

**Title:**

Oktoberfest - A Celebration Of German Culture

**Word Count:**

399

**Summary:**

Oktoberfest is one of the world's great seasonal festivals. It is held every fall in Munich, Bavaria, and in other locations around the world.

The first Oktoberfest started as a series of horse races in honour of the wedding of the Crown Prince of Bavaria in 1810. The horse races became an annual event and were combined with the state agricultural fair the following year. By 1818 the folks were setting up booths and serving food and drink.

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**Keywords:**

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**Article Body:**

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By the late 1800s the booths had become large beer halls or tents. And that is the image of Oktoberfest that persists to this day.

The beer tents are still set up each year at Oktoberfest on the Theresienwiese, named in honor of the Crown Prince's bride. Today the Munich festival also features a large midway and fair, and always lots of eating and beer drinking.

This year's Munich Oktoberfest runs from Sept. 21 through October 6, and it is expected that roughly 6 million foreigners will visit the city. They will be there for the non-stop festivities -- "endless rounds of beer, sausages, toasts, dances, parades and oompah bands."

Bavaria is a distinctively Catholic area and carries on the Catholic tradition

of celebrating the abundance of the earth with lots of jovial merrymaking, hearty eating, and unrestrained drinking.

Oktoberfest in Kitchener-Waterloo, Ontario, Canada

The world's second largest Bavarian Oktoberfest celebration is held in Kitchener-Waterloo, Ontario, Canada. The large German community in the Waterloo County area had been accustomed to celebrating Oktoberfest at their local cultural clubs.

In 1969, some enterprising citizens took the festival, then being held annually at the Concordia Club in Kitchener, out into the community. They saw it as an opportunity to turn it into a civic event that the entire community could share in. It became a uniquely local celebration of the deep German traditions of the area.

Since those first years, the Kitchener-Waterloo Oktoberfest has become the largest Bavarian festival in North America, and hosts the grandest Thanksgiving Day Parade in Canada.

Visitors come from all over North America and around the world to share in the spirit of Gemuetlichkeit. As in Munich, numerous Festhallen (large beer tents) are set up around the community, and the trademark eating, drinking, and celebrating takes place day and night for two weeks.

There are also a growing number of family and cultural events including presentations highlighting German traditions, language, clothing, dancing, music, and cuisine.