



*Federal Constitutional Court (backside)*

Dear Expats,

November in Karlsruhe can be gray, cold and dreary. It's dark when you leave in the morning and it's dark when you return – and sometimes the fog doesn't lift all day. Most of us would rather stay indoors. The annual Christmas markets in the region, which open at the end of November, are a good reason to get outdoors! The inner cities are transformed into magical places.

Soaking in a nice warm pool or sweating it out in a sauna are great ways to flee the November blues. The local indoor pools (Hallenbäder) are listed [here](#). In addition, curative waters can be found in the baths in nearby Bad Herrenalb, Baden-Baden, Bad Bergzabern, Bad Wildbad, Gaggenau-Bad Rotenfels & Waldbronn. Both medicinal and wellness options are available and the baths are open to the public for a fee. Be aware that certain baths and saunas are textile-free (except for a towel or bathrobe). If you are uncomfortable with this, find out beforehand which baths are textile-free and during which times. Some baths & saunas have special times or days for women only — with and without clothing.

### **Important Days in November**

**October 28 – November 4 — Fall holidays** for the Karlsruhe school system.

**October 29 – Return to standard time** – be sure to set your clocks back one hour.

**November 1 — All Saint's Day** is an official holiday in Baden-Württemberg, but not in all German states. In Karlsruhe, all government institutions, stores (including grocery stores), banks etc. are closed.

**November 11 — Martinstag (St. Martin's Day).** A traditional (but not official) German holiday. The Durlach neighborhood of Karlsruhe hosts a [parade](#) which starts at 5:30 pm at the Durlach Schlossgarten. Children, often with their school classes, sing and carry homemade paper lanterns. Usually the story of St. Martin cutting his coat in half and giving one half to a beggar is told. New route this year. It's fun to watch.

Goose is often eaten on St. Martin's Day — many German restaurants offer goose from now through Christmas. It is also a time to eat Dambedei, a yeast dough formed like a man, sometimes with a pipe. This is a Catholic holiday, but others join in as well.

**November 19— Volkstrauertag (Day of Mourning)** — commemorates all those who died in armed conflicts or as the victims of violent oppression.

**November 23 — Thanksgiving** is not celebrated in Germany. However, cranberries and turkeys are available in many supermarkets and at the food markets in Karlsruhe.

**November 26 — Totensonntag (Sunday of the Dead)** German religious holiday observed mainly in the Protestant churches and remembers those lost in the past year. This is considered a "silent day" and out of respect, no live music or dancing in public spaces is allowed during certain hours of the day in certain regions of Germany.

**November 28 — Opening of the Karlsruhe Christkindlesmarkt** (Christmas market).

### Miscellaneous News

- More cars are being towed for illegal parking in Karlsruhe. The fees are about €200 to get your car back + the ticket for illegal parking + daily holding costs if you can't get your car back right away, so be sure to read the signs that it is ok to park where you want: resident permit parking areas have restricted times when you may park, no parking on sidewalks, no parking in handicapped spots unless you have a handicapped permit etc.
- Remember the "O to O" rule – Oktober to Ostern (October to Easter) is the time for winter tires – make an appointment to get yours changed. If you are in an accident where winter tires were warranted, your insurance company may not pay.
- November is the month to review your contracts. If you would like to terminate a contract by the end of the year, now is the time to do so, as many contracts have a 4 to 8 week term of notice. Read all the fine print to determine under which circumstances you can terminate your contract. Many car insurance companies will be raising their prices, so comparing insurance companies may be worthwhile. For car insurance, you have until November 30 to cancel your policy – but be sure you have a new one lined up!
- It's possible that the Deutsche Bahn workers will be striking again in November! Check before leaving home that your trains are running.
- Starting in November, a new law "[Gesetz zur Weiterentwicklung der Fachkräfteeinwanderung](#)" (Law for the further development of skilled labor immigration ) goes into effect. The process for skilled workers to be able to live and work in Germany should be simplified (!). Skilled workers with vocational training or an academic degree will be able to immigrate to Germany with the "EU Blue Card".
  - Credentials: Those who have a degree will be able to pursue any qualified employment in the future, not just those in your direct field.
  - Experience: Anyone with at least two years of professional experience and a vocational qualification recognized by the state in their country of origin can immigrate as a worker. In the future, the professional qualification no longer has to be recognized in Germany.
  - Potential: Another new feature is a job search opportunity card based on a points system. The selection criteria include your credentials, German and English language skills, work experience, connection to Germany, age, and accompanying spouse or partner.
- The Marktplatz is now finished as far as removal of tram tracks and laying of pavement stones – just in time for the Christmas market!

### What to do in Karlsruhe in November

#### Regular English Language Events

Karlsruhe's [English-Speaking Meetup Group](#) (sponsored by [Relocation Service move-in](#)) is a means for anyone to organize events and activities. The most popular regular event is the monthly Stammtisch where you can meet nice people who speak English in a relaxed atmosphere. Start is 6:30 pm until around 9:30 pm. The **November Stammtisch** is on Tuesday, November 7 at Vogelbräu Karlsruhe (see below). Other popular events are hiking and jazz concerts. Anyone can participate, but it helps the organizers if you sign up first – and remove your name if you can no longer attend!

The [American Library](#) has regular events in English for kids and adults.

For adults: LitNight (Nov 7 & 21), New(s) Views (Nov 14), Poetry?Please! (Nov 28).

For kids and teens: Storytime in English for Kids 3 to 5 (Nov 8 @2pm, Nov 22@4 pm), Stories for Kids 6 & up (Nov 10 & 24), TeenTime (Nov 10 & 24).

The [Karlsruhe Toastmasters](#) meet every 1st, 3rd and 5th Monday of the month from 7:15 to 9:15 pm to practice public speaking in English with friendly, relaxed support from speakers from around the world. To check if the events have moved from online to in-person, please check the website.

### Calendar of Events

If you have an event you would like advertised, please let us know a few days before the end of the month (info@expat-ka.com). Keep in mind that it should be something of general interest or specifically of interest to an English-speaking community.

**October 27 – November 6 — [Karlsruher Mess'](#)** is the large temporary amusement park in the eastern part of Karlsruhe at the Messplatz on Durlacher Allee. Fun for the whole family with rides, food etc.

**October 28 - November 5 — [Offerte](#)** at the Messe Karlsruhe. The largest consumer trade show in the region. Lots of hands-on things to try and taste. Admission charged.

**November 6 – 26 — Dance Festival ([tanz Karlsruhe](#))** at various venues throughout Karlsruhe. New choreographies, experimental performances, international contemporary dance etc. Well worth it! Admission fees.

**November 7 — Monthly [Stammtisch](#)** hosted by the English-Speaking Meet-Up Group. This time at Vogelbräu in Karlsruhe. It's a great way to meet new people, chat with old friends — all in English! Please sign up if you plan to attend. And please remove your name if you can no longer attend! It helps those planning the event.

**November 9 – 11 — [Martinsmarkt](#)** in Durlach from 10 am to 7 pm. A cozy market of hand-made goods and food in the Durlach Rathaus (city hall of the Durlach neighborhood of Karlsruhe) – entrance from Pfinztalstrasse. Free.

**November 15 —MovieTalk Special Event** at the [American Library](#) in Karlsruhe starting at 7 pm. *Fiction vs. Facts: Dian Fossey's Legacy*. After watching the well-known film about Dian Fossey — in English with English subtitles (the library movie license does not allow naming of the movie), the author Elisa Jakob will provide background information about and take questions regarding Dian Fossey's life and work. Elisa Jakob did extensive research for her book (*Die Mutter der Berggorillas*) and has some interesting stories to tell. The discussion will be in English. Admission is free.

**November 18 — Book and Bake Sale** at the [American Library](#) in Karlsruhe from 10 am to 2 pm. Lots of great books at reduced prices and yummy homemade cakes for sale benefitting the library. Just stop by!

**November 18 — [JuBi - Jugendbildungsmesse - Fair for Youth](#)** from 10 am to 4 pm. Around 100 organizations provide information about year abroad, work&travel, AuPair, language-learning holidays etc. At the European School in Karlsruhe. Free but a ticket is recommended and can be reserved for free about three weeks before the event on the website.

**November 23 – January 7 — [Christmas Garden](#)** at the Karlsruhe Zoo. Lots of lights! Food. Timed tickets.

**November 28 — Opening of the Karlsruhe Christkindlesmarkt** (Christmas market). The market runs through December 23rd. The main areas are Marktplatz and Friedrichsplatz. Over 90 stands, a big ferris wheel, a flying Santa Claus (seen twice each evening over the Marktplatz), and a special area for kids at Stephanplatz are open from 11 am to 9 pm (Su-Wed) or 10 pm (Th-Sa).

**November 28 – January 28 — Ice skating** in front of the Karlsruhe palace.

**December 1 — Christmas Carol Singing** at the [American Library](#) starting at 6:30 pm. A family-friendly relaxed way to begin the holiday season. Songs are sung together in English (texts provided) with the magnificent piano man Michael, followed by cookies, punch and socializing. Admission free; cookies cheerfully accepted! Please call or stop by to sign up (0721 7 27 52).

### Want to improve your German?

#### [Sprecht miteinander! Speak with each other!](#)

Practice your spoken German in a relaxed atmosphere. People of similar language ability form groups moderated by a volunteer. Free and no registration required. Wednesdays and Fridays from 6:30 to 8:00 pm.

Bürgerzentrum Mühlburg (BZM) Weinbrennerstr. 79a 76185 Karlsruhe

Just stop by!

The [IBZ](#) also offers practice in speaking German via Skype on Mondays and in person on Thursdays from 6:30 to 8:00 pm. More info [here](#).

Look through their website for other events, such as a [Spanish cooking class](#) on November 18th.

### Federal Constitutional Court (Bundesverfassungsgericht - see photo above)

The Federal Constitutional Court was established in 1951 and was first housed in Karlsruhe in the Prinz Max Palais. The current set of buildings was begun in 1965 because more space was needed. There are five interconnected buildings. The idea behind the many windows is that democracy should be transparent. What is pictured above is the addition from 2007 — more space was needed again. The addition caused an uproar among Karlsruhers, because there were concerns that the building would infringe on the Botanical Garden.

This court is responsible for determining if legislation is constitutional. Unlike similar courts in other countries, individuals can make a direct complaint to the court if they feel their constitutional rights have been violated – most of these involve taxes (!) and after review, very few are admitted for consideration. Similarly, the governments of the individual states of Germany, regular courts, and federal institutions can all file complaints directly.

The judges of the court are elected by the German parliament (Bundestag) and the Federal Council (Bundesrat) for a term of 12 years or until they reach the age of 68.

### Relocation Service move-in

With more than 20 years of experience in the region, [Relocation Service move-in](#) can help with your move to Karlsruhe, your move from Karlsruhe and with all those day-to-day problems expats experience.

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