

Oktoberfest



German Recipes to Try

October (and Oktoberfests) are a great time to celebrate German culture with these German recipes.

GERMAN POTATO DUMPLINGS

Makes eight servings. Recipe is from Taste of Home.

Ingredients

3 pounds medium potatoes, about 10, peeled and quartered
 1 cup flour
 3 large eggs, lightly beaten
 2/3 cup dry bread crumbs
 1 teaspoon salt
 1/2 teaspoon ground nutmeg
 12 cups of water
 Browned butter sauce:
 1/2 cup butter, cubed
 1 tablespoons chopped onion
 1/4 cup dry bread crumbs, toasted

Directions

- Place the potatoes in a Dutch oven and add water to cover. Bring to a boil and reduce heat, cooking uncovered for 15-20 minutes or until tender. Drain and transfer to a bowl.
- Mash the potatoes and stir in flour, eggs, bread crumbs, salt and nutmeg. Shape them into 16 two-inch balls.
- Bring 12 cups of water to a boil. Carefully add the dumplings, reduce heat and simmer, uncovered, for 7-9 minutes or until a toothpick inserted in the center of the dumplings comes out clean.
- Make the sauce: In a small, heavy saucepan, heat the butter and onion over medium heat. Heat for



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5-7 minutes or until the butter is golden brown, stirring constantly. Remove it from the heat and stir in the bread crumbs. Serve with the dumplings.

PFEFFERNUSSE

Makes 36 cookies. Recipe is from Allrecipes.

Ingredients

1/2 cup molasses
 1/4 cup honey
 1/4 cup shortening

1/4 cup margarine
 2 large eggs
 4 cups flour
 3/4 cup white sugar
 1/2 cup brown sugar
 2 teaspoons anise extract
 2 teaspoons ground cinnamon
 1 1/2 teaspoons ground cardamom
 1 1/2 teaspoons baking soda
 1 teaspoon ground cloves
 1 teaspoon ground nutmeg
 1 teaspoon ground ginger
 1 teaspoon ground black pepper

1/2 teaspoon salt
 1 cup confectioner's sugar, for dusting

Directions

- Place the molasses, honey, shortening and margarine in a saucepan over medium heat. Cook and stir until creamy. Remove from heat and allow it to cool to room temperature. Beat in the eggs.
- Combine the flour, white sugar, brown sugar, anise, cinnamon, cardamom, baking soda, cloves, nutmeg,

ginger, pepper and salt in a large bowl. Add the molasses mixture and stir until combined. Refrigerate for about two hours.

- Preheat the oven to 325 degrees. Roll the dough into small balls and place an inch apart on baking sheets.
- Bake until firm to the touch with slight cracking, 10-15 minutes. Cool on the baking sheets briefly before removing them to a wire rack to cool completely. Dust with confectioners' sugar and store in airtight container.

Oktoberfest Beers

Six Munich breweries are official participants in Oktoberfest:

Löwenbräu, Spaten, Hofbräu, Augustiner, Hacker-Pschorr and Paulaner.

Here in America, there are way more than six, but they all tend to be Märzens, an amber lager with a coppery color. Try these brews at your Oktoberfest celebration this year.

Hacker-Pschorr Oktoberfest Märzen, Munich

A leading Munich brewer since 1417 (you read that correctly), this beer is malty with a nose of blackcurrants, says Hop Culture.

Hopewell Brewing Oktoberfest, Chicago

This beer is rich and malty with plenty of hops and smooth mouthfeel and deep flavor typical to Märzens.

Elsewhere Brewing Oktoberfest, Atlanta

Hop Culture says this beer has a creamy foam almost like melted ice cream. It's very balanced, clean and crisp.

Hobräu Oktoberfestbier, Munich

This golden brew includes four Hallertauer hops and three Bavarian malts that combine for a rich, full-bodied flavor in a lager style.

New Image Brewing Small-Tober, Arvada, Colo.

A low-alcohol version of an Oktoberfest beer, it is brewed with a Colorado-grown malt from Troubador Maltings. In the taproom, it's served in smaller, kölsch-sized glasses.

Green Bench Brewing Company Festbier, St. Petersburg, Fla.

This golden lager brewed with imported German pilsner,

and Vienna and Munich malts, uses traditional double decoction and natural carbonation.

New Glarus Brewing Company Staghorn Oktoberfest, New Glarus, Wis.

New Glarus is best known for farmhouse ales and fruited sours, but this Märzen is an autumnal brew with Midwestern and European malts with German yeast and Wisconsin water.

Czig Meister Oktoberfest, Hackettstown, N.J.

An orange-gold brew with crisp, toasty notes that, Hop Culture says, is all about the malt.

Spaten Oktoberfest UR-Märzen, Munich

This brew has a roasted malt flavor and characteristic deep amber color. It was first served at the 1872 Oktoberfest

and even today, the mayor of Munich kicks off the official festival by tapping a ceremonial keg of Spaten's beer.

Schilling Brewing Company Konstantin, Littleton, N.H.

This is described as an Austrian-style Märzen with a slightly drier finish than a German Märzen.

It's a ruby-hued lager with the taste of caramel and toasted oats.



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Tunes for Celebrating

Oktoberfests are known as places to eat, drink and be merry, and that often includes dancing and singing. Here are some songs to add to your Oktoberfest playlists.

Ein Prosit (I Salute You)

This has become an Oktoberfest classic since first being played in 1912. Every time it's played — which is every 15 minutes or so at Munich's celebration — stand up and chug a beer. The song was composed by Bernhard Dittrich in Saxony, who died in 1902, about ten years before the song was first played in Munich.

Fliegerlied (The Flyer Song)

A children's song from 2008, it gained popularity at Oktoberfest with its own dance. Just pay attention to what the natives around you are doing. You'll get the hang of it.

Esellied (la la la oh) (The Donkey Song)

This is a staple of Oktoberfest celebrations in Germany and abroad. It's known for its unique yodeling chorus and is about a donkey as he waits outside for his lady love.

Country Roads

Yep, that's right, John Denver's classic is a big hit in Germany, where lots of bands have done their own covers.

Atemlos Durch Die Nacht (Breathless Through the Night)

A 2013 hit by Helene Fischer is a



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German party hit and is now a top hit at German Oktoberfests.

Sweet Caroline

Neil Diamond's song about Caroline Kennedy is just as popular in Germany as it is at home. DJ Otzi released a remix in 2009 that's popular at any German party.

Mountain Mother

A Spanish chorus makes this Ger-

man song from the 1970s a hit.

It was covered in 1987 by an Austrian band and, when it's played on the last day of Oktoberfest, everyone lights sparklers together and sings along.

Seven Nation Army

The White Stripes song is a huge hit at sporting events around the world, "Seven Nation Army" is also big at Oktoberfest, where it tends to break

out spontaneously from the crowds.

Fürstenfeld

Another crowd favorite by Austrian group STS, just yell "zicke zacke zicke zacke" and "hoi, hoi, hoi" along with everyone else.

The Hofbräuhaus Song (Steht Ein Hofbräuhaus)

This 1935 Oompah classic is a must that also exhorts listeners to drink.

U.S. Oktoberfests to Visit

You don't have to go all the way to Munich for Oktoberfest (though it is the original). Pack up your lederhosen and get ready to celebrate all things German.

Oktoberfest Chicago, Sept. 27-Sept. 29

Oktoberfest Chicago at St. Alphonsus is in its 21st year in 2024. It takes place in and outside the church in Chicago's West Lakeview neighborhood. Tickets are a suggested donation of \$10 per day. Set your GPS to: 1429 W. Wellington Ave., Chicago, IL 60657.

Big Bear Lake Oktoberfest, Big Bear Lake, California, Sept. 7-Nov. 2

Bring an appetite to Big Bear Lake Oktoberfest. You can get sauerkraut, bratwurst, kielbasa, pretzels, apple strudel and more. It also has plenty of games, including stein-holding matches, log-sawing competitions and the annual Queen Stein Carrying Contest.

There are live bands and free rides so you get home safe.

Oktoberfest Fredericksburg, Fredericksburg, Texas, Oct. 4-6

Three days of celebrating



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German culture in the Polka capital of Texas. There's plenty of beer, wine, food,

music and games. There's also a market featuring handwoven textiles, painted ceramics,

leather goods and more. Tickets run from \$15-\$25 for adults.

Oktoberfest, New Ulm, Minnesota, Oct. 4-5 and Oct. 11-12

New Ulm's celebrations happen all over town, including the historic downtown, Schell's Brewery (naturally) and Morgan Creek Vineyards. Like the other festivals, there's food, beer, wine, music and an extra helping of Minnesota nice.

Reading Liederkrantz Oktoberfest, Reading, Pennsylvania, Oct. 2-6

Reading's celebration features nine (nine!) bars full of German and domestic beers, as well as wines, bloody Marys, mimosas, spiked cider, Jägermeister and cocktails, food, polka and more. Head for the Antietam Valley Recreation and Comm Center, 905 Byram St., Reading, PA 19606.

Oktoberfest, Helen, Georgia, Sept. 5-Oct. 27

This Southern-fried Oktoberfest kicks off with a parade and tapping the first keg of Oktoberfest. Admission runs upwards of \$20, but the fest is held indoors, so it's rain or shine. Look for: Helen Festhalle, 1074 Edelweiss Strasse, Helen, GA, 30545.

Tulsa Oktoberfest, Tulsa, Oklahoma, Oct. 17-20

This year marks 45 years of this Oklahoma Oktoberfest, which features a German dinner, a Dachshund Dash, bands, arts and crafts, games in 140,000 square feet of tents, stages and more. There's a free family day on Friday.

Beer Can Be an Ingredient, Too

Beer isn't tasty just with food, it's also delicious in food. Try these recipes to get more hops in your diet.

BROCCOLI BEER CHEESE SOUP

Makes 10 servings. Recipe is from Taste of Home.

Ingredients

3 tablespoons butter
5 celery ribs, finely chopped
3 medium carrots, finely chopped
1 small onion, finely chopped
4 cups fresh broccoli florets, chopped
1/4 cup chopped sweet red pepper
4 14.5-ounce cans of chicken broth
1/2 teaspoon pepper
1/2 cup flour
1/2 cup water
3 cups shredded cheddar cheese
1 8-ounce package cream cheese, cubed
1 12-ounce bottle of beer, nonalcoholic is

fine

Toppings: Shredded cheddar, bacon crumbles, chopped green onions, croutons or soft pretzel bits

Directions

1. In a Dutch oven, melt butter over medium-high heat. Add the celery, carrots and onion and sauté until crisp-tender. Add broccoli and red pepper, then stir in the broth and pepper. Combine flour and water until smooth, then gradually stir it into the pot. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer, uncovered, until the soup is thickened and the vegetables are tender, 25-30 minutes.

2. Stir in cheeses and beer until the cheeses are melted. Do not boil. Top with desired toppings.

BEER BRISKET

Serves 8-10. Recipe is from Food.com.

Ingredients

1 beef brisket, trimmed



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1 large onion, cut into chunks
Garlic pepper, to taste
Pepper, to taste
Seasoning salt, to taste
1 16- to 24-ounce can of beer
1 8-ounce bottle barbecue sauce

Directions

1. Heat the oven to 225 degrees. Tear off a sheet of aluminum foil that's twice the length of the roasting pan. Line the pan with foil, centered, folding the sides and ends up.

2. Place the brisket in the center of the foil and season with seasonings. Scatter the onion chunks over the brisket. Pour the beer over, making sure everything is contained in the foil.

3. Seal the foil and place in the oven for about eight hours.

4. Remove from the oven, open the foil and pour off and discard beer and onions. Pour the barbecue sauce over the brisket and reseal the foil. Return to the oven for 30 minutes.

5. Remove the roasting from the oven. Allow the brisket to rest for 15-20 minutes

before slicing.

CAN O' BEER CAKE

Makes 16-20 servings. Recipe is from Food Network.

Ingredients

1 15-ounce yellow cake mix
1/3 cup vegetable oil
3 large eggs
1 12-ounce can of lager
1/4 cup sugar
1 1/2 cup confectioner's sugar, sifted
1 12-oz. bag of frozen cherries, thawed
Whipped cream

Directions

1. Preheat the oven to 350 degrees and spray a Bundt pan with nonstick baking spray.

2. Whisk together the cake mix, oil, eggs and a cup of beer in a large bowl until smooth. Pour the batter into the prepared pan, smooth the top with a rubber spatula and bake for 45-50 minutes, or until a cake tester inserted in the

center comes out clean.

3. Pour two tablespoons of beer into a heat-proof glass bowl and microwave for 30 seconds or until hot. Stir in two tablespoons of sugar until dissolved.

4. Let the cake cool in the pan for five minutes, then invert it onto a cooking rack. Drizzle the beer syrup evenly over the cake until it soaks in. Let the cake cool completely.

5. Stir the confectioners' sugar and two tablespoons of beer together until smooth. Add more beer, a tablespoon at a time, as needed to form a thick glaze. Drizzle it evenly over the cake and let it stand until set, or about 10 minutes.

6. Combine the remaining beer and two tablespoons of sugar with the cherries in a saucepan. Bring to a simmer over medium heat and cook, stirring, until the cherries are warmed through and the liquid is reduced to a thick syrup, about 10 minutes. Transfer the cherries to a bowl and let cool completely. Serve the cake with cherries on the side and whipped cream.



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Oktoberfest Games

Oktoberfest without games wouldn't be much of a fest. Here are some games to try with your family during your own Oktoberfest this year.

STEIN HOLDING (MASSKRUGSTEMMEN)

Stein holding is harder than it looks. Grab beer mugs and fill them with water (or beer). Participants stand in a row and, with arms fully extended and parallel to the ground, hold the stein for as long as possible without spilling any liquid or bending the arm. The last

person standing with a straight arm and minimal spillage is the winner.

PRETZEL TOSSING

Participants stand facing each other, 6-8 feet apart. One person holds a pretzel (the bigger the better) and the other a stick. Bonus points if it's a traditional Bavarian walking stick, or stecken. The person with the pretzel tries to toss it onto the stick. Each successful catch earns a point and the pair with the most points wins.

LOG SAWING (HOLZSÄGEN)

Participants form teams of two. Each team gets a log and a two-person saw. The log is placed on a sawhorse and

each team member takes up position with the saw. At the start signal, the sawdust flies as teams work together to saw through the log as quickly as possible.

BARREL ROLLING RACE (FASSROLLEN)

Each team of two people gets a standard-sized beer barrel (or, let's be honest, anything roughly cylindrical and the same size as a beer barrel). The race begins with the first team member rolling the barrel with their hands, guiding it along a designated course. Once the barrel hits the halfway checkpoint, the second team member takes over. The first team to cross the finish

line is the winner.

KEG VAULTING AND KEG SQUATTING

Toss an empty beer keg as high as you can up and over a pole. If the keg touches the pole, you're out. The last person standing wins. Then, take the empty kegs and front-rack the keg or do an overhead press. Squat down and the last person to remain squatting wins.

HAMMERSCHLAGEN

Hammer a nail into a stump. Each participant gets one whack at the nail until it's driven all the way in. Just watch your fingers.

Oktoberfest Traditions

Oktoberfest is a time-honored German festival celebrating fall and the harvest season.

Here are the stories behind some of the most treasured traditions in Munich.

SCHOTTENHAMEL AND A PARADE

The oldest beer tent at the Munich fest is the Schottenhamel. That's where the city's mayor kicks off the festival by tapping the first keg and yelling, "O'zapft!" or "It is tapped!" The next day, the festival holds a five-mile parade, the Costume and Riflemen's Parade, which includes more than 7,000 dancers, marching bands, animals and floats.

THE GARB

Munich's Oktoberfest is replete with traditional Bavarian garb. Men, you should wear lederhosen, a pair of shorts or three-quarter-length pants fastened with either buttoned or zippered with a drop-front flap and leather suspenders with a distinctive front cross strap. They're worn with white shirts, long socks and boots along with a German-style hiking hat, or Trachten hat.

Women, get out your dirndls. It's a dress with a bodice, a blouse and a full skirt with apron. Where you tie the bow signifies your relationship status: Left is for single



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ladies, right for those in a relationship. Both outfits are available around the city for sale or rent.

THE FOOD

Almost as iconic as Oktoberfest costumes is the Oktoberfest menu. Soak up some of the beer with dishes like hendl, a half or whole

spit-roasted chicken and haxn, or pork knuckles. There's also steckerlfisch, or grilled white fish, along with sausages, dumplings and snack sandwiches.

One of the most beloved of Oktoberfest dishes is the brezel or soft pretzel, sprinkled with salt. For a sweeter snack, try gebrannte mandeln, or

sugar-glazed almonds cooked in copper kettles and served in paper cones.

SOUVENIRS

As tempting as they are, don't steal the beer krugs. The fines aren't worth it. Instead, purchase one you can keep at each beer tent's souvenir shop. You can also purchase

commemorative Oktoberfest steins each year with the official logo.

Pick up a traditional lebkuchen, or gingerbread necklace. These are gingerbread hearts decorated with German phrases along the lines of "I love you." They're strung with a ribbon for your love to wear proudly.