

“Bei uns ist immer was los!” Feste in Rheinland

„FASCHING IN MÜNCHEN“ / „CARNIVAL SEASON IN MUNICH“

Wann feiert man Fasching? (When is Fasching celebrated?)

Carnival was originally a pagan festival, later it has become associated with the catholic church and was celebrated on the day before the beginning of Lent. Nowadays the carnival season begins officially on November 11 with the coronation of a carnival prince and a carnival princess and lasts about three months until Ash Wednesday seven weeks before Easter. The most Fasching events are held in the last four weeks.

Most of the celebrating in Munich takes place in the city center on the Marienplatz square and at the nearby Viktualienmarkt, but there are events (balls, music, parties, etc.) all over the city during Fasching. One big highlight is the Carnival Sunday parade of the “Daft Knights” (*die Damischen Ritter*). This *Faschingsumzug*, with colorful floats, dancers and bands, marches from Herzog-Wilhelm-Straße, winding through downtown Munich and along the pedestrian zone until it ends at the famous Hofbräuhaus for a big “after-parade” party at around 2:30 in the afternoon. The parade features Herzog (Duke) Kasimir and his retinue of knights, clowns and other colorfully dressed participants. Bands and other marching groups from all over Bavaria are invited to take part. In recent years there have been over 30 groups and some 1,000 people marching in the Sunday parade.

Until it all ends on Shrove Tuesday, Munich celebrates *Fasching* with parties, balls*, public stage events (music, dancing, comedy) and street carnivals (*Straßenfasching*) in neighborhoods all across the city. The *Narren* (fools) take over the

This Sunday carnival parade only began in 2006 after Munich had gone 35 years without a *Faschingsumzug*! Of course there are many other Fasching events, including the Dance of the Market Women (*Tanz der Marktfrauen*) on Shrove Tuesday at the Viktualienmarkt. This tradition, which began almost by accident in the 1800s, has become one of Munich’s most popular Fasching attractions. The ladies who normally run the many booths at Munich’s popular open-air food market take a break from selling and dress up to dance on a stage at the market beer garden. In the beginning the market women danced around their booths and along the streets during Fasching – until the 1980s, when they set up a stage and turned the event into a major attraction.

pedestrian zone for three days (Sunday-Tuesday) and turn it into a big open-air party. Vast amounts of food and drink are consumed, including lots of *Krapfen*, Munich’s version of the doughnut. No one can claim that Bavarians don’t know how to have fun!