

## Press Release

### Legendary Onion Market to be celebrated for the 360<sup>th</sup> Time

#### Markets and Festivals: Christmas Market extended until 28<sup>th</sup> December

**Weimar.** Weimar's Onion Market is legendary. Whether the Potters' Market on the first September weekend, the Wine Festival on Goethe's birthday surrounding the 28<sup>th</sup> of August, the Easter Market or the Flower Market – the Weimarer are experts in celebrating festivals. The Weimar Christmas Market is finding more and more fans – perhaps because they are festively welcomed to the Culture City until 28<sup>th</sup> December.

On the second weekend of October the motto is "Everything in Onions" for three days: The onion presents itself in tarts, in the skillet, as a braid, in flower arrangements, in the crown of the Onion Market Queen and as the name patron of Thuringia's largest folk festival. In 2013 the Onion Market will be celebrated for the 360<sup>th</sup> time, from October 11-13. The tradition began in 1653 as the "Viehe- and Zippelmarckt" (Livestock and Onion Market). In the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, the market developed to the most significant trading venue for onions in central Germany. Then as now, the onion farmers from Heldrung produce and sell the onion braids. In two colours, from mini to extra long – the decorative braids are a favourite of natives and tourists alike. More than 300,000 visitors are attracted to the Onion Market each year. They also enjoy the cultural events that offer three days of extraordinary entertainment.

During the advent season, the old-town is transformed into a Christmas Market illuminated in glowing lights. Its stands, booths and mulled wine huts extend from the Theatre Square with the famous Goethe and Schiller memorial all the way to the historical Market Square from 30 November until 28 December. An ice-skating rink in front of the Herzogin Anna Amalia Bibliothek offers another winter attraction from November until January. The magnificent spruce tree with its glowing lights in the middle of the Market Square is a special tradition of the Weimar Christmas: Around 1815, the court bookseller Hoffmann surprised the entire town with the first public Christmas tree. He wanted to share his bourgeois wealth with the poor and had the tree set up so that families who could not afford a tree of their own could enjoy this wonderful tradition.

This idea of an outdoor Christmas tree originated in Weimar and became popular in the whole world. The famous German Christmas carol "O du fröhliche ..." is sung in Weimar especially often. Johannes Falk, a contemporary of Goethe, was a philosopher and social pedagogue in Weimar and wrote the words. A small museum in Weimar is dedicated to the life and work of Falk, who founded the first orphanage in Weimar.

The Weimar Christmas Market will be followed by a Winter Market, which will offer visitors culinary delicacies and winter wares on the Market Square until after New Year's.

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