



Munich at Christmas

Bavaria's magnificent capital and its environs

21–28 December 2023 (MJ 154)

8 days • £4,030

Lecturer: Tom Abbott

A wide range of art and architecture in the magnificent Bavarian capital.

Two full-day excursions to some of the most special sights in Bavaria – the beautifully preserved medieval town of Regensburg, and the outstanding Baroque church at Wies.

Led by Tom Abbott, cultural historian resident in Germany who has led many tours there.

Munich is everyone's favourite German city. Not only is it the most prosperous in the country, but the attractiveness of the cityscape, the abundance of cultural activity, the relatively relaxed lifestyle and generally amenable ambience make it the most sought-after place to live and work in Germany.

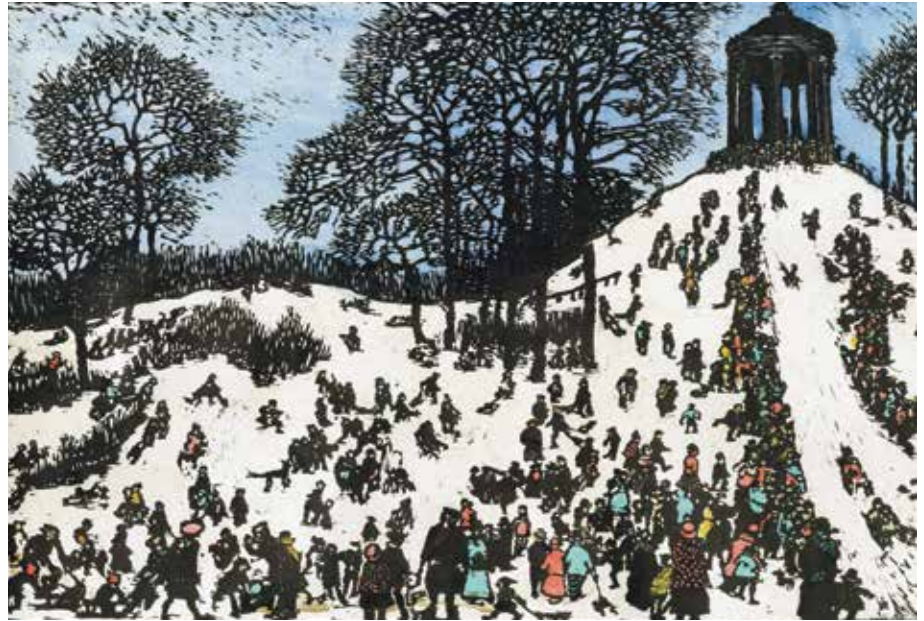
The seat of the Wittelsbachs, who ruled Bavaria from 1255 until 1918 as Counts, Dukes, Electors and, from 1806, as Kings, Munich was a city which grew up around a court, not one spawned by trade or industry. Consequently, artistically and architecturally it is still one of the best-endowed centres in Europe.

There are fine buildings of every period, and it is also a city of museums. The Alte Pinakothek has one of the finest collections of Old Masters in the world, and the Treasury in the Residenz and the classical sculpture in the Glyptothek are among the best collections of their kind. There are two full-day excursions through beautiful countryside to some of the greatest sights in Bavaria – Regensburg, Linderhof Palace and the Wieskirche.

The accompanying lecturer, Tom Abbott, is a cultural historian with a wide range of knowledge and a deep understanding of contemporary Germany.

Itinerary

Day 1. Fly at c. 12 noon from London Heathrow to Munich (British Airways). Tour by coach the architecture and monuments on the fringes of the old city, including the monumental Ludwigsstraße, Jugendstil houses, the English Garden and Königsplatz, a noble assembly of Neo-Classical museums. Time to settle in at the hotel before dinner.



Munich, Englischer Garten, early-20th-century woodcut.

Day 2. Begin with a visit to the Alte Pinakothek, one of the world's greatest collections of Old Masters. The Neue Pinakothek is closed for renovations for several years but a selection of its masterpieces of 19th-century art are on display on the ground floor of the Alte Pinakothek. Some free time; you may choose to visit the Brandhorst Museum, the Pinakothek der Moderne or join a guided tour of the Art Nouveau Villa Stuck, a museum and historic house dedicated to the works of the Bavarian painter, Franz Stuck.

Day 3. The Residenz in the centre of the city was the principal Wittelsbach palace and seat of government, a magnificent sprawl of buildings, courtyards, state apartments and museums of every period from Renaissance to the end of the 19th century. There are fine works of art and sumptuous interiors of the highest importance, especially the Rococo interiors and the Cuvilliés Theatre (subject to confirmation as the theatre can close for rehearsals at short notice). An afternoon walk includes the vast Gothic cathedral and the pioneering Renaissance church of St Michael.

Day 4, Christmas Eve: Morning excursion to Nymphenburg, the summer palace of the Wittelsbachs with sumptuous interiors. After lunch visit the excellent collections of sculpture and decorative arts at the Bavarian National Museum. Christmas dinner. There are several musically embellished midnight masses.

Day 5, Christmas Day. The morning is free (a couple of museums are open, and, of course, there are many church services to choose from). In the afternoon visit the Church of St Peter and the Asamkirche, built and decorated by Egid Quirin Asam. The Lenbachhaus has an outstanding collection of German Expressionist painting.

Day 6. Regensburg. Travel by coach to Regensburg, one of Germany's finest medieval cities, with a Gothic cathedral and parliament of the Holy Roman Empire.

Day 7. Linderhof Palace, Wies. Travel by coach to Ettal, site of Linderhof Palace, commissioned by the legendary 'Swan King' Ludwig II. The lavish interiors are in Renaissance and Baroque styles and gardens include grottos and Oriental adornments. Continue to the 1740s church at Wies by Dominikus Zimmerman, one of the finest of all Rococo churches.

Day 8. Fly from Munich, returning to London Heathrow at c. 2.00pm.

Munich at Christmas
continued

Lecturer

Tom Abbott. Specialist in architectural history from the Baroque to the 20th century with a wide knowledge of the performing arts. He graduated in Psychology and Art History from Carleton College, Minnesota and studied at the Louvre School of Art History in Paris. Since 1987 he has lived in Berlin and has organised and led many academic tours in Germany. Tom has a particular interest in the German and American architectural and artistic modern including the Bauhaus and Expressionism.

Practicalities

Price, per person. Two sharing: £4,030 or £3,740 without flights. **Single occupancy:** £4,740 or £4,450 without flights.

Included: air travel (economy class) on scheduled British Airways flights (aircraft: A319); travel by private coach throughout; hotel accommodation as described below; breakfasts, 2 lunches and 5 dinners with wine; all admissions; tips for waiters, drivers and guides; all state and airport taxes; the services of the lecturer and tour manager.

Optional music: details of performances will be sent to participants in the autumn when tickets can be requested.

Accommodation: Platzl Hotel München (platzl.de): a four-star hotel located in the heart of the old city, a 5-minute walk from the opera house. *Rooms for single occupancy are small doubles with a queen size bed.*

How strenuous? There is quite a lot of walking and standing around in museums, and navigation of metro and tram systems. This tour should not be attempted by anyone who has difficulty with everyday walking and stair-climbing. The excursions to Regensburg and Schloss Linderhof involve a fair amount of driving. Average distance by coach per day: 47 miles.

Group size: between 10–22 participants.