



Germany Travel Planning Podcast

Ep 20 – What's the Best Time to Visit Germany?

Transcript is autogenerated

Cate (00:00)

What's the best time of year to visit Germany? This is one of the most common questions we get from travelers. And it's such a good one, because the answer isn't as simple as you might think. This is the Germany Travel Planning Podcast, the show that helps you plan a super fun trip to Germany. I'm Cate, your Germany Destination Specialist, and I'm here to help you plan the trip of a lifetime.

Today, we're breaking down what each season in Germany is really like. Weather, crowds, costs, experiences, things like that. So you can figure out the best time to go for you because there is no best time of year. There's only the best time for your trip, your travel style, and your priorities. It's really important to us at My Germany Vacation that we bring your ideas and dreams to life. With our deep knowledge of Germany and years of travel planning experience, we'll help turn your vision into an unforgettable perfectly tailored trip.

Because when your trip lines up with what matters most to you, whether that's sunny weather or wine festivals or smaller crowds or getting the most out of your budget, everything becomes easier. Planning, packing, booking, all of it. And it becomes a lot more fun too.

Let's start off with spring. This is when Germany slowly wakes up from winter. The days are starting to get a little bit longer and that chill in the air begins to soften. The flowers start popping up in gardens and parks and window boxes. It's a really lovely time to be in Germany. But spring weather in Germany can be unpredictable. One day it might be sunny and warm and you feel like you can take your coat off and



wear your t-shirt. And the next day, you're pulling out your umbrella and getting that coat out and putting a hat on. Or possibly even snow boots if you're in the higher elevations. So it's important to pack for all possible weather and just be prepared for that variability in the weather. Spring is great if you want to avoid peak summer crowds. May in particular offers a sweet spot. You have longer days, you have those beautiful flowers and trees that are blooming, smaller crowds, and flights and hotels are often a bit more budget friendly at this time of year, especially if you book early.

As Germany moves into spring, attractions start to reopen and statues are uncovered, fountains are turned on, and festivals start popping up. So it seems like everything is just really coming to life. But the thing is that this happens over a period of time. So some things might be open when you're there, depending on when you go, and other things might not be quite yet open.

One of the most iconic springtime experiences in Germany is called Spargelzeit. This is white asparagus season, and Germans love it. You'll find white asparagus everywhere. You'll find it at the grocery store, and if you have an Airbnb or an apartment that you're renting, you can buy it at the grocery store and cook it at home. You can also go to lots and lots of restaurants. They'll offer full menus dedicated to white asparagus. Usually you can get it served with potatoes or ham with a hollandaise sauce or butter and it is really good. So if you're there during asparagus season, I highly recommend going to a restaurant and having white asparagus and you might even encounter an asparagus festival depending on where you are in Germany.

Thinking about traveling in spring, some of the pros about spring travel are you get weather that is not winter weather, it's not yet summer hot weather, and you get the beautiful blooming trees and flowers and things coming to life. You get smaller crowds, you get usually better deals on flights and hotels and more availability. And it can be a great time for more budget conscious travelers or if you just want to get more for your money.



Some of the cons of traveling in the spring are that the weather can be unpredictable. So you might experience all kinds of weather every other day. Early in the spring, some attractions might not yet have reopened or you might find that a fountain hasn't been turned on. So, you know, sometimes that can be a little disappointing. And there are some really fun spring festivals that you might encounter, but they could also drive up some of the hotel prices in some of the areas that you might want to go to.

So spring can be a really great choice for you if you're looking for things like spring flowers, fewer crowds, maybe some more budget friendly options or just more availability. And if you don't mind a little unpredictable weather or if you find that something like a castle or a site might be closed when you're planning to be there.

So one tip that I have if you're thinking about spring travel is definitely look at the castles and the sites and the hotels and you know the things that you want to go to and just make sure that they are actually open for the dates that you'll be there. I've traveled in Germany in the spring many many times and what I do is I just make sure that I'm prepared for cool drizzly weather and warm sunny weather. It's usually not terribly hot in the spring, so I don't really worry about that. But I make sure that I'm prepared for, you know, various types of weather, rain, wind, etc. And I've always enjoyed my spring travel.

Next up is summer in Germany. Summer is when Germany really shines. Like literally, the days are very long. It can stay light until, I don't know, 10 p.m. maybe. The weather is warm to even hot, possibly heat wave hot. And the whole country just comes alive with outdoor events and festivals and open air dining. Everyone is enjoying picnics on lawns and going for walks and hikes and swimming in lakes. It really is a lovely, lovely time to be in Germany.

June through August is high season. And like I said, you'll find everything from pleasant warm weather to full on heat waves. But the other thing to consider about



summer is that it is often the wettest time of year in many parts of Germany. So we have experienced that. I've been in Germany for beautiful summers where it hasn't rained hardly at all, but it has been very, very hot. And I've been in Germany during summers where I feel like it has rained more than the sun has been shining. Probably not quite that extreme, but that's how I remember it.

The thing is, is that while it's disappointing to encounter rain while you're traveling, especially if you're on vacation, we've actually found it's not so bad in the summer because it's still warm. So like we will still wear shorts, we'll wear t-shirts. We'll just bring a light jacket with us, in case it does get a little bit colder when it's raining. And be prepared. So, you know, bring an umbrella or a rain jacket and, you know, don't just bring sandals and then you'll be fine.

Here's something else to know that's especially important in the summer months. Germany is not big on air conditioning. So if you're visiting during a hot time of year, so, you know, there could be a heat wave in June, July, August, early September, probably not the entire time, but it could happen in one of those months.

And if you really need air conditioning to sleep or if you need to cool off, be sure to double check that the hotel or vacation rental that you're looking at has air conditioning. Not all of them do, especially in smaller towns, mountain areas, or small family run older types of B&Bs and older buildings. And the other thing is that even if there is air conditioning, it doesn't mean that it's going to be super strong or you're going to find, you know, really cold temperatures in your room.

While I prefer to have air conditioning, I find it easier to sleep in the summer when my room has air conditioning. I don't really stress about it too much anymore. When we stay at hotels that don't have air conditioning, we just open up the windows at night, let the cool air in. Sometimes we'll request a fan and we find that that makes it pretty bearable.



The other thing to know about traveling in the summer is that you will most likely still get a duvet in your room. I find them a little bit too heavy to sleep under in the summer. So what I've started doing is I bring lightweight pajamas and then I also bring a very lightweight blanket with me. And that way I know that I will have something comfortable when I'm sleeping and I generally can sleep pretty well with a really thin lightweight blanket.

Now I will say there have been a few times where we have been in Germany during the heat wave in a hotel without air conditioning and there have been a couple of nights that have been extremely uncomfortable. So this is something to very seriously think about. If you plan a trip to Germany in the summer, you could experience beautiful, perfect weather. If you go for two weeks, you could have two weeks of beautiful, absolutely ideal conditions. You could also experience two weeks of weather where you have a rainstorm every day. Not all day, but you might have a little bit of rain every day.

On the other end, you could experience Germany where you have several days of extremely hot weather. So this is something to seriously consider because I know that some people are just very, very uncomfortable or downright miserable in hot weather if they can't cool off. So I would consider this, consider how you will feel if you do experience a heat wave and then think about the things that you can do to mitigate that and whether you will still be comfortable or not.

I will still travel in Germany in the summer, although for many years I was not real excited about traveling in Germany in the summer. But since we've been back the last couple of years, I've actually found it more bearable. And one of the things that I do in addition to bringing that really thin blanket so that I can sleep or getting a hotel room with air conditioning is we will often rent a car.

Now we don't use cars in cities to get from site to site. We still use public transportation. But I have actually found that renting a car in the summer is really



great because we get air conditioning. And so I find that's just a way I can cool down. You know, if we're doing a day trip or going from one location to the next, we're in a nice air conditioned car.

Now, if you're looking for a hotel with air conditioning, I highly recommend starting with our hotel guides on our website. We do a lot of hotel research so that we can recommend hotels that are in excellent locations, have really good prices, great amenities, are highly rated, and a lot of them do have air conditioning. So I'll link that up in our show notes.

And if you have our Germany Travel Planner, then I would definitely recommend going to our interactive digital map. We have not only all the top sites that we recommend for all over Germany and castles and castle hotels and tours and things like that. We also have the hotels that we recommend. We put those on the map so that you can see where the hotels are in relation to the top sites. So you can see our photos, our tips, our information about the hotels that we recommend, and you can see which ones also have air conditioning.

Now, one more thing to think about with summer is that it is peak tourist season. So you are more likely to see crowds at popular sites and in popular cities. And prices for flights and hotels and tours, they all go up and they get booked up pretty quickly. Because people can book hotels online now, a lot of them do get booked up and then the prices go up and availability plummets. So I highly recommend booking your hotels early. You can book refundable hotel rooms, that's what we do. And then you can always change your mind later but at least you have something locked in that you're happy with at a price that you're okay with.

Also, if you're planning to travel to top attractions like Neuschwanstein Castle or the Parliament Dome in Berlin, be sure to book your tickets well in advance, like weeks or months in advance, not days. Same thing goes if there's a tour that you wanna do or a guided day trip, or if you would like to work with a private guide. The private guides



that we work with as our preferred partners, they get booked up very quickly because they are excellent, outstanding guides. So I would highly recommend thinking about those things in advance and getting those things booked.

Now one really great thing about traveling in the summer is that there are lots of outdoor events. So there's lots of really great festivals and like street fairs, wine festivals, music festivals, and lots of fun events like Berlin's Carnival of Cultures or Rhine and Flames or yeah, there's a whole bunch that I'm not even thinking about right now. There's lots of music. I mean we've got all sorts of things like that in the summer and it's really fun to do those things in another country. There's also lots of outdoor activities. You can go hiking, biking, swimming, you know, enjoying beer gardens. There's just so many things to do outside in the summer.

Okay, so the pros of traveling in the summer: long days, lots and lots of sunshine. So you can, you feel like you can really do a lot during the day. There are loads of festivals and events and really fun things to do. It's a great time to do things outdoors. And there's also just this really fun, lively and energetic atmosphere that you really only get in the summer.

Some of the cons of summer travel, peak prices, bigger crowds, and often things get booked up pretty far in advance. You might experience a heat wave and Germany has limited air conditioning and they're still not super keen on cold drinks. And you might experience more rain than you expect and some summer storms.

Summer is ideal if you love those really long days, if you're interested in all of the festivals and events that take place outdoors and really benefit from good weather and a warm or even hot weather is to your liking. And if you don't mind potentially encountering crowds or higher prices.

Okay, let's move on to fall in Germany. Now, while I really like spring travel, I really like summer travel, I absolutely love fall travel. September in Germany is usually quite



nice. Usually you have warm days, crisp mornings and evenings, and you're really starting to get that first, you know, the first hints of fall colors.

I say usually because every once in a while it is rainier in September than usual, but usually September is a good time. The heat of summer has usually faded by about mid-September. Kids are back at school, so there's fewer people vacationing. And so a lot of the popular spots become a little bit less crowded.

By October, things start to cool down more noticeably. The light starts changing and it starts getting dark earlier and it just really starts to feel cozy. You'll still get the crisp mornings and evenings and oftentimes you'll get nice warm days in the afternoons as well. By November, especially towards the middle of the month, winter really starts creeping in. Days get shorter, temperatures drop, so you'll need to wear a coat and some places actually start beginning prepping for the holiday season.

And there are some times in November where it has almost really been overnight where it feels like it has switched from beautiful fall weather into foggy, cold winter weather. It's kind of amazing. But even in November, travel in Germany is great, especially at the end of the month when you start experiencing the beginning of the Christmas markets.

So fall travel usually means fewer crowds, and especially in late October and in November, lower prices on flights and hotels. Of course, you never know, you know, got to check if there's a local event going on that might prevent prices from going down or availability from going up. But it's often a good time to snag a deal. In late October and early November, those outdoor statues that you see around palaces, castles and elsewhere often are covered up and then fountains are turned off and covered as well.

Some castles or other sites have reduced winter hours and other sites like Eagle's Nest or things like boat cruises close for the winter season. So it's always a good idea



to check if the things you wanna do and see will be open. And of course, there's Oktoberfest. It actually begins in late September and runs into early October and it's the biggest beer festival in the world. So you can imagine that hotel prices skyrocket at this time of year. And many of the hotels are actually booked out a year in advance. It's also harvest season, and especially in Germany's wine regions, like the Rhine and Mosel valleys, you'll find really nice, cozy wine festivals and scenic vineyards and charming fall markets. And don't forget that October 3rd is the day of German Unity, which is a national holiday. And by late November, the first Christmas markets begin to open.

So the pros of traveling in the fall are you usually find fewer tourists and better prices. You'll find gorgeous fall foliage and beautiful light coming through that fall foliage and cozy vibes. There are lots of fun things to do outside, fall festivals, Oktoberfest, wine fests, et cetera. And at the end of November, you have the start of the Christmas market season.

Some of the cons of fall travel, cooler weather, could be wetter weather, shorter daylight hours, and some of the touristites either start reducing their hours or they close for winter.

Fall is perfect for you if you enjoy crisp weather, colorful foliage, and local festivals with fewer crowds and better prices in summer, and if you're okay with some possible variation in the weather.

Now, last but not least, let's talk about winter. So the first thing, yes, it gets dark early. Like it will be dark by 4:30 in December. And it will start feeling like it's getting dark by about two o'clock. It can be cold, it can be rainy, it could even be snowy. You could even get a huge snowstorm. It can be foggy. Sometimes it'll be all of that in one day. And while January and February aren't my top recommended months for travel in Germany, December definitely is.



December is absolutely magical with the Christmas markets and all of the lights and the festivities. I think that is probably my number one time of year. That's probably my absolute favorite. There are a lot of times, like I pretty much like traveling in Germany at any time of year, but I think Christmas market season is probably my favorite time of year, hands down.

December does get busy. It can get very crowded because people come from all over the world to experience German Christmas markets. Germany does have the best Christmas markets. There's just no comparison. And the Christmas markets are right downtown. They're in the old town. So not only are there more people visiting, you've got all of that in the old town. So it can feel crowded. It can feel very busy and kind of hectic, but the Christmas markets are just amazing.

So as you can imagine, hotels get booked up very quickly, especially the ones that have a really good price or are in really excellent locations and flights can also be more expensive and they can also get booked up early. So if you're going to go during Christmas market season, I highly recommend booking those things in advance.

There have been times when we have not been able to book hotels very far in advance when we go visit Christmas markets and it's been okay. Sometimes we just pay more for a hotel. Sometimes we stay a little bit further out. Sometimes we don't get quite the room that we were hoping for. But there have been a few times when we could not find anything, like when we went to Nuremberg, we could not find a hotel that wasn't super, super, super expensive anywhere near the old town. So we actually went out and stayed in a smaller town. It's just kind of the outskirts of Nuremberg and it's called Fjöt. And we ended up staying there and it was fine. But it worked out okay.



But I mention this because if you have your heart set on staying in the Old Town very close to the Christmas markets, then you definitely want to book those in advance if you also want to have a choice of hotel and find good prices.

And if you are planning a Christmas market trip, don't miss the Christmas market guide in our DIY Germany Travel Planner. and I have been to well over 100 Christmas markets. I don't even know how many at this point. We've been going to them for so many years. And during the last Christmas season, we were in Germany specifically to do research for our Christmas market guide.

So we went to over 50 Christmas markets all over Germany. We were searching out the best markets for this guide that we can recommend to you. And on our interactive digital map, we have the top markets. We have our tips and we tell you what's unique about the market, why you should visit. We also show you photos so that you really get a sense of what the market is like. And then we also show you hotels, our recommended hotels, so that you can choose the hotel that's closest to the markets that you want to go to. Because there are so many Christmas markets in Germany now. It's a little overwhelming, and some of them you won't know about. And the thing about Christmas markets is if you only go to the one that is the most well-known right in the old town, they're all going to start to feel the same.

We have found the markets that are a little bit further out and they're a little bit more unique. So you can create a Christmas market trip that doesn't just replicate the same markets over and over and over. You can create a Christmas market trip where you get like a little bit of everything and each market will be unique.

So if you wanna know our favorite markets, see the photos and read our insider tips so that you can make the most of this absolutely magical season. Definitely check out the Christmas Market Guide in our DIY Germany Travel Planner. I'll add a link to our planner in the show notes so you can check it out.



Now, after the holidays, things start to slow way down. January and February are low season, which means you'll find some really great prices and very few tourists. But a lot of sites and some hotels shut down. And there are some tours that aren't running, some day trips aren't running, and some private guides don't do any tours at that time of year.

I've traveled all over Germany in January and February and have had a great time. And sometimes we've had just a couple other people on a small group tour. And one time we had a lovely historic hotel all to ourselves. If those are the only months you can go to Germany, then definitely go. You'll find lots of fun things to do. But if you have a choice, I recommend going in spring, summer, fall, or December.

So some of the pros of winter travel, the Christmas markets in December are absolutely magical. You can find really great travel deals in January and February. The cons of winter travel, very short travel days, cold weather, limited sunlight, and some attractions might be closed, and some attractions might have reduced hours or might even be closed for the whole winter season. Winter is a good time to travel if you love the festive Christmas markets, cozy vibes, and some travel deals. And if you don't mind cold weather and early sunset.

So when should you go to Germany? Honestly, there's no wrong time to visit Germany. But there is definitely a right time for you depending on what kind of experience you want.

If you want fewer tourists and cheaper flights, spring and late fall are your best bets. If you love sunshine, long days, outdoor events, and you can tolerate heat waves, summer is a good time for you.

If you like foliage and wine festivals and cozy fall vibes, September or October are great. And if you can't resist the twinkling lights and the beauty and magic of the Christmas markets, December is for you.



Rest assured that no matter when you go, Germany is going to surprise and delight you and you'll have an unforgettable time.

Before you go, two quick things. First, if you found our podcast helpful, please leave a five-star rating and even better, a review. That helps more travelers find our podcast and that means we can keep creating episodes to help you plan an unforgettable trip to Germany and surrounding countries.

And second, if you're just starting to plan your trip and you want to enjoy the best of Germany while also skipping those rookie mistakes most travelers unknowingly make, you'll love our best-selling DIY Germany Travel Planner.

Think of it as your travel savvy best friend who's handing you everything you need to know to plan your perfect trip. And if you'd like personalized support, upgrade to a one-on-one consult, itinerary review, or even a complete custom itinerary and travel plan. You'll find everything on mygermanyvacation.com. Thanks so much for listening to the Germany Travel Planning Podcast, and until next week, happy travel planning!