



by
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The Oktoberfest is the world's largest beer festival and travelling funfair. Held annually in Munich, Bavaria, Germany, it is a 16 – 18-day folk festival running from mid or late September to the first weekend in October, with more than 6 million people from around the world attending the event every year. The Oktoberfest is an important part of Bavarian culture, having been held since 1810. Other cities across the world also hold Oktoberfest celebrations that are modeled after the original Munich event.

During the event, large quantities of Oktoberfest Beer are consumed: during the 16-day festival in 2013, for example, 7.7 million litres were served.[1] Visitors also enjoy numerous attractions, such as amusement rides, sidestalls and games. There is also a wide variety of traditional foods including Hendl (roast chicken), Schweinebraten (roast pork), Schweinshaxe (grilled ham hock), Steckerlfisch (grilled fish on a stick), Würstl (sausages) along with Brezen (pretzels), Knödel (potato or bread dumplings), Käsespätzle (cheese noodles), Reiberdatschi (potato pancakes), Sauerkraut or Rotkohl/Blaukraut (red cabbage) along with such Bavarian delicacies as Obatzda (a spicy cheese-butter spread) and Weißwurst (a white sausage).

The Munich Oktoberfest originally took place in the 16-day period leading up to the first Sunday in October. In 1994, this longstanding schedule was modified in response to German reunification. As such,

if the first Sunday in October falls on the 1st or the 2nd, then the festival would run until October 3 (German Unity Day). Thus, the festival now runs for 17 days when the first Sunday is October 2 and 18 days when it is October 1. In 2010, the festival lasted until the first Monday in October (October 4), to mark the event's bicentennial.

The largest Oktoberfest outside of Germany is regarded by most as being in Canada, in the twin cities of Kitchener and Waterloo, Ontario, drawing between 750,000 to 1,100,000 visitors, but there are now Oktoberfests in just about every country in the world, and many of those countries have no direct connection to German culture, such as China and Sri Lanka. Hey, a good party is a good party!

But what about—American Oktoberfests! Oktoberfest celebrations in the USA are some of the world's largest festivals, attracting more than six-million visitors every year. German-Americans are the largest self-reported ancestral group in the United States, and there are hundreds of large and small Oktoberfests held annually in the country, the largest being Oktoberfest Zinzinnati in Cincinnati, Ohio. Known for its large German immigrant population, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and its historic Pennsylvania Dutch (Pennsylvania Deutsch) population are well known to have many Oktoberfest celebrations during the months of September and October. These celebrations became increasingly popular in the later half of the 20th century with the rise of microbreweries, and with the opening of authentic German brew houses such as Hofbrauhaus in Pittsburgh, PA.

