

“Bei uns ist immer was los!”

FEIERTAGE UND FESTE IM MAI SITTEN UND GEBRÄUCHE MAIBAUM

May pole: der Maibaum, die Maibäume
Putting up (and stealing) the ‘May tree’



Locals from Ruhpolding, Bavaria ride a stolen Maibaum down the street.

Perhaps the most thrilling part is the tradition of towns trying to steal one another's May trees, requiring locals to keep a close watch day and night to ward off their sneaky neighbours. If and when a tree is stolen, towns must then hash out a ransom for it, usually involving copious amounts of beer and food.

In 2004, some clever thieves used a helicopter to steal a May tree that had been placed atop Germany's highest mountain, the Zugspitze.

Another tradition related to the Maibaum is for young men to go into the forest, chop down a young tree and place it outside the home of their love interest, often with decorations and her name on it.

Another challenge in some areas is that people (the *Maibaumkraxler* in Bavaria) compete to climb the tree to get to the top as fast as possible.