

The winter fairy tale of Karlsruhe

Karlsruhe's Christmas market immerses visitors in a winter wonderland

When Santa Claus flies above the cozy gabled houses and the crowded streets on his reindeer-drawn sleigh, you know that it is **Christmas time** in Karlsruhe! Karlsruhe's "**Christkindlesmarkt**" invites visitors to step into a winter fairy tale from November 28 to December 23, 2017. But isn't this just another German Christmas market? Not at all! The **fan-shaped city** enchants its visitors with a mix of sparkling winter wonderland, German "Gemütlichkeit" and an extraordinary program.

Mulled wine, roasted almonds and Christmas cookies are just the beginning of any visit to Karlsruhe's Christmas market. Talking fairy-tale houses and a train ride through a magical forest will bring a glint of excitement to children's eyes. An imposing pyramid of lights illuminates the **Marktplatz** (market square). Decorated stalls invite visitors to indulge in regional delicacies such as dumplings with sauerkraut. The "Glühweinwäldchen" (mulled wine copse) seduces visitors' taste buds with its Christmas treats.

Are you dreaming of more than just a cozy "Waldweihnacht" (woodland Christmas)? How about a romantic horse-carriage ride to the ice rink directly in front of the illuminated baroque castle of Karlsruhe? Thomas Jefferson had already acknowledged the enchanting effect of Karlsruhe's castle and its fan-shaped street layout by basing his design of Washington, D.C. on it. Nowadays, visitors to the Christmas market can skate on the **second largest open-air ice rink** in Germany, which includes a special beginners' area, a curling sheet and a circular path beneath the illuminated trees. And the cozy "Eiszeit-Stube" (ice lounge) lets you enjoy good food surrounded by thousands of lights.

Those interested in a cultural program should take their time at the **Staatliche Kunsthalle** (The State Art Gallery). "Cézanne – Metamorphoses", the exhibition featuring French art, takes a fresh look at Cézanne's bright landscapes, bathers, portraits and still-life paintings. Apart from admiring great art, visitors can also buy exquisite modern and traditional artisan craftwork at the beautifully decorated stalls in the city center.

Only a few minutes away from Karlsruhe, fans of the medieval period will find the perfect place: the **historic Christmas market** just outside Karlsburg Castle bathed in the soft glow of candlelight and the warmth of bonfires presents a truly historical atmosphere with its artists, musicians, craftsmen and storytellers. A medieval camp, a fire show and swordplay top off the entertainment program. Visitors are also invited to join in the spectacle: shooting crossbow bolts or riding an ancient carousel.

About Karlsruhe:

Karlsruhe, formerly the capital of Baden, lies in southwest Germany, on the western flank of Baden-Württemberg. Situated adjacent to the mighty river Rhine, the city is close to the border with France. The climate is very pleasant – its location on the Rhine Plain makes Karlsruhe one of the sunniest and warmest cities in Germany. Founded by Margrave Charles William nearly 300 years ago, the city's plan resembles that of Paris, with streets laid out in rays, like the ribs of a fan, radiating from a central point that is the margrave's palace. The renowned 18th century city planner L'Enfant liked Karlsruhe's design so much that he incorporated its elements into his plans for Washington, D.C.

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02_Ice_rink: Winter in Karlsruhe also means skating in front of the baroque castle.

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03_Cézanne: Works of Paul Cézanne at the Staatliche Kunsthalle.

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