New craze in Germany for British stag nights

Thursday 6 June, 2013

Germans & Scandinavians getting in to the pissup act

HP Sauce, Cadbury, Marmite – many of Britain's favourite exports may be a bit culinary, but we can also claim the Bentley and Financial Times. And of course, the stag-do. Believe it or not, the classic pre-wedding piss-up has been drunkenly embraced on the Continent.

"Germans and Scandinavians have really taken to the idea of traditional British stag nights,' said Max Bowen, sales manager for Pissup.com, a group travel and activities organizer with operations in 14 European cities. "We saw a 300% increase in groups from these countries since 2009."

While group t-shirts are still the norm, Brits are getting more creative with their fancy dress. They've got nothing on the Germans though, who go to extremes, and not just the groom.

"We typically have guides fighting over the German groups because we never know how they are going to dress," said Bowen. Prague is their first choice city, with most preferring to drive or go by bus or train. Amsterdam and Budapest round out the top three.

Germans also typically engage in a game called 'gut loading' in which the groom has a selection of small items (condoms, tampons) he must sell before the end of the night. Other 'tasks' the groom may need to accomplish include acquiring a certain number of ladies' panties or collecting kisses. The groups are fairly conservative so their top activities are pub crawls and clubbing.

The Scandinavians meanwhile know their alcohol, and their sun. Getting out of their often grey and expensive hometowns the Danes and Swedes are thrilled to wander from pub to pub, enjoying whatever the local tipple may be.

"For these groups, the focus is on the restaurants and bars, they know what they are looking for and we are constantly monitoring new restaurant openings to see if they'll offer something different that'll appeal to our Scandinavian groups," Bowen said.

Stag-dos have even evolved for the British. Historically, they followed a pretty predictable schedule: the groom, best man and their mates would go to the local town and spend the afternoon and evening touring all the drinking establishment getting increasingly drunk. They'll end up at a local club, or if available in their chosen city, a strip club. And then a kebab. Of course, the groom tied-up nude somewhere and preferably vomiting was always a bonus. Now, however new experiences are a priority, with weekend trips to new destinations that involve actually seeing the outside of a pub. Shooting, paintball and karting are just a few of the sober things mates include on their debauchery weekends these days.

"We've see the age of our groups rise over the year, with the majority of the groups in their early 30s," Bowen said. "These guys have done the drunken binge thing and now want a more memorable time spent with friends."

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