

Did you know?

Christmas markets in the UK and USA



It's not only the Christmas tree tradition that has been exported from Germany; German Christmas markets have established themselves as a firm favourite in British and American Advent-time.

Who doesn't love the smell and sound of the Christmas market? Roasted almonds, gingerbread, *glühwein*, the sounds of sausages sizzling and the brass bands playing. A treat in the lead up to Christmas.

While Christmas markets have been around in Germany since medieval times when they offered a practical choice of merchandise for workers: boots, houseware and so on and trinkets and wooden decorations for the well-to-do, their appearance on British shores is much more recent.

Lincoln became the first city to introduce a German Christmas market in 1982 followed 15 years later by Birmingham. Since those original markets, with just a few stalls, the German Christmas market has boomed throughout the country: London, Manchester, Bath, Oxford, Edinburgh, Aberdeen and Cardiff for example all have German markets. Almost as prevalent as in Germany itself.

The footfall at these UK markets shows that they are a popular addition to the festive calendar: Birmingham's Frankfurt market had almost five million visitors pre-Covid, and Manchester welcomed around nine million people to the now 300-stall market.

As you walk through these British 'German' markets, you could imagine yourself in Frankfurt or Munich except for one difference between the two countries: their attitude to alcohol sales. In the UK the *glühwein* stalls are often fenced off, whereas in Germany there is a rather more relaxed attitude to its sale.

It's not just the presence of Christmas markets that shows increasing German influence; supermarkets also report that sales of *stollen* and *lebkuchen* (previously rather niche Christmas fare) have grown exponentially and they are now a festive staple.

There is a similar story with *Christkindl* markets in the USA: they can be found in many cities from New York to San Francisco and Milwaukee to Bethlehem. One of the oldest is in Leavenworth, Washington founded by the local German community and it has been delighting the residents since 1956. Each of these markets has food, trinkets, decorations, beverages and other traditional German delicacies and handicrafts giving them a wonderful *Christkindlmarkt* atmosphere. Just like here in Germany!

You can find out more about 51 German Christmas markets in the USA here: <https://christmasmarketguides.com/christmas-markets-usa-dates/>

Why not play our Christmas board game and have some fun with your students talking about Christmas.

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Christmas game

Teacher's notes

In the classroom:

- Be careful of hygiene rules in the classroom. Only Student A should roll the dice and move the counters on the board.
- Divide the class into groups of 3 or 4 students.
- Give each group the board and a dice (or you could use a coin – heads move forward 1 square, tails move forward 2 squares). Each player has a counter. Give each player the *Tell us about...sheet*.
- The person with the birthday nearest to Christmas starts and Student A rolls the dice for them.
- When students land on a square, they follow the instructions on the *Tell us about...sheet*.
- Students take it in turns to move along the board. The first person to reach the Finish wins the game.

Online:

- Divide the class into groups of 3 or 4 students. Each group will be in a breakout room.
- Send each group the board AND the *Tell us about...sheet*. (You could do this by sending the documents by email BEFORE the lesson or in the chat during the lesson.)
- In the breakout room, one student shares the board on their screen.
- Each student has the *Tell us about...sheet*.
- Using the Annotate function, each student chooses a different colour from the draw function (or they could use the Stamp function, each student having a different stamp) and they use this to mark their progress around the board.
- Each student tosses their own coin – heads move forward 1 square, tails move forward 2 squares.
- The person with the birthday nearest to Christmas starts and tosses their coin.
- When students land on a square, they follow the instructions on the *Tell us about...sheet*.
- Students take it in turns to move along the board. The first person to reach the Finish wins the game.

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English Teachers' Club
Seite 3

CHRISTMAS GAME

Tell us about ...

1	... your favourite Christmas film.
2	... a present you received when you were a child.
3	Ask another person to sing a Christmas song
4	Miss a turn: You stop at the Christmas market for another <i>Glühwein</i> .
5	Read this tongue twister: <i>Peter's parcels perfectly packed in pretty paper.</i>
6	... your hopes for next year.
7	Ask another person what their plans are for Christmas.
8	... what you usually eat on Christmas Eve.
9	... a present you would NEVER want to receive.
10	Throw again.
11	Read this tongue twister: <i>Eleven elves liked eleven little lilies.</i>
12	... your favourite Christmas song.
13	Miss a turn: You have to do some more Christmas shopping.
14	Ask another person what they are doing on New Year's Eve.
15	... your fantasy Christmas guest.
16	Miss a turn: You've forgotten to post your Christmas cards.
17	Read this tongue twister: <i>Santa's sleigh slips on slippery snow.</i>
18	... a New Year's resolution you have made.