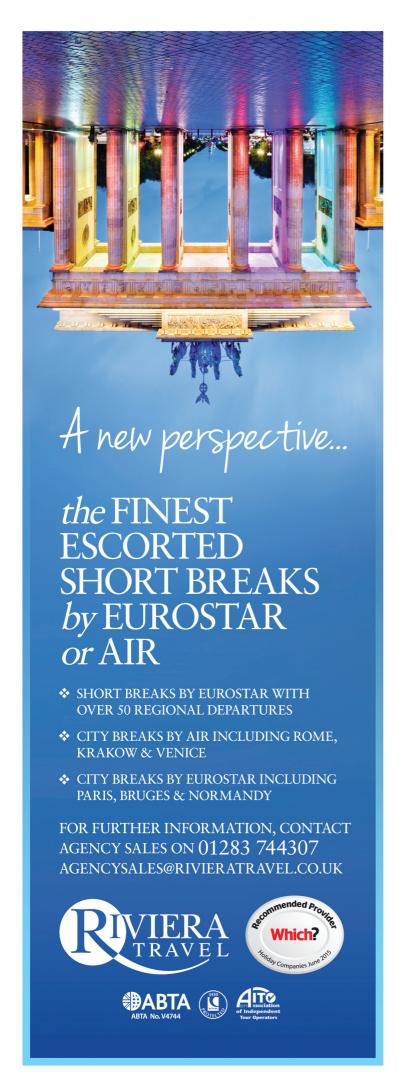


# SHORT BREAKS GERMAN CHRISTMAS MARKETS DESTINATIONS







## **GERMAN MARKETS**



**BERLIN** has 80 Christmas markets, plus street entertainers, a toboggan run and an ice rink. SuperBreak features 36 Berlin hotels. Two nights at its latest addition, the Quentin Boutique, starts at £150 in December, including flights.



**COLOGNE** boasts some of Germany's prettiest markets, with its Gothic cathedral and labyrinthine Old Town providing beautifully festive backdrops. It's new to Newmarket Holidays' programme, with a four-day markets tour and flights starting at £399.



**DRESDEN**, Germany's oldest market, is the birthplace of the Dresden Christstollen cake and is best known for hand-made gifts and decorations. It's included on Insight Vacation's eight-day Christmas Markets of Germany tour, from £1,179.

draw the line at the more unusual concoctions - hot moiitos or hot caipirinhas are a step too far.

#### GIFTS GALORE

The sizeable market square at the Römerberg is every bit as Christmassy as you'd expect. Backed by the neo-Gothic facade of the city hall, it's jam-packed with timber-framed stalls selling wooden toys, tree decorations, jars full to the brim with oldfashioned boiled sweets or towering stacks of stollen cakes wrapped up for Christmas Eve.

Yet as pretty as it is by day, the market comes to life from midafternoon, when it's dark enough for the 30m tree to twinkle with fairy lights and the fairgroundstyle carousel to reawaken that sense of nostalgia that goes hand-in-hand with the season.

Just as indispensable are the plentiful treats on offer, so I'd recommend arriving with a hearty appetite. Choose from huge sides of salmon and pans of chestnuts grilling above roaring flames, tinfoil-wrapped baked potatoes and griddles stacked with schnitzel and spicy bratwurst.

Alternatively, stop for a sugar boost from the trays of sticky pretzels, brightly iced gingerbread and paper bags full of sugared almonds from one of Frankfurt's most famous stalls, selling 50 almond varieties ranging from vanilla and rhubarb to less-traditional flavours such



as Red Bull and Oreo cookies. In fact, spend more than a couple of days here and the post-Christmas diet will need to start early.

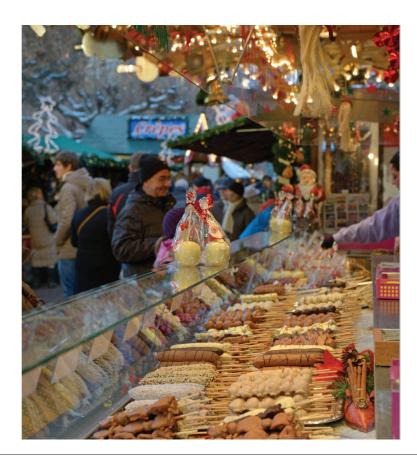
Despite its staggering array of goodies and gifts, there isn't a hint of commercialisation here. Historically, the market was only for citizens of Frankfurt to sell their wares, and it still feels rooted in the locality, with everything from traditional styles of earthenware on sale to the 300-year-old Honey House on St Paul's Square, a wooden cottage selling local honey and beeswax candles.

### HIPSTER CHIC

The market might be the thing to bring visitors, but it's not the only attraction in town. Frankfurt isn't a city packed with sights, but its compact centre offers enough to occupy an afternoon or two.

The skyscraper-dominated skyline and position on the banks of the River Main have earned

RIGHT: Frankfurt Christmas market

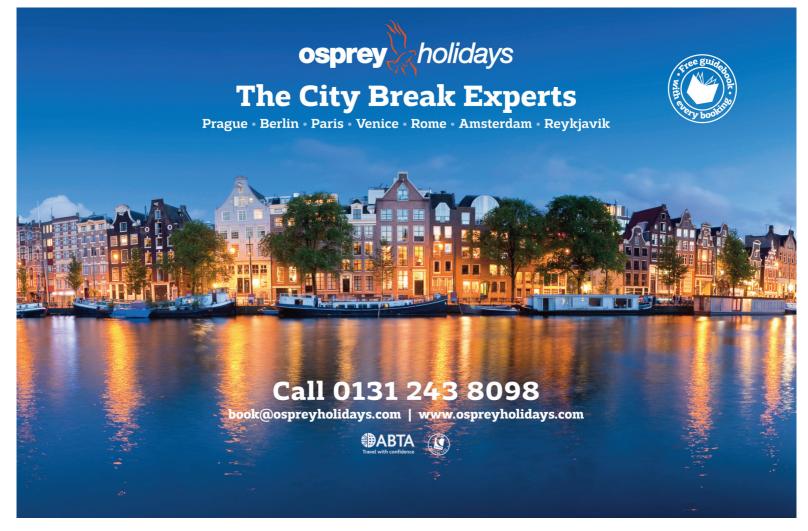




**ASK THE EXPERT** 



Ross Merchant, reservations consultant, Osprey Holidays: "The best time to book Christmas market breaks for your customer is now - with fantastic hotel availability and ideal prices on flights, you'll be sure to grab a magical break at a fraction of the cost."



# **DESTINATIONS** GERMAN CHRISTMAS MARKETS **SHORT BREAKS**

it the nickname 'Mainhattan', and while the financial district is unexciting architecturally, heading up to the observation deck of the 56-floor Main Tower offers a view far beyond the centre (€6.50 adults, €4.50 concessions).

It's also home to an impressive number of museums, filling the cultural void created by a relative lack of historic buildings, many of which were flattened by Second World War bombing raids.

Most, including the famous Städel Museum, are clustered around Museumsufer on the banks of the Main (two-day combination tickets covering 34 museums cost €18). My personal favourite was the MMK Museum of Modern Art, as interesting for its wedgeshaped architecture - dubbed the 'piece of cake' museum by locals as the Roy Lichtenstein and Andy Warhol artworks inside. Anyone with a penchant for modern

design will also enjoy the quirky shops along the same street.

And if all that browsing works up an appetite, this area of the city also boasts some trendy eateries reflecting the city's cosmopolitan mix. There's every chance of stumbling across a pop-up restaurant or supper club, but for a more permanent option, recommend the pastrami sandwich from Maxie Eisen (it's attracted praise from as far afield as the New York Times). east African cuisine at Im Herzen Afrikas (literally, in the heart of Africa), Moroccan fare at cosy cafe Picknickbank, or fine dining at Heimat. Alternatively, cross the Iron Bridge to the district of Sachsenhausen, an area of cider pubs and restaurants serving traditional Frankfurt dishes, or head back to the market for your choice of festive fare.

frankfurt-tourismus.de



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# Tried & Tested

### **JUMEIRAH FRANKFURT**

There's no chance of getting lost when staying at this city centre hotel: its 96m-high, 25-floor tower stands out even in a city full of skyscrapers. Yet while it has all the bells and whistles you'd expect of the luxury Dubai-based brand – cutting-edge in-room technology, Bose sound systems, Nespresso machines in every room, and that's barely scratching the surface – there's a warmth and sense of hospitality that belies its imposing size.

The 218 spacious rooms feel incredibly luxurious, with super king-sized beds, huge standalone bathtubs and dual sinks with TV screens mounted into the bathroom mirrors.

But it's the low-tech touches such as paintings by a local artist in every room and the bee colony on the roof (a pet project of the executive chef) producing honey for the restaurant and spa that really give it character.

The Talise spa has a sauna and separate steam rooms for men and women, with direct access to a Fitness First gym in the neighbouring shopping mall. The fact that it offers spa treatments for couples, kids and mums-to-be, plus accommodation packages



themed around food, Christmas markets or year-round shopping at nearby Chic Outlet Wertheim Village, shows this hotel is leading the charge in proving Frankfurt is more than just a place to do business.

Book it: Jumeirah Frankfurt has a one-night festive season package starting at €279 for two sharing a deluxe room, including breakfast and a three-course set meal in signature restaurant Max on One. jumeirah.com

