



Oktoberfest

Set Up Your Own Oktoberfest

So you can't get to Munich this year. Don't worry, we've got your complete guide to setting up your very own Oktoberfest.

Traditionally, the Oktoberfest runs from mid-September to the first Sunday in October, but yours can be whatever October weekend you'd like that doesn't interfere with other plans.

DECORATIONS

In Munich, the festival includes beer tents festooned with ribbons and other decor. Stateside, you can keep with tents for an outdoor party, but you can repurpose traditional fall or harvest decor with sunflowers, pumpkins and more. You can create the illusion of a tent indoors by hanging fabric, banners, garlands and more from the ceiling. Use the colors of the Bavarian flag — light blue and white — for linens, napkins and other accessories.

ACTIVITIES

Once you've picked a date, plan some activities for your party. While you may not have a grand parade with horse-drawn carriages, you can have a variety of games, just like the original celebration. Take advantage of fall weather by planning plenty of outdoor activities, such as cornhole,

horseshoes and other games your friends and family enjoy. Make one or two of them a tournament with prizes for the ultimate winner.

COSTUME CONTESTS

Part of the fun of Oktoberfest is the traditional costume of dirndls for women and

lederhosen for men and some women. Hold a costume contest for the best-dressed attendees with prizes, which can include first in line for a buffet of delicious German food or a bespoke beer stein. Have guests vote on the best-dressed or choose a panel of judges.

FOOD AND DRINK

Of course, food and drink are the heart of any Oktoberfest celebration. Go for a menu of finger-friendly German foods, such as pretzels and appropriate condiments, cocktail sausages, meatballs and more. Beer is crucial to any good Oktoberfest

celebration as well, but not always the best choice for children or adults who abstain.

Look for non-alcoholic beers or sparkling juices to serve alongside a lineup of beers. Also have water and soft drinks on hand to provide guests a choice.



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Oktoberfest Beverages

While beer is a great choice for Oktoberfest, there are other German beverages to try to keep everyone’s tastebuds happy.

Here are some recipes to try when celebrating Oktoberfest.

WALDMEISTER BOWLE

Recipe is from German-foods.org. This is a punch traditionally drunk to celebrate fertility and the spirits of the forest. In the Middle Ages, the drink was thought to be a aphrodisiac. You can use the traditional herbs or, if you can’t find them, a dash of Waldmeister syrup.

Ingredients

- 1 bottle of German white wine
- 6 sprigs sweet woodruff
- 1 bottle sparkling wine
- 3 orange slices
- 1/2 lime

Directions

1. Pour a chilled bottle of wine into a large glass bowl. Add about six stems of sweet woodruff into the wine, leaves downward and stems bound together. Submerge only the leaves.
2. After an hour, add a bottle of sparkling wine, sliced oranges and lime. Stir lightly and serve.

GERMAN SPARKLING APPLE CIDER (APFELSAFTSCHORLE)

Recipe is from All Tastes German. Makes one beverage.



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Ingredients

- 1/2 cup cold apple juice
- 1/2 cup cold sparkling water

Directions

Mix together and serve without ice.

SPEZI

Recipe is from The Kitchen Maus.

Ingredients

- 2 parts cola, chilled
- 1 part San Pellegrino Aranciata, chilled

Directions

Mix and serve without ice cubes.

KINDERPUNSCH (GERMAN CHRISTMAS PUNCH)

Makes six servings. Recipe is from The Daring Gourmet.

Ingredients

- 2 cups apple juice
- 2 cups orange juice
- 1/2 cup cherry juice
- 2 cups water
- 2 cinnamon sticks
- 10 whole cloves
- 2 whole star anise
- 5 bags of hibiscus tea
- Honey, to taste

Directions

1. Place all the ingredients except

for the honey and tea into a stock pot. Bring to a boil, reduce heat, cover and simmer for 15 minutes. Add the tea bags and let them steep, covered, for 10 minutes. Remove the tea bags and add honey to taste.

2. Serve hot. Garnish with orange slices, cloves, star anise or cinnamon sticks.

GLUHBIER

Makes four servings. Recipe is from Drindl Kitchen.

Ingredients

- 1 liter of beer
- 100 grams cherries, fresh or frozen
- 1 orange, sliced, half of the peel

reserved

- 1 lemon, cut into slices
- 1 cinnamon stick
- 3 whole cloves
- 1 whole cardamom
- 1 whole allspice
- 2 tablespoons sugar or honey, or to taste

Directions

1. Over medium heat, warm all the ingredients other than the sugar in a pot. Once it starts to steam, reduce heat to low and let steep for 10 minutes without boiling.
2. Strain out the fruit and spices, sweeten to taste with sugar or honey.
3. Serve warm.

Oktoberfest Playlist

A perfect party includes a perfect playlist, and Oktoberfest isn't any different. Here are some songs to add to your favorite streaming service for your party.

Ein Prosit: The quintessential song of Oktoberfest, this is a song to good health and is often followed by a simple toast — one, two, three, drink!

Bayerischer Defiliermarsch: This is a military march from the 19th century composed by Adolf Scherzer de in Ingolstadt. It was played during the 1972 Olympic Games in Munich.

Bohmischer Traum: The Bohmischer Traum, or Bohemian Dream, is a polka written by Norbert Galle in 1997.

Lichtensteiner Polka: In 1957, this song by Edmund Kotscher and Rudi Lindt reached No. 16 on the U.S. pop chart. It was performed by Will Glahe and His Orchestra and also by Lawrence Welk and His Orchestra. Other versions have been released by The Big Ben Banjo Band, The Pogues and as part of Weird Al Yankovic's "Polka Face" medley.

Ich will keine Schokolade: This originated in the U.S. as "Percolator," written by Jack Morrow and Randy Randolph, but became popular in 1960 as the German "I don't want



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Chocolate" by Trude Herr.

In den Wald: Look for the version by The Bavarian Oompah Band, recorded in 2006.

Wien Bleibt Wien (Vienna Remains Vienna): You can find versions of this song by The Royal Horse Guards, The Oktoberfest Oompah Band, the Vienna City Orchestra and the

Johann Strauss Orchestra.

Rosamunde: Also known as the "Beer Barrel Polka," "Roll Out the Barrel" or "Rosamunde," this 1927 polka was composed by Czech musician Jaromir Vejvoda. It gained popularity during World War II as a drinking song.

Sportpalastwalzer: This

waltz is also known as "Wiener Praterleben" by Siegfried Translateur. It's still played at the Velodrom, a Berlin cycling arena.

Einen Stern (... der deinen Namen tragt): "A Star (... That Bears Your Name) was released in 2007 by Austrian singers DJ Otzi and Nik P. It was

Germany's best-selling single of the 2000s and has sold more than 2 million copies.

In Munchen steht ein Hofbrauhaus: The English translation is "There's a Hofbrauhaus in Munich." Composed in 1935, it's one of the most popular drinking songs in the world.

Games to Start the Party

Oktoberfest is about more than beer and dancing. There are games to be played and prizes to be won.

Set these fun games up at your Oktoberfest party and offer prizes.

Stein holding (masskrug-stemmen): In this popular Oktoberfest game, competitors hold a liter of beer in a stein or mug at arm's length. Each stein must be filled to the same mark, not necessarily to the very top, and participants must hold the stein out in front of them. They can't switch arms in the middle of the contest; whichever arm they start with, they must finish with. The last person with their arm extended wins.

Pretzel toss: Toss pretzels at a target. Use a cornhole set, empty beer steins or Bavarian flags as targets. Set different lines for different age groups and abilities.

Keg toss: Filled under feats of strength, this game involves tossing a small keg over a set distance. Consider having different kegs or other containers for different age groups. Contestants must stand behind a line and toss the keg in whatever method they prefer (maybe avoid the discus toss). The winner is whoever hurls the keg the farthest.

Keg rolling: Participants roll a keg down a length of grass as an individual or as a relay team. The keg can be



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rolled on its side or end-over-end. It's helpful to mark start and finish lines with spray paint.

Stein races: Hold a race where relay teams carry a full stein of liquid (beer is

traditional, but maybe not family friendly). The person with the most liquid left in their stein wins.

Sack races: Racers hop in a sack to a finish line, just like at your field day in elemen-

tary school.

Tug of war: Two teams test their strength by pulling on a rope.

Pretzel-eating contest: Prepare a pile of soft pretzels and line up some contestants. The

contestant who eats the most pretzels wins. Set rules ahead of time, such as can contestants dunk pretzels in water and what is the end of the race, such as a time limit or who finishes their pile first.

Cook Up a Delightful Oktoberfest

Pretzels are great, but an awesome Oktoberfest party calls for more than that. Try these recipes to keep your guests full and happy.

OBATZDA

Recipe is from Taste of Home. Makes 3 1/2 cups of dip.

Ingredients

- 2 8-oz. rounds Camembert cheese, rind on, sliced
- 1 8-oz. package cream cheese, softened
- 1 medium onion, finely chopped
- 3 tablespoons wheat beer
- 1 teaspoon paprika
- 1/2 teaspoon caraway seeds
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/8 teaspoon pepper

Directions

In a bowl, mash the Camembert cheese with a fork to the desired consistency. Beat in the cream cheese, onion, beer and seasonings. Sprinkle with additional caraway seeds.

DARK BEER-MARINATED BBQ CHICKEN

Recipe is from German Foods. Makes 4 servings.

Ingredients

- 1/2 cup peanut oil
- 1 teaspoon German mustard
- 1 cup dark German beer
- 1/4 cup lemon juice
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 teaspoon salt, or to taste
- 1 teaspoon black pepper, or to taste

- 1 teaspoon minced fresh basil
- 1 teaspoon fresh thyme leaves
- 3-4 pounds chicken pieces
- Non-stick cooking spray

Directions

1. Whisk together peanut oil and mustard, then add beer and lemon juice until mixture is smooth. Stir in garlic, salt, pepper, basil and thyme.

Add chicken and turn to coat. Cover and refrigerate 2-12 hours.

2. Heat a charcoal grill until coals are covered with white ash. Drain chicken and discard marinade.

3. Using large tongs, push the hot briquettes to one side. Spray the grill rack evenly with non-stick cooking spray. Place the chicken on the grill rack on the coals side. Cook until skin

is crisp, about 10 minutes, turning as needed with clean tongs to prevent charring.

4. Move the chicken to the cool side of the rack. Cook 10-15 minutes more or until chicken juices run clear. Serve with mustard.

APFELKUCHEN

Recipe is from Allrecipes.



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Makes one cake, about 12 servings.

Ingredients

- 2 1/4 cups sifted flour
- 1 1/8 cup warm milk
- 1/4 cup white sugar
- 1 0.25-ounce package active dry yeast
- 6 tablespoons butter, softened
- 1 tablespoon vanilla extract
- Pinch salt
- 3 large apples, peeled, cored and sliced
- 1 cup white sugar
- 3/4 cup sifted flour
- 2 ounces candied lemon peel, chopped
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1/4 teaspoon ground nutmeg
- Pinch salt
- 1/2 cup butter

Directions

- Grease the bottom and sides of a 9x13-inch baking dish.
- Beat together 2 1/4 cups flour, milk, 1/4 cup sugar, yeast, 6 table-
spoons butter, vanilla extract and a pinch of salt in a large bowl with an electric mixer on high until the dough is smooth.
- Spread into a baking dish and press the dough up the sides. Press apple slices into the dough.
- Mix a cup of sugar, 3/4 cup flour, candied lemon peel, cinna-
mon, nutmeg and a pinch of salt in a bowl. Cut in 1/2 cup of butter with a knife or pastry blender until the mixture resembles coarse crumbs. Sprinkle over the apples. Allow the dough to rise for 30 minutes.
- Preheat the oven to 400 degrees Fahrenheit. Bake in a pre-
heated oven until the cake is golden brown and the apples are tender, about 35 minutes.

Traditional Costumes

Around Munich's Oktoberfest, traditional Bavarian costumes are the rule of the day, and it can be the same for your Oktoberfest party, too.

Dirndls are the common trachten, or costumes, for women, and lederhosen are the usual costumes for men.

DIRNDLS

A dirndl is a traditional dress from the German-speaking areas of the Alps. It's regarded as a folk costume in Germany and, nowadays, is usually a tight-fitting bodice with a low neckline, a blouse worn under the bodice, a high-waisted skirt and an apron. Alpine peasants dressed in dirndls in the 16th-18th centuries, with particular designs chosen for different regions.

The bodice is usually made tight to the body with a low neckline and in a single piece with a fastener in the front-center. It's traditionally made from long-wearing dark, heavy cotton, but more modern designs come in lighter cotton, linen, velvet or silk. The neckline is usually round or rectangular, but in more modern designs may be v-shaped or heart-shaped. It is often embroidered.

The skirt is full with folds gathered at the waist. Before the 1930s, it was separate from the bodice, but the two have

since been sewn together. The skirt was originally long, but has been shortened to mid-length in later years or even mini-skirts. Traditionally, the skirt has a pocket on the side or in the front, hidden under the apron. An apron is attached to the skirt and covers only the front of the skirt. Traditional designs for the apron are regional and they're typically only a single color.

A cropped blouse is worn

under the bodice and can give the bodice a more modest effect with a higher neckline. Traditionally, the blouse comes to the base of the throat. Blouses are usually made of cambric, linen or lace and they are usually white. Short, puffed sleeves are usually worn, but narrow or long sleeves can also be worn.

LEDERHOSEN

Lederhosen are leather

pants attached to a drop front and probably come from the Middle Ages, when they were worn for hard physical work. They were cut above the knee, typically, though longer versions were worn for special occasions. They weren't just worn in Bavaria, but were popular all over Europe, just perhaps not with the drop-front.

The color of the lederhosen is usually black or brown, with

the color of the shirts and vests worn with them varying by region. They can have decorative seams and a cuff, either tied or buttoned. Traditionally, lederhosen are worn with suspenders that match. As a working garment, lederhosen often have pockets for tools and seams.

Modern lederhosen usually has vibrant, colored embroidery on the pants and suspenders.



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Decorating for a Party

Bavaria is in the southeast of Germany. It includes Munich, which is home to Oktoberfest. Even celebrations outside of the area tend to feature decorations that refer to the German state.

The blue-and-white flag of the state is a great place to start, as are iconic Oktoberfest symbols such as beer steins and Bavarian hats.

TABLES

Cover tables for food and beer with white and blue tablecloths (plastic for easy cleaning).

Place tables for food near electrical plugs so food can be kept warm, if needed. Put coolers of ice under a drinks table so beverages can be kept cold.

Tables for guests can have white or blue tablecloths and centerpieces using symbols such as Bavarian flags, beer mugs, pretzels and hats. Pair tables with wooden benches for a beer garden atmosphere. You can also use fall decor, such as leaves and sunflowers.

PAPERS, NAPKINS AND CUPS

Find white and blue napkins, paper plates and disposable cups for your guests to use and to make



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clean-up a snap. Set food in serving dishes on cut pieces of wood or wooden chargers to add to the beer tent ambiance. If sustainability is a concern, choose items that are made from recycled material and set up recycling stations around your party for your guests to separate recy-

clables from regular trash.

DECORATIONS

Use pennant banners in blue and white along with streamers and lanterns to make your home seem more like a traditional Munich beer hall. You can make or purchase signs and other custom

banners to add a dash of authenticity. Set up speakers in hidden places around the party area to play traditional German music.

PROPS

There are several shops online that sell a variety of photo props, such as cutouts,

hats, backdrops and more. Setting up a selfie station can be a way to keep your guests laughing, especially if it includes giant moustaches, which are always funny. Look for traditional German and Bavarian hats, selections of faux glasses, pretzel balloons, and giant beer steins.