

OKTOBERFEST FROM A TO Z

Oktoberfest Kultur / Oktoberfest Culture

Munich without Oktoberfest is still a lot of fun!

Munich's Oktoberfest was cancelled this year due to the coronavirus. But the city has come up with alternative events that could also benefit tourists from abroad in the future.



Summer fun on Munich's Königsplatz © picture alliance/dpa/Hoermann

Christin spent the summer under palm trees, enjoying the feeling of sand between her toes — right in the center of Munich, on the Theresienwiese. This is where, as of mid-July, there would normally be a large construction site: Workers with low loaders and large cranes erect the beer tents and entertainment machinery of the Oktoberfest. Ten weeks of construction, two weeks of fun, and then another five weeks to get it all cleared away again.

But not in this coronavirus summer. For the first time since the Second World War, the Oktoberfest — or the "Wiesn," as the Bavarians affectionately call it — will not be taking place. Instead, the people of Munich have the Theresienwiese all to themselves. A good 42 hectares (104 acres) of space. "This is a completely different way of life", says Christin, a young woman from Munich.



Christin enjoys the peace and the summer feeling on the Theresienwiese

Losses of over a billion euros

Clemens Baumgärtner, director of the Oktoberfest and economic advisor to the city of Munich said he was "sad, shaken and almost paralyzed" when the world's largest public festival was cancelled in April. "It has created a vacuum that is difficult to fill — and of course many businesses rely on the Oktoberfest."

Baumgärtner's office has calculated that the losses are of approximately €1.23 billion (\$1.5 billion). Revenues that the city, the barkeepers, traders, cab drivers, hoteliers, restaurants, traditional clothing and souvenir vendors and many others are deprived of this year. More than 500 businesses work on the festival grounds alone, through which 13,000 temporary jobs are created every year.