

Siteseeing

FOCUS ON ...
GERMANY

with SCOTT PODMORE
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With all eyes on Germany, get a kick out of these websites focusing on the host nation of this year's soccer World Cup

TOURISM HOME

www.germany-tourism.de

THE official online tourism resource for Germany may be cluttered, but it's just about the best for accuracy, detail and a comprehensive range of information.

There are super maps, regional guides, scenic routes, city summaries and also a section on where to find the best spa resorts.

Also check the culture and events page link for the lowdown on castles, entertainment, food, theme parks and zoos.

WORLD CUP

<http://fifaworldcup.yahoo.com>

THE World Cup is the biggest thing happening in the world of sport and this official website is a lot of fun and has some great features.

There is a handy real-time scoreboard, team lists (including profiles on all 736 players), previews and all the latest news.

Check out the Destination Germany videos and those really keen to know the results at ungodly hours of the morning can organise free SMS alerts to their mobile phone.

KING OF THE CASTLES

<http://www.mediaspec.com/castles>

CASTLES are one of Germany's most alluring attractions and while there are many websites dedicated to them, this one is hard to beat for simplicity and detail.

Find out about castles along the Rhine River, the famous Heidelberg Castle, King Ludwig of Bavaria and Neuschwanstein Castle and Salzberg Castle.

PROST!

www.oktoberfest.de/en

THERE are now fewer than 100 days to the biggest event in the world for lovers of the amber fluid — the Oktoberfest.

This official website has all the fast

Hit the highway



Destination: Bellellen Homestead, Bellellen (Grampians)

www.ozbedandbreakfast.com

WHAT better way to experience these chilly, wintry days than to head to the Grampians and enjoy all the spoils Bellellen Homestead has to offer. Siteseeing has joined Ozbedandbreakfast.com to give one lucky reader a night's free accommodation.

Bellellen Homestead offers traditional hosted B&B accommodation with queen, family and executive suites available.

Enjoy the captivating views of the Grampians and relax on the property's large shady verandas and in front of its grand open fires.

facts about the event, photo galleries, a free newsletter service and an excellent page dedicated to The Big Tents — all 14 of them, with pictures and a short description on each.

BEAUTIFUL BERLIN

www.berlin.de/english/index.html

DESPITE a few annoying pop-up advertisements, this site has the lot for information on beautiful Berlin.

There is an excellent visitor's guide, as well as providing entertainment info, events, an accommodation finder and general tourist info.

TALK IT UP

www.germanfortravellers.com

MEMBERSHIP at the German For Travellers website is inexpensive and offers access to all exercises, grammar explanations, more than 2000 audio files and culture pages.

It also allows you access to the

Bellellen Homestead also is close to Halls Gap and central to all Grampians attractions, including balloon rides and vineyard tours.

To win, email siteseeing@escape.com.au before noon tomorrow (no later) with your name and phone number and tell us in fewer than 25 words why you want a free night at Bellellen. Winner will be contacted by Ozbedandbreakfast.com and told how to claim the prize.

QuickFix page, which has audio samples so you can listen and repeat words and phrases as you practise your German.

LONELY AT THE TOP

www.lonelyplanet.com/worldguide/destinations/europe/germany

TRAVEL guides don't get any better than Lonely Planet's — one of the premier travel resources in cyberspace.

This page link transports you directly to all things German, including details on events, transport, the country at a glance and links to German topics at the Thorn Tree, one of the internet's most famous travel chat forums.

Also check the image galleries and handy tips from other travellers who have been before you.

Email Scott Podmore at siteseeing@escape.com.au



Germany at its grandest: The Staatstheater in Stuttgart.

Time to party in Germany

There is more to Germany than the World Cup, reports **MIKE SMITH**

HARRY Kewell will be there as well as Mark Viduka, Tim Cahill, Lucas Neill and the rest of our World Cup squad.

For four weeks until July 9, Germany will host a party to beat all parties, as the boys in green and gold converge on Munich and Stuttgart, along with the lesser known Kaiserslautern, for a slice of football history.

In the light of our 1-1 draw with the highly-fancied Netherlands, we take a look at the centres that will host the Socceroos, along with capital Berlin, where the biggest challenge, the final, will be staged.

BERLIN: Since the Berlin Wall tumbled and the souvenir hunters moved in to take home a brick or two, the German capital has reinvented itself as a modern, trendy city that likes to party — day and night.

Reunification and the ultimate closure of the infamous dividing gate, Checkpoint Charlie, have been good for the city. In the centre of Berlin is the city's birthplace, Mitte, where commerce blends with culture and politicians rub shoulders with fashion designers. The rise of international hotels is a sign of fruitful times for the city.

Between matches, fans can stroll through the capital and marvel at impressive structures such as the Brandenburg Gate, which epitomises German reunification.

Berlin's party scene is said to be one of the most diverse in Europe.

And dining doesn't just focus on the traditional bratwurst as a generation of chefs with international

experience has moved into the restaurant scene, creating lighter dishes. You can only imagine what the streets, clubs, pubs and restaurants will be like on July 9, as the city kicks up its heels to host the World Cup final.

MUNICH: Renowned for noisy beer halls and annual Oktoberfest celebrations, Munich, home of BMW and the 1972 summer Olympics, will be on every Australian fan's lips when it hosts the much-awaited clash against the world hot-shots Brazil on June 18.

Along with the bustling sights of the Bavarian city, there is sure to be plenty of celebration in the nearby beer halls afterwards, of particular interest the Hofbrauhaus, that dates to 1589 and has long been a magnet for Australian beer drinkers.

STUTTART: The city's population is half that of Munich, but what it lacks in size and buzz it makes up in beauty, with the parks and hillside forests forming a chain of green that stretches to the vineyards, orchards and meadows that ring the city boundaries.

Stuttgart is a short drive from the Swiss border, even closer to France, which allows fans to venture beyond Germany.

In the centre of the city is Schlossplatz, a square overlooked by the Konig Wilhelm Jubilee column, flanked by cooling fountains.

KAISERSLAUTERN: Not hugely recognised on the tourist trail, this is where it all begins for the Aussies in their opening World Cup match against Japan. Located in the beautiful Rhineland-Platz region, close to the French border, southwest of Frankfurt, Kaiserslautern is a fascinating centre with a Renaissance castle as its main focal point.

MORE: www.germany-tourism.de

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