

Fassenacht in Mainz

Fastnacht first timer: Behind the scenes of Mainz famous carnival

Unable to consume alcohol and heavy food all weekend without consequences, on day four I peeled out of bed and went to the gym. After a brief workout I found myself standing along the route of the *Parade der Narrischen Garden*, the Parade of the Foolish Guards.

Thousands of club members young and old marched, played music, danced and shouted *Helau!* My husband and I happened to be standing by a local photographer who, in a blend of English and German, told us about each group that passed.



A women's marching group struts down the street.

No one spared: A parade of politics

Our new friend led us back to the town centre to catch the *Ausstellung der Motivwagen*, a preview of floats that would be featured in the Rosenmontag parade on Fastnacht's final day. These floats displayed masterfully crafted caricatures of politicians in cheeky vignettes; from Angela Merkel to Queen Elizabeth to Theresa May, no public figure was spared.

I would be remiss not to mention my favourite, which depicted Donald Trump as a bull passing gas onto a globe. It was a tad funny to see people unabashedly wearing politically incorrect costumes against the backdrop of these self-aware, inventive pieces of art.