

# Oh du fröhliche...

Weihnachtsmärkte gibt es nicht nur in Deutschland.  
Wir stellen traditionelle, handgefertigte Produkte  
aus fünf europäischen Städten vor, die für ihre  
Region typisch sind und nach denen man auf dem  
Weihnachtsmarkt Ausschau halten sollte

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## Dresden

**D**er Dresdner Weihnachtsmarkt, auch Striezelmarkt genannt, ist vor allem für das Christbrot bekannt, das gemeinhin Stollen oder im Mittelhochdeutschen auch Striezel genannt wird. Er feiert dieses Jahr seinen 580. Geburtstag und ist damit einer der ältesten Weihnachtsmärkte Deutschlands. Aber nicht nur sein Alter ist rekordverdächtig: In der Mitte des Altmarkts, dem Veranstaltungsort des Striezelmarkts, steht die mit 14,62 Metern weltgrößte Stufenpyramide.

Schon seit dem 16. Jahrhundert zieht der Markt erzgebirgische Händler an, die dort ihre typischen weihnachtlichen Dekorationen aus Holz verkaufen. Seiffen, eine Erzgebirgsstadt 70 Kilometer südlich von Dresden, ist das Zentrum der erzgebirgischen Volkskunst, der kunstvollen Verarbeitung von Holz zu Spielzeug und eben Weihnachtsschmuck wie den typischen Pyramiden und Nussknackern. Müller Kleinkunst, der Hersteller der abgebildeten Pyramide, ist dort schon seit 1899 ansässig und ein Familienbetrieb in der vierten Generation. Die Dresdner Frauenkirche dient

dieser Pyramide als Motiv. Das Holz, aus dem sie gemacht ist, kommt von einem regionalen Holzhändler, mit dem die Familie schon jahrelang zusammenarbeitet. Der Betrieb hat 40 Mitarbeiter und fast alle haben an der Pyramide Hand angelegt. Die 350 Einzelteile, aus denen sie besteht, werden zugeschnitten, geschliffen, gebohrt, gefräst, zusammengeleimt, bemalt und lackiert. Neben den traditionellen Engeln, Hirten und Weihnachtsmannmotiven gibt es auch Nussknacker im Schottenrock und eine Pyramide mit der Moskauer Basilius-Kathedrale.

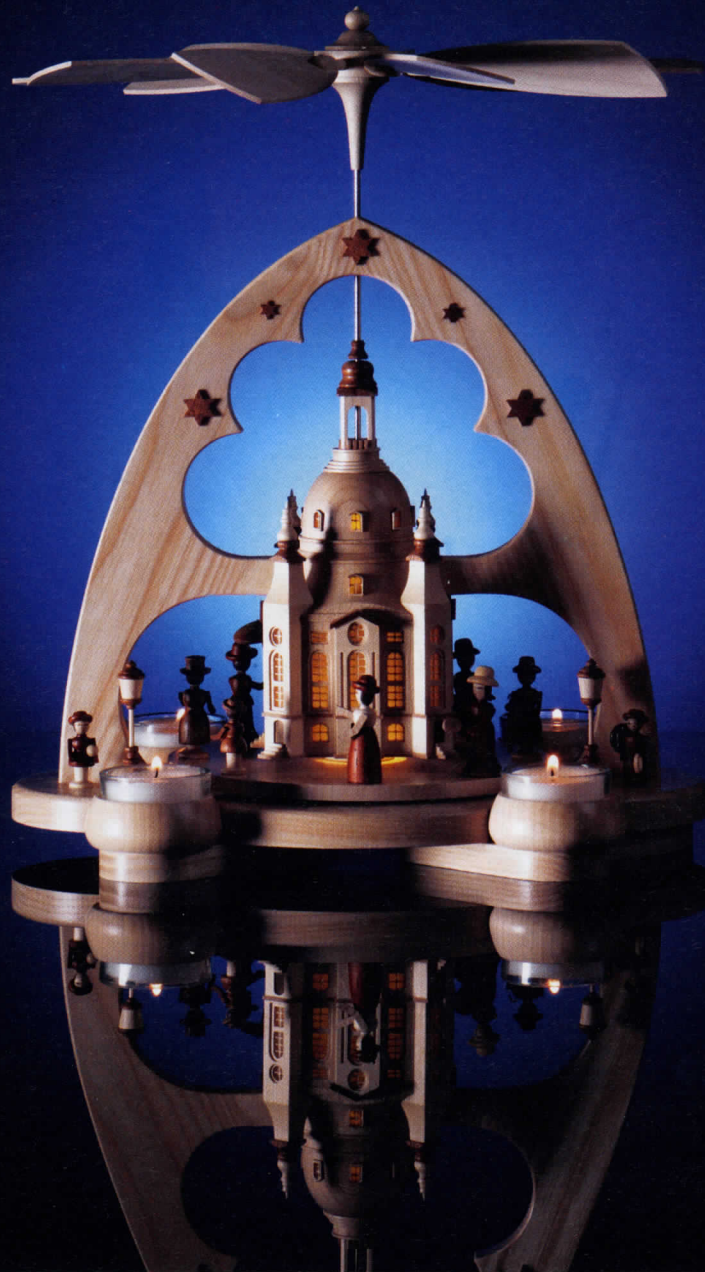
### DRESDNER STRIEZELMARKT

*Der Dresdner Weihnachtsmarkt findet auf dem Altmarkt statt, ganz in der Nähe der Frauenkirche und des Zwingers am Südufer der Elbe.*

*Donnerstag 27. November – Mittwoch 24. Dezember 2014*

### GERMANWINGS FLIEGT VON

→ Köln-Bonn, Stuttgart, Hamburg und Düsseldorf nach **Dresden**





# BOXING DAYS

With Christmas markets brightening up the short days, we reveal the local specialities that help give five European cities their distinctive Yuletide feel



## MANCHESTER

Candles in all shapes and sizes are available at Christmas markets. One Manchester firm that makes these festive lights is Mayflower Apiaries, a small local bee-keeping business with a staff of around 20 million diligent workers. Owner Ed Peirson, who kept his first bees at the age of 12, has 400 hives within 30km of the city. The wax that bees use to seal their honeycomb is removed to get their honey; Ed decided six years ago to turn that wax into candles. Each harvest yields around five kilogrammes of wax, which is melted at 70°C and poured into moulds with no further additives. An hour later, or slightly longer for larger candles, the wax has hardened and the light is ready for the Christmas market.

It's oddly fitting that Ed's business is located in Manchester, since the bee is the city's symbol; its coat of arms features seven of the insects. This is said to stem from the start of industrialisation in England, a time when Manchester's bustling activity resembled a bee colony. The bee can still be spotted across the city



## Neapolitan nativity scenes feature unusual guests such as Italian film stars and politicians

today, on its street lights and in the mosaic pattern on the Town Hall's floor. Bee hives adorn the roofs of many buildings, including Manchester Cathedral.

### ► MANCHESTER CHRISTMAS MARKET

Stalls are located in various streets around Albert Square. The Mayflower Apiaries stand is in New Cathedral Street. 14 November - 21 December

## DRESDEN

This year, Dresden's Christmas market celebrates its 580th birthday, making it the oldest in Germany. At its centre is *Christbrot*, otherwise known as *Stollen* or, in Middle High German, *Striezel*, which gives the market its name, Striezelmarkt. Since the 16th century it has been the principal shopfront for the Erzgebirge school



of woodworkers, who sell their wares there. Long associated with the town of Seiffen, 50km south of Dresden, Erzgebirge is a folk style of woodworking used for making toys, Christmas decorations such as pyramids and that Xmas must, nutcrackers. Family firm Müller Kleinkunst, now in its fourth generation, has been based there since 1899 and made the pyramid pictured above; constructed from 350 pieces of locally sourced wood, it depicts Dresden's Frauenkirche church. The firm's 40 employees, nearly all of whom helped make the pyramid, first machine-cut the rough wooden shapes, then sanded, drilled, glued together, painted and varnished them. Trips abroad give the family ideas beyond the traditional angels, shepherds and Father Christmas motifs; previous innovations have included a Scottish nutcracker and a pyramid depicting Moscow's St Basil's Cathedral.

### ► DRESDNER STRIEZELMARKT

Dresden's Christmas market is held at the Old Market near the Frauenkirche, the Semperoper opera house and the Zwinger Palace on the south bank of the Elbe. 27 November - 24 December





### NAPLES

It's Christmas all year round in the Via San Gregorio Armeno in Naples because this street is where Neapolitan nativity scenes are made. Saint Francis of Assisi is said to have built the world's first nativity scene in 1223 in the northern Italian town of Greccio. The custom of setting up nativity scenes at Christmas then spread from Italy around the globe. The nativity scene-makers' street in Naples is a small, narrow alleyway lined with one shop after another filled with nativity scenes and figurines.

Handmade accessories have been produced there for 150 years, and even today many of the shops still have their own small workshops. During the festive season the small alleyway buzzes with activity. Tall buildings on either side of the street keep it shrouded in a permanent twilight that's brightened by the shops' Christmas lights and thousands of glistening Christmas decorations. In December, some sales assistants wear traditional shepherd's clothing, adding to the Yuletide magic.

Neapolitan nativity scenes are characterised by their extremely realistic figurines and settings. Unusual guests such as Italian film stars and politicians join more familiar attendees at Jesus's birth. Everyday characters complete the line-up in the Bethlehem stable: potters as well as glass blowers, lace-makers, metal-smiths, candlemakers and woodcarvers all gather round the crib.

#### ► CHRISTMAS IN NAPLES

Processions and markets take place in Naples during the traditional festive season and nativity scenes are built all around the city. 8 December - 6 January. Nativity scenes are now also available online, for example at [www.holyart.co.uk](http://www.holyart.co.uk)



### AMSTERDAM

Another Christmas sweet treat is *Speculaas*, a spicy biscuit made of short-crust pastry, originally from the Netherlands. Holland dominated the international spice trade in the 16th and 17th centuries, controlling Ceylonese cinnamon and forging close trading links with the East Indies and Indonesia, the source of many other spices used in speculaas. Cinnamon, cloves, ginger, white pepper and cardamom all feature in the recipe. Variations on the biscuit include almond speculaas with ground almonds in the dough and a topping of flaked almonds.

In Amsterdam these Christmas biscuits are traditionally eaten on the eve of St Nicholas's Day on 6 December, when Dutch people exchange Christmas gifts. Speculaas is also available year-round but best enjoyed in December from the Christmas market.

The sweet treat gets its name from the Latin word *speculum*, meaning 'mirror'. The baking moulds used to make the biscuits, the *Speculaasplanken*, are made from wood intricately carved with Christmas motifs; they can also feature ships, windmills and other typical local scenes. Once they're turned out of the moulds the biscuits display a mirror image of the pictures. A bakery museum in the small town of Medemblik, 60km north of Amsterdam, has several hundred pieces of this traditional bakeware.

#### ► AMSTERDAM WINTER MARKET

Amsterdam's winter market is held on the Beursplein, near the main train station. 20 November - 4 January



### BASEL

Basel's *Lächerli* biscuits are made from white flour, honey, candied fruits, nuts and, in some recipes, a dash of kirsch liqueur. In Switzerland they're eaten all year round but are most popular at Christmas. *Lächerli* is usually cut into simple triangles but is also available in Father Christmas shapes at the Christmas markets. *Lächerli* is covered with a sugar glaze after baking which gives it a wintery look, as though it's dusted with a light frost.

*Lächerli* has its roots in a 700-year-old tradition. As with speculaas, the spice trade played an important role in its creation. Back in the 11th century, Switzerland's well-off monasteries were the first to be able to afford expensive oriental spices. They started adding them to their honey cakes and by the 15th century this type of baking had boomed into an industry in its own right. A guild emerged for bakers specialising in sweet, spiced treats known as *Lebkuchen*. *Lächerli* recipes appeared for the first time in 17th-century cookery books. The recipe has since gone on to global fame. Today, it gets an airing in the starriest arenas: the American talkshow host Oprah Winfrey has recommended Basler *Lächerli* in her *O* magazine.

#### ► BASEL CHRISTMAS MARKET

Switzerland's biggest Christmas market is held at Barfüsser and Münsterplatz in Basel. 27 November - 23 December