/london info@london.goethe.org



Torschlusspanik* (*gate-closure panic***) is the fear of being left on the shelf.*** It was handy to have my **handy*** (*mobile phone***) in my hand when my **handy** rang.*** **Ohrwurm*** (*ear worm***) is a very straightforward yet poetic term for a catchy tune.***

UK-based lovers of the German and English languages used their language skills in a fun way: the Goethe-Institut in London invited people to nominate a German word that is not yet part of the English language but should perhaps be given a chance to migrate into English – like *zeitgeist*. The results were hilarious as in *Kummerspeck* (*grief bacon*): in order to create the same sense in English it would be necessary to describe it as “an excessive weight gain caused by emotion-related overeating”.



Word Play**

13

Michael Ballack is *the* superstar of German football. In 2006 he transferred from Bayern Munich to Chelsea. He wanted to go there to play with the very best. But where does Michael Ballack come from, what is he really like?

By Martin Orth

He looks good. So good in fact that nearly a hundred thousand readers of one of Germany's biggest magazines voted him the ideal man. And he doesn't look very German. Anyway, he's not blond. With his smile, black locks and dark complexion he could pose for international fashion magazines. Or star in Hollywood films. Yet he always seems a little shy, isn't pushy at all. That makes him even more attractive. We're talking about Michael Ballack. But he's neither a model nor an actor. Ballack is a footballer. In fact, the best one Germany has at the moment. Like no other player he is able to read, direct and then decide a game with crucial goals. They called him "Herbert" during his time at Leverkusen – after the famous conductor Herbert von Karajan. It was said, "He led the lads and they didn't even notice." Now Ballack is playing in England, for the richest club, Chelsea. He's where he wanted to be. With the very best. He's a star. But who is Michael Ballack – the man we all apparently know – really?

PLAINPICTURE/TRANSOULLIUM

THE LIFE OF MICHAEL BALLACK

BERT HEINZMEIER/MATTHIAS ZIEGLER/STERN/PICTURE PRESS



Let's travel back in time. Michael Ballack was born in 1976 and grew up in the GDR. Right in the East, in what was then Karl-Marx-Stadt, almost on the border with Poland. The suburbs are grey and the washing-line poles between the housing blocks serve as goal posts. The older boys put the youngest in goal. He often comes home crying after being hit by the ball once again. "Stand up for yourself as best you can," says his dad. Later the neighbours' children come to the door crying. "It was a lesson in character-building," says the father today. And: "Deep inside, he's a bit different from the way he tries to present himself in public. There's a soft, vulnerable core. But Micha keeps that to himself." Michael later joins the local club, BSG Motor Fritz Heckert, and in some games scores twelve goals. So he's assigned to FC Karl-Marx-Stadt and attends the sport school for children and young people. "I was just happy," says Ballack.

When the Wall fell in 1989 Ballack is 13 years old. Everything changes. Even the name of the town. Karl-Marx-Stadt is called Chemnitz again. For Michael Ballack, though, everything stays the same. He goes to a sport grammar school and pursues the dream of a career in football. Then comes the shock. Pains in his knee. The doctors discover damaged cartilage. "That's the end of playing football," he's told. Life without football? Impossible. Things look bad for young Michael Ballack, very bad. But he doesn't even tell his parents how bad he feels. He fights his way back to form with the help of a youth trainer. At 18 he successfully leaves school with *Abitur* and becomes a professional with the team. He has learned to keep it. But he keeps his experiences to himself. And soon he moves to the West. In 1997 he signs up with FC Kaiserslautern, wins the league title and joins the national team. But even more important: it's during this period that he meets Simone. After her daytime job as a pharmaceutical assistant, she sometimes works at the Café am Markt, the place in Kaiserslautern where there's always something happening. Simone is half a year older than Michael and not overwhelmed by the glamour of the Bundesliga stage. She's the woman who takes the car for a service. And she goes with Michael in 1999 when he makes the move from Kaiserslautern to Leverkusen. That's when he knows: she's the one.

With her support, Michael Ballack's star really begins to shine. Then come the scenes that will always be associated with his playing career. For example, there was the time in May 2000 when Bayer Leverkusen only needed a draw to win the Bun-

desliga title, but in the last game, against Unterhaching, Ballack scored an own goal – and wept uncontrollably. Or then there's the magic spring of 2002 when Ballack played for Leverkusen in the Champions League and knocked out Liverpool, Manchester and nearly Real Madrid. But only nearly. At the end of the season there were three second places. Or there's the World Cup in Japan and Korea when Ballack knocked out Korea 1:0 with the goal that took the German team into the final. But because of a yellow card in that match, he had to sit out the dream final against Brazil. Incidentally, the final score was 2:0 – for Brazil.

Sounds like lots of second places. However, Ballack has been voted Footballer of the Year three times and won the double – the Bundesliga title and the German Cup – three times with Bayern Munich. Of course, he has experienced setbacks during his career, but he has always got back up again, faced the challenge – and won. Anyone who knows Ballack can see he has not reached the end yet. That's revealed by his smile, the familiar expression with which he quietly savours triumphs and overcomes defeats, the calm exterior behind which he hides so well.

PICTURE: ALLIANCE/IDPA (2)

★★★★★★★★★★] **08** The EU is good,

because it makes life more comfortable

Sometimes it can sound like a threat: the EU standardises, regulates and prohibits. Or it sounds ridiculous: the EU determines the curves on cucumbers and the safety of cigarette lighters. But many such regulations make it easier for companies to export their goods, and also make our lives as consumers simpler – they are purely practical.



For one night only

By Till Vere-Hodge

No doubt, 2006 was *the* year of football. Germany hosted the games and what an event it turned out to be.

The cup of superlatives attracted an estimated worldwide TV audience of more than 30 billion viewers. 3.4 million people watched the drama unfold live in the twelve stadiums with millions more mingling at FanFests across Germany. Already, FanFests are widely regarded as one of the most positive innovations of recent times in the way we follow the beautiful game. As a result the organisers of the next World Cup in South Africa have pledged to emulate Germany and bring with them the concept of FanFests to Africa in 2010. **But Fan-**

Fests were merely an expression of a broader approach adopted by Germany. From the outset, the 2006 World Cup was designed to be a Time to Make Friends, a big party with people from all over the world coming together, enjoying world football together and... having a ball. This concept successfully sidelined hooliganism and violence. **In**

analysing the success of 2006, we shouldn't forget that the weather played its part as well. At times it was too good: thousands of England fans defied the excruciating heat on a June afternoon at Nuremberg's FanFest to watch England play Trinidad. It would be fair to say that they thoroughly enjoyed their Franconian beer ice-cold that day. **Not every-**

body would have expected to see Germany host anything remotely fun or enjoyable.

Here they were: a steely-eyed, humourless, charmless, Lederhosen-clad bunch of Krauts bent on spoiling the event for the rest of us. According to some newspaper reports, Germany even planned to employ mini-tanks (or Panzers!) to keep England fans in check. Utter rubbish of course, but the story obviously sold. **Nevertheless**, the World Cup changed many deep-seated stereotypes. All of a sudden, the *Daily Telegraph* called on England fans to switch their support to Germany following England's unlucky elimination from the competition. In an editorial on 3 July the paper advised its readers under the heading "**The war is over**" that "... there are better reasons to cheer for our old adversaries, the Germans. On the pitch, they have displayed the qualities we most admire: stoicism and pluck. [...] Off it, they have been brilliant organisers and generous hosts."

Change of scene: it is cold, dark, gloomy. We're in the middle of November. The World Cup seems a million miles away. So does summer, heat and cold Franconian beer. A time for hibernation, not for World Cup football. Or is it? **On a rainy October night** German Ambassador Wolfgang Ischinger meets with Arsenal goalie Jens Lehmann for dinner. Their conversation touches on football and, amongst other things, they talk about Sönke Wortmann's documentary *Deutschland. Ein Sommermärchen*. All of a sudden they come up with an idea: should it not be possible to show this film in London for charity? The film would bring back summer, football, party... and raise money for SOS Kinderdörfer. **The German Embassy** arranges with Chelsea Cinema to have a charity screening of the movie on 8 November. There is only one problem: they don't have the rights to the film. In an incredible race against time the Ambassador and Lehmann ensure that Fifa and the German FA grant them the rights to show the documentary (8 days before the date of the event!) to bring back the World Cup to London in the middle of November. **The rest, as they say, is history:** the German Embassy announces and advertises the screening and within 3 hours all 713 tickets to Chelsea Cinema's main movie theatre sell out.

Unfortunately, the Cup is back for one night only.

Unfortunately, the Cup is back for one night only.

ANDREAS MUHS/JOSTKREUZ

And here are 10 top tips on how to make the most of your visit

By Adrian Bridge

1.
Hier we go

Despite the (well-deserved) reputation for cutting edge technology, getting to Germany is not rocket science. With the huge increase in low-cost routes you can now fly from a host of British airports to destinations all over Germany for as little as 50 pounds return. Once there, as fans coming for the World Cup soccer matches discovered last year, the excellent Deutsche Bahn railway service can whisk you to all corners of the country speedily and cheaply (check out the offers for under 26-year-olds). If you want to stay local, get on your bike (widely available for hire) and enjoy a network of cycle routes that is second to none.

2.
And the living is easy

The Germans may not be known for being the most laid back people of Europe, but behind that austere Teutonic work ethic is a nation crying out for good old rest and relaxation. And they make sure they get it. The average German enjoys considerably longer holidays than his or her British counterpart and has more bank holidays. And for a surprisingly high number of Germans the weekend starts at some time around noon on Friday. Well you've got to have time to enjoy all that spectacular scenery, the spas, the pools and the shops. As for German students... ah, the regular late morning breakfasts (to discuss Goethe and Schiller of course), the social rounds in the cafés, the clubs...

3.
Sprechen Sie Deutsch?

It was Mark Twain who famously described German as "that awful language", a sentiment surely shared by all students who have grappled with the finer points of the dative case. But don't worry, an incredibly large number of Germans – especially younger ones – have mastered the basics of English and are only too happy to practise

them on you. And if they haven't, after a beer or two, who cares whether it's der, die or das?

4.
Germany rocks

Yes the country does have some rather splendid mountain ranges: the Alps in the south, the Harz towards the north, the beautiful "Saxon Switzerland" in the east, but that's not what I



WEINHÄUPL/IMAGEPOINT

meant. There is also a thriving clubbing scene, particularly in the cities. Berlin lays claim to being the Techno capital of the world and its annual Love Parade featuring Techno, Trance, House and Schranz music draws more than a million ravers onto the streets of the capital. They may not wear flowers in their hair but this is certainly not the rather stiff Germany of popular perception. Elsewhere the cities of Hamburg and Cologne have quite a funky rhythm. But if oompah music really is your thing, there's still many a beer hall in Bavaria that can oblige.

5.
Bread of heaven

We all know that with its purity brewing laws, Germany is a beer drinker's paradise. But whether you like your beer clear, smokey or wheaty, you've got to have something to soak it all up with. Step forward the Great German Bäckerei – the little bakery shops found throughout the country which between them offer about 100 variations of the bread roll. You can have it dark or white, heavy or light, long and thin or round and fat, with seeds or without – and best of all filled with local meats and cheeses. Of course if you're really hungry you are in the home of the Bratwurst and the schnitzel. And then there are the cakes...

6.
The price is right

If you're used to British prices prepare to be very pleasantly surprised. Most things in Ger-

many cost less than at home and that includes dining out (the portions are large but the bills are not), sleeping in (youth hostels in particular offer the young traveller good value) and most categories of shopping. Clothes in particular are reasonably priced and, again, contrary to some stereotypes, can be quite stylish (don't forget, this is the home country of Hugo Boss, Jil Sander – and Claudia Schiffer).

7.
Boys' toys

Talking of big names and state-of-the-art designs, when it comes to motor cars they don't get much bigger than Mercedes, BMW, Volkswagen and Audi. If your budget allows, rent one of these for a few days and hit the (speed limit free) Autobahn. Alternatively there are stunning car museums and experiences – Wolfsburg for VW, Munich for BMW and Stuttgart for Mercedes. In Dresden there's also a pretty funky "Transparent Factory" in which VW's luxury Phaeton model is produced.

8.
Going green

OK, all those high-powered cars burning down the Autobahn might not convey the impression that Germany is a country concerned about the environment but it is – passionately. The Green party was until recently a partner in government and secured a commitment to phase out all nuclear power plants in Germany within the next 20 years. The country has excellent rail and cycle networks. German babies enjoy biodegradable nappies; German shoppers carry their goods in cloth rather than plastic bags and most German households separate their rubbish into at least four different sections (plastics, glass, paper, compost, etc). Even football fans coming to last year's World Cup matches were encouraged to recycle their beer bottles.

9.
So much to see

Whether it's beautiful scenery (mountains, rivers, lakes – and beaches), stimulating cities, invigorating activities (from walking to cycling

to swimming to canoeing) or colourful Christmas markets, there are many reasons to consider visiting Germany. It is a country rich in history (and fully accepts the controversial aspects of that history) and rich in culture (world class opera and art; architectural innovation). It's a country of geographical and culinary diversity. It is a country in transition. Again, as last year's hosting of the World Cup showed, it is also a country that is rediscovering how to party. Visitors welcome.

10.
Useful websites

Getting there

- Air Berlin www.airberlin.com
- German Wings www.germanwings.com
- Hapag Lloyd Express www.hlx.com
- OLT www.olt.de
- Fly Be www.flybe.com
- Jet 2 www.jet2.com
- Ryanair www.ryanair.com
- EasyJet www.easyjet.com
- Lufthansa www.lufthansa.com
- British Airways www.ba.com

Once there

- Deutsche Bahn www.bahn.co.uk
- Youth Hostel Association www.jugendherberge.de

Further information on

- all aspects of travel to and within the country
- German National Tourist Office www.germany-tourism.co.uk
- Tel 020 73170900



There are lots of good reasons...



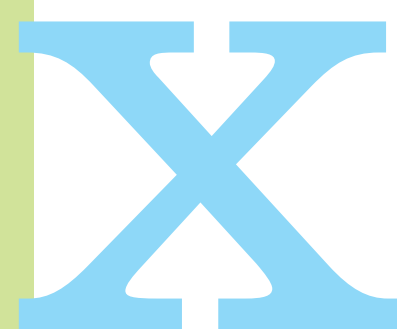
...for a trip to Germany. Which one...



...do you like best?



... you're in Germany

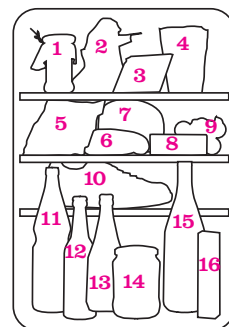


PICTURE-ALLIANCE/DPA (2), WEINHÄUPL/IMAGEPOINT (2), JIRKA-JANSCH.COM/IMAGEPOINT (2), HISS/OSTKREUZ, PICTURE-ALLIANCE/ZB, CARO/HECHTENBERG, CORBIS/DIDIER ROBICIS



★★★★★★★★★★ 09 The EU is good, because it is bureaucratic

Hard to believe, but true: Europe's bureaucracy has powerful advantages. And the EU is a lesson from history. It began life after World War II as an administrative body for the coal and steel industries, then started to incorporate other areas of the economy and politics until, finally, what we now refer to as "Brussels" came into existence. The EU is so successful that war between its member states is not only unthinkable, but also nearly impossible. Even when conflicts arise between the main players, the Commission simply gets on with its day-to-day activities. The rest of the world views this stability as extremely attractive.



Lifestyle from Germany?

Of course, it includes the old classics, such as sausages, sauerkraut and beer. And much more, too. We've taken a look into a fridge containing a suspiciously large number of cool products

1 ⇒ Marmelade A breakfast classic. And according to legend it was invented in Scotland. But together with a crunchy German bread roll or *Brötchen*, it's probably the best joint venture ever. Have you tried it?

2 ⇒ Gummibärchen Bears are the best. These little creatures made from sugar and gelatine were invented by Hans Riegel from Bonn in 1922.

3 ⇒ Ritter Sport A square of chocolate. Why is the chocolate so sporty? It was the idea of company founder Clara Ritter: she wanted a bar of chocolate that fitted exactly into the pocket of a sports jacket.

4 ⇒ Capri-Sonne Reminds Germans of trips to the swimming pool with Mama. The fruit drink in a bag comes from Heidelberg and is the world's most widespread drinks brand following Coca-Cola, Pepsi and Schweppes.

5, 6 ⇒ Wurst The butcher's art. "Jetzt geht es um die Wurst" is

what Germans say when things get serious. It means: "OK, this is it." But where did this idiom originate? Did someone steal the sausages?

7 ⇒ Bio-Vollkornbrot It's eco-logical. Germans are trendsetters in the organic sector: over 30,000 products in supermarkets now bear the Bio-Siegel eco-label.

8 ⇒ Käse Sorry, Netherlands, but Germany leads in cheese production. Each year 1.8 million tonnes of cheese are produced here. Germany the land of cheeses.

9 ⇒ Radieschen They're just radishes. They're tasty, not trendy.

10 ⇒ Adidas Sportschuhe Oops! Trainers in the fridge? They're cool enough already: the sport shoes with the three stripes from Herzogenaurach.

11 ⇒ Mineralwasser The favourite drink. On average every German drinks 130 litres of

mineral water each year and "just" 114 litres of beer.

12 ⇒ Bionade Shooting star from the provinces. Bionade comes from a little village – and almost overnight it has become the coolest non-alcoholic drink in clubs.

13 ⇒ Tannenzäpfle It's a record. There are 5,000 beer brands in Germany and 1,270 breweries. Have you ever heard of Tannenzäpfle? It has cult potential.

14 ⇒ Spreewald Gurken Pickles can perk you up – as another German saying goes. But why the giant gherkins from the Spreewald taste so good – that's a closely guarded secret.

15 ⇒ Riesling Found in all top restaurants. German Riesling has become a big international success.

16 ⇒ Dr. Hauschka Hollywood's choice. It's said that many stars have opted for the natural cosmetics from southern Germany. But why? Just try them out.

INSIDE MY
fridge

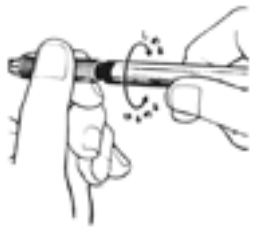


Christmas with the in-laws-to-be

By Christopher Lucas



Christopher Lucas is 25 years old, from London and currently completing a PhD in linguistics at Cambridge University. This talented linguist is not only proficient in English, but also speaks fluent French, German, Arabic, Italian – and a little Hebrew. Christopher Lucas won first prize with this contribution in the 2006 DAAD essay competition. This year the DAAD (German Academic Exchange Service) is once again offering a competition with attractive prizes. See page 2



Impetus

My uncle Ralph was adamant: “The Germans may not be inherently fascist; what they are is inherently fanatical. Like the Japanese. That’s why they were good allies.” Unanswerable logic, I think you’ll agree. But there was more. “Take Mirja,” he proposed. (Mirja was my German ex-girlfriend). “All that Steiner Waldorf cult weirdness: every German needs to throw themselves obsessively into something, be it eurhythmy or the Hitler Youth.”

I didn’t want to agree. I didn’t agree: I argued eloquently and vociferously. And yet that insidious little gremlin in my head kept piping up: he’s got a point there; he’s onto something.

How could I be entertaining this ludicrous idea? Does it make any sense to talk about an entire nation possessing a single character trait? It’s certainly not politically correct, but is it intellectually misguided? Ralph is a reasonable person. He wouldn’t claim for a moment that this analysis holds for every single German individual; merely that it’s an accurate representation of a general tendency.

My mission was clear. Investigate some Germans in their natural habitat and ascertain their level of fanaticism. Luckily I had the perfect pretext for penetrating deep behind enemy lines to carry out this perilous operation: Christmas with the in-laws-to-be.

Methodology

I shall be operating the following highly scientific mechanism for gauging the level of German fanaticism: every time I come across an instance of fanatical behaviour I shall award the Germans a point; every time I deem an opportunity for fanaticism to have been missed or I detect a positive lack of obsessiveness, I shall deduct a point. If they end up with a positive number of points they are indeed fanatical. If not, then they’re not.

Field work

Having arrived in Frankfurt International Airport, I boarded the ICE, InterCity Express, bound for Lippstadt. I had taken this train before and thought I remembered it being rather swish. As it was I was a little disappointed. Let us make no mistake: it was fast, clean and efficient. It put English trains with their grimy seats and inexplicable pauses in the middle of nowhere to shame. But I was getting it confused with the Swiss ICN train, which is basically ludicrous: it purrs soothingly as it hurtles you across the country, everything’s veneered, including the highly informative multi-lingual LED display, and the toilets are marbled things of beauty.

That’s how I remember it at any rate. The point is, the ICE is effective and ordinary. One can imagine a better service. Running Fanaticism Quotient (henceforth RFQ): **-1**.

Antonia met me at the station in Lippstadt and we proceeded to my first encounter with her family: Omi und Grosspapa. Here we spent less than twenty-four hours, but this was sufficient for a splendid joint display of fanaticism from our hosts. Not, I should stress, in their general attitude and demeanour, which was fairly laid-back for people of their age, but rather in one specific: Omi had very kindly offered to lend us her car for our trip, however both she and her husband were adamant that we could not venture out with the car without the vehicle’s Fahrzeugschein. We agreed and promptly forgot all about it, driving merrily on our way to Göttingen without this vital document. This was, naturally, an utter disaster. The remedy was textbook. Original sent to Langen to be sure of reaching us while we were there despite the interruptions to the post caused by Christmas; photocopy sent to Göttingen to tie us over in the meantime. Problem sorted. RFQ: **0**.

And so to Göttingen. By way of the Autobahn, which raises something of a problem for my analysis. I’ve deliberately left this notion of fanaticism undefined so as to be able to go on a similar kind of rough and ready intuition as that which informed my uncle Ralph’s view detailed above. But your average German’s driving on the Autobahn in no way conforms to the cautious, methodical, safety-conscious stereotype. Get them behind the wheel of a Mercedes or BMW and they’re lunatics. They’ll think nothing of racing up behind you to within a few feet of your bumper, when you’re going eighty miles an hour anyway, and you’re overtaking a juggernaut, and flashing their lights at you frenetically until you let them race past. In fact they do this to each other at 100mph+. So I’d like to deduct a point. But then again, surely this is a fanatical attachment to fast driving. The very fact that there is no speed limit on large stretches of motorway, despite the fact that people drive so recklessly, seems to demonstrate an unhealthy obsession with speed from the top down. So perhaps I should be adding a point. RFQ: **0**.

And so to Göttingen, where Antonia’s father lives (her parents are divorced). Hermann is a psychoanalyst. His current wife is a psychiatrist. His ex-wife, Anja (Antonia’s mother), is a psychiatrist. Anja’s ex-partner (after the divorce but before her re-marriage) is a psychiatrist. RFQ: **1**.

I had a wonderful Christmas in Göttingen. Hermann has three very sweet and Christmasy children: Paula, 11, Max, 9, and Felix, 6. I wanted to bring little presents from England, so I chose *The Fantastic Mr Fox* by Roald Dahl and a set of “predators” Top Trumps, or Quartett, as it’s known in German. As it turned out the sneaky English lesson element in “predators” could easily be bypassed by looking at the picture of the animal and saying its German name. There was one category where they did stick to the English though, allowing me a small measure of satisfaction, though in the event it was something of a pyrrhic victory. In addition to these animals’ vital statistics, speed, and the like, they were each assigned a “killer rating”. When it was explained to the boys what this was getting at they seemed very taken with the idea, Felix in particular. He took to rushing round the house and perpetrating acts of wanton

destruction on furniture, Max’s toys, the Christmas tree, shouting, “Killer wating zehn!” and cackling evilly. I put this down to a universal childish exuberance and so leave the RFQ unchanged. In fact, the general friendly chaos of this household, in contrast to the austere regimen I was half hoping to find, means I shall have to deduct another point from Germans everywhere. RFQ: **0**.

There is, however, a relevant postscript to the above. Antonia’s birthday is in January, so shortly after we got back to London the cards started coming in. The most memorable was from Max. It read simply, “Liebe Antonia, Herzlichen Glückwunsch zum Geburtstag. Ich gehe jeden Tag in den Park und hacke Eis. Dein Max.” RFQ: **1**.

Our next stop was Langen, near Bremerhaven, where Antonia’s mother, Anja, lives with her husband Peter, who, it turns out, is a retired English teacher, rather than a psychiatrist. This is emblematic, I’m afraid, of the disappointingly low levels of fanaticism encountered on this section of the trip. Anja’s parents had some pretty spectacular idiosyncrasies, however: lunch, bei Oma Helga and Opa Jan, is served daily at 10:30 am sharp; they keep the temperature in their house constant year-round at a balmy thirty degrees centigrade; and Opa Jan complains non-stop that his wife, one of the sweetest and most mild-mannered old ladies I’ve had the good fortune to meet, is dedicated to making his life a miserable story of permanent oppression. However it’s all done with such tremendous tongue-in-cheek humour that I cannot deem it fanatical. RFQ: **0**.

Next stop, Berlin for Silvester. When we arrived there had been a fair amount of snow which the local council had decided to do absolutely nothing about. When we were there there was the type of chaos we get when a few flakes fall here in England. We weren’t too badly off because we had winter tyres on the car and decent shoes, but I’ve never seen so many ultra-low-speed collisions and people slipping and sliding all over the pavements. This seemed like gross inefficiency to me. RFQ: **-1**.

Otherwise I had a very pleasant time in the German capital – it certainly seemed a much more laid-back kind of place than London. My impression may have been somewhat skewed, however, by the fact that I did very little of anything that could be called strenuous during my stay there. My abiding memory is of permanently sitting around in pleasant company, eating and drinking. I did manage to put a very small tick in the cultural box though, by having a quick whiz round the Pergamon Museum. It was an interesting little place, but I couldn’t help comparing it to the British Museum and noticing how much less efficient the Germans must have been at nicking cool stuff off other people than we were, given the relative size of the collections. So tempting to whip off another point, but I won’t because I like the zealotry of removing an entire ancient building plus a street and carting them off home to be allowed to deteriorate where people can really appreciate them. RFQ: **0**.

Our final destination was a small town called Isny im Allgäu in the beautiful south-eastern corner of Baden-Württemberg. We stayed at the

house of Anja’s ex-partner, Arno. This was a very enjoyable, if ever so slightly nightmarish experience. Enjoyable because our host was a kind and hospitable man, the food was great, and the weather was incredible – very cold and sunny every day such that the moisture frozen to every twig glistened like a cheesy Christmas card. The nightmarish part was that every wall in Arno’s house was crammed full of the stuffed heads of various animals he’d shot over the years. Now I’m not squeamish or sentimental – in fact I thought it was quite interesting to be able to look at all these rare and interesting animals up close – I just didn’t like the feeling I was being constantly stared at, that’s all. Then he showed me his secret basement room. Here he had your usual stuff: the jaw of an alligator, a waste paper basket made from a hollowed out elephant’s foot... But dominating the wall facing the door was the entire stuffed head and neck of a rhinoceros. It was colossal. It was insane. How on earth had he snuck that through customs in his suitcase? One thing’s for certain, it was well worth an extra point. RFQ: **1**.

On our final day we went sledging. I was expecting a sleek, stylish vehicle, made from some kind of futuristic material, preferably fitted with GPS technology. What we got was a couple of half rotten, very broken, old wooden things with rusty nails sticking out of them.

The hill was crammed with people on sledges, skis, and snowboards, careering downhill at alarming speed. Every time we went down, just as we were reaching maximum velocity, I would spot some mean-looking toddler on skis out of the corner of my eye, heading our way at an oblique angle. Every time, in order to avert what seemed to me to be certain injury and quite possibly worse in the event of a collision, I would hurl myself and my co-sledger from our vehicle so that we ended up in a cold wet heap a few yards down the hill, while the toddler sped on his way, chuckling to himself as he passed within inches of death. Haven’t these people heard of health and safety?! RFQ: **0**.

Conclusions

So that was it. My trip was at an end and the Germans had collectively earned themselves an official RFQ of zero. QED. So what’s the moral of the story? Well, my uncle Ralph (and my xenophobic gremlin) were proven wrong. But what salutary implications does this have for Anglo-German relations? I think it confirms what I have long suspected anyway: if one can characterise entire peoples in the manner of individuals, then the Germans are not the same as the English. But they’re not much different either. They are indeed efficient, but so are we, and we complain in a very similar way when we encounter inefficiency. So that’s good then. As for the sense of humour, I’ve rarely laughed so much as I did during this wonderful two and a half week trip round Germany. If only we English could get over our fanatical competitiveness with the Germans, then I’m quite sure that we’d all get on rather well and live happily ever after.



because it is modern

These days we can buy a holiday home in Spain, a car in Belgium or wine in France – all privileges that the European Commission has had to fight hard for, just as it is currently fighting for cheap mobile phone calls abroad. Without the EU, telephone companies would probably continue to fleece their customers. Only the EU has pushed through an integrated mobile phone standard, which is leading the way across the world.

Why study in Germany?



There are lots of **good reasons** why to study in Germany and an organisation such as the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) can reel them off at any given opportunity almost without thinking. But, why oh why, should you believe us? (At the end of the day it is our job to promote all the good things that exist within the German higher education system. That much is obvious!) So, we have asked some British and Irish students who are actually in Germany on a DAAD scholarship to email us why they find it attractive to study or do research in Germany and what their experiences have been so far. (The good news is that they are still speaking to us and actually seem to be ENJOYING their stay!) Enough said. **Here are a few examples from the DAAD's inbox:**

It's affordable and an incredible ... experience!

"I was surprised when I got to Berlin how easy it was to find a 'WG' (a flat share) as well as how incredible Berlin is and how much is going on. I was also surprised to find that it was quite easy to make friends with German students. Other pleasant surprises were the far lower cost of living, the Semesterticket (i.e. free travel for students on the city's public transport), the cheap student cafeterias and the medical system."

ANITA HURRELL (23)
MA STUDENT
HUMBOLDT UNIVERSITY &
FREE UNIVERSITY OF BERLIN
& UNIVERSITY OF POTSDAM

Grow wiser, not older!

"I think it's really important to live somewhere else for long enough to get an idea of the different ways in which things can be done, be it in terms of day-to-day social organisation, or of general attitudes, or approaches to teaching and research, or kinds of music and the value of a bicycle and so on. It really helps to be able to think for yourself about what the best way of doing things is."

JUDITH KERRY (26)
PHD STUDENT
UNIVERSITY OF POTSDAM

It's in the heart of Europe!

"My guide to Germany describes Germany as: 'Bach, Bratwurst & bustling Berlin.' While I must have heard Bach at some point, have definitely eaten a fair few Bratwursts and have visited bustling Berlin during my stay, there are a fair few things that I could add to that list other than the alliterative beer! Germany offers the beaches of the Baltic coast, the beauty of the Bavarian Alps, it was the border of the cold war, it has world renowned beers and wines and a wide culinary diversity. Geographically it is in the centre of Europe and yet each region (even each town) has something unique to offer."

SIMON LITCHFIELD (24)
PHD STUDENT
FRIEDRICH ALEXANDER
UNIVERSITY OF ERLANGEN-
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CHLOÉ DISKIN (20)
UNDERGRADUATE
UNIVERSITY OF HEIDELBERG

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"People worry about the high level of bureaucracy and 'red-tape' that goes on in Germany, however, my experience was that of smooth sailing! The efficiency of the international office makes life very easy for foreign students in Germany. This helped hugely at the beginning with the mundane essentials – opening a bank account, registering at the city and at the university for example. Germans will jump at any opportunity to practise their English – this can be helpful at the beginning!"

ANNE-MARIE O'NEILL (23)
MA STUDENT
FRIEDRICH SCHILLER
UNIVERSITY OF JENA



Many thanks to **Chloe, Anita, Simon, Anne-Marie** and **Judith**. Naturally, one could still come up with a million more reasons to study in Germany! 1. more and more degree courses taught in English 2. lower fees or none at all especially if you're taking your first degree 3. learning a second language will improve your job prospects 4. ... Ok, ok ... you tell us the rest! Find out more about studying and researching in Germany on www.daad.de and <http://london.daad.de>. See you in Deutschland **Antje Schlamm** DAAD London Branch