

Size: 7,390 characters (incl. spaces) Press contact:

1,195 words

90 lines

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Leipziger Freiheit

Leipzig Tourismus
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PRESS INFORMATION

(presse 11/004-e)

A culinary tour of Leipzig, then and now

Love Leipzig, love its food: for centuries the people of Leipzig and visitors to this cosmopolitan metropolis have been able to enjoy a host of tasty specialities, from a "Scheelchen Heeßen" (a cup of filter coffee) to a plate of "Leipziger Allerlei" (Leipzig Allsorts, a dish of mixed vegetables), or a piece of "Leipziger Lerche" (Leipzig Lark, a cake made with shortcrust pastry) and a glass of "Leipziger Gose", the local beer. But what's truly typical for Leipzig? Where do the locals go to eat?

Known for its rich musical and artistic traditions, the city has always been cosmopolitan and welcoming. Merchants from all across Europe, who came to Leipzig for the trade fair, and a large number of students would all rave about the city's pubs and inns. **Johann Wolfgang Goethe**, once a student in the city himself, immortalised **Auerbachs Keller** in his play "Faust". With its "Großer Keller" (Large Cellar), the restaurant now numbers among the most famous restaurants in the world. Yet, the sophisticated cuisine available in the "Historische Weinstuben" (Historic Wine Bar) that is the oldest part of Auerbachs Keller is still an insider tip for many. Over the past few years a good number of Leipzig restaurants have cooked their way into gastronomical stardom, especially **FALCO** and **Stadtpfeiffer**. FALCO is located on the top floor of the Westin Leipzig hotel, and under head chef Peter Maria Schnurr, it is the only restaurant in the east of Germany (excluding Berlin) to have two Michelin stars, whereas the Stadtpfeiffer, in the Gewandhaus concert hall, has boasted a Michelin star and 17 Gault Millau points for years. You really do feel close to the stars in the **Panorama Tower Restaurant**, which is high up on the 29th floor of the City-Hochhaus in the Augustusplatz square. It's worth a visit, not just for the wonderful panoramic views over the city from a height of 110 metres, but also for the cuisine, which is modern and daring.

The Saxon love of coffee

Aficionados of **coffee culture** will love the city's traditional coffee houses. The "**Zum Arabischen Coffe Baum**" café-restaurant is the oldest coffee house in Germany – none other than Robert Schumann was a regular patron here. It is named after a sculpture above the entrance portal which dates from the year 1720 and remains well preserved today. The third floor of the building houses a coffee museum, with over 500 exhibits featuring the popular beverage. Many visitors are first attracted to the **Kaffeehaus Riquet** by the two large elephant heads above the entrance, but the coffee house makes a more lasting impression with its excellent selection of coffees and cakes. In his wonderfully imaginative design, Paul Lange, the architect who built the coffeehouse in 1908/1909, managed to capture the Riquet company's trading links with Eastern Asia and the Orient, which went all the way back to 1745. Another culinary must for the visitor to Leipzig is sampling a cup of Bach coffee in the **Café Kandler** by St Thomas Church.

Leipzig Specialties

The large variety of **Leipzig specialities** reflects the high standard of living enjoyed for centuries by the people of Leipzig in comparison with the surrounding areas. The best-known delicacy is a hearty vegetable dish known as "**Leipziger Allerlei**". Unlike the pre-cooked frozen versions available in many supermarkets, the traditional handed-down recipe calls for morels, prawns and bread dumplings along with the various baby vegetables like carrots, kohlrabi, asparagus and cauliflower.

The "**Leipziger Lerche**" is a tasty dessert that's popular in the city and far beyond. When the hunting of larks for pie-making was banned by the King of Saxony in 1876, the enterprising bakers of Leipzig immediately came up with a substitute for the popular delicacy: using shortcrust pastry, almonds, nuts and marzipan they made imitations of the song bird's nest. They cleverly added a dollop of strawberry jam inside to symbolise the lark's heart.

The original **Bachtaler** cakes make for an excellent gift idea. They were created in the year 2000 by the patissier René Kandler to mark the 250th anniversary of the death of Johann Sebastian Bach. The **Bachtaler** cake is an exquisite confection made of chocolate-coated ganache containing a coffee bean enclosed in hazelnut pastry. By contrast, "**Leipziger Rübchen**" are rather reminiscent of doughnuts, and are always prepared fresh and served warm. They are made of prunes filled with marzipan and pressed into a pancake mix, then shaped into balls and rolled in cinnamon sugar. For those who prefer something more substantial, there are the classics, like Saxon potato soup or a succulent roulade, or **Mutzbraten**, a speciality of Thuringia and Western Saxony: a fist-sized piece of pork neck or

shoulder marinated with spices and slowly cooked on a special birchwood grill, or "Mutzbratenstand".

For a refreshing drink with a 1,000-year tradition, try the **Leipziger Gose** beer. This top-fermented beer had almost faded into obscurity before being rediscovered by a resourceful publican. Now it is being brewed in Leipzig again. You can find extensive information about this once very popular alcoholic beverage in the Gasthaus- & Gosebrauerei "Bayerischer Bahnhof" (a brewery inn at the Bavarian Railway Station), and in the "Gosenschenke Ohne Bedenken" pub in the Gohlis district of Leipzig, and of course the beer is available there as well. Both pubs have beer gardens that are popular in the summer months. To aid digestion, there's the popular **Leipziger Allasch**, a strong liqueur made from caraway seeds.

Places to eat and drink

Since 1989 many streets have been developed in the city centre specialising in **restaurants and pubs** – each with its own special charm. The beating heart of the city centre is along the "**Drallewatsch**" around the Barfußgässchen. The curious German name comes from an expression in Old Saxon dialect meaning to experience something or to go dancing. The Barfußgässchen is also known for the huge amount of outdoor seating provided by its restaurants and bars – seeing and being seen downtown was never easier.

Just a few yards to the west, in **Gottschedstraße**, there are large numbers of trendy bars and pubs featuring international cuisine, tasty "after work" cocktails and regular live music. This is probably down to the influence of the nearby Central Theatre. In **Karl-Liebknecht-Straße** there is good food from all four corners of the globe available from early in the morning till late at night. In the early 90s this was a meeting place for squatters and clubbers, tucked between the district of Südvorstadt and the alternative left-wing heartland of Connewitz. All around the **Karli**, as it's affectionately known by the locals, there are colourful cafes, restaurants and bars where people swap city gossip, recall the wild days of their youth, or even attempt to relive them: the night life in this part of town is legendary! For the perfect route back to the city centre the little **Münzgasse**, which leads onto the Karli, deserves a closer look. In its short length it contains an impressive selection of eateries and charming pubs.

Information on Leipzig, travel deals, room reservations, etc.:

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