



THE
PLACES
WE'LL
GO

August is a national travel month in Germany. Many school children are on summer vacation, German and American alike. The Autobahns will become packed with families escaping to the mountains, lakes, and seashore.

So this month, we wanted to take you on a mini-vacation across Europe from the Fire and Ice of Iceland to the beautiful Rhine river wineries. But if you're having a staycation in Stuttgart or work is keeping you here, we have a piece on the royal palaces in the local region and a sampling of books that at least can help your mind travel. We hope you will enjoy our slightly non-traditional Stuttgart Citizen magazine this month.

August is also a month of transition for our service members and civilians, as the garrison welcomes hundreds of new families and bids "Auf Wiedersehen" to hundreds more as they leave for new duty stations across the globe. It's a bittersweet time for many who will be leaving colleagues and friends behind, including for us, as we bid adieu to a pair of public affairs stalwarts. First, we bid farewell to Becca Castellano. She has been the Stuttgart Citizens' managing editor since the beginning of the year. She has stewarded this publication from its newspaper origins into the magazine you see today. Not only did she write heartfelt and impactful stories about the community we live in – like the story of the fallen 1-10 Soldier Master Sgt. Mike Riley, or about how a community of animal lovers

came together to save a cat, Becca was instrumental in this garrison's fight against COVID-19. She led many of our virtual town halls, was our voice on AFN radio, and truly excelled at being a public affairs specialist, never wavering when faced with a challenge. Fair winds and following seas, we know you and Sean will excel in Washington D.C.

We're also saying farewell to our intrepid – sometimes rogue reporter – Geoffrey Morris. If you lived in the Stuttgart Military Community the past year, there's a good chance you've bumped into Geoff. Sharply dressed with his PAO hat on and camera slung to his side, Geoff tirelessly canvassed the community to bring your voice to life. A volunteer for much of the past year, he was part of the garrison summer hire program, earning pay he has long deserved. You can find out more about the summer hire program in the story he wrote for the edition. But thankfully, Geoff won't be leaving the community; rather, he will be joining the Panzer elementary school as a substitute teacher and social media manager. So expect to continue to see his stories grace this magazine.

To the readers: safe travels this month, and see you in September. We're glad YOU live here.

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Becca Castellano admires the Icelandic shore from the comfort of her van.

Photo by Sean Castellano

Cover image:

Vestrahorn mountain on Stokksnes cape in Iceland at sunset with reflections.

Photo by Yevhenii Chulovskyi/Shutterstock.com



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New arrivals at the library

By Geoffrey Morris

USAG Stuttgart Public Affairs

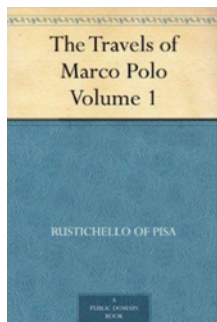
August is travel month in Germany — for Germans and Americans alike! So this month we are providing a selection of books and movies about travel from a guide book to Berlin, and another propelling the reader through a wardrobe and into a mysterious new world. The best part, they're all available for free at the Stuttgart Library: <https://www.mwrlibrary.armybiznet.com>.

So no matter where you physically go this August, let these selections engage your wanderlust.

The Travels of Marco Polo

By Marco Polo

Marco Polo (1254-1329) has achieved an almost archetypal status as a traveller, and his Travels is one of the first great travel books of Western literature, outside the ancient world. The Travels recounts Polo's journey to the eastern court of Kublai Khan, the chieftain of the Mongol empire which covered the Asian continent, but which was almost unknown to Polo's contemporaries. Encompassing a twenty-four year period from 1271, Polo's account details his travels in the service of the empire, from Beijing to northern India and ends with the remarkable story of Polo's return voyage from the Chinese port of Amoy to the Persian Gulf. Alternately factual and fantastic, Polo's prose at once reveals the medieval imagination's limits, and captures the wonder of subsequent travel writers when faced with the unfamiliar, the exotic or the unknown.



Mamma Mia

By Phyllida Lloyd

Mamma Mia! (promoted as Mamma Mia! The Movie) is a 2008 jukebox musical romantic comedy film containing music directed by Phyllida Lloyd and written by Catherine Johnson based on her book of the 1999 theatre show of the same name. The film, in turn, is based on the songs of pop group ABBA, with additional music composed by ABBA member Benny Andersson. The film features an ensemble cast, including Christine Baranski, Pierce



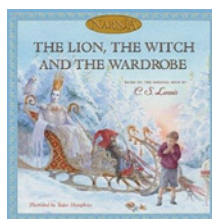
Brosnan, Dominic Cooper, Colin Firth, Amanda Seyfried, Stellan Skarsgård, Meryl Streep and Julie Walters. The plot follows a young bride-to-be who invites three men to her upcoming wedding, each one with the possibility of being her father.

The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe

By C.S. Lewis

Narnia... the land beyond the wardrobe door, a secret place frozen in eternal winter, a magical country waiting to be set free.

Lucy is the first to find the secret of the wardrobe in the professor's mysterious old house. At first her brothers and sister don't believe her when she tells of her visit to the land of Narnia. But soon Edmund, then Peter and Susan step through the wardrobe themselves. In Narnia they find a country buried under the evil enchantment of the White Witch. When they meet the Lion Aslan, they realize they've been called to a great adventure and bravely join the battle to free Narnia from the Witch's sinister spell.



The Mummy

By Stephen Sommers

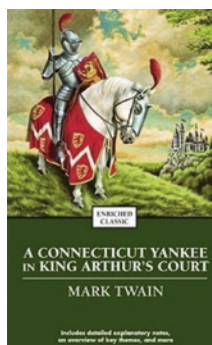
The Mummy is a 1999 American film written and directed by Stephen Sommers. It is a remake of the 1932 film of the same name with stars Brendan Fraser, Rachel Weisz, John Hannah, and Kevin J. O'Connor, and Arnold Vosloo in the title role as the reanimated mummy. The film follows adventurer Rick O'Connell as he travels to Hamunaptra, the City of the Dead, with a librarian and her older brother, where they accidentally awaken Imhotep, a cursed high priest with supernatural powers.



Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court

By Mark Twain

One of the greatest satires in American literature, Mark Twain's 'A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court' begins when Hank Morgan, a skilled mechanic in a nineteenth-century New England



arms factory, is struck on the head during a quarrel and awakens to find himself among the knights and magicians of King Arthur's Camelot. The 'Yankee' vows brashly to "boss the whole country inside of three weeks" and embarks on an ambitious plan to modernize Camelot with 19th c. industrial inventions like electricity and gunfire. It isn't long before all hell breaks loose!

DK Eyewitness Travels

2015 Berlin

By DK Eyewitness Travels

DK Eyewitness Travel Guide: Berlin is your in-depth guide to the very best of Berlin. Experience the greatest of all this city has to offer, from its remarkable Pergamon Museum and historic Berlin Wall to its energetic contemporary arts scene and legendary non-stop nightlife. Detailed itineraries and "don't-miss" destination highlights at a glance.



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Insights into history and culture to help you understand the stories behind the sights.

Magic Tree House Vacation Under the Volcano

By Mary Pope

Jack and Annie are ready for their next fantasy adventure in the bestselling middle-grade series—the Magic Tree House!

Who wants to vacation next to a volcano?

Jack and Annie are about to find out when the Magic Tree House whisks them back to the days of the Roman Empire. They arrive in Pompeii and soon discover that it is the very day the city will be destroyed. Now Jack and Annie must race against time to find an ancient library before it is buried in ash!



Book covers and descriptions provided by Army Europe Libraries or Goodreads

Movie covers and descriptions provided by Wikipedia



Patch Post Office circulates close to a thousand deliveries every day. With that many packages arriving, summer hires like Anthony Cala, Maya Johnson, and Gabriella Figueroa (left to right) are essential to the continued functioning of the Post Office.
Photo by Geoffrey Morris

Summer hires aid garrison

By Geoffrey Morris
USAG Stuttgart Public Affairs

U.S. Army Garrison Stuttgart has all hands on deck this PCS season, and that's why the post is tapping into a special labor pool – families, or more accurately, their kids.

Eleven youths from the ages 15-22 were selected for the post's six-week summer hire program. The teens and twenty-somethings were placed in various garrison agencies from the post office to housing. More than 50 candidates applied for the program, which began June 21.

"Across the board, they up our A-game," said garrison postmaster Larry Baricuatro, whose seven summer hires make up the majority of the garrison's temporary youth employment.

Baricuatro said the new team members were essential to the continued operations of Stuttgart's four post offices. They work side-by-side with the regular employees, breaking down trucks full of packages, sorting mail, and finally delivering that mail to P.O. boxes, he said.

Summer hire program director Ray Brown said the program's purpose is "to get our family members experience in the workforce while helping out the garrison at the same time." As the program's head organizer for the past few years, Brown said that he'd seen the benefits that the program provides to the youths, their families, and the community over the years. "They get an upbeat spirit, for family members to help contribute to their family."

Along with the post office, the housing office and the Military Personnel Division have also gained new temporary employees. Seventeen-year-old James Montoya is working at the passport office. He's not only helping the community, and he's already putting his knowledge to use.

"My parents are actually in [passport] renewal right now, so I've been able to direct them through it," he said.

Erin Kenealy, a summer hire, who's been helping the Directorate of Public Works housing office, said the opportunity to work for the garrison is building off work experience she already has in the community.

"I already had some experience in the workforce from the vet clinic, so it's great to have an opportunity to diversify," the 19-year-old said.

Kenealy has been proud of her work managing arrivals to the housing office and providing guidance to customers.

"It's not an easy job, helping with things that might seem minor but are absolutely essential," her supervisor said.

While the program may end July 30 for Kenealy, Montoya, and the rest of the summer hires, this is just the beginning of their burgeoning careers.

Montoya remarked on his experience in the program, "It's taught me more than just accountability but the systems and the processing, something I can use in my future endeavors with the military."

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Fire and Ice

Photo by Gestur Gíslason/Shutterstock.com

By **Becca Castellano**

USAG Stuttgart Public Affairs

The land of Fire and Ice landed at the top of my bucket list several years ago as photos of its otherworldly landscapes began popping up all over Facebook and Instagram. As my obsession with the remote island grew, it seemed the rest of the world's curiosity with island did too. Tourism in Iceland has expanded dramatically in recent years but it's still not a destination you can land in and "wing it." Lodging, whether hotels or Airbnb's, are popping up all over the Island, but they can be pricey and in high demand. And if you are trying to leave Iceland's capital, Reykjavik, guided tours or rental cars might be your only options.

When planning for my family of two, I decided early on to join the camper van craze that dominates Iceland's tourism industry, and drive the island in our own home on wheels. With many options designed to fit every family size, we chose a basic, two-person camper complete with everything we needed to survive for nine days. (This was the perfect amount of time to see everything we wanted, and, most importantly, still like each other after living together in such close quarters.)

Our camper van came with basic cooking gear, a propane camp stove, two chairs, a camp table, and a cooler. For a small fee, we opted to add portable WIFI and a power converter to charge our computer and camera gear. We were plugged in and accessible

everywhere we went on the island, which provided peace of mind when driving through Iceland's more remote areas.

Where to sleep:

Wild camping has been outlawed in Iceland, but there are plenty of designated camping grounds all over so we never had an issue finding a safe place to park for the night. All were equipped with toilets and water, and most had heated showers and kitchen facilities. There is an Icelandic camping card you can buy that gives you access to several campgrounds around the country, but this does limit which ones you can use.

I highly recommend the van life experience, because even with a detailed itinerary, we were often pulled off course by some otherworldly scenery we found ourselves driving through. Some of our favorite memories from this vacation were made on detours we never planned. Our impromptu stops only happened because we did not have reservations to keep at any hotels.

Land of the Midnight Sun

I highly recommend visiting during the summer months. We had originally planned to travel over our anniversary in early September 2020 in hopes of seeing the northern lights. But, when COVID-19 cancelled our trip, we jumped at the chance to reschedule in May 2021. If COVID has taught us anything, it is to not wait for the perfect timing, just go! So, we booked for May 28 through June 7 and I am so glad we did. The midnight sun is a strange thing to experience, but

we saw so much more on our daily drives and we were able to enjoy some of the Arctic "Summer" weather with an average daily high of 53 degrees!

What to see:

Finally, the fun part. Planning on what to see! I have included the highlights from our trip below but I highly recommend following Icelandic travel pages on Facebook or Instagram to tailor your own itinerary to your specific interests. We mixed in a few paid, guided tours but mostly we spent our days exploring at our own pace and stopping when we got tired.

Our top four recommended sites are: Fagradalsfjall Volcano

I lived at the base of Mount Etna in Sicily for three years and watched her frequent eruptions from my rooftop. But it was nothing compared to the adrenaline I felt watching Fagradalsfjall blow after a grueling hike up steep terrain in driving rain. The raw power we experienced from this volcano was unreal. If you ever get the chance to visit while she is still erupting, do it! And if you miss it, well no worries, it is the land of Fire and Ice for a reason!

Diamond Beach at the Glacier Lagoon

The other half of the Fire and Ice can be found a few hours away along Iceland's southern coast. Diamond Beach, just outside of The Jökulsárlón glacier lagoon, gets its name from the smooth, glassy chunks of ice that glitter across its sand like diamonds. As the "bling"

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breaks off of the Jökulsárlón glacier in the lagoon, it makes its way out to sea and often washes ashore on Diamond Beach. Gemstone to car-sized “diamonds” make a dramatic scene against the black sand beach.

*We opted to take a boat tour in the lagoon and loved it! The guide explained how researchers use the air bubbles within the ice to date the glacier. Then she fished out a giant chunk of ancient glacier for us to use in our cooler later.

Silfra Fissure

Snorkel or dive between two tectonic plates in the Thingvellir National Park! This can only be done in a guided tour, and it was definitely worth it! After being fitted for dry suits and receiving a safety briefing, we followed our guide into crystal clear water and began our journey between the North American and European tectonic plates. Despite the freezing temperatures, the water looked straight out of the Caribbean. Tour guides boast that this is the only place in the world where you can touch two different continents at the same time, and they make sure to get a picture of you doing just that!

Honorable Mention: Stokksnes Beach

Stokksnes Beach Earns an honorable mention for its quiet beauty and amazing sunset. We happened upon this quiet corner of the island one evening and stopped for a picture. Several hours and hundreds of photos later, we decided this was one of our favorite spots. If you're planning to visit, I recommend trying

to arrive at dusk when the sinking sun ignites the black sand.

Things to know: Water proof pants

Seriously, do not even think about visiting Iceland without these game changers. We used these (paired with waterproof jackets) to climb behind massive waterfalls and trek through a massive torrential rain-fall on our way up an active volcano. They made those once-in-a-lifetime views possible and comfortable.

Camera

Because if there are no pictures, did it even happen? The landscape here is the closest thing to a foreign planet that I have yet to see. Bring your camera. And if you have a fancy expensive camera, you might want to consider investing in a waterproof cover because if you haven't figured it out yet, Iceland is often wet.

Warm layers

We watched, in our Longjohns and winter hats, as children in Husavik, Iceland celebrated “warm” spring weather on a slip-n-slide run by the local fire department. No matter how warm it gets in Iceland, I don't think you can enjoy it in shorts and a t-shirt unless you are a local.

Shopping

We lived in a van so groceries stores were key. So if you are committing to camper van travel, make sure

to stock up in Reykjavik, as the stores there are a little cheaper and more abundant. Keep in mind most stores close at 6 p.m., which shouldn't be a shock to those of us living in Germany, but with a sun that seems to refuse to set, evening hours can catch up on you. Unlike Germany, however, alcohol isn't sold at the grocer, but rather at the state-owned liquor stores Vínbúð.

Souvenirs

The number one souvenir sold in Iceland is a sweater called a Lopapeysa. These are knit from Icelandic sheep wool, which is uniquely suited to repel water and keep the wearer warm in all weather conditions. These snazzy sweaters are a bit pricier than your average travel souvenirs but there are ways to find one at a reasonable price if you want to look the part on your epic road trip. Try visiting the thrift shops around the Island to snag one second hand at a fraction of the cost!

If you're visiting Iceland on a budget and guided tours are not your thing, or if you have the spare cash and want to live it up in hotels have no fear. Even without the above mentioned activities, we would have fallen in love with this place. From the countless waterfalls, each one more mesmerizing than the last, and the hidden hot springs at the end of dramatic hikes, there is just so much to see, do and experience in Iceland. Some of my favorite memories were made just soaking in Mother Nature's artwork. We're glad we took the trip, and we hope you do too.

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1-10th Special Forces Group host inaugural Excellence in Competition pistol match



Below: A range officer holds an audible timing device, the first beep signals the start of the firing window. All rounds must be complete by the time of the second beep.



Calm, composed and deadly accurate. A special operations soldier takes aim at a silhouette target with his M17 pistol.

Story and photos Paul Hughes
USAG Stuttgart Public Affairs

Fifty of Stuttgart's top marksmen proved their worth on the range July 7, as they competed for the coveted Bronze Excellence in Competition (EIC) Pistol badge.

Wednesday's competition was part of the Army-wide EIC program that began way back in 1884 to help cultivate the Army's lethality and tactical proficiency. With multiple awards, this competition is a stepping stone for competitors to go on to gain the Army's silver and distinguished marksman badges, which require

competitors to attend multiple competitions and continue placing highly as they potentially move up the ranks as skilled marksmen.

Stuttgart's Green Berets aim to make this inaugural EIC match at the Panzer range complex an annual event.

"This is a formal program, run by the Army Marksmanship Unit, and it's a great opportunity for soldiers to get a chance to earn a real award that goes into their military records," said SOF Maj., 1-10's operations officer and event organizer.

On the first day of the three-day event, competitors familiarize themselves on the range with either the M9 or M17 pistol.

On day two, where the official scoring begins, competitors raise their pistols to the target before firing 40 rounds at distances of up to 30 yards. Two range supervisors scrutinize their every move as they move between standing, kneeling and prone positions. On the last day though, it's all about bragging rights as the fifty competitors are invited to a barbecue, where the winners will be announced.

Unlike earning the traditional Army marksmanship badges, which every Soldier must qualify for, shooters are directly pitted against each other in EIC matches. Only the top 10% of competitors receive the bronze award. This means that today, just five will walk away with a badge. One soldier, who shot 166 out of a possible 200, is hopeful, but realistic.

"It's too early to tell if I made the top 10%" the Special Forces Soldier said as he watched over the official scoring of his targets.

He added, "shooting in a competition provides a benchmark for where people are. It removes any of the self-deception involved when you're just out at the range."

While there will be more than one disappointed marksman after the competition is complete, a fellow competitor, a SOF Captain, said the competition was more than just a day at the range.

"It's good to get people around the garrison together for these kinds of professional events," the Captain said. "It's an opportunity to meet somebody that works in a staff position at headquarters that you've only interacted with virtually and now you're on the range and you build a relationship."

The final scores will be sent to the Army Marksmanship Unit in Fort Benning for adjudication before the winners will receive their Bronze EIC pistol badges.

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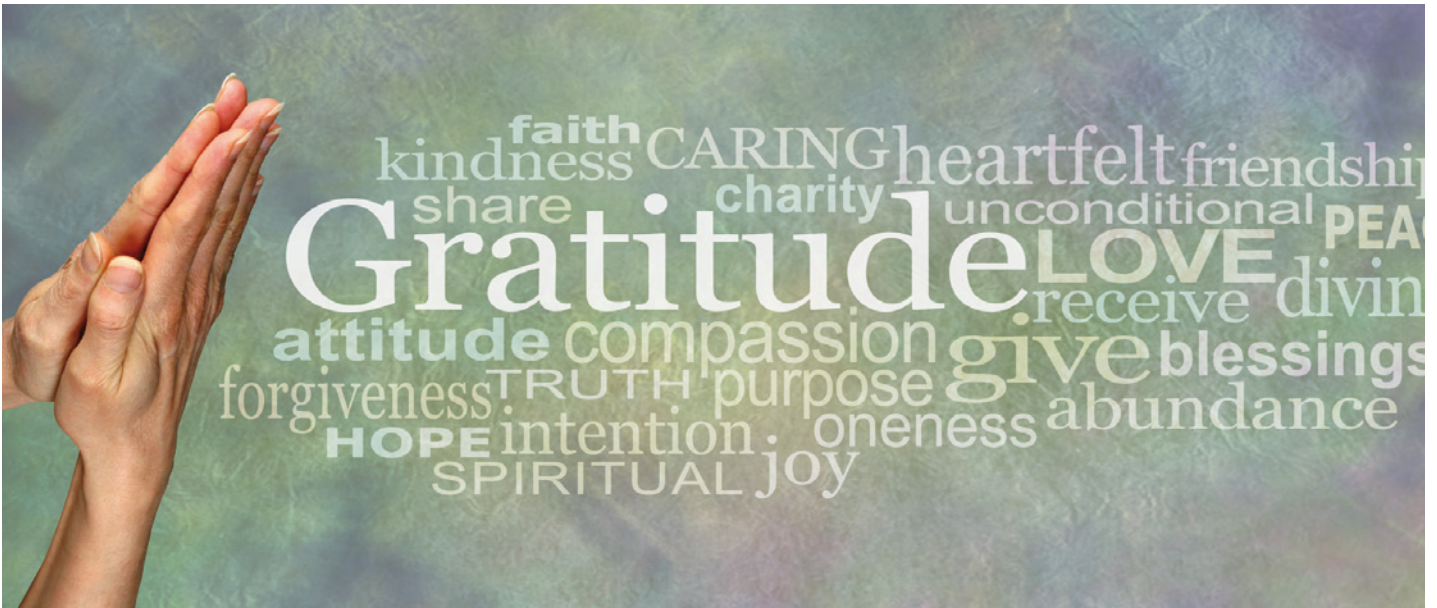


Photo by Nikki Zalewski/Shutterstock.com

By Chaplain (Maj.) Dave Ditolla
Family Life Chaplain

While locked down from many activities during COVID, it was a challenge for many of us to feel gratitude. Several folks that I came across were struggling with a sense of anxiety and some depression. It just did not seem like there was much to be thankful for. And yet, somewhere inside of all of us, we know that there is always something to feel grateful about.

So, "what is gratitude?" At its basic level, gratitude is about thankfulness, about counting our blessings, taking notice of simple pleasures, and acknowledging everything that we receive. It means learning to live your life with a sense of appreciation for all that we have been given. It is the belief that life truly is a miracle.

Gratitude allows us to shift our focus from what we lack in life to the incredible abundance that is already present. Psychologists who research gratitude have shown that giving thanks makes people more resilient, happier, that it strengthens relationships and reduces stress.

Most of us probably take for granted much of the good that is already present in our lives. In order to start noticing what is already good in our lives, we will need to be intentional. In my ministry, I sometimes give people an assignment. I instruct them

to write down 10 things that they are grateful for right now in their lives. From this list, it is important to acknowledge what life would be like without these things. It is amazing to me that when people can imagine what life would be like without something that is important, they are able to make the shift to more gratitude for all the good.

If the only prayer
you say in your
life is 'thank
you,' that would
suffice.
— Meister
Eckhart

So, "what do we do with all the bad things in life? Many people have struggled with loss and the resulting grief of COVID. Can gratitude help us deal with all of this?"

I believe that gratitude can help us turn our losses into learning. Gratitude is the critical ability to appreciate what we have gotten from our loss experiences. Every person I know has experienced terrible times in their lives. Yet, we discover that new doors open, tremendous lessons are learned, and that pain has taught us our most valued lessons. In many ways, our problems and difficulties have been some of our best teachers.

Today, as we struggle to make sense of the past 15 months, it is important that we count our blessings for all the good that we have in life. It is also paramount that we allow ourselves to acknowledge our losses, grieve them and trust that something new and better will grow from these difficult times. Gratitude allows us to move forward with hope and resilience.

Gratitude
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what
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'A diamond in the rough': Stuttgart Golf Course offers fun, value

By Bardia Khajenoori

USAG Stuttgart Public Affairs

Pattonville, a neighborhood located between Stuttgart and Ludwigsburg, served as a bustling U.S. military housing area for nearly forty years. Thousands of service members and their families enjoyed amenities like schools, shops, and a movie theater until the area was returned to German control in 1993.

But while the area's street names — Michiganstrasse and Oregonweg among them — have kept an American flair, the only remaining direct U.S. presence here since the handover has been the Stuttgart Golf Course.

"We're all proud to work here," said Marco Spellacy, the facility's manager. "We're sort of like an island out here on our own compared to the rest of the

garrison, and it seems special that we still have the property and can continue to contribute to service members' quality of life."

The 18 hole, 300 acre course was built in 1956 and designed by Bernhard von Limburger, described by the journal 'Golf Course Architecture' as "clearly the most important golf course architect in Germany" in his time. A \$1.8 million renovation in 2011-2012 redesigned the greens complexes and tee boxes, introducing new contours and a much-improved drainage system.

The course is run by Family and MWR in partnership with a German golf club, which helps keep amenities up to par, said Spellacy. "We have first class practice facilities — four practice greens, another area to hit short shots, and a driving range."

Richard Root, a DoD civilian who plays there regularly, was impressed early on with its championship length and facility quality.



Rows of golf carts parked at the Stuttgart Golf Course.



All photos by Severin Hardy



An aerial view of hole 11.



The Stuttgart Golf Course seen at sunset.

“We’re sort of like an island out here on our own compared to the rest of the garrison,...”
— Marco Spellacy



Sunset on the 11th hole.

“I researched it before I took the job here, that’s how much I like to golf,” said Root. “The photos I saw showed it was unbelievably well kept, and that’s been my experience. The team does a great job keeping it up.”

U.S. ID card holders benefit from favorable pricing, with junior enlisted service members able to play eighteen holes of golf for as little as \$14. Annual memberships, which allow unlimited play, range from \$375-725 based on rank and affiliation. Fees for joining partway through the membership season are pro-rated.

“Even if you golf a few times a month, the membership pays for itself,” said Root. “It’s an exceptional value, much cheaper than where I played in the states – and it’s a better course.”

Active duty players can schedule tee times up to 14 days in advance, and all other U.S. ID card holders can schedule up to seven days prior.

“As long as you can plan in advance, you can get on the course pretty much anytime unless there’s an event going on,” said Spellacy, who added that staff also work to accommodate more spontaneous visits.

The course, along with others nationwide, was closed completely for nearly three months last year as the first wave of the coronavirus pandemic took hold, but has remained open since then with mitigation measures in place.

For Root and his wife, Dianne, playing golf has served as a form of stress relief through the past sixteen months. “It’s a sport we can do together, and it’s good exercise since I walk the course every time we play.”

One of the advantages of the course, said Root, is that it suits all levels of players. “Each hole has uniqueness with bunkers, hills, and turns that challenge you.” The staff are also “fabulous,” he added, going out of their way to help and advise players.

August, along with being National Golf Month, brings the course’s two biggest tournaments: the Commander’s Cup on August 7, and the Stuttgart Golf Course Championship from August 28-29.

The Championship is particularly competitive and attracts players from U.S. installations across Europe, said Spellacy. Entry is limited to golfers with established handicaps of 24 or below for men, or 32 and below for women.

With an onsite restaurant and picturesque views, Spellacy points out that even non-golfers can enjoy the facilities. “You can sit outside on the terrace and enjoy a nice meal and drink overlooking the eighteenth hole, where we’ve got a little pond with a fountain,” he said. “It’s really peaceful, quiet, and beautiful.”

The Stuttgart Golf Course and Golfer’s Garden restaurant are open year-round, and instructional programs are available for individuals and groups at all skill levels. Rental equipment, ranging from clubs to golf carts, is available at the pro shop.

Along the Rheingau Riesling Route

Story & photos by Gemma McGowan
contributing writer

Beer drinkers may enjoy a good pub beer crawl, but wine aficionados will love the Rheingau Riesling Route! The route runs from the town of Flörsheim to Lorch, which is close to the city of Wiesbaden. The beautiful drive is 70 kilometers in total and sign-posted throughout. This drive is great for the whole family because, besides being able to purchase wine in the Riesling center of the world, you also pass beautiful vineyards, famous castles, historic manors, and picture-perfect views of the Rhein River.

1. The Route

On the map that is sign-posted by the region, you can find the route for driving (thick line), walking/biking trails (dotted lines), and also the wine stands (black wine glasses).



2&3. Rudesheim am Rhein

The beautiful route from Lorch along the Rhein River will make you feel like you are driving in a scenic painting. A great place to stop is in the romantic Altstadt (Old Town) of Rudesheim am Rhein. You could get lost exploring the winding cobblestone streets all day!



I suggest you head to the Seilbahn (cable car) to go up and see Germania at the 'Niederwaldmonument'. However, since this is the Riesling tour, make sure you buy a small bottle of Riesling Sekt from the cable car and drink it while taking



in the extraordinary view high above the vineyards.

Enjoy the absolute silence as you ascend higher away from the town. The only sounds you will hear are the faint popping noises from your bubbly Sekt and any Sekt glass clinking! Cheers!

4. Oestrich-Winkel

Nowadays, we are lucky enough to be able to load the trunks of our SUVs with this amazing wine. But more than 250 years ago, this area was used for loading wine barrels onto decks of ships traveling along the river. In Oestrich-Winkel there is a crane that was built in 1744 on the bank of the river and along the route. Now a protected monument, the construction inside consists of two massive mill wheels. Interestingly, it is based on a 2000-year-old technology used during the Roman era. The inside is open to the public during certain times of the year, which is posted at the crane. There are also many wineries to discover in this special town.



Photo by Sina Ettmer Photography/
Shutterstock.com

5&6. Schloss Johannisberg

Next on the route, there is the must-see castle: Schloss Johannisberg! This impressive castle has a wine shop, café, and incredible views of the Rhein. It is also the perfect spot to sip a glass of the Schloss Johannisberg Riesling, which they have been making for over 900 years. They are also known for creating the first late harvest wine, called Spätlese, which is a popular sweet-tasting wine.



Photo by Daniel Malinowski/Shutterstock.com

7&8. Eltville

The route then weaves around the enchanting town of Eltville, which feels like a fairytale town... with wine! There are many small wineries open for tastings and wine purchases. Just like you'll find in any good fairytale town, Eltville has an incredible castle from

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the 14th century called the Electoral Castle. After you enter the gift shop, for a small fee, you can walk to the top of the tower for views of the river and beautiful castle gardens.

Customize your experience!

The Rheingauer Riesling Route continues through the city of Wiesbaden and then a longer stretch of road winds through smaller picturesque wine towns like Hochheim. Whether you explore the Riesling Route all in one day or only visit a few towns, or if you sampled at the wine stands or filled your car with boxes of wine: the Rheingauer Riesling Route is an absolute delight that should not be missed during your time in Germany!

Just think, years down the road when you order a glass of German Riesling in another part of the world, you can confidently say, "Oh, I've been there!"

.....
Author's Profile: Gemma is 'A Jersey Broad Abroad' blogger and podcaster living in Wiesbaden, Germany. She is either found spending time with her family or planning her next adventure.



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Culture Corner: Traces of royalty around Stuttgart

Story and photos by **Bardia Khajenoori**

USAG Stuttgart Public Affairs

Stuttgart is the modern-day capital of Baden-Württemberg, but it also had a centuries-long role as a home to kings, queens, dukes, and duchesses. Some symbols of this history are subtle, like a crown-topped royal monogram above a door of the opera house. Others, like imposing palaces on a main square, are more obvious.

There are numerous castles, castle ruins, and former royal residences in the greater Stuttgart area, but six of the most central and well-known include the Residenzschloss in Ludwigsburg; and Altes Schloss, Neues Schloss, Schloss Solitude, and Schloss Rosenstein in Stuttgart. They make nice picnic spots and photo backgrounds these days, but how did they come to be, and how were they used before?

Note: Rulers are referred to by their German names. Additionally, the word “Schloss” is translated both as ‘castle’ and ‘palace’, but the English word is chosen based on the type of building (i.e., fortified or not).

Residenzschloss Ludwigsburg

Duke Eberhard Ludwig was inspired to transform a small hunting estate in the woods outside Stuttgart into a sprawling Baroque palace — one of Europe’s largest — after visits to Versailles and other European courts. Built from 1704-1733, the sheer scale of the building project prompted the development of an adjacent new town, fittingly called Ludwigsburg.

Eberhard Ludwig’s immediate successor cared little for the palace and moved his residence back to Stuttgart. The next duke, Karl Eugen, used Ludwigsburg as his unofficial, primary residence until 1775, during construction of the Neues Schloss in Stuttgart. King Wilhelm I moved into the Neues Schloss upon taking the crown in 1816, but signed the kingdom’s constitution at Ludwigsburg three years later.

The 79-acre complex consists of extensive gardens and 452 rooms in 18 buildings. Daily guided tours showcase the interior of the main building, and there are small museums of ceramics and fashion. Together with the “Blooming Baroque” gardens and various events held onsite, it plays host to nearly half a million visitors a year. Schloss Favorite, across the road from the main palace, and the lakeside Schloss Monrepos complete the Ludwigsburg trio.

Altes Schloss

The Altes Schloss (“Old Castle”) is one of the oldest buildings in Stuttgart. Its history dates back to 950 A.D., when a duke of Swabia (which preceded Württemberg) established a moated fortress on the site. The intent was to protect a strategically important horse breeding ground, the “Stutengarten.” The city’s name and symbol originate here.

The stronghold became the primary residence of the dukes of Württemberg in 1311,

and would remain so for about the next four centuries — expanding, improving, and strengthening to meet their needs. Its current four-winged castle form took shape in the mid-16th century, including the large round towers and courtyard.

It fell into disfavor after the construction of Ludwigsburg Palace, and Duke Karl Eugen only considered moving the ducal seat back to Stuttgart on the condition that it be replaced (hence the construction of the Neues Schloss). King Karl began restorations over a century later, and it started functioning as an exhibition space in 1899, with the opening of the Württemberg Army Museum and royal portrait gallery.

The castle was damaged by fires and air raids in the 1930s-40s, and while some areas were rebuilt in their original style (namely, the courtyard and oldest wing), reconstruction in the following decades was intended to provide a home for the Württemberg State Museum, which continues to be based there.

Residenzschloss Ludwigsburg



Schloss Solitude



Schloss Hohenheim



Schloss

Neues Schloss (Akademiegarten)

Construction on the Neues Schloss (“New Palace”) began in 1747 as an attempt by Stuttgart to regain the status of Württemberg’s capital, which had been moved to Ludwigsburg by Duke Eberhard Ludwig. Duke Karl Eugen, unsatisfied with the aging and by then inadequate Altes Schloss, had insisted on a replacement.

Ironically, Karl Eugen never had an opportunity to live in the palace, which suffered construction delays due to changes of architect, a fire, and his own disinterest. It was only fully completed in 1807, coinciding with a visit by Napoleon Bonaparte.

The palace was mostly destroyed by Allied bombing during WWII and was nearly torn down completely in favor of a hotel being built on the site. A margin of only one vote in the state parliament secured the castle’s reconstruction in 1957. Since then, it has been used by the state government, and today houses the ministries of education and finance.

Located directly behind the palace is the Akademiegarten, so named for the former military academy turned university which used to

occupy the space from 1775 to 1959. The visibility of the palace’s rear façade would have been largely blocked by academy buildings, contributing to its comparatively, unadorned look on this side. The former school’s ruins were eventually cleared (amid protests) in order to expand Konrad-Adenauer-Strasse (B14). The lion fountain, which remains, formed a central courtyard for the academy buildings and was designed for King Friedrich I, Württemberg’s first king and the father of Wilhelm I.

Schloss Solitude

This secluded Rococo palace and hunting retreat was commissioned in 1763 by Karl Eugen, who took an active role in its planning, and completed in 1769. The main building was ceremonial in nature; the duke and his staff would live in the neighboring cottages when spending time there.

It was used as a military hospital during World War I, but soon fell into disrepair until the state government restored its interiors between 1972 and 1983.

Approaching streets are lined with trees, and a monumental vista offers a straight-line view down the hill toward Ludwigsburg. Its grounds were the original home of the academy, which would later come to be based behind the Neues Schloss in Stuttgart. It has hosted a renowned interdisciplinary artist-in-residence program since 1990.

Schloss Rosenstein

Built as a summer home for Wilhelm I in 1830, the three-wing, neo-classical

Schloss Rosenstein sits perched atop a hill with an excellent view of the Neckar River and Bad Cannstatt.

The palace shares its name with the expansive park surrounding it; the name “Rosenstein” came courtesy of a decree by Wilhelm, who wanted the site named after the favorite flower of his deceased wife, Queen Katharina. The palace had a clear line of sight toward the mausoleum he had built as her resting place, on a hilltop in Untertürkheim, and a rose garden adjoins its eastern façade (the wing which housed the king and queen’s private rooms). Wilhelm died here in 1848, after which his remains were moved to the mausoleum.

During its time as a royal residence, it had 81 rooms. It now forms part of the State Museum of Natural History and is located close to the Wilhelma Zoo, a former royal bathhouse and gardens also constructed for Wilhelm I.

Schloss Hohenheim

Located just down the street from Kelley Barracks, Schloss Hohenheim is a former summer residence of Karl Eugen’s, which began construction in 1785. It languished unfinished after his death in 1793, but Wilhelm I brought it back to life by making it the home of an agricultural institute in 1818, during a time of crop failures. This institute would eventually become the University of Hohenheim, which occupies most of the building today and maintains the botanical garden and forests which surround it.

Altes Schloss



Rosenstein



Neues Schloss (Akademiegarten)

TRAVELING ALONE



By Leonie Milde
contributing writer

"I have found out that there ain't no surer way to find out whether you like people or hate them than to travel with them." — Mark Twain

People often ask me if I get bored when I travel alone. The answer is always no. Sometimes it's people-watching over expensive hot chocolate, sometimes it's whiskey with strangers at hostel bars and other times it's just an early night with a good book. I have met some pretty amazing humans on the road that I would have never encountered had I sat next to a friend.

Now, don't get me wrong, I have traveled extensively with friends and family and nothing compares to the sweet privilege of sharing travel memories with a loved one. But every once in a while, I pack a tiny pink suitcase and ask Ryanair or DB where to go next. Even though more than a year of "house arrest" may not put you in a solo traveling mood, there are so many benefits to it, especially after a period of time where your own company may have become more of a nuisance to you.

Now that you're in Europe, the next metropolis is never more than a train or plane ride away. If you look out for deals, this trip won't blow a dent in your wallet either. First you should decide on a type of trip (city trip, spa, camping/ hiking), means of transportation (plane, bus, train, car), type of accommodation (camping, hostel, Airbnb, hotel) and off you go!

Here are some great perks to travelling away from your comfort zone, straight into an adventure:

- Become a problem solver. You will inevitably be faced with unforeseeable situations and there will be no safety net to take care of it. Thankfully, you're smart and fearless and just needed a little nudge.
- Go on a tech detox. You may want to use social media as a crutch to feel less alone at first and there is absolutely nothing wrong with that but once you get the hang of being by yourself, you might want to consider blocking electronic distractions and truly enjoying your time off. This will feel amazing after potentially having been glued to your screen throughout the pandemic.
- Learn to love and appreciate yourself more as you become more self-aware.
- Learn the language. You will hear a lot more of it once you're not surrounded by fellow English speakers.
- Meet new people. This one sounds like a cliché but it's true nonetheless and there hasn't been a lot of that in the past 15 months.
- Go at your own pace. Breakfast at 2? Dinner at 5? It's all up to you!
- Find out what you like doing. Whether it's shopping, museum visits, sightseeing, picture taking or sitting in a park with a magazine, nobody can reschedule your plans for you.
- Become more decisive and boost your confidence as a result.
- As you can see, some of these are quite obvious and some are simply inevitable. You can't go a whole weekend without eating by yourself at least once or trying to understand a foreigner at some point (unless you go to an English speaking country). Waiters will give you a certain look when you ask for a table for one but once you remind yourself that alone does not equal lonely, you will feel independent and liberated rather than lost and stood-up.
- Lastly, some tips to avoid feeling lonely:
- Plan your itinerary in advance. A packed schedule will not leave room for self pity.
- Set goals for your trip. Do you want to learn how to take amazing photos? Read three books? Try as many pains au chocolat as possible? Follow your mission and keep your mind occupied.
- Follow your gut. If you feel unsafe, stick to more crowded areas.
- Don't feel bad if your screen time increases. Our phones provide comfort in unfamiliar situations and that's okay.

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There's a chance you won't like it. There's also a chance you'll never want to travel with a friend ever again. The most likely outcome, however, is that you will have simply spent a nice weekend in a wonderful city.

Traveling in the time of Corona



Some airlines offer the opportunity to keep the middle seat free for additional comfort and distancing.

Story and photos by **Bardia Khajenoor**
USAG Stuttgart Public Affairs

Check requirements for destination and return

- Pay close attention to the entry requirements of your destination and any layover locations. Check again no more than a few days prior to ensure you follow the latest policies, as they can change often.
- Some countries have digital or physical forms which must be filled out prior to departure
- Bring proof of vaccination or test results with you

Plan to arrive at the airport earlier and have documents in order

- It's now common for airline staff to check travel documents like vaccination records and country-specific forms at check-in desks before passengers go through security—even for passengers who may not otherwise need to visit one because they've checked in online and have no checked bags. Check with your airline to confirm.
- Some airlines offer the ability, or have the requirement, to upload travel documents during online check-in

Ensure you have the right masks, and wear them where required

- Medical masks (surgical/N95/KN95/FFP2) are required in Baden-Württemberg airports and public transit
- While medical masks may not be specifically required onboard by all airlines, a nose and mouth cover is required on all flights within the EU for anyone over the age of six

Airline policies

- Many airlines are continuing to offer exceptional flexibility should you need to change travel plans, from refundable vouchers to free rebooking (plus fare difference, if applicable) and airline credit for canceling even the most typically restrictive fare types
- Some airlines offer the opportunity to keep the middle seat free for an extra charge, to provide additional distancing between you and other passengers

At your destination

- Follow local mask policies and consider being conservative with face coverings, especially in areas with high incidence
- Some countries now have wide-ranging vaccination or testing requirements for shops, restaurants, or leisure facilities.

Coming back

- Check the Robert Koch Institute's list of risk areas, updated weekly, to determine requirements for your return travel to Germany
- A quick reference guide is available in the COVID-19 menu of the USAG Stuttgart app and in the COVID-19 guidelines posted on the Stuttgart Citizen website
- Travel back from any level of risk area requires pre-registration at the German government's "Einreiseanmeldung" website

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Remaining vigilant against terrorism



Always pay attention to your surroundings.

By William J. Christina

U.S. Army Garrison - Stuttgart, Antiterrorism Officer

August is Antiterrorism Awareness Month. Now, more than ever, your vigilance and assistance are required to protect us and our mission.

Antiterrorism is “the defense measures used to reduce the vulnerability of individuals and property to terrorist acts.” It integrates risk management, planning, training, education, random antiterrorism measures and other tenets into a holistic security program to protect against acts of terrorism.

Amid the COVID-19 pandemic, and civil unrest affecting people worldwide, we must remember that terrorism, criminal activity and public disruption continues to be a threat. When provided with informative data, we work with the Garrison Public Affairs team, and will release the latest updates on protests, demonstrations and other pertinent information occurring in the Stuttgart area, with tips on how to stay safe.

You the Public, can help us to mitigate or eliminate these threats. You are the best protection that we have... you are the eyes and ears of our community. We need your constant vigilance, monitoring the daily activities and identifying those suspicious ones, in where we live and work.

What might be suspicious? It could be a person, or persons sitting in a running vehicle displaying an “out of area” license plate. They might be observing your activities to gather intelligence, or it may be strangers loitering in the vicinity of the facility’s access control point that may be acting peculiarly. Some may actually be sketching or photographing a facility.

Always pay attention to your surroundings... we call it “Situational Awareness.” If you observe something suspicious or questionable, report it. If you have the Garrison app, look under the emergency button to find ways to report, to include iReport and the Military Police. You can reach the MP desk at 07031-15-3102 and Army Counterintelligence (ACI) at 0162-296-7230

And when reporting... try to remember the descriptions of the suspicious person(s), the vehicle(s) involved and the activity that they were they performing.

Thanks For Your Help!!

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The Big Question: Where have you already been this summer that you would recommend for others to visit?

Check out the destinations below for some amazing travel inspiration!



1

- 1 Lake Bled, Slovenia
-Rebecca Thomas
- 2 Mallorca, Spain
-Becky Layne
- 3, 7 & 10 Our vacation to Salzburg and Innsbruck, Austria, and Trieste, Italy!
-Elaine Gutierrez Meyer

After more than a year of lockdowns and restrictions, travel has finally opened back up in Europe! In the search for some great travel destinations, we asked the Stuttgart Military Community:

Disclaimer: make sure you check on local COVID travel restriction before you take your trip.



2



3



4

- 4 Santorini, Greece
-Madeleine Bates
- 5 "We finally checked & Rome off of our bucket list, and enjoyed the beer spas in Prague."
-Kaymi Kurfis



5

- 6 Geiranger Fjord, Norway
-Becca Castellano
- 8 Mallorca, Spain
-Keith Burke
- 9 Lauterbrunnen, Switzerland
-William Sigmon



6

- 12 "Porto, Portugal was amazing!"
-Marie Mills



7



8



9



10



11



12

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