

Europe Christmas Markets Guide


Akorn
AKORN DESTINATION MANAGEMENT

Wiener Christkindlmarkt



Twinkling lights, warming Glühwein, one-of-a-kind handmade crafts, and the sweet scent of cinnamon wafting through the crisp winter air — step into a holiday wonderland that delights the senses. Discover our curated selection of Europe’s most enchanting Christmas markets, where your clients can immerse themselves in timeless festive traditions.



DISCOVER EUROPE’S SOUGHT-AFTER CHRISTMAS MARKETS

European Christmas markets trace their roots to medieval German-speaking regions, where winter fairs helped locals stock up for the cold months. Over time, these practical gatherings evolved into festive celebrations. Cities like Munich, Frankfurt, Vienna, and Dresden inspired the spread of Wintermärkte, filled with handmade toys, sweet treats, and holiday cheer—a tradition that still shapes the season today.

Contact us for more on Europe’s Christmas festivities.
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GERMANY

TIMELESS TRADITIONS

From Dresden’s ceremonial Stollen cutting to Munich’s Marienplatz Glockenspiel, age-old customs come alive in festive settings across the country. Treat your taste buds to Lebkuchen in Nuremberg, Reibekuchen in Cologne, or hearty Maultaschen in Stuttgart—each region serves up its own seasonal specialties. Wander cobblestone streets under twinkling lights in medieval towns like Rothenburg ob der Tauber and Aachen, where Christmas markets glow with nostalgic charm.



NUREMBERG CHRISTKINDLESMARKT

One of Germany’s most beloved Christmas markets, Nuremberg Christkindlesmarkt opens with a speech from the golden-crowned Christkind. Wander through the Hauptmarkt’s hundreds of stalls for gingerbread, nutty Zwetschgenmännle figures, toys, and spiced cookies. Enjoy carol services, stagecoach rides, and a holiday atmosphere that fills the city—just an hour by train from Munich.

Berlin to Tegernsee: Yuletide Germany



BERLIN

Germany’s cool capital sparkles with over 80 Christmas markets, including the magical Bebelplatz with artisan crafts, tasty schnitzel and fondue, and lively performances. Explore the dreamy Charlottenburg Palace market, the Scandi-style haven at Kulturbrauerei, or enjoy the thrill of snow tubing and ice skating at Potsdamer Platz.



COLOGNE

Beneath the towering spires of the Cologne Cathedral, 250 festive stalls sparkle around one of the region’s tallest Christmas trees. Enjoy Glühwein, bratwurst, handmade ornaments, and live music. Don’t miss the charming markets at Alter Markt and along the Rhine. A magical holiday experience in the heart of Gothic grandeur.

DRESDEN

Going strong since 1434, Germany’s oldest Christmas market lights up Dresden’s Altmarkt with Baroque charm, around 240 stalls, and the world’s largest Christmas pyramid. Shop for Erzgebirge crafts, gingerbread, and the country’s finest Stollen, all beneath a canopy of festive lights and historic domes.



ROTHENBURG OB DER TAUBER

Rothenburg ob der Tauber transforms into a true winter fairy tale during its Reiterlesmarkt. Set against a backdrop of medieval charm, the market features festive stalls, local crafts, and the warm glow of tradition — all inspired by the mythical gift-bringer, the Reiterle.



LAKE TEGERNSEE

Lake Tegernsee transforms into a winter wonderland during the holidays, with Christmas markets at Castle Tegernsee and Rotach in Bad Wiessee. Enjoy glittering ice sculptures, Bavarian performances, horse-drawn carriage rides, and twinkling lights. Discover local crafts and treats like Kreuth cheese and Waakirchen chocolates. In the mood for something special? The markets can also be reached by boat for a special Christmas experience.

AUSTRIA

SEASONAL SPLENDOR

Festive lights, snow-dusted rooftops, and the scent of mulled wine in the air — Christmas in Austria is pure magic. From mid-November, cities and villages sparkle with Christkindlmarks, where tradition meets enchantment. Wander through twinkling stalls filled with local crafts, sip Glühwein under centuries-old architecture, and savor seasonal treats like gingerbread and apple strudel. Whether in front of Vienna's grand City Hall or along Salzburg's charming streets, Austria's Christmas markets promise an unforgettable holiday experience.



CHRISTKINDLMARKT AT RATHAUSPLATZ

For almost 50 years, the Viennese Christmas Market has been held annually on the Rathausplatz. In 1975, the market stalls opened their Christmas wooden stalls here for the first time. Set against the stunning backdrop of the Rathaus, it dazzles with twinkling trees, an ice rink, and glowing decorations. When the many shopping streets and Advent markets light up the city of Vienna in the run-up to Christmas, one place shines especially brightly: the Vienna Christmas Market is considered one of Europe's most beautiful Christmas markets.

Vienna to the Alps: Austria's Festive Best



SCHONBRUNN

Set before the elegant Baroque Schönbrunn Palace, this is one of Vienna's most refined holiday markets. Browse traditional handicrafts, from handmade ornaments to ceramics and candles, while enjoying classical Christmas music in a regal atmosphere. After Christmas, the market transforms into a New Year's celebration, extending the festive spirit into January.



BELVEDERE

Set against the beautiful backdrop of Belvedere Palace, this smaller market is famous for its romantic ambiance, the twinkling lights reflecting on the palace and lake. Breathe in inviting aromas of mulled wine and seasonal spices, while exploring artisan crafts and enjoy delicious Austrian specialties in a truly magical setting.

SPITTELBERG

Nestled in a charming historic quarter with narrow cobblestone streets and 19th-century buildings, this market exudes local charm. Enjoy a more artistic and authentic atmosphere, with stalls offering high-quality crafts, handmade jewelry, and organic products—perfect for those seeking a unique holiday experience.



INNSBRUCK

In Innsbruck's medieval Old Town, with the iconic Golden Roof as a stunning backdrop, this market radiates authentic alpine charm. Stretching from Römerberg to St. Paul's Church, stroll past glowing stalls showcasing Tyrolean crafts, festive decorations, and local delicacies like Kiachln with sauerkraut.



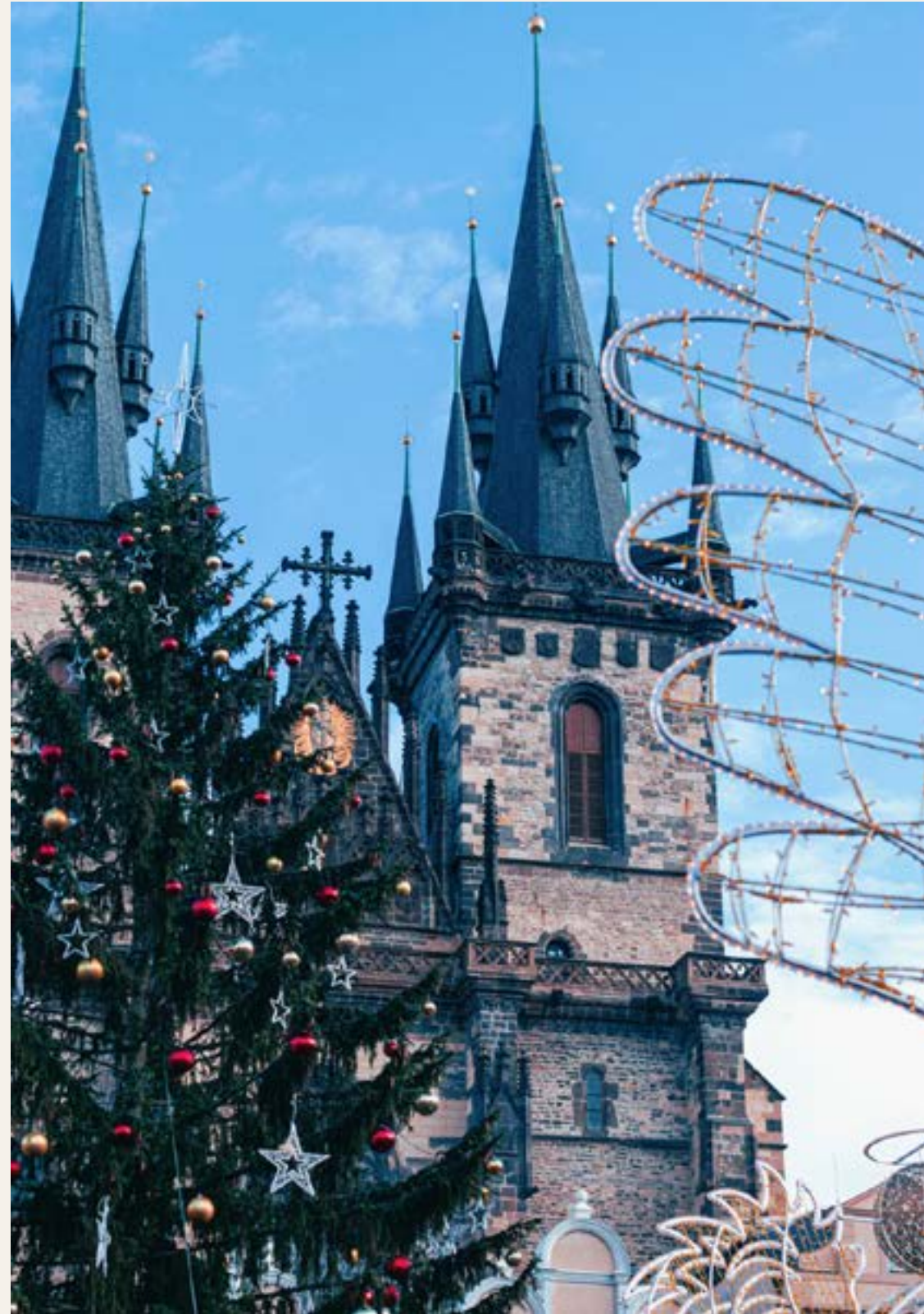
SALZBURG

Step into a winter wonderland at the Christmas Market on Cathedral Square, one of Austria's most enchanting and historic festive traditions. Dating back to 1491, it is the oldest market in Salzburg—offering a truly timeless holiday experience. Set against the breathtaking backdrop of the Salzburg Cathedral and the Fortress Hohensalzburg, the market feels like a scene from a fairytale. Wander through beautifully decorated stalls as the air fills with the comforting scents of roasted chestnuts, baked apples, and sweet seasonal treats.

PRAGUE

WINTER WONDER

Renowned for hosting one of Europe’s most beautiful Christmas markets, Prague is a must-visit holiday destination. Explore bustling markets in iconic locations like Old Town Square and Wenceslas Square, surrounded by landmarks such as the Astronomical Clock and St. Vitus Cathedral. Stalls brim with traditional Czech crafts, including hand-painted ornaments, wooden toys, and delicate glasswork—perfect for individual holiday gifts. Indulge in local treats like trdelník, roasted chestnuts, and hearty Czech specialties, making every visit a delightful sensory experience.



OLD TOWN CHRISTMAS MARKET

The Old Town Christmas Market in Prague is a festive highlight set against the historic Old Town Square, framed by landmarks like the Gothic Týn Church and the Astronomical Clock. Decorative Wooden stalls are filled with traditional Czech crafts, handmade ornaments, and unique gifts. Savor classic treats like trdelník, roasted sausages, and warming svařák (mulled wine) while enjoying the sounds of carols and live holiday music.

Old Town to Castle: Fairytale Prague

WENCESLAS SQUARE

Wenceslas Square Christmas Market delivers a vibrant holiday experience in one of the city’s most bustling squares. Surrounded by grand 19th-century architecture and modern shops, the market blends tradition with urban energy. Stalls offer traditional Czech crafts—from hand-carved wooden toys to delicate glass ornaments—and local artisan products. Savor classic treats like klobása (grilled sausages), trdelník (sweet chimney cake), and mulled wine as you explore. The centerpiece is a beautifully decorated Christmas tree, set against the National Museum and the statue of St. Wenceslas. With live performances and carolers, this market combines festive warmth with the dynamic spirit of Prague.



PRAGUE CASTLE

Prague Castle Christmas Market offers a magical experience within the grounds of one of the world’s largest ancient castles. Set against stunning architecture like St. Vitus Cathedral and royal palaces, this market combines intimacy with grandeur. Enjoy festive treats like vánočka (Christmas bread), roasted chestnuts, and mulled wine. Illuminated by holiday lights, the castle creates a regal and enchanting atmosphere.

FRANCE

FESTIVE FLAVORS

French Christmas markets are celebrated for their festive charm, regional traditions, and rich culture. With twinkling lights, wooden chalets, and beautifully decorated town squares, the ambiance feels like a holiday postcard come to life. Each region offers something unique, from Alsace's handcrafted ornaments to Provence's iconic santons (nativity figurines). Savor seasonal delights like vin chaud (mulled wine), roasted chestnuts, gingerbread and local specialties that showcase the depth of France's culinary heritage.



STRASBOURG CHRISTMAS MARKET

Strasbourg's Christmas Market, one of France's oldest dating back to 1570, offers a charming vintage holiday experience. Wander through the historic Petite-France district on a winter evening and explore around 300 twinkling chalets filled with traditional crafts and festive treats. Don't miss sipping warm mulled wine as you soak in the magical atmosphere.

Paris to Strasbourg: French Spirit of Noël



PARIS

Paris shines during the holiday season with festive markets full of delicious food, family-friendly fun, and magical city views. The capital's largest market, La Magie de Noël at the Tuileries Garden, features gourmet stalls, twinkling lights, a Ferris wheel, and a charming Christmas carnival. Other must-see markets include the Hôtel de Ville, La Défense's Village de Noël, and Jardins du Trocadéro—each offering its own Parisian take on holiday cheer.

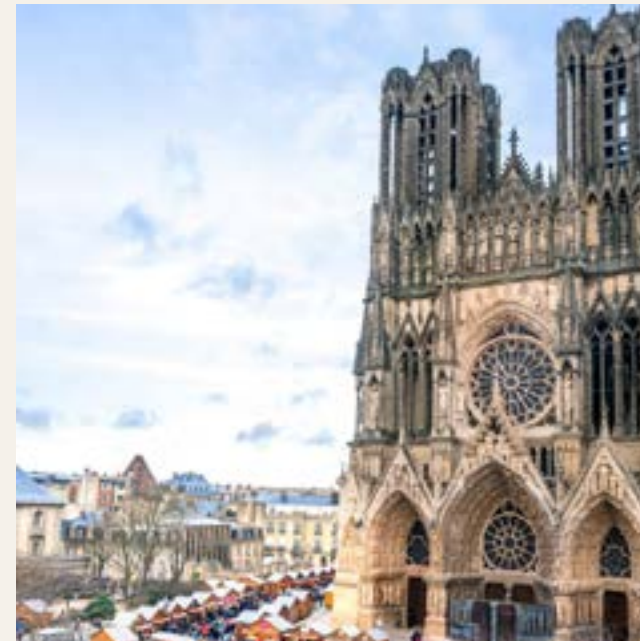


METZ

Arguably France's second most beloved Christmas market after Strasbourg, Metz Christmas Market unfolds across five enchanting areas of the city. Each location offers its own charm, from glittering baubles and handcrafted tree toppers to seasonal treats, local wines and one-of-a-kind Christmas souvenirs.

REIMS

Reims sparkles during the holiday season, with its magnificent cathedral glowing at the heart of the city's Christmas celebrations. The festive market features elegant glass ornaments, handcrafted chocolates, and roasted chestnuts. Warm up with a cup of mulled wine—or treat yourself to a glass of local champagne.



BORDEAUX

Venture south to Bordeaux and discover its lively Christmas market, featuring over 150 exhibitors offering unique gifts and festive delights from across France. Sip a warming, spiced drink as you browse decorative stalls, and don't miss the chance to sample local wines and craft beers.



LILLE

In December, Lille transforms into a festive wonderland, with the city center aglow in holiday lights. At the heart of the celebration, 90 charming wooden chalets offer a variety of gifts, nativity figurines, Christmas decorations, and seasonal treats. From the Grand'Place to the Rue de la Monnaie, enjoy regional specialties alongside festive favorites like gingerbread, roasted chestnuts and freshly made pralines—perfect for savoring the spirit of the season.

