Germany's Christmas Market Extravaganza

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To celebrate the German Christmas Market Hostelworld, the leading global hostel accommodation plaform, has compiled the ultimate German Christmas Market road trip designed to evoke that warm and fuzzy festive feeling even in the Sroogiest of Scrooges'.

Starting in the Harz Mountains, Berlin, you will first visit a selection of village markets to kick off the bonanza. You'll then travel down to Meissen, Dresden, Germany's oldest market and it's then on to the walled medieval city of Rothenburg ob der Tauber, Bravaria. After which you'll drive across to Heidelberg, Frankfurt to show off your ice skating skills. The road trip finishes in Aachen where you can indulge in traditional 'printe', a special type of gingerbread!

Hostels offer an affordable accommodation option so you can spend more money on the important things - mulled wine, fruity cider, German sausage and Christmas decorations!

1. **1. Berlin, Harz Mountains**

Villages within the Harz Mountains such as Leipzig, Magdeburg and Goslar all host their own Christmas markets where you can find handcrafted wooden toys that originate from the area.

Leipzig
The history of Leipzig's Christmas market dates back to 1458 and is one of the largest and most beautiful in Germany with around 250 lit up stalls located in the city's historical market square. Further to the market itself visitors can enjoy the fairy-tale forest and a model railway display on Augustusplatz.

The market opens on 24th November and closes on 23rd December

Magdeburg
The 1,200 year old city pulls out all the stops over the festive season with thousands of white lights illuminating the historical town square. Those travelling with children can entertain them at the 'Advent in the vaults' at the Mark fortress centre.

The market opens on 23rd November and closes on 30th December (closed on 24th and 25th December)

Goslar
The Goslar Christmas Market houses around 70 romantically decorated stalls set in the beautiful medieval market square. The market's main attraction is the Christmas Forest on Schuhhof with 36 illuminated Christmas trees and reams of fairy lights, a spectacular site to behold.

The market opens on 25th November and closes on 30th December

For bargain beds in Berlin, check out our *Berlin Hostels*

2. **2. Dresden, Meissen**

Germany's oldest Christmas market dates back to 1434 and is traditionally known as Striezelmarkt which derives from Hefestrizel, a sweet delicacy that many years later has become known as “Desden Christollen” (German Christmas Cake).

This festive wonderland is located on the Altmarkt Square in a city centre teaming with history. You'll be surrounded by themed Christmas stalls stretching all the way up to the main railway station, Albertplatz.

The Market itself is a treasure trove of traditional handmade crafts ranging from Christmas pyramids, figurines and candleholders from the Erzebirge Mountains, pottery from Liustasia, gingerbread from Pulsnitz, blown glass tree decorations from Lauscha and of course specialities from Dresden itself including the traditional Pflaumentoffel, a chimney-sweep figure made of dried prunes. We'd suggest packing a spare suitcase to ship back your spoils!

This market opens on 26th November and closes on 24th December until 2pm

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1. **3. Bavaria, Rothenburg ob der Tauber**

One of the most beautiful places in Germany, the medieval walled city of Rothenburg was left totally untouched during the war and with cobbled streets and medieval architecture it is a 'chocolate box' town.

Home of Käthe Wohlfahrt, Germany's favourite and world-renowned toy shop, as well as stalls filled with Christmas decorations, mulled wine and German sausage, visitors will be hard pushed not to find the perfect Christmas gifts for those back home.

Whilst there be sure to try the local speciality, 'Schneeball' or snowball, which is made from strips of deep fried sweet dough covered with icing sugar and chocolate – salivating much?

The market opens on 27th November and closes on 23rd December.

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1. **4. Frankfurt, Heidelberg**

When arriving at the Heidelberg Christmas Market you'll be hit by the unmistakeable festive smells of roasted almonds, cinnamon and hot chestnuts. As you wind your way through the streets of the Old Town, positioned against the backdrop of the castle you'll pass by visitors frolicking on the ice rink and of course the beautifully decorated Christmas stalls.

The market opens on 23rd November and closes on 22nd December

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1. **5. Koln, Aachen**

The Aachen Christmas market has been open since 1973 and boasts 120 artisans and vendors there to peddle their Christmas wares. The symbol of this Christmas market is the 'printe' (a special gingerbread), specifically from Aachen. The traditional recipe for printe goes back hundreds of years and is now a closely guarded secret. Whilst there why not visit the Printenbäckerie Klein, a bakery dedicated to baking printen.

Other food stuffs to look out for include handmade sweets at the Bonbonmarcher stall, trading since 1900, that are made on site and come in flavours such as mulled wine, cream and raspberry.

The market opens on 20th November and closes on 23rd December

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About Hostelworld

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