

Frankfurt Street Food Festival

It's summer, I'm hot, and this foodie is ready to ride up to the Frankfurt Street Food Festival.

Germany's food truck scene was virtually non-existent until a short time ago. Basically all I could find was a brat and bun truck, a French crepe and Nutella truck, or the occasional vendor selling roasted chestnuts during the holidays. Jeez, what the truck!

I'm not sure why, but food trucks hadn't quite hit the Germany scene except in large progressive cities like Berlin. The rest of the country's food truck scene was basically sitting on the Autobahn in a *Stau*—it just wasn't moving like in other countries like the U.S. and Thailand.

This weekend it's a different story in Frankfurt, Germany the multi-cultural economic capital of Europe. The engines are revved up in Frankfurt as over 30 vendors will be rolling out their favorite foods as the city celebrates the first Frankfurt Street Food Festival.



Street food market during the Yasothon Rocket Festival.
Wiki photo by Takeaway.

Head to the *Hauptwache*, the baroque building that was a former guard-house and the *Zell* or just follow your nose. The food trucks are lined up, have their coals burning, and are ready to tantalize your taste buds with some mind-blowing unique foods.

To capture the real essence of street food you have to go beyond the norm and offer the people something different and you'll find it at the Frankfurt Street Food Festival.

Considering this is Frankfurt's first street food festival, there's quite a good assortment of trucks offering some savory mouth-watering treats. Black Calamari sandwiches, 24-hour cider marinated beef steak, Surf & Turf burger to name a few. Fancy an Arepa? [Maria Maria Arepas](#) makes delicious gluten-free flat bread pocket is filled with naturally raised meat or veggies.

For a global array of food and beverages from artisans head to the [Frankfurt Street Food Festival](#). It runs Friday, July 31 (12:00 – 22:00), Saturday, August 1 (12:00 – 22:00), and

Sunday, August 2 (9:00 – 20:00).

Bon appétit my foodie friends!

Up and Away Zugspitze Eibsee Cable Car

Say goodbye to the old Zugspitze Eibsee cable car and hello to its replacement the new Eibsee cable car – soon to be the world's tallest aerial tramway support tower.

Some things like wine get better with age, but after 50 years of operation, the Zugspitze Eibsee cable car built in 1963 to transport visitors to Germany's highest mountain has seen better days. By December 2017, we can say hello to a sleeker more modern Eibsee cable car. The new cable will include two cabins holding up to 120 passengers as opposed to the current one which only holds about 40 people.



Zugspitze Eibsee Cable Car. Wikitravel photo by Octagon

Zugspitze, Germany's Highest Attraction

Zugspitze is Germany's highest elevation at 2,962 meters located near Garmisch-Partenkirchen, a mountain resort town in Bavaria, southern Germany. Zugspitze, home to three glaciers, a unique 360° panorama including mountain peaks from four countries is easily accessed by the Eibsee cable car.

Sure, you can climb the mountain top like my friends in tip-top condition, but I prefer the cable car since I'm not fantastically fit (not yet at least). If you're like me and would rather get to the top of Zugspitze quickly, then the cable car connecting the lower station (973 meters or 3,192 feet above sea level) near Lake Eibsee with the top station at 2,950 meters (9,678 feet) above sea level is for you.

Whether you're an avid, skier, hiker, or lover of fantastic

views, a trip to the top of Germany's highest point offers breathtaking views every foot of the short 10 minute ride which expeditiously whisks you to the summit ridge of Zugspitze, Germany and the border to Austria.

DACH Engineering, Gotta Love it

The cabins of the current cable car are suspended from two track ropes and are moved by two haulage ropes, so you will definitely feel movement as you ascend to Zugspitze.

I thought the old cable car was an engineering feat with two support towers, but the new Zugspitze Eibsee cable car will have only one support tower. Yes, one 127 meter high support tower. Yikes! With construction from DACH (DE-German, A-Austrian, and CH-Swiss) construction companies, I'll feel safe riding the new Zugspitze Eibsee cable car knowing it will be built with the highest standards.

Riding the current cable car doesn't come cheap. A one-way ticket for adults costs around 31 Euros. Building the new Zugspitze Eibsee cable car doesn't come cheap either at 50 millions Euros. Hmmm. I'm curious to see how much a one-way ticket will cost in the future.

Out with the Old

Want to take a nostalgic ride on the existing Eibsee cable car? You still can since the current cable car will run parallel to the new system, so you'll be able to see the construction site.

It's out with the old and in with the new, but not until around May 2017 when the old final ascent of the 1963 cable car takes its last ride to the summit ridge of Zugspitze.

Alsatian Flammkuchen Recipe

Follow the simple Flammkuchen recipe below and you'll receive rave reviews when you present family and friends with an authentic [Alsatian Flammkuchen](#).



Homemade Flammkuchen

Basic Flammkuchen Recipe (Tarte flambée).

- 1-14-16" really thin pizza-style yeast crust of your choice (frozen, fresh, non-gluten, or homemade)
- 1 small yellow onion finely chopped
- 3/4 – 1 cup (150 – 200 grams) of crème fraiche or sour

cream

- 1/2 cup (110 grams) lardon, matchstick-cut pieces of bacon cut from the belly of pork
- Salt and pepper
- Fresh or dried thyme (optional)

Variations

Be creative as you can and make sure to enjoy the journey!

- Strasbourg (Alsatian recipe above and slices of Munster cheese).
- Veggie Flammkuchen (Cherry tomatoes, olives, onions, mushrooms.)
- Greek Flammkuchen (Feta cheese, green olives, spinach, red onions, dried Basil)

Directions

1. Pre-heat the oven to 450°F (230°C).
2. Place the prepared dough on a pizza stone or oven rack covered with baking paper.
3. Spread crème fraiche evenly onto dough, leaving 1/2 inch of outer edges free.
4. Sprinkle salt and pepper to taste on top of the crème fraiche.
5. Sprinkle the chopped onions evenly over the crème fraiche.
6. Next sprinkle the pancetta bits on top of the crust.
7. Place the Flammkuchen in the pre-heated oven and bake for about 8-10 minutes or until crust is crispy, but not too burnt.
8. Garnish with fresh or dried thyme.

Note: As oven temperatures vary, you'll need to carefully watch the Flammkuchen or it will indeed be a burnt mess – baked in the flames.

The Reality of Glamping at Feather Down Farms Holland

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The first day was exciting but brought some challenges, mainly the weather. It was 6 degrees Celsius (30 Fahrenheit) in our tent. That's the reality of [glamping at Feather Down Farms Holland](#) or anywhere else for that matter. It was so cold I could see my breath as I grabbed my flashlight to head to the Honesty Shop to grab the coffee and fresh milk I had ordered the day before.



Spacious tent interior, © Feather Down Farms

Around 7:00 AM on the way to the shop, I checked the chicken larder for farm fresh eggs, but I was not alone. Aside from the guinea pigs and rabbits, the most beautiful Dutch children were anxiously anticipating the arrival of fresh eggs. The egg-laying hens teased us as they jumped onto the back of the wood step. They turned their backs giving us the illusion they would soon lay eggs, but didn't.

Considering some hens lay three eggs every four days then repeat the cycle again, I grabbed half a dozen eggs from the Honest Shop and noted my purchase. The kids were still waited disappointingly as I ducked through the petting barn for cover from the hard rain and strong winds.



Fresh eggs, © Feather Down Farms

By the time I returned to the tent, my husband had started the fire and gladly welcomed the mug of coffee and fresh raisin rolls. The next challenge would be to make a real meal on the wood burning stove.

That morning's menu included, scrambled eggs with red peppers, onions, and garlic topped on a slice of buttered whole wheat toast. Our first glamping breakfast turned out well. The only

trick is to control the wood burner temperature, so prep everything first before you start cooking.



Glamping bed and breakfast cooked on a wood-burning stove at Feather Down Farms

Shower and Shave

There is yet another barn, this one with hot water, where you can shower and shave. Some people took advantage of it and it appeared others just went for a true camping experience by bemoaning a shower at the ~~campground~~ glampground. You'll need to haul your towels, flip-flops, and bath items to the shower barn, to get fresh, sparkly, and squeaky clean.

The one thing I can't refrain from is to brush my teeth at least twice daily, so I brought my toothbrush. At least my pearly whites were clean and my breath didn't frighten the farms animals away. Ok, ok, so I cheated and glamped a bit.

Insider Tip #3

Many of the [Feather Down Farms Holland](#) offer services such as ready-made fires to welcome you and even a set of bath towels; I'd recommend you purchase the services if you aren't ready to leave the comforts of home quite yet.

What's on the Agenda?

Depending on your preferences and the weather, you can discover the farm and farm living. Take a farm tour, hike or bike ride in the forest, play with the kids in the barn, or just hang around and relax.

Our Feather Down Farm was located near some quaint villages in Holland. That gave us the chance to discover the area and visit a local restaurant. A great excuse to heat up and charge the mobile phone. Too bad we forgot the charger.



Friendly bull from Feather Down Farms Holland

The End of a Unique Experience

Once we got the hang of glamping, we thoroughly enjoyed the Feather Down Farm Holland vacation concept and the surroundings—you leave the city madness and are welcomed into simple country 'green' living.

We slept comfortably in our tent which was under a tree with an owl above that cooed us at night. We enjoyed the sunrise holding a cup of coffee watching the cows graze across the meadow, and relished the moments with our furry little vacation pet Hasi.

Making our own fire to heat the tent and cook our food was very empowering and after the first attempt were able to make some decent meals. By the end of the trip I was whistling my way through the woods with my cart to pick up dry wood and thinking about returning to one of the many [Feather Down Farm locations around the world](#) very soon, but most certainly when the weather is warm and toasty.

Get to Know Springerle and Speculaas

The Dutch call them *Speculaas*. The French call them *Spéculoos*. The Germans call them *Spekulatius*. I call the spiced holiday cookies simply delicious.

No matter how you spell them or call them, you'll find many families baking spiced biscuits near the Christmas season. In Holland on December 5th, just before the [Saint Nicholas celebration](#), Dutch families are busy baking Speculaas. In parts of German-speaking Europe, the Alsace region of France,

and parts of Switzerland, families are rolling out lots of Speculaas dough.



(c) Photo by Andreas Bauerle (Wikimedia Commons)

The main ingredients in Speculaas are the spices of winter—pepper, cinnamon, ginger, cloves, cardamom, and nutmeg and when baked infuse the home with a warming wintry fragrance. The cookies are easy to make and if you use a mold, the impression forms a delicate looking cookie perfect for gift giving or enjoying with a cup of tea.

Springerle and Speculaas

Don't get your Springerle mixed up with your Speculaas.

- Springerle and Speculaas and are both cookie dough types.
- Speculaas dough contains warm spices.
- Springerle dough contains anise and when baked they seem to “spring up”.
- The Springerle is not only a cookie, but a mold you can use to emboss designs on Springerle or Speculaas.

Once your Speculaas dough has been prepared, you can use a Springerle mold (press or a rolling pin) to emboss a design of choice on your cookie before baking.

Springerle History

Traditionally, the first Springerle mold designs were of horses and their riders. Hence the name “little jumper” or

“little knight”. Many ancient molds have survived and can be found in museums such as the [Musée des arts et traditions populaires Musée du Springerle](#) in Alsace. The quaint folk art museum is devoted to the history of wooden molds and Christmas Springerle cookies. Now that sounds delicious.

At German Christmas markets you'll find all types of Springerle impressions for sale from simple to intricate. The molds make lovely Christmas gifts that are functional for baking or can be used decoratively in your home. Keep in mind the more intricate the mold, the trickier they are to work with (at first).

After a bit of practice, you'll have spicy Speculaas springing up all over the kitchen.