



Basic Information

The Cannstatter Volksfest

The Cannstatter Volksfest at present

Once established in 1818 the Cannstatter Volksfest today is one of Europe's biggest festivals regarding fairground entertainment. Due to its diverse offers from entertainers, innkeepers and open-air market traders, more than three million people are attracted to come to the festival in Stuttgart, the capital of the federal state Baden-Württemberg, every year. Thereby the Cannstatter Wasen, a 37 hectare big fairground alongside the river Neckar, becomes a cross-cultural venue. For people of mixed parentage and of different generations laugh, sing and celebrate together 17 days long in a friendly atmosphere until far into the night. The latest fairground rides for the young and the young at heart, but also cherished classics like chairplane, Ferris wheel or ring-the-bell; lottery booths, flea market, musical fireworks, the festival parade, brightly decorated marquees with music, beer mug and roast chicken: The Cannstatter Volksfest combines tradition with modern spirit in an incomparable, wonderful heartfelt way.

A first-rate festival

The biggest wave swinger, the highest freefall tower, the fastest flight carousel – some of the world's best transportable funfair attractions wait to be discovered at the Cannstatter Volksfest. If all rides and booths are set in a row, a front of more than five kilometres will result. About 17,000 people work directly or indirectly for the Cannstatter Volksfest, definitely making it a strong economic motor. Not only the visitors benefit from the festival - bakers, butchers, suppliers, trade, service companies, hotel business and transport companies as well.

Tradition with fresh impulse

The Cannstatter Volksfest develops at the pulse of time without neglecting its ancient customs grown over decades. Scores of habits have been maintained and enrich today's festival culture. Every year the Cannstatter Volksfest is inaugurated by the Lord Mayor with the traditional keg tapping. The more or less successful ceremony about tap and mallet is followed by a varied program with cheerful music, comedic contributions and the very best of Swabian cooking. At the same time outside the tents fairground entertainers already invite to wild rides, spooky adventures and lots of fun and enjoyment. Every year the opening ceremony is simulcasted by the German TV station SWR Fernsehen, since 2007 already on a Friday. From that year forth the official opening of the Volksfest has been advanced one day.

Once every four years the International Trade Exhibition for Farming and Agriculture (Landwirtschaftliches Hauptfest) takes place on the Wasen at the same time as the Cannstatter Volksfest. In 2010 many exhibitors present tried and true classics, but above all new trends in agriculture and all kinds of animals at the 98. Landwirtschaftliches Hauptfest from September 25 until October 3. Themed "Discover the Farmer in You" the priority objective is to improve agricultural value added in all agricultural and silvicultural sectors. In 1818 the first Landwirtschaftliches Hauptfest took place under King Wilhelm I. of Württemberg and was the origin of the Cannstatter Volksfest.



A true spectacle for the whole family is the festival parade which always takes place on the first festival Sunday. Richly decorated harnessed horse teams, performers in colorful traditional costumes, bands, historical groups and Civil Defence Corps from all over the federal state trek from Cannstatt's kursaal to the Cannstatter Wasen. Its organisation lies in the hands of the Cannstatter Festival Society, founded in 1994. Especially for this event they manufactured a huge coppery can, Cannstatt's coat of arms, which adorns the base of the Fruit Column in "volksfestless" times. During the Volksfest the Fruit Column is decorated with more than three tons of vegetables and plants – in remembrance of its origin as an agricultural festivity.

At the Cannstatter Volksfest tradition becomes trend without fail. It is fashionable to go feasting at the Wasen in a befitting traditional costume. The especially for the Volksfest 2008 designed "Wasen-Tracht" with embroidered Württemberg logo enthralls mainly young visitors. Whether the solemn Wasen-Dirndl for women or the black leather trousers with a suitable shirt and jacket for men – the whole family now can enjoy the festival dressed in the original Volksfest outfit. All new is the kid's traditional costume which can also be purchased at www.wasen.de or during the Cannstatter Volksfest and the Frühlingsfest at the gift shop in the Fruit Column.

At the seventeenth and last day of the festival a spectacular musical fireworks show represents the ceremonial ending of the Cannstatter Volksfest. Once more every year the multiple pyrotechnics world champion Joachim Berner from Ehningen next to Stuttgart conjures up a breathtaking play of lights and colours in the nightly sky over the fairground. Synchronous to the tunes of world-famous musicians this spectacle belongs to the highlights of the Cannstatter Volksfest.

Pure family entertainment

At the Cannstatter Volksfest great importance is attached to family-friendliness. Whether white water ride, chairplane or hunted house – a visit at the Wasen promises boundless fun for the young and the young at heart. Many entertainers allow parents to accompany their children on rides for free.

The official family days have been enjoying great popularity for years. Every Wednesday entertainers and innkeepers offer a variety of attractions at reduced prices. Driving bumper cars or riding a carousel for half the price, French fries for one Euro, special children's portions in the festival tents and booths, funny clowns, balloon artists, face painting – all this and a lot more awaits visitors on the two family days at the Cannstatter Volksfest.

As further service restrooms and baby change facilities are available at no charge all over the fairground. And if a family loses track of someone the German Red Cross has opened a Child Collection Point at the Cannstatter Wasen for many years. Lost children are being taken care of until their family picks them up.



in.Stuttgart

Veranstaltungsgesellschaft mbH

Free-of-charge return home service – a nationwide unique project

For 45 years drivers can make use of a nationwide unique service on the Cannstatter Wasen: the free-of-charge return home service. Visitors drive to the Wasen and are being brought back home in their own car by the return home service. Just the taxi charge for the return of the volunteer driver has to be settled by the visitor. But therefore the own car is standing at the front door the next morning and the driver's license is not exposed to danger.

The Wasen-Hasi – more than a mascot

Since 2007 the Cannstatter Volksfest has its own likeable icon which brings the positive image of the festival over city limits and frontiers into the world: the friendly smirking Wasen-Hasi. It embodies everything that makes the Volksfest so very special: pure enjoyment of life, culinary delicacies, Swabian tradition and especially hospitality towards visitors from all over the world.

The Wasen-Hasi has its origin in the old Swabian folksong "Aufm Wasa graset Hasa...", literally translated "the rabbits browse on the Wasen...". Even today free-living rabbits can be seen hobbling in the Wasen area. It was designed by G. Wörner alias Gecko Keck. The artist, author of children's books and publisher grew up and went to school near by the Wasen and still lives there today.



The History

In the course of the period of political upheaval and economic weakness, in 1817 King Wilhelm I. of Württemberg, with the formation of the "Centralstelle des landwirtschaftlichen Vereins" ("Central Point of the Agricultural Association"), laid the foundation for what is known today as the Cannstatter Volksfest. An agricultural festival with horse races, the awarding of prizes for extraordinary performance in livestock breeding together with a general festival was expected to rebuild the Württemberg economy, which was heavily damaged after the Napoleonic wars.

The first Cannstatter Volksfest

The following year, on September 28, 1818, one day after the King's 36th birthday, it happened: The Cannstatter Volksfest was held for the first time, 192 years ago as seen from today. And since 1818 the Cannstatter Wasen has been the site of the huge festivity. At that time it was an idyllic, somewhat watery Neckar floodplain with no surrounding development, between meadows and vineyards, situated along the Neckar which was not yet dammed up. Within sight there was also the royal Villa Bellevue at the Wilhelma, which are today the only zoological-botanical gardens in Germany. Therefore it was a short ride by coach for the founder of the festival, who insisted on opening it ceremonially and to be witness of a successful start. The original idea of the "king among farmers and farmer among kings", as Wilhelm I. was called by his contemporaries, still lives on today in the form of the "Agricultural Main Festival" taking place parallel to the actual festival, which is now an extensive exhibition on state-of-the-art agricultural technology in Baden-Württemberg.

Festival parade for the first time in 1841

There were almost always festival parades. For the year 1841 a festival parade with more than 10,000 participants and far more than 100,000 spectators along the streets of Stuttgart was reported. On that day not only the festival itself, but also the anniversary of the 25 years' government of the founder, King Wilhelm I., was celebrated. And some more information about the number of participants: At that time Stuttgart had barely 40,000 residents. The first festival parade in today's sense took place in 1927 with the official start at Cannstatt's kursaal and ending on the Wasen. In 1911, as befits the home town of Gottlieb Daimler and Wilhelm Maybach, the first festival motorcade was held.

In the early days the number of "festival booths" with fairground entertainers and beer stands was small and was confined to the boundary of the actual fairground, in favor of the royal loge and the stand for the dignitaries. A little later, in the year 1860, the "Amts- und Intelligenzblatt für das Oberamt Cannstatt" (Official and Intelligence Journal for the District Authority) reported a scene, which sounds quite familiar to the situation today, in which the booths were organized "in three main streets and numerous side streets" for the first time.

As of 1882, upon the direction of King Karl, the son and successor of Wilhelm I., the Cannstatter Volksfest or – as it was called in those days – the "Agricultural Main Festival" was no longer organized yearly, but only every two years. This rule stayed effective until the death of the king in 1891. By reason of this rule and a number of years without festivals during and after the two world wars in the 20th century, today "only" the 164th Cannstatter Volksfest is celebrated – because 28 years in total stayed without any festival.



„Festival of the Swabians“ acts as a draw since its beginning

Over the decades the Cannstatter Volksfest has developed constantly. At the same time it managed in a likeable and unique way to combine tradition and modern spirit. About four million people visit the „Festival of the Swabians“ every year.

According to contemporary records, in 1818 already more than 30,000 participants and guests were enthusiastically celebrating. Some of them had, as it is mentioned, endured a journey of several days from all parts of the kingdom. At that time the number of participants was noticeably higher than the number of the residents of Stuttgart and Cannstatt put together. And if one considers that the first Cannstatter Volksfest took just one single day, which was just this day of September 28, 1818, then the “daily average of visitors” can definitely stand comparison with today’s numbers. Even in its early days, then, the festival was no small event, but immediately started as a very real hit with the public, which it still is to this day.

Seldom did the Cannstatter Volksfest last as long as it does today. In the 19th century it initially took only one single day, a little later it was three, then four, as of the late 1920s of the 20th century it was finally five festival days. After World War II the festival, which by now was very traditional, finally grew to its familiar size: at the start of the 1950s it was ten days, then twelve and since 1972 sixteen days, and since 2007 for the first time it is seventeen festival days.

The Fruit Column

The Fruit Column is the emblem of the Cannstatter Volksfest. Right from the festival’s beginning in 1818 there was a towering column which was decorated with lots of fruits, corn and vegetables. So this symbol still recalls the origin of the Cannstatter Volksfest as an agricultural festival. The first Fruit Column was founded by King Wilhelm I. and designed and built by the Württembergian architect to the imperial court Nikolaus Friedrich von Thouret.

With the start of the first German republic after World War I, the Fruit Column, which by then was more than 100 years old, was banned from the Cannstatter Wasen as a “monarchistic” relic. Since 1935, the 100th anniversary, it has stood in its traditional position. Today’s Fruit Column originates from the year 1972 and, regarding its diameter, height and coloring, it is built after the historical model. It is 26 meters high, stands on a five meter base and weighs about three tons. The paring right on top of the column is decorated with fruits and plants and weighs another 600 kilograms. The outer part is made from wood, a steel construction is inside.

Over the decades the Fruit Column’s appearance has changed several times. Until 1995 every year after the Cannstatter Volksfest it was removed and stored. In the years that followed it experimentally remained on the Wasen, so that it could be seen during the Frühlingsfest, the spring festival, as well. For a few years now only the top gets removed, the base, which carries the Cannstatter Kanne, a coppery can, stays at the fairground.



Did you actually know that...

... the pitch of all rides, tents and equipment starts about three months before the official opening of the Volksfest?

... about 17,000 people work directly or indirectly for the Cannstatter Volksfest? So it is definitely a strong economic motor. Not only the visitors benefit from the festival - bakers, butchers, suppliers, trade, service companies, hotel business and transport companies as well.

... 1,500 people are on duty at the Cannstatter Volksfest every day?

... there is a especially established job center at the venue? About 300 workers can be placed each year.

... the pitch of a large tent takes two to three months? Among others plumbers, carpenters, decorators, sound engineers and stage hands, gas and container providers as well as kitchen cabinet makers are involved.

... the pitch of a large tent costs about half a million Euro?

... more than 20,000 members of the Volksfest Society consistently travel from New York, Philadelphia and Chicago to Stuttgart, just to visit the Cannstatter Volksfest? German emigrants and their families use the festival as an opportunity to affirm and renew their tie of friendship with the city of Stuttgart.

... the great Cannstatter Festival Parade always takes place on the first festival Sunday? Richly decorated harnessed horse teams, performers in colourful traditional costumes, bands, historical groups and Civil Defence Corps from all over the federal state trek from Cannstatt's kursaal to the Cannstatter Wasen.

... about 100 groups, 3,500 participants and 300 helping hands are involved in the Cannstatter Festival Parade? Up to 250,000 spectators follow the parade along the streets, hundred of thousands at home on TV.

... the Fruit Column as the emblem of the Cannstatter Volksfest is 31 meters high and decorated with more than three tons of fruits, corn and vegetables?

... the Cannstatter Volksfest always is inaugurated by the Lord Mayor with the traditional keg tapping?



Facts and figures at one glance

Establishment:	September 28, 1818
Venue:	Cannstatter Wasen in Stuttgart
Duration 2010:	17 days
Opening hours 2010:	Friday, September 24 until Sunday, October 10, 2010
	Beginning Monday until Friday 12.00 a.m.
	Saturday, Sunday and on holidays 11.00 a.m.
	End Monday until Thursday 11.00 p.m.
	Friday, Saturday and before holidays 12.00 p.m.
Employees (direct and indirect):	ca. 17,000 people
Employees each day:	ca. 1,500 people
Amount of enterprises:	330 enterprises (fairground entertainers, innkeepers and open-air market traders) 280 enterprises in 2010 (Trade Exhibition at the same time)
Long line of attractions:	5 kilometers 4.5 kilometers in 2010 (Trade Exhibition at the same time)
Energy consumption:	corresponds to a small town with 35,000 inhabitants
Water consumption:	more than 40,000 cubic meter (corresponds to about 320 bathtubs)



Information for wheelchair users

Visiting the Cannstatter Volksfest for wheelchair users is absolutely problem-free. Right across the street of the Cannstatter Volksfest there is a wide-space disabled car park (the former freight depot) with access to the festival site on the same level. The entrance to the car park is signposted and officially supervised. On presentation of a certificate of disability with mark "G" parking is at no charge.

The Wasen is also ideally linked for wheelchair users by public transportation with the festival line U11, also the taxi point is not far away from the Fruit Column, the emblem of the Cannstatter Volksfest.

All festival streets are asphalted, the access ways to all tents are provided with shallow wheelchair ramps. Inside the festival tents, but of course also on the fairground, there are free, staffed disabled restrooms. The innkeepers and snack bar owners are helpful and upon request also remove ale-benches, so that wheelchair users can comfortably roll to the tables.

Besides the presence of the German Red Cross, one can at any time rely on the willingness to help by all innkeepers, fairground ride owners and security services. Ferris wheel, wild water channel, wild mouse and other fairground rides – every owner will make the ride one desires possible, so that the day on the Wasen will be unforgettable.



Directions to the Cannstatter Volksfest

The Cannstatter Volksfest can easily be reached by foot, by car or with public transportation. Bus and train stations are close to the fairground. Due to the International Trade Exhibition for Farming and Agriculture which takes place every four years at the same time as the Cannstatter Volksfest there is no parking-lot at the Cannstatter Wasen. Parking spaces are scarcely available in the surrounding area. Using public transportation is strongly recommended.

With public transportation:

Suburban and regional trains

S1, S2, S3, R1, R2, R8 - stop Bad Cannstatt

City railway

U1, U2 - stop Mercedesstraße

U13 - stop Badstraße (Wilhelmsplatz)

U11 - stop Cannstatter Wasen (special train service during major events)

Busses

Linie 52, 55 - stop Bad Cannstatt Wilhelmsplatz

Linie 56 - stop NeckarPark (Stadion)

Airport

The Stuttgart Airport is about 25 kilometers away from the Cannstatter Wasen. Depending on the traffic situation travel time takes up to 30 to 40 minutes.

Arriving by car:

A8 from Karlsruhe:

Leave the A8 at the interchange Stuttgart, exit Vaihingen, and change to A831 resp. B14 to Stuttgart-Zentrum. On the B10/B14 the NeckarPark traffic guidance system leads directly to the parking lot.

A8 from Ulm:

Leave the A8 at exit Esslingen-Zentrum and change to B313. Follow the B10 to Stuttgart. From this point the NeckarPark traffic guidance system leads directly to the parking lot.

A81 from Heilbronn:

Leave the A81 at exit Zuffenhausen and change to B10 to Stuttgart-Zentrum. Follow the road to Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt/Esslingen. From this point the NeckarPark traffic guidance system leads directly to the parking lot.

A81 from Singen:

Leave the A81 at the interchange Stuttgart, exit Vaihingen, and change to A831 resp. B14 to Stuttgart-Zentrum. On the B10/B14 the NeckarPark traffic guidance system leads directly to the parking lot.



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Pollution badge required in Stuttgart downtown

Since March 1, 2008, the Cannstatter Wasen is situated in an environmental zone. For an arrival by car a pollution badge is required by law.



Services at the Cannstatter Volksfest

During the Cannstatter Volksfest several services are located in the administrative building of in.Stuttgart Veranstaltungsgesellschaft mbH on the Cannstatter Wasen.

- Event management of the in.Stuttgart Veranstaltungsgesellschaft mbH
- Building Legal Authority
- Authority for Public Policy
- Child Collection Point
- Youth Welfare Office
- Free-of-charge return home service
- German Red Cross
- Police Authority

The following telephone numbers will be manned as of the beginning of the festival.

Wasen Police Station:

Telephone 0711-8990-1500

German Red Cross:

The First Aid Station and the emergency vehicles of the German Red Cross are prepared for medical first aid treatment on the Cannstatter Volksfest.

Telephone: 0711-8496768

Crash helmet storage:

Crash helmets can be left for safekeeping in the administrative building on the Cannstatter Wasen.

Telephone: 0711-9005625

Lost and Found Office:

Lost or found items can be found or delivered in the lost and found office located in the Fruit Column. During the festival the office opens Monday until Friday from 5.00 p.m. to 11.00 p.m. and on Saturday, Sunday and on holidays from 12.00 a.m. until 11.00 p.m.

Telephone: 0711-9005625

Eurocheque ATMs:

Several ATMs are available all over the fairground.



in.Stuttgart

Veranstaltungsgesellschaft mbH

Operator: in.Stuttgart Veranstaltungsgesellschaft mbH

Venue: Cannstatter Wasen at the NeckarPark Stuttgart

Homepage: www.wasen.de (English version also available)

Press Contact:

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