

LIVING IN BURGHAUSEN
A Survival Guide
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1 Introduction

Over the past decades Wacker Chemie AG has relocated several families from the United States to Burghausen, Germany and the surrounding area. Relocation to another country is a wonderful and exciting experience but it is not without its challenges. Many of us overcame numerous challenges while settling in and acclimating ourselves to our new environment. As we began to discuss our issues, we discovered that many of our challenges were similar. We decided that future ex-pats might benefit from our frustrations as well as our positive experiences if we were to capture some of our learnings and put them together into this 'survival guide'. We hope that this document will provide you with useful information that will make the transition to Burghausen a little smoother and a lot less stressful.

This document is originally the result of a series of focus groups with ex-pat employees and spouses from a Wacker Chemie AG project in 2001. These focus groups were sponsored by Wacker in order to capture some of the American's learnings about their relocation process. Shannon Van Horn wrote the majority of the original text. I (Barbara Heller of Heller Consulting) facilitated the focus groups, coordinated the original compilation of information for this document, and have been curating (maintaining/adding to/updating) it since 2002.

Those early families developed a support network in Burghausen that has expanded to include not only American families but families from other cultures as well; the group currently consists of Germans, Brits, Australians, Canadians, Korean-Americans, French, and Americans. There are actually several different overlapping groups of Americans and friends of Americans who meet weekly or bi-weekly to socialize, share stories, practice speaking English, support and help each other in times of need. We also get together for the 4th of July and Thanksgiving every year. If you'd like information about one of the local English speaking groups, please contact me at bheller@gmx.de.

Please note: This guide is always in the process of being updated! Please let me know if you have suggestions for improvement, corrections, or additions by sending me an email at bheller@gmx.de. A new and greatly improved version of this guide is being prepared in cooperation with Mümmler Relocation Services; it should be online by the fall of 2012. For more information about support services for ex-pats in the Burghausen area visit Vanessa Mümmler's website: mueessler-relocation.de. For more information about the curator of this document, please visit my website: www.heller-consulting.org.

We welcome you to Burghausen!



Figure 1: Left to right in photo: Rachel Gagnier, Rob Gagnier, Monika Friedrich, Tom Nagy, Judy Moreland, Shannon Van Horn, Carolyn Lesch and Barbara Heller. Not in photo: Jill Simmons, Carol Pierce

DISCLAIMER: This document is a compilation of opinions and facts based on the experiences of various individuals who have moved to Burghausen. The policies and procedures within this document are subject to change and are only accurate as of the date this document was originally written.

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Curated by: Barbara Heller

2 Tips Before You Leave The U.S

Moving abroad is a huge undertaking. When making a change of this magnitude it's not always easy to find out all the things you need to know ahead of time. Here are some tips that we learned from our experiences in making this transition:

2.1 Research

The more research you can do before you leave, the better. Go the bookstore and browse through some books on living in Germany. They are often written by British people who have moved to big cities but some do give some excellent advice regarding the famously tedious bureaucratic processes in Germany, such as obtaining a driver's license. There are also several books that explain some of the reasons the Germans are the way they are and the cultural differences between the U.S. and Germany.

We really don't recommend 'Culture Shock: Germany!' in general: The author seems to be rather jaded against Germany, and some of the information is out of date as well as negatively biased. 'Understanding Cultural Differences: Germans, French, and Americans' by Edward T. Hall and Mildred Reed Hall is very good, although it may be a bit too theoretical for some. 'Figuring Foreigners Out' by Craig Storti is a good general book about culture differences, with some specific information on Germany.

There are also several websites devoted to the differences between US and German cultures, norms, behaviors, expectations, etc. One of the best websites out there is www.howtogermany.com. This survival guide was developed before the "How To Germany" website, and much of the information to be found here can also be found there (in many cases the information on the How To Germany website is much more in depth and more up-to-date). Please familiarize yourself with all the information on that website; I highly recommend it!!

2.2 Legal/Financial

- You should consider leaving a power of attorney with someone in the US in case legal matters arise that require immediate attention. It's very inexpensive to do. You can set it to last only for the period of time that you will be abroad.
- We recommend that before you move to Germany you look into setting up a procedure to make wire transfers of funds between your U.S. and German banks. This is easier to do in person at your U.S. bank after you've opened your German bank account, but you can also do a lot of the prep work before coming to Germany. You'll need to get specific routing and bank numbers from your US bank, and you'll have to be very very careful when providing those numbers to your German bank. (Once I had a transfer of funds end up in some guy's bank account in New York City instead of my bank account in Maine! The German bank was great about reversing the transfer, but it's really important to work closely with both banks to make sure the transfer goes through on time.) Any information you get can from your US bank before coming over here will help facilitate those future transfers for you. Some German banks will accept U.S. bank checks as a method for transferring funds from the U.S. to Germany.
- Check with your bank and other financial institutions (credit union, investment broker, accountant, etc.) about any forms you have to sign to authorize transactions from abroad.

2.3 Medical

- Make sure that you and your family are up-to-date on all immunizations. There has been some conflicting information on Lyme disease. According to Dr. Staudt, a Pediatrician in Neuötting, the vaccine for Lyme disease given in the U.S. will not protect against the strain of Lyme disease bacteria carried by ticks in Germany. An 'FSME' vaccine will vaccinate against some strains of infection carried by the German ticks. **Discuss getting an FSME vaccination with your doctor here in Germany: Burghausen does belong to the high risk area for tick-carried diseases.** A person may not know that they have been bitten by a tick and symptoms of the disease are often not apparent right away and therefore can be difficult to recognize. This bacterial infection can cause meningitis and encephalitis. Symptoms can vary from skin irritations or joint pain to complications resulting in brain impairment or even death in very rare cases. In children, one of the most common symptoms is paralysis of one side of the face. The best protection against tick bites is to wear long pants and long sleeves when in the woods. The most common areas for tick bites are necks, shoulders, and ankles. Be sure to inspect your skin thoroughly after being in wooded or grassy areas.
- Bring immunization records for your family. Ask your new German *Hausarzt* (G.P.) to update any vaccinations you might need; he/she will give you a vaccination passport (*Impfpaß*)
- Bring any letters (referral slips, treatment plans, requests for blood/lab work, follow-ups, etc.) from your doctors you might need to continue treatment for current health conditions. If you are currently taking a prescription medication which you will need to get refilled while in Germany, make sure that you have a letter from your doctor describing your treatment plan. Your local German doctor will be able to continue your treatment more easily if they have a letter/referral from your American doctor.
- Stock up on any important prescription drugs or non-prescription (over the counter, OTC) drugs that you use frequently. Medicines such as Zicam, Sudafed, Alka-Selzer, Alka-Seltzer Cold Remedy, Dramamine, Benedryl and Thera-Flu will be hard to locate and costly (or impossible to locate) here in Germany. Some of these popular medications have German equivalents to which you may or may not respond as well (German doctors recommend the plant-based Sinapret instead of Sudafed; Dramamine is similar to the German medication Vomex; Benedryl is similar to the German Fenestil).
- Non-drowsy motion sickness medicine is unfortunately not yet available in Germany, other than plant-based remedies such as Zintona (with which I've actually had great success!). If you need non-drowsy Dramamine to survive a trip, make sure to have enough with you to last until you get back to the US.
- Many drugs that are OTC in the U.S. can be bought here under different names (Tylenol is called *Paracetamol*; Advil is called *Ibuprofen* and comes in either 200mg or 400mg tablets; Claritin is called *Loratadine*). Without a prescription, you may end up paying more here than you would in the US (e.g., Ibuprofen). Other OTC medications (such as Claritin or children's cold remedies) can tend to be less expensive in Germany than they are in the US.
- Speaking of (children's) cold remedies: The cough syrups that you can buy here in Germany are maybe different from what you are used to, so you may want to stock up on a few bottles to bring with you. The cough syrups here are all single-symptom remedies: Expectorants for daytime and suppressants for the night.
- You'll want to check with your moving company to find out what their procedure

is with Customs when shipping medications; your moving company can advise you about having your medications with you in your luggage versus putting them into a container. Ideally you will want to pack necessary medications in your check-in luggage.

- Vitamins are readily available in Germany, but the brand names you may be used to (e.g., Centrum) may be much more expensive in Germany or hard to find. If you're really attached to a brand of vitamins, you should plan on bringing an ample supply with you.
- Most prescription medicines that we have in the U.S. are also available here but under different names. The doctors in Germany will be able help you find equivalent products most of the time, but some medications are slightly different. Sometimes German pharmacists can order your original medication from an international supplier (with an additional fee). Again, make sure bring enough of your regular medications with you as you'll need until you see a new local German doctor.
- Be sure to have your animal vaccinated and checked by the vet, and make sure that all requirements by the German Consulate and the airline are met for your pet.

2.4 Important things to bring with you to Burghausen

- Americans planning to live in Germany should have Visas in advance.
- Bring your marriage license if you are married. (Also divorce papers if applicable.)
- Bring a certified birth certificate for all of your family members as well as their passports.
- If you have extra passport photos for each driver you should bring them with you; you'll need them for your residency permit and for getting a new German driver's license. You can have them made here but it might be a bit more expensive.
- A good German/English dictionary and a translation of the German verbs is very useful. The ones you can buy in the U.S. will be much better suited for you than those designed for German users.
- Make sure you remember to pack your favorite hobby items and things to keep you busy during the long winter months such as books, DVDs, videos, etc. The hobby shops in Germany are typically smaller than the large hobby stores common in the U.S., so stock up on specific craft items you will need.
- Bring transformers for any electrical items you bring with you such as crock pot (which are not readily available in Germany but can be ordered online from the UK), KitchenAid (which cost twice as much in Germany, so don't plan on buying one here!) or stereo; check carefully to make sure you have the correct transformers, or plan on buying local German appliances and electronics.
- Without a video converter, your American TV will NOT work here. TV signals are in the PAL format and **not** the NTSC used in the U.S. You will need to buy a video converter and these can be expensive (upwards of \$ 500). You can buy a TV here for about what you would pay in the U.S. See hints on electrical information below.
- If you bring an American bed with you, make sure to bring enough sheets and bedding. European pillows and mattresses are very different in construction and size so their bedding is also quite different. American **tall fitted** sheets fit some standard German mattresses (100cm x 200cm). Fitted sheets for your queen or king mattress may be difficult or impossible to buy locally in Germany.
- The following groceries are not easily available here so if you can't live without them, bring them with you: Corn syrup, molasses, graham crackers, Nestle's chocolate chips,

cracker crumbs, cans of pumpkin or squash for pies, non-stick cooking spray, Quaker Oats Rolled Oats, wax-paper, Jello mix, instant fat-free or sugar-free pudding mix, specialized seasoning mixes, Lipton Soup mixes, Kraft Mac 'n Cheese, Swiss Miss Cocoa, Bisquick, vanilla extract, your favorite brownie/cake/ cookie package mix, Bell's seasonings, dried mint, Ranch Dressing/Dip Mix.

- Brown sugar is slightly different here so if you use it a lot for baking you may want to think about bringing some with you (there is also a substitute: see section 4.1.7., Cooking Substitutions). The brown sugar in Germany is dryer and has a much more subtle flavor; it can only be substituted 1-to-1 for American brown sugar in some recipes.
- Duncan Hines boxed cake mixes and cans of cake icing are not available here. However, there is a German brand of high quality boxed mixes called Dr. Oetker which is similar. They are available in a very wide variety of flavors and types, but if you can't live without Grandma's lemon-cake made with Betty Crocker yellow cake mix and lemon jello, be sure to bring a supply of both with you!
- Most German cake mixes are designed to be baked in German cake pans, which are different in size and shape from the standard American cake pan. You may want to bring your American cake pan (9x13) with you if you plan on doing a lot of baking. If you don't bring your pan with you, then plan on doing a lot of experimenting with your American recipes!
- A few other baking/cooking utensils that you may want to make sure to have with you if you're planning on baking/cooking a lot include: pastry cutter (unheard of here and impossible to find); 8x8 brownie pan, 9x13 cake pan, jumbo muffin pans if you use them (the small ones are available here); pie pans in whatever sizes you need.

2.5 General Tips/Advice Before You Leave Home

Here are a few random ideas, tips, and pieces of advice about things to do before you leave the States for an extended period abroad:

- Go to your favorite hair stylist and get your standard cut if it's really important to you to keep the same style. Take photographs of your head from the front, side and back. You may decide to change your look while you're over here, or you may prefer to keep the same style that you're used to. These photographs will be invaluable for you 6-8 weeks after your last cut if you do want to keep your old style!
- Make a list of all the things you want to accomplish while you're abroad. Make a commitment to yourself to turn that list into an action plan as soon as possible.
- Think about what your favorite American foods are and take some opportunities to enjoy them before you leave the States. Some of your favorites may not be available here, so it might be a long time before you get a chance to eat them again. Some examples of Americans' favorites that are either not available, hard to find, or not the same in Germany include: Reuben sandwich, Hot Pastrami, really good hamburgers, Mexican food, deep dish or thick crust pizza.
- Think about whether there might be something you'd like to discuss with loved ones, especially elderly family members, in case you don't have a chance to see them again. It's difficult to even contemplate, but unfortunately it does happen that a beloved grandparent passes away while an ex-pat is out of the country. Don't leave things unsaid.
- Buy yourself a journal and get in the habit of making regular entries. Just 10-15 minutes of daily journaling has been shown to greatly decrease the negative effects of

“Culture Shock.” Plus it will be fun to have a travel log to look back on years from now! Plan on pasting entrance ticket stubs, pictures, postcards, etc. into your journal. If you’re so inclined you might prefer to set up a blog to share your perceptions and adventures with loved ones back home!

2.6 Electrical information and appliances

- Electricity is 220V and 50 Hz. (In the U.S., we have 110V and 60Hz). The transformers will convert the voltage but **not** the Herz! The lower frequency means that your turntable will likely not function properly if at all. Simple devices such as alarm clocks will run slower. Some clocks built into a device like a microwave oven may also be affected. Clocks in TVs, stereos and computers typically are already converted to DC within the unit so they will run properly. Your computer might have a switch on the back of the power supply for 220 V. Your monitor (if it’s a newer model) will likely automatically adjust to 220V. Laptop power bricks are almost all self-regulating but you will want to buy a replacement plug that fits the German outlets. (This is the part that goes between the power brick and the wall socket.)
- For your computers and laptops, you’ll want to buy a new power cord that has the right prongs on it. For your other appliances such as printer, speakers, etc. that have power bricks, you can plug them into a power strip that you bring with you and then you can plug the power strip into a transformer. Surge suppressors are not as common here because the electricity is better conditioned so you usually do not need them. However, you can buy a surge protected power strip for your electronics (especially computer). You can get (and most likely will need to buy) extension cords (which look somewhat different from what you’re used to).
- Buy all your transformers and converters in the U.S. and bring them with you. Not only will you have to pay a 19% sales tax on any product you buy over here, there is also a customs duty which can be just as high if you buy them later and have them shipped to you. In a pinch you can order them over the internet from various expatriate sites where they are not very expensive.
- When buying a transformer, don’t buy the cheap ones that are merely voltage converters, as they will not last and can even be dangerous. You want a heavy duty, big box, copper coil transformer. They weigh a ton depending on the Wattage rating but they will work. Plan your appliance load carefully as the number of electrical outlets in a German home is usually less than what you have in the U.S. Add up the wattage of your appliances and add 25% to it. Then pick a transformer rated with that wattage or the next higher level. This is to account for resistance due to heat build-up. Also, look for transformers that have off switches on them. Some can even be used to convert in both directions so that the nice Italian lamp you purchase here can be used when you’re back in the U.S.!
- European outlets do not look like the ones in the U.S. You will need adapters – they are available here as well as in the U.S.
- If you bring lamps with you from the U.S., you should be able to use German light bulbs if your lamps use the standard size bulb. Any lamps with abnormal sized sockets may present a problem and you will want to bring your own light bulbs.
- Do *not* bring your washer and dryer. You will need to buy them here if your company doesn’t take care of this for you.
- Appliances from the U.S. need special transformers. Don’t try to bring high wattage appliances such as an iron, hair dryer, popcorn popper, or coffee maker.

- Many U.S. analog phones do not work here in Germany, so you should probably plan on leaving yours at home and buying a new one here.

3 Getting Settled

3.1 Bureaucratic procedures

As in most countries, foreigners living in Germany are required to go through certain formalities which permit you to live and work with the proper legal status. Germany (Bavaria) requires the following formalities:

1. Health certificate (*Gesundheitsnachweis*)
2. Local registration of presence (*örtliche Anmeldung*)
3. Residence permit (*Aufenthaltserlaubnis*)
4. Work permit (*Arbeitserlaubnis*)
5. Drivers license

For many ex-pats living in the Burghausen area, Wacker Chemie AG provides assistance in completing the appropriate paperwork. However, many of us were unaware of what some of the procedures would require. For instance, a health examination by a city health office or a general practitioner is required for all foreigners staying in Germany for over 3 months. The state of Bavaria requires an HIV test as part of that exam. Before you leave for Germany it's important to clarify with your HR department exactly how the paperwork will be completed, including the health exam. Each town may have different requirements for registration. Be sure to bring with you important documents such as marriage certificates, passports, and birth certificates that may be required for completion of these processes. Some towns also require a certification of good citizenship from your local U.S. police department.

3.1.1 Drivers license requirements

We discovered that most of us experienced challenges when trying to determine the correct driver's license procedures. It is best to start preparing for your driver's license exam as soon as possible. For the first 6 months of your stay here, you are allowed drive in Germany with your U.S. driver's license. Six months after your arrival, you may no longer drive *in Germany* without a German driver's license. If you are caught driving without a German license, you are subject to serious fines. However, if you are staying in Germany for less than 1 year, this policy may be waived. Ask your HR department to verify this for you and help you apply for an extension if you're planning on being here between 6 and 12 months.

You must also have your U.S. driver's license translated into German within 6 months of moving here. This can be done in several ways. You may travel to Dorfen or Munich to have your license translated and certified by the German automobile club (ADAC) or you may pay the *Fahrschule* (driving school) to do this for you for about 50 € per license. There is a official certified translator in Altötting who will translate driver's licenses for around 15 €: Bärbel Pluta, Pater Rupert Mayerstrasse 8. Her phone is 08671/13750, and she speaks English. Also Frau Kristina Zimmerman, 08677/911243 in the Altstadt, Burghausen, can have it translated by her colleague, a certified translator. Frau Zimmerman speaks excellent English.

Before receiving your new German driver's license you will need to complete several steps. The *Fahrschule* can help you with most of these processes, but some steps can only be

handled by you. Depending on the state which issued your current U.S. driver's license, different rules apply as to whether you need to take just the written test, the driving test, or both. Oregon residents need only take the written exam. California residents are required to pay for at least five driving lessons as well as take the practical exam, for instance. Because this process is very confusing, go over each step with the *Fahrschule* representative to make sure that you are clear. Note: the asterisk (*) denotes the steps the *Fahrschule* can assist you with.

1. Translation of your U.S. driver's license into German. * Must be obtained within 6 months of arrival.
2. Request for an application for a German license.*
3. Purchase study materials in English for the written driving exam.* Note: study early because there are many questions to memorize and only a few can be missed on the exam! As of December 2000, there are 30 questions on the exam and each has different points assigned to it. You can only miss a certain number of points and still pass. The cost of the two books (make sure to request the English books) is about 50€. They will give you two books full of sample tests. You learn by answering the questions and correcting yourself using the answer key. Note - the English used on these tests is British English so Americans will have to become acquainted with some 'strange' new terminology. There are some new signs you'll have to learn the meaning of as well. You will quickly learn that the German way of driving and road design is extremely logical and the whole idea is to keep traffic moving. Stop signs and traffic lights are far fewer here than in the U.S.
4. Completion of a first aid course* and a *Sehtest* (eye exam): You may visit any eye-glasses shop and request to have the *Sehtest*. They will then provide you with a form which you need to bring back to the driving school. The vision test usually costs 10-20€. The first aid classes are offered about once a month in every town. You can also drive to a nearby town for the course if the schedule is more convenient for you. The class will probably be taught in the Bavarian dialect and you may not be the only foreigner in the class; feel free to introduce yourself to the instructor before class and ask him/her to speak slowly. Although you may not understand everything, you must sit through it anyway and prove that you understand the basics of CPR and emergency life saving measures. It usually lasts four hours on a Saturday morning and may also be offered in the evening. Please note: A First Aid course is mandatory because it is *against the law* to pass by the scene of an accident without stopping to offer first aid to any victims, or to ensure that someone else is there who is offering first aid. There are also other traffic laws that are different here that you'll want to make sure you're aware of (see the section on 'Legal Differences').
5. Obtain two passport photos for your German license.
6. Return the eye exam and first aid forms along with the two passport photos to the *Fahrschule* for completion of the application process.*
7. Once the completed application is returned to the *Fahrschule*, verify that all pertinent information is correct.
8. Take your application, your original translation of your driver's license, your passport photos, your passport, your U.S. driver's license and any other forms you have received to the *Landratsamt* (county hall) in Altötting if you live in *Landkreis* (county) Altötting. If you live in *Landkreis* München, the *Landratsamt* is located in Mühldorf. The *Landratsamt* will process your application and then return it to the *Fahrschule*. Be sure to check with the *Fahrschule* frequently, as they may not call you to notify you that the application process is complete!

9. Arrange to have the written driving test ordered in English (at least two weeks before your exam) and confirm your test date. It will cost approximately 70 € to take the written test. You might then be required to take one or more hours of road instruction with the driving instructor before being allowed to take the road test.*
10. Once you have successfully passed your driver's test and received your certificate, you will need to go back to the *Landratsamt*. Bring your U.S. passport, current driver's license and translation, your certificate and approximately 50 €. After you pay you'll receive your driver's license.
11. You may have to hand over your U.S. driver's license at the *Landratsamt*, where it will be kept on file. You can exchange your German driver's license for your U.S. one if you are traveling to the States. However, as with many bureaucratic matters this is subject to change. Please verify this information with your contact person at the *Landratsamt*.
12. If for any reason you cannot obtain your U.S. driver's license before a trip to the U.S. (if, for instance, you have an emergency or unexpected trip to the U.S. on a weekend when the *Landratsamt* is closed) don't panic. Rental car agencies will accept a German driver's license, and you will of course also always have your U.S. passport with you as a legal form of identification. Check cashing will be problematic, however, as many U.S. stores will not accept your Passport as identification!

Tip: Start this process early. The procedures in Germany take some time to complete and office hours are often limited. Be aware that in for most steps in the process you will need to pay in cash for services so come prepared. Be sure to always follow up with the *Fahrschule* as they may not call you.

3.2 Moving in

If you are moving into an unfurnished apartment or home, please be aware of several differences between the U.S. and Germany:

3.2.1 The German kitchen

1. When Germans vacate a home they typically remove all kitchen cabinetry, appliances (washer, dryer, refrigerator), lighting fixtures (even ceiling fixtures) as well as all furniture. There is a good reason for this: Kitchens and lighting fixtures are very personalized items here. They are also usually of very good quality and quite an expensive investment. There are many places to shop for kitchens including Küchenwelt Max Kammhuber in Altötting (highly recommended!!), Weko in Pfarkirchen, or Masters in Burghausen. Be prepared to deal with people who do not speak much English. (Try asking for someone who does. Very often in larger shops someone does speak English relatively well).
2. German kitchens usually have far fewer cabinets than we are used to, as the kitchens are typically smaller. If you get a custom- kitchen (not a prefab one from IKEA, for instance), they will need to come to your home and take measurements.
3. You will have many decisions to make regarding the style of your cabinets and fixtures. The kitchen styles available here are extremely varied – country-style, ultra modern, wild, conservative and everything in between – but real wood cabinets will typically cost more than wood-like composite cabinets (which often still look quite nice). The color schemes and all other options you will face can be overwhelming. Just be sure to fix a budget and stay within it as the prices can quickly get out of hand.

4. You will also have a wide variety of functions, quality, style, colors, price etc. in choosing what appliances you want for your kitchen. The quality of appliances in Germany is generally excellent and you do get what you pay for. Note – appliances are much smaller than what you are used to and you may need to become accustomed to a different way of cooking:
 - Electric stoves have glass tops or cast iron burners. The glass tops take longer to heat up and longer to cool down. You must be very careful about cleaning spills as some substances can actually get so hot (sugars, for example) that they can etch into the glass. If you're renting with a pre-installed kitchen, this could lead to losing your security deposit!
 - The ovens usually have many more options than what you may have been used to in the U.S. It's very common here to use hot air (convection style) ovens; it's a good idea to get one which has convection as well as conventional baking if you're buying your own. German ovens are significantly smaller than an American oven, however, so you'll need to plan your Thanksgiving Dinner extremely carefully!
 - Dishwashers (like washing machines) have heaters built into them so you will only see a hook-up for cold water.
 - Your kitchen may or may not have a place to vent the range hood. If it does not, you can buy a range hood that blows the air back into the kitchen. For this type, it is recommended to buy carbon filters to remove cooking odors from the air.
 - You will not find garbage disposals for your sink. Many apartment buildings have arrangements to dispose of organic (composting) waste.
 - Freezers are always not frost-free but that option is available for a price.
 - Refrigerators are much smaller than we are used to but packaging of food and shopping habits are also different. For example, you buy milk by the liter and not the gallon (milk is not available here by the gallon), and most housewives shop 3-4 times a week if not daily in order to get the freshest foods possible. In fact, most foods have no preservatives. The food here is of very good quality but many of us had to learn the hard way that foods spoil much more quickly without those preservatives!
5. If buying your own washing machine, you may want to choose one with a *kurz* (short) button on the washer. The normal washing cycle takes up to two hours. The *kurz* cycle will reduce the wash time in half. Also choose one that has a variable spin speed; you can then adjust the spin cycle for heavy-duty or delicate washes. Since the washing machines have a built-in heater, you can set the temperature very precisely according to the clothing manufacturer's instructions. Your whites can be safely washed at 80-90C and will come out very clean without bleach. European front loading washing machines use far less water than their U.S. counterparts. For delicate fabrics or dress shirts there is a shorter delicate cycle. It also uses more water and even that cycle will likely take an hour. For delicate woollens be sure to set the temperature at "0" and not "30" or "Cool"; many of us have learned the hard way (many felted sweaters later!) that 30 degrees isn't cold enough!
6. German dryers can take up to two hours to dry a load of laundry. There are two basic types: The normal dryer blows out air but you will need a vent to get that air to the outside (you can hang a hose out your bathroom window if it won't disturb the neighbors). The other type does not have an exhaust. It has a built in condenser to remove and trap the moisture from the heated air. (This type will probably have a filter down below in the front in addition to the moisture reservoir at the top. Besides

emptying the water after each use, the filter must be cleaned from time to time as well. Ask for a machine that includes instructions in English, if possible, and read them carefully.) The second type is actually more common but they're not nearly as efficient as the one with the exhaust.

7. It's important to remember that relatively fewer Germans actually use a clothes dryer; many still prefer line-drying for the environmental friendliness, economical advantages, and line-dry freshness.

3.2.2 Water quality in the Burghausen area

In general, the water quality is very good with no residual chlorine smell like in the U.S. but you will want to buy a Brita water filter as the water here is extremely hard. The filters in the U.S. are optimized to remove chlorine. Here, they are optimized to remove minerals; limestone (*Kalk*) is especially prevalent and important to remove. You will want to use filtered water in your iron and when making coffee and tea. Even if your iron or coffee maker has a limestone removal system built in, you will obtain better results using the Brita filtered water. Be sure to buy a filter here instead of bringing yours with you from the US. It's really not necessary to filter your drinking water; the tap water is excellent quality here and is the most stringently controlled food substance in Germany.

You'll need to buy special salt (*Geschirrspulersalz*) for conditioning the water in your dishwasher. You'll also want to add special *Antikalk* tablets to your washing machine with every wash to prevent the lime build up on the machine (where it would eventually break the pipes) or your clothing (where it would eventually made the towels grey and less fluffy). If you prevent the lime from building up by consistently using the tablets, there's nothing to worry about.

3.2.3 Other notes about the apartment

1. Delivery for new furniture takes a lot longer than we are accustomed to in the U.S.: Eight to ten weeks is common, and many of us have heard stories about deliveries taking up to four months or longer! Some large furniture stores such as Weko (in Eggenfelden) or XXXLutz (in Neuötting) have items that can be bought and taken home directly from the store. Stock availability for furniture which is available to take with you is usually better in the fall, and delivery times over the summer vacation period can stretch out for 10 weeks or more. Be sure to ask about delivery times when you're shopping around!
2. If you are not placed in a company- owned apartment, you may have to find a house or apartment yourself. Have a friend help you to read the ads in the paper. The Saturday paper is best. You will typically be expected to pay up to three months rent (*Kaution*) as a security deposit. Security deposits go into special escrow accounts and do earn some interest. Your employer might help you by signing a *Bankbürgschaft* which is essentially a promissory note.
3. TV/Radios need to be registered and fees will be collected when you move in. Be sure to obtain a form from the appliance store when you make a purchase. The completed form should be sent in to the *Gebühreneinzugszentrale*. The governmental department with responsibility for the registration fees (GEZ) actually might come knock on your door and ask to inspect your apartment or ask you about how many radios and TVs are in the apartment. You are not required to let them into your apartment (in fact it's inadvisable) and you are not required to give them any information at the door. If

- they have forms to be filled out they should leave them with you and you will complete them and return them asap.
4. In principle it seems like there are more people here who potentially may show up unannounced at your door and ask to come in for various reasons: The GEZ inspector can ask to verify how many radios and TVs are in your apartment (don't let them in); the "Meter Reader" from the utilities company will come in and read your gas meters on your radiators (you have to let them in, but they should announce ahead of time on which day and time range they're coming); the chimney sweep (if you have a house) will come in and inspect your gas burner, clean your chimney, etc. (they have to clean and inspect chimneys 1-3 times a year, but should also announce ahead of time when they're coming to be sure it's a convenient time for you). If you aren't comfortable having these people in your apartment without someone there who can translate for you, feel free to ask them to schedule another appointment for a more convenient time.
 5. Electrical installations, such as lighting, may be difficult or impossible to install on your own. If you are only here for a short time you will probably want to buy rather inexpensive lamps – there are attractive lamps available at very reasonable prices. The Europeans make much greater use of halogen lamps. These lamps are very bright, attractive, and have built in transformers. If you want to take them back with you to the U.S., keep in mind that the transformers within these lighting fixtures would have to be replaced and this may not be possible.
 6. If your apartment has carpeting, you're one of the lucky ones. Apartments usually have PVC flooring and the tenants have to buy area or wall-to-wall rugs themselves. Nicer places may have tile or wood floors, but even in apartments tenants often install carpeting or flooring themselves. Be sure to check with your landlord for cleaning instructions if your apartment has a 'fake hardwood' (*Parquet* floor – most of these floors must be washed with a bare minimum of water and special non-detergent cleaners to prevent damage).
 7. If your employer is not providing you with a furnished apartment, you will have to buy wardrobes (*Schränke*), cabinets, and bookshelves, because European homes do not usually have them built in. The styles to choose from are endless. The cheaper ones contain no wood. Others have only a wood veneer (*Holz furniert*) and the best quality ones have solid wood panels (*Holz massiv*). You might want to consider checking in an antique store for an antique Bavarian farmhouse-style wardrobe or cabinet if you've got the budget and space available.
 8. You will probably need to buy your own window dressings. Most things have to be custom-made and can be very expensive; some stores now sell ready-made American-style sheers and curtains if you're lucky enough to have standard -sized windows. The fabric styles and colors available are in large part different from what you'd typically find in the U.S. One source for a large variety of fabrics, panels, and ideas is TTL, the carpet and drapery store on the main road in Altötting, on the left heading out of town toward Burghausen. You can also find draperies and window coverings at Schultheiss in Burghausen.
 9. Your heat will most likely be by steam radiators. The meters on the radiators contain a liquid that evaporates at a constant rate at high temperatures. Similarly, the plumbing fixtures in the kitchen and the bathroom will have meters for hot and cold water. Once per year, the landlord will read these meters (*Jahresablesung*) and perform an annual reckoning (*Jahresabrechnung*). You will either pay him the difference between the actual usage and what he has charged you as an estimate for heat and water (*Nebenkosten*) or he will pay you money back. Don't be surprised if three months

go by between the *Jahresablesung* and the notice from the landlord regarding the reckoning. Your *Nebenkosten* typically also includes some kind of garbage removal service.

10. Dumpsters here are about half the size of a typical one in the U.S. and they are emptied only once every two weeks. Therefore, you **must** learn the fine art of recycling nearly everything. Every town has a recycling center (*Wertstoffhof*) and they take everything from yard refuse (usually for an extra fee), to old bread, used deep-fryer fat and dead washing machines. The one in Burghausen is closed on Mondays and opened til noon on Saturdays. Most communities here, including Burghausen, also have curbside pick-up of plastic/tin (*Gelbesack*) and paper (*Blautonne*) recycling.
11. If you are not in company-provided housing, you will have to negotiate your own deals with the an electric company (you get to choose – *Yello* often has the cheapest rates) and a phone company. This can be daunting, as there are many options available. Your cell phone from the U.S. will most likely not work here so you may want to sign up with a plan that includes all your telephone needs. DSL internet service is available in Burghausen and some of the surrounding area.
12. Cable TV costs about 10€ a month and you get many channels. For no extra charge, you even get a French and a Turkish station! Depending on your cable package, you might be able to receive CNN, BBC, and Bloomberg/CNBC. Depending on where you live, a satellite dish may not get you (m)any more English-speaking channels . . . but you may opt for one anyway. Prices are reasonable.
13. If you are renting, check with your landlord before attempting to make any improvements to your house such as installing a satellite dish, drilling holes in the walls or even hanging curtains. They will especially not like you drilling holes in their window frames but other options are available (plastic window fixtures, spring-loaded dowels, etc.).
14. As stated above, radiator heating is most common, and the houses are for the most part extremely well insulated. Rooms can therefore get stuffy and moisture (from cooking/ laundry/showering/etc.) will very quickly build up inside your apartment – resulting in mold and mildew – if you don't air out your apartment daily. Each room (including the foyer, living room, and kitchen) usually has a door so you can avoid drafts and control the heating in each room separately.
15. Windows in Germany open in two ways – either wide open or tipped forward on a bottom hinge – so you can control the amount of air coming in. Note that because of this construction the windows here often have no screens. Depending on the way the window opens, it is possible to buy and install a “do it yourself” screen. If you don't install screens, please note that during bug season you have to keep the windows closed if the lights are on in the evening. For the most part, if your lights are off you can keep the windows open . . . but if you have the windows open when the lights are on, plan on being carried away by mosquitoes!
16. Winters can be cold, wet, and snowy. Being so close to the Alps, the towns and people are very well prepared for the snow here. They salt the roads and you are required by law to have snow tires for your car. If you live in a row, double- or single-family house you are responsible for clearing the sidewalk of snow each time it snows. You are liable if someone slips on snow or ice and is injured on your sidewalk or driveway.
17. Summers are not particularly long and normally not extremely hot, but it can be quite humid. Air conditioning is practically non-existent so bring or buy fans.
18. You should expect the apartment or house to have been painted by the last occupant, but the previous tenants are not responsible for cleaning the carpets so you may want

to rent a steam cleaner (available in many dry cleaning shops).

19. Beware: Most rental contracts have a clause which states that you must paint all the walls white when you move out (or pay to have it done). You are free to paint the walls whatever color you like (at your own cost) while you live in the apartment, but when you move out all the walls must be freshly painted in pristine white – or you'll probably lose a good portion of your security deposit!

3.3 Living with pets

Note: This section was written in 2001 and probably out of date! Please email me with any feedback for updates. Thanks!

If you have decided to bring your pet to Germany, here are a few things to know. There is an extensive process for exporting your animal to Germany. Luckily, Germany does not have problems with cats or dogs coming into the country if all the appropriate paperwork is completed and presented on your arrival. If the paperwork is not completed your animal may be quarantined. Animals will need a check-up, vaccinations, and paperwork from your vet as well as paperwork completed and approved by the German Consulate. The Consulate will give you a bilingual veterinary certificate. Start this process early but not too early as some vaccinations have to be administered no later than 90 days prior to your arrival in Germany. In Germany, they administer a rabies vaccine every year so don't waste your money on a three year vaccine because your dog or cat will still have to get one a year later. Veterinary fees are much cheaper in Germany – about half the price of those in the U.S.! Call the German Consulate nearest you in the U.S. before you leave and they can assist you with the necessary paperwork for the German government. Be aware that their hours are extremely limited. Like most German government offices, they will only see you before noon on certain days of the week. You must also comply with the airline's strict requirements, especially if you have a small pet and you want to bring it into the cabin with you. If you plan to do this, make sure your carrier will fit under the seat in front of you. For that purpose, a soft-sided pet carrier from Petco is recommended. Contact the airline you are flying on immediately to make sure you are in compliance. Note that many airlines have weather/temperature restrictions. Animals will not be able to fly if temperatures reach an extreme high or low.

If your pet is a dog, it will need to be registered with the city of Burghausen. You will need to visit the *Stadthauptkasse* within the *Rathaus* (town hall, located in the *Altstadt*) to pay for a license for the animal. The license must be updated yearly and you can set it up so that they automatically remove the 25 € directly out of your account. Cats do not have to be registered.

There is a wonderful veterinarian (*Tierärzt/in*) located in Burghausen:

Dr. Sabina Halm

Elisabethstr. 8, Burghausen

08677/5303

Hours: M, T, TH, FR 9:00-11:00 and 16:00-18:00

If an emergency should occur after hours, you may leave a message on the voice mail and one of the on-call doctors will call you back. There are several veterinarians from neighboring towns who share the on-call duty. Note that Germany is very strict about what procedures can be performed on your animal. They do not remove dew-claws on dogs or de-claw cats and they may not neuter or spay your animal as young as is commonly done in the U.S. (although Dr. Halm has attended conferences in the States and will consider earlier

ages). Similarly, they won't bob your dogs ears or tail for those breeds that have this done commonly in the U.S. as they consider that to be cruel. You may not find your cat or dog's brand of food here so bring a few weeks' supply until you can get them adjusted to a brand available here. The brand *Eukanuba* is quite common and very good. If you have a dog, they will love chomping down on pig ears. They're about half as expensive here as they are in the states and you can buy them in bulk at Hornbach in Altötting. (Hornbach is virtually identical to Home Depot.) Also Dehner in Neuötting has a good variety of better-quality pet foods.

It is extremely important to note that Germany has a problem with Lyme disease which is carried by ticks. There is currently no vaccination available in Germany against Lyme disease and a vaccination given in the U. S. has no affect against the strain of Lyme disease bacteria carried by ticks in Germany. If contracted, Lyme disease can be treated with antibiotics. (See page 4 – Before you Leave: Medical – for more on Lyme disease). In some regions there is also a problem with a viral infection carried by the ticks called F.S.M.E. (see Vaccinations, Health below). If you have an animal that will be outdoors or if you spend a lot of time outdoors, please make sure that you and your family are vaccinated for FMSE when you arrive. Any general practitioner can do this for you here. It requires three visits for a series of injections. If your dog is picking up a lot of ticks, ask Dr. Halm for some tick medicine that is applied each month on the animal's back and above the tail. It is very effective but cannot be used on cats and there may be precautions if you have young children.

4 Daily Life in Burghausen

4.1 Grocery shopping

The first trip to the grocery store can be a bit overwhelming. Knowing what to expect is half the battle. Here are some tips to help you get through your first visit with minimal confusion.

4.1.1 The grocery stores

- Grocery carts are connected by chains. In order to release a cart, you must place a 1 € coin in the slot on the cart handle or use a plastic token that's the same size as a 1 € coin (available in many shops). When you return the cart, lock the chain back into the appropriate slot on the handle and your coin will come back out. (Funny story: I used to think the coins were there to discourage people from stealing the carts. Silly system, I thought, because if someone wanted to steal a cart I guess he wouldn't be deterred by the thought of losing 1 €... But then I learned more about German culture and realized the purpose is to get people to tidily return the carts to their stalls! An eminently practical system which saves on personnel costs and increases the chances that there will actually be a cart available in a convenient location when you need one!)
- Fruits and vegetables can be the most confusing section of the supermarket. If you see a scale in the area then these items must be weighed by you before you go through the *Kasse* (cashier). Note: this is not necessary in all stores as many stores are modernizing and weigh the products for you at the register as is done in the U.S. The trick is just in recognizing in which stores you have to do the weighing and sticking yourself! Plastic bags are available in the area near the fruits and vegetables. If you

are required to weigh the produce yourself, pick out your food item noting the number written next to the nametag of the item. These numbers correspond to the buttons on the scale in the middle of the produce section. For instance, *Tomaten* may have a #23 next to it. When you take your tomato to the scale you will see a button marked #23. Usually there is a picture next to the number as well. Place your tomato on the scale and press the #23 or the button with the picture of the tomato. A sticker will come out of the machine and you place the sticker on your plastic bag of tomatoes. Done! The only problem is when you can't find the picture or name of the item you want to weigh!

- Some items are sold by the piece (the price label will say *je* or *Stück*). You do not need to weigh these items. For instance, lettuce such as iceberg (*Eisberg*) or romaine (*Romana*) is often priced per head, as are loose lemons, avocados, and cucumbers. Usually a sign hanging above or below the items will say the price per *Stück*.
- You will notice that the produce here is not refrigerated or sprayed with water. Consequently, the lettuce may be limp and, indeed, may never recover. You may prefer to buy your produce from the farmer's markets (Thursday mornings in Burghausen, Thursday and Saturday mornings in Altötting and on Wednesday in the *Stadtmitte* (town center), Neuötting) where you can get produce which is fresher, sometimes organic, usually somewhat more expensive but almost always better quality.
- There are also great vegetable and fruit specialty produce stores within Burghausen, Altötting and Neuötting but some of these can be very expensive, especially if they specialize in organically grown products.
- Fruits, vegetables, and meats are weighed per gram and kilograms, not pounds or ounces. A cheap scale can be purchased for home use for converting recipes from ounces to grams. (See Section 4.1.7 on Cooking Substitutions for the weights per volume measurement of some more common cooking items).
- Most shoppers bring their own wicker basket or bags when shopping. Bags are available at the *Kasse* for a price of about 10 cents per bag.
- The cashiers do not bag your groceries for you. Shoppers are expected to bag their own goods at the *Kasse*. Be aware that you will be expected to move quickly. Begin bagging your items as soon as the cashier runs them past the scanner. The cashier will not wait for you to bag your items before starting with the next person in line. If you're not quick enough, there may be times when you are picking your items out of another person's goods. With practice you'll learn to put your groceries up onto the conveyer belt in the order that you want to place them into your shopping bags (heaviest things first) which will speed up your bagging speed!
- The cashiers usually like it when you pay with exact change or at least close to it. They always need the change, and it's a great way to get rid of all that (heavy) spare change you will undoubtedly start to accumulate. Men, take note – it pays to buy a German wallet with a little coin purse inside. (Some banks have automatic change sorters if you decide to save your change in a jar.)
- Most large grocery stores will have everything you need in one building, but it is actually more fun to shop around and find the local small bakery and butcher with the quality, taste, and service you like best. Becoming a regular customer (*Stammkunden*) at these neighborhood shops is a great way to become more integrated into your community, and often the quality is simply much better at the smaller family-owned specialty shops. There is also an amazing amount of difference in taste between the various local butchers and bakers.

- A *Bäckerei* (bakery) sells breads and rolls as well as some sweet items whereas a *Konditorei* specializes in pastries (and might sell some breads as well).
- Within grocery stores you will find also a deli section with cheese, fresh meats, meat products, some salads, etc. Most supermarkets also have a section with fresh bakery goods.
- Danish bacon (Tulip brand) is the closest thing to American bacon; Rewe in Altötting often has American bacon in their deli section.
- One of the more popular grocery stores in Burghausen is Kaufland near the McDonald's on the outside of town (toward Burgkirchen). The Marktkauf in Altötting has some brands not offered by the other stores, as well as a good cheese selection including provolone, cheddar, and a wide variety of blue, Italian, and French cheeses. If you feel like an excursion, the Globus in Mühldorf is very modern and will meet your American shopping expectations. They sometimes have very good prices on wine there too. Rewe in Altötting has very friendly clerks, good quality bakery and meat sections, and a respectable selection of wines and hard liquor: in other words, the advantage of having everything under one roof!
- If you miss Costco, wait till you see the German version: Aldi is actually owned by the same people who came up with Trader Joes. Nothing is stored nicely on the shelves, they don't really have products in bulk quantities, and the lines at the checkout are very long, but they have relatively low prices. Penny, Netto, and Lidl are similar discounter stores; each has a limited selection, their own specialties, and their own advantages and disadvantages. The discounters are also a good place to look for bargains on little odds and ends you might need for your apartment.
- Another place to look for very inexpensive odds and ends is the German equivalent of a Dollar Store, called "Tedi", "Kik" or "Box König". "Kik" has primarily (very low cost) clothing; the other two have more household, stationary, storage, or decorative items.
- Most of the larger supermarkets have sections for organic produce and food products, but it's a bit harder to find organic meats. Gantt in Neuötting is only open Fridays and Saturdays. The farm stand (Stadler) on the road between Burghausen and Altötting is only open Fridays from 2-6.
- Last, but not least, some encouragement before you leave for your first shopping trip: with a few nouns, some pointing, and a lot of patience you can usually get what you need with no problem!

4.1.2 Meat and meat products

- A *Metzgerei* (butcher) is the best place to go for meat. Most butchers sell some cheeses and deli items (potato salad, olives) as well as meats and meat products. A popular *Metzgerei* is Mühldorfer on Robert Kochstraße in Burghausen; their shop on Marienstraße in Altötting is also excellent.
- The butcher chain called *Fischer* which can be found inside several of the larger supermarkets has pretty good quality meats, cold cuts, and sausages, too.
- Many of us recommend against buying the pre-packaged meats, cold cuts, poultry or meat products that you can find in the discounters or near the dairy section of the supermarkets, but of course to each his/her own! Every once in a while there's a report on TV about some less-than-savory aspect of the low quality meats or poultry available at discounters. There are, of course, exceptions to that rule and many people are really happy with the meats they buy from the discounters.

- If possible, it's a good idea to find a butcher that you can trust and become a regular customer there.
- Baked hams are not customary here but Metzgerei Mühldorfer in Altötting will prepare a ham suitable for baking for you. You just have to call Frau Mühldorfer at 08671 85790. Tell her Barbara Heller recommended that you call her to special order "einen Amerikanischen Schinken." Make sure to talk to the owner Frau Mühldorfer herself. The butcher will make it to order for you; it will take about 10-12 days, so be sure to plan ahead.
- In general, you'll notice that Germans tend to eat a lot more pork and a lot less beef than Americans. The beef tends to be aged much less than in the US, which means it's usually less tender. Marinading will help, and knowing the right cuts of beef to use for which purpose is really important as well. Fillet is, of course, the best cut, but it's horribly expensive. The cut "*Hufte*" ("hip", either a sirloin or rump steak) tends to be relatively tender for steaks. A lot of people use the cut called "*Lende*", New York strip, for grilling/broiling, as well.
- Turkey breast is also very popular here. You can buy various cuts of turkey (thigh, breast) at the butcher or at the farmer's markets. The quality of the frozen poultry at the supermarkets or discounters may not be as good as the fresh alternatives at the farmer's markets, of course.
- Some sausage terms: The thing closest to an Italian Sausage is called a *Nürnberger Rostbratwurst*. A *Wiener* is the "hot dog" equivalent, but better. Wiener are 100% pork and spices, with no fillers. A *Depriziener* is similar to a Wiener, but it's slightly spicy. *Weißwurst* is more than a sausage – it's a Bavarian institution! They're typically eaten with mustard; unless you want to upset everyone in the entire restaurant, don't ask for ketchup to be served with it. You'll definitely have an opportunity to try one soon after arriving, either mid-morning at work at a traditional *Weißwurstfrühstück* or under some beautiful chestnut trees at a local Biergarten. As the Bavarians say at mealtime, *an guadn!* ("a good one", abbreviated from the high German "Ein Guten Appetit!")
- Meats aren't treated with preservatives here so they tend to go bad more quickly than what you may be used to. For the most part, meat will start to turn bad within 24 of when you buy it. Local butchers actually recommended that you use ground meat within 6 hours of buying it!! For the best results you should take meat out of the plastic bag and wash and dry it (obviously don't do this with hamburger!) then leave it lightly covered (with a paper towel, for instance) in the fridge. Even if you do that, it won't stay fresh more than 48 hours. Be really careful and trust your nose: If it smells bad 24 hours after you bought it, throw it out!
- The "default" for ground meat (*Hackfleisch*) is a mixture of ground pork and beef. If you just ask for *Hackfleisch* they may ask if you want *gemischt* (mixed beef and pork) or *Rind* (just beef).
- A final word about meat in Germany: there are a lot of really excellent sausages, cold cuts, and salami in this part of Bavaria that you won't find anywhere else. Be adventurous and try something new!!

4.1.3 Poultry

If you're looking for good quality poultry, your best bet is to buy it at the local farmer's markets (Thursdays in Burghausen, Thursday and Saturday in Altötting, Wednesday in Neuötting). My favorite poultry farmer's market stand is from a local farmer named

Mühlhauser in Garching, tel. 08634 8837. They use feed that they've grown themselves, and although they're not certified organic they do have happy birds! You have a choice between free range (*Freilauf*) or cage-free (*Bodenhaltung*) poultry and eggs and you can also special order turkeys with about one week's notice. Your local butcher will also (sometimes) have poultry, especially filets of turkey breast or chicken breast.

4.1.4 Buying beverages

Shopping for beverages is very different in Germany than in the U.S. Many shoppers buy their drinks at the *Getränkemarkt* (beverage stores) around town. You can find individual beverage stores around town or within the larger grocery stores. These shops carry all kinds of sodas, juices, water and beer. Most juices are reconstituted from concentrate but be sure to read the label; there are also some excellent quality 100% juices. Lidl is a great source of a variety of juices at very reasonable prices. They also have unbeatable prices for wine and Champagne! Marktkauf and Rewe have signs by the wine telling whether it's sweet or dry, which is great for wine novices. *Nektar* sounds heavenly but is actually artificially flavored syrup and water mixed with (maybe) a little bit of real juice. Many local stores (Rewe, Marktkauf, Edeka) sometimes have liters of Tropicana real orange juice but it's very expensive. It's hard for many Americans to find a brand of German orange juice they like. Many OJ brands here are somewhat bitter; Edeka's store brand is pretty good, and you may just have to try a bunch of brands until you find one you like. You can buy your drinks individually or in cases.

Glass bottles for beer, juice, water, or milk are returned in their crates back to the grocery or beverage store. This is also true of many plastic bottles used for cokes or mineral water. There are deposits (*Pfand*) for most beverage containers and plastic crates. (Bottles that say *Einwegflasche* or *Grünerpunkt* with a picture of a green circle with arrows have no refund; you have to include them with your recyclables.) Each store has its own process for receiving bottles for the deposit. In some stores (e.g., the *Getränkemarkt*) the cashier will either reduce the price of your new purchase by the amount of your bottle deposit or they will give you the cash back. Other stores have an automatic refund machine which gives you a ticket (*Bon*) which you then redeem at the *Kasse*.

Geith in Burghausen has an excellent selection of good quality wines and very knowledgeable staff if you're looking for advice. They also have some hard liquors. You may be surprised to see the prices of wine in the supermarket: the California wine growers actually are really good at inflating American wine prices, so European wines which are actually really good can be had for a real bargain (by American standards). Don't be afraid to try that bottle of 3.99€ Riesling or Spatburgunder!! And for the most part you'll pay about 10€ for a quality wine that would cost over \$20 in the US.

A note about gift giving: Generally speaking, if you're bringing a bottle of wine to someone's house as a hostess gift, the general rule would be to buy a bottle of wine that costs about 10€. Geith can advise you about a wide variety of wonderful wines in that price range, and will do a lovely job at gift wrapping the bottle for a small fee.

In addition to the hard liquors available in regular beverage stores and the supermarkets, there is also a very large liquor store called ALRA in a little town called Teising on the B12 between Altötting and Mühldorf. They have an amazing selection and very friendly staff.

4.1.5 Coffee

Which coffee tastes better, American or German? For the typical American, German coffee might be one of the things that actually takes some getting used to. The typical German may find American coffee to be too weak or too mild. To each his or her own!!

If you are a fan of Starbucks coffee, you may find that German coffee tastes bitter and not as full-bodied as what you're used to. Here are a few tips:

- Starbucks fans, take heart: Starbucks is also in Germany! The bad news: The nearest store is in Munich!
- Italian coffee is readily available here (e.g., Lavazza); you may find the flavor actually pretty close to a Starbucks blend.
- You might want to try experimenting with putting just a few grains of salt (yes, that's right – *salt*) into the filter with the ground coffee before pouring the water through. It greatly reduces the bitterness of the coffee.
- If you're finding the coffee to be too bitter, try a brand that says "Mild" on the package.
- The general rule of thumb is to put about one rounded or heaping tablespoon of ground coffee per 6-ounce cup of coffee when making filter coffee (Melita filter or "Mr. Coffee" type coffee maker method).
- A Brita filter is rather unavoidable for making good coffee in this area. The high limestone content along with the other minerals will make your coffee or tea taste pretty bad if you don't filter them out.
- Several coffee shops in Munich (including several Starbucks locations) sell good coffee beans if you're willing to pay an arm and a leg.

4.1.6 Where to find some American products

There is a German and American Grocery Store found in Munich on Baderstraße 65, 80669, München. Phone number is 089 2017031. It's near the U Bahn station Frauendorferstraße.

Another great site for mail ordering your favorite foods from home is www.foodfromhome.de.

Another store with food from the states where you can also order online is in Waldkrauburg. The website is www.trendjumpers.de.

Kaufland in Burghausen near McDonald's might special order American foods for you, with possible restrictions or minimum orders. Please ask to speak to the manager there for more information.

Früchte Hollinger on Marktlerstraße 17 in Burghausen (beside the cinema) has an excellent selection of very fresh produce. They go to Munich twice a week to get fresh supplies from their wholesaler and would be glad to look for any hard-to-find items for you (okra, jalapenos, portabello mushrooms). They typically stock fresh cilantro which can be somewhat hard to find in this area.

4.1.7 Milk products

Cottage cheese (*Huttenkäse*) like most products here is made with no additives or preservatives, is really great quality, and is available in skim (0.2%) to full fat (3.8%). Milk comes in whole milk (*Vollmilch*) with 3.8% or 3.5% fat which tastes very rich. They don't have 2%

milk but they do have 1.5% milk (*Fettarm*) and it, too, tastes richer (better) than American 2%. Skim milk has about 0.3% fat and is called *Fettfrei* or *Magermilch*. You can buy skim H-milch that is unrefrigerated but must be refrigerated after opening. “H- milch” is milk that has been ultra-high heated (UHT, ultra-high-temperature) to kill off bacteria. It keeps for up to three months unopened. It’s ok in a pinch but it’s somewhat of an acquired taste. At a Reformhaus you can find powdered milk, fat free and low fat items as well as special foods for diabetics or people on fat/cholesterol reduced diets. If you use Benecol (cholesterol reduced margarine) in the U.S., look for Becel Pro Active here.

Quark is a German milk product that might be new to you: It’s kind of like a cross between cream cheese and sour cream or yogurt cheese. It’s also available in skim (0.2 percent fat) as well as medium *Halbfett* and high *Rahmstufe* fat contents. You can use it for dips, or add some milk and use it as a substitution for sour cream, or add some fruit and some honey or sugar to taste for a yummy treat.

Although German grocery stores sell sour cream *Sauerrahm* it might taste more sour than what you’re used to. *Schmand* or *Crème Fraîche* are two similar products that are less sour (and delicious!).

There are a wide variety of wonderful German, Swiss, Italian and French cheeses readily available at much lower prices than what you’d pay back in the states for such ‘delicacies’. Some cheese terms that might be useful include:

| | |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| Firm, for grating or eating with crackers | <i>fest</i> |
| Soft, usually higher fat content | <i>weich</i> |
| Mild | <i>mild</i> |
| Sharp | <i>würzig</i> |
| Swiss cheese | <i>Emmenthaler (Swiss or German)</i> |

4.1.8 Spices

Your favorite spices may be a little difficult to find so here are a few translations:

| | |
|-----------|-----------------------|
| Garlic | <i>Knoblauch</i> |
| Ginger | <i>Ingwer</i> |
| Cumin | <i>Kreuzkummel</i> |
| Cloves | <i>Nelken</i> |
| Cinnamon | <i>Zimt</i> |
| Cilantro | <i>Korriandergrün</i> |
| Coriander | <i>Korriander</i> |
| Onion | <i>Zwiebel</i> |
| Parsley | <i>Petersilie</i> |

Since the Germans do not have fluoride in their water, table salt can be purchased with iodine (*Jod*) and/or with fluoride (*Fluor*). The fluoridized salt may taste a bit different if you taste it directly from the carton but you won’t notice any difference in your food.

4.1.9 Cooking substitutions

You’ll be able to find many familiar food items here, but there are some differences between cooking in the US and Germany so it can sometimes be challenging to use U.S. recipes in Germany! You can be creative with substitutions in some cases but you may prefer to bring some essential things from the U.S.

Here are some cooking tips and hints:

- Confectioners sugar is different in the U.S. (where it contains corn starch) and Germany (where it is simply powdered sugar, no corn starch). Add some corn starch (1 tsp per cup of confectioners sugar) to recipes **only if** you suspect that the confectioners sugar is also supposed to help with leavening or thickening (e.g., Lemon Squares, Pecan Squares, cake fillings). You may need to experiment with adding more corn starch to thicken appropriately. Don't forget: you have to cook out the cornstarch taste by baking (in a cake) or boiling at least one minute (in a sauce).
- It will also help lighten your cakes if you add 1-2 tablespoons of cornstarch in per cup of flour in your American recipes.
- Baking soda and baking powder are available but like so many things, the packaging is different. For example, both products come in little envelopes. Look for *Hausnatron* or *Baknatron* for baking soda and *Bakpulver* for baking powder.
- If a recipe calls for 1 cup self-rising flour, substitute 1 cup minus 2 tablespoons all-purpose flour, plus 1 1/2 teaspoons baking powder and 1/8 teaspoon salt.
- There are different types of flour so make sure you buy what you need. Regular white flour is marked with a #405.
- Brown sugar in Germany is simply sugar made from beets, sometimes slightly less processed and sometimes simply colored brown. It's granular, dry, cannot be packed down like U.S. brown sugar, and will generally not produce the same results. It can be used in recipes but tends to make cookies grainy. You can substitute white granular sugar plus molasses (1-2 TBS molasses per 1 cup of table sugar). If you don't have molasses you can also use *Zuckerrüben Sirup* as a molasses substitute. It tastes similar but not exactly the same.
- Chocolate chips are available but they are smaller and can't really be used to replace Nestles tollhouse brand in a recipe. You can chop the *Blockschokolade* (a semi-sweet baking chocolate) into pieces for chocolate chunk cookies, or use *Halbbitter* chocolate bars (such as Milka), or bring Nestle chips with you if you prefer.
- For graham cracker crumbs, substitute crushed butter cookies, anise cookies, lady fingers, or other dry cookies; reduce sugar if making a crust.
- Instead of canned pumpkin, make your own by baking halved pumpkins and running the baked pulp through a food mill; add spices.
- Refried beans are easy to make with canned kidney beans added to some fried onions, garlic and spices (cumin, chili powder). Add some water or some of the reserved cooking water and puree. You can also find Old El Paso canned refried beans sometimes in the local stores.
- Instead of non-stick (Pam) cooking spray (check EDEKA for availability) buy a refillable pump-spray bottle.
- If a recipe calls for using wax-paper, you can often use German *Bakpapier* (parchment paper).
- Vanilla extract is hard to find here; you should bring some with you if you don't want to try a substitution. Germans normally use *Vanillin Zucker*, sugar mixed with vanilla flavoring; substitute 1-1 for vanilla extract. Alternatively, vanilla beans themselves are readily available and add an excellent flavor (open the bean and scrape out the paste, add paste and bean to milk before scalding for pudding).
- Oatmeal here is not as the same as Quaker Oats. Rolled oats here, *Haferflocken*, come in two varieties. The flakes are either smaller or more robust, and neither are rolled like Quaker Oats, so the flavor, texture, cooking method, and results in recipes will be different from what you're used to.

- Many grocery stores have a whole foods section where you can find organic grains and cereals, nuts and dried fruit. These brands offer excellent quality oats, cornmeal, and other organic produce.
- German recipes use weight measures (grams) instead of volume measures (fluid ounces, cups) for recipes. Once you get used to this, you'll probably never want to go back to the hassle of using those measuring cups!!
- You can easily convert your volume measures to weight measures with the help of numerous websites, such as www.traditionaloven.com or www.aloha.com.
- www.allrecipes.com is an awesome site filled with great recipes, tips, videos, and best of all a great button on the recipe that you can click to convert recipes from U.S. to metric measures. Very handy!!

Here are a few useful equivalences for converting recipes from U.S. volume to German weights – or vice versa:

- If spooned into the measuring cup, flour weighs 4.45 ounces (125 grams) per cup. If scooped into the measuring cup it weighs 5 ounces (140 grams) per cup. Dipping the cup and scooping packs the flour into the cup. (Most professional bakers, if not using a scale to weigh ingredients, fluff all-purpose flour with a fork and spoon it into the measuring cup before leveling the top with the back of a knife. Most home bakers dip the cup in the flour and scoop, then level. If your baked goods are a bit dry or heavy, it may be that you are using the scooping method and adding more flour to the recipe than the author intended.)
- 1 cup granulated sugar = 7 ounces (200 grams)
- 1 cup confectioners' sugar = 4 ounces (115 grams) if spooned into a measuring cup)
- 1 cup packed light brown sugar = approximately 7.5 ounces (215 grams)
- 1 cup packed dark brown sugar = about 8.5 ounces (240 grams)
- 1 stick butter = 1/2 cup = 8 tablespoons = 4 ounces (113 grams)

Here are some other general baking tips*:

- No baking powder? For every 1 teaspoon needed, use 1/4 teaspoon baking soda plus 5/8 teaspoon cream of tartar (or 1/2 cup buttermilk or yogurt).
- No buttermilk? Use plain yogurt, thinned sour cream or crme friche instead. Or add 1 tablespoon lemon juice or white vinegar to 1 cup milk and let stand 5 minutes.
- No whole milk? For every 1 cup needed, use 1/2 cup evaporated milk and 1/2 cup water, and reduce sugar in recipe slightly. Or use 1 cup skim milk plus 1 tablespoon cream or melted butter.
- No whipping cream? Use whipped dessert topping, well-chilled evaporated milk that's been whipped, 1 cup non-fat dry milk powder whipped with 1 cup ice water, or 1/2 cup non-fat yogurt plus 1/2 cup part-skim ricotta cheese plus 2 tablespoons honey all mixed together.
- No dry bread crumbs? Just get some bread, tear it up into small chunks, saute in a skillet with a little butter until browned.
- No dried cranberries? Substitute an equal amount of raisins, currents, or dried cherries.
- No dry mustard? For every teaspoon needed, use 1 tablespoon prepared mustard.
- No cornstarch? For every tablespoon needed, use 1 tablespoon arrowroot or 1 tablespoon potato flour or potato starch or 2 1/2 tablespoons flour.
- No eggs? If you need them for baking, substitute 1/4 cup applesauce for 1 egg.
- No cake flour? For 1 cup of cake flour, sift together 7/8 cup all-purpose flour and 2 tablespoons cornstarch.
- No pastry flour? For every 1 cup needed, use 1 cup minus 2 tablespoons all-purpose flour.

- No whole wheat flour? For every 1 cup needed, use 2 tablespoons wheat germ mixed with all-purpose flour to make 1 cup.
- No honey? For every 1 cup needed, use 1 cup molasses or 1 cup light or dark corn syrup or 1 cup maple syrup or 1 1/4 cups granulated sugar plus 1/4 cup liquid (use liquid called for in recipe).
- No confectioners' sugar? For every 1 cup needed, use 7/8 cup granulated sugar and 1 tablespoon cornstarch and whirl in blender for a few seconds.
- No granulated sugar? For every 1 cup needed, use 3/4 cup confectioners' sugar or 3/4 cup honey.
- No brown sugar? For every 1 cup needed, use 1 cup granulated sugar combined with 2 tablespoons light or dark molasses.
- No pumpkin pie spice? For every teaspoon needed, use 1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon plus 1/4 teaspoon each ground ginger and allspice plus 1/8 teaspoon ground nutmeg.
- No sesame seeds? Use an equal amount of finely chopped almonds or pumpkin seeds.
- No parchment paper? Use brown paper or waxed paper (not over high heat), or just grease and flour the pan.
- No kitchen twine to truss the turkey? Use unwaxed, unflavored dental floss.

* From "Lucky substitution cards Published Wednesday, Nov. 21, 2001, in the San Jose Mercury News (with permission)", which cited "Kitchen Solutions" (Bristol Publishing Enterprises, \$24.95); "Food FAQs, Frequently Asked Questions" (FAQS Press, \$12.95) by Linda Resnik and Dee Brock; and "Williams-Sonoma Kitchen Companion" (Time Life Books, \$24.95).

The equivalences below are from Rose Levy Beranbaum's "The Cake Bible" William Morrow and Company, Inc., New York, 1988:

- For 1 cup sifted cake flour: Substitute 3/4 cup sifted bleached all purpose flour plus 2 tablespoons cornstarch
- For 1 cup light brown sugar: Substitute 1 cup granulated sugar plus 1/4 cup unsulfured light molasses
- For 1 cup dark brown sugar: Substitute 1 cup granulated sugar plus 1/2 cup unsulfured light molasses

4.2 Banking and money matters

One of the first steps you will want to take when arriving in Burghausen is to set up a bank account (*Girokonto*) at one of the local banks. Please note there are two kinds of accounts available. The *Girokonto* is a checking account and a *Sparbuch* is a savings account in which you earn interest. However, there are penalties for withdrawing more than 2,000-3,000 € per month from your *Sparbuch* and you must give the bank three months notice to close your account or withdraw more than 3,000 € without penalty. There may not be a representative who speaks enough English so you may want to bring a German speaker along. The Volksbank in Burghausen does have a few customer service people who speak a little English. Be aware that it may take several weeks to receive your bankcard which allows you to take money from the ATM (*Geld Automat*) machines. In the meantime, you may visit the bank during business hours (the banks close during lunchtime), or use the ATM machines for a cash advance on your Visa. If you have a check-guarantee/debit card from your checking account in the states with a VISA logo on it, you can access your checking account funds with this card from any **international** ATM machine. The ATM must be an **international** ATM and it will say so somewhere on it. This can be cheaper than using

your VISA card for cash advance. Your ATM card will be sent to the bank and you may want to check in with the bank frequently to see if it has arrived because they may not contact you. You may also apply for an Eurocard. These cards are accepted widely in many European cities. Although Mastercard and Visa are used in many tourist areas they are not always accepted in smaller towns. The Eurocard card will help decrease your frustrations if you want to use a card for payment. It must be applied for separately and may require a yearly fee. When shopping for banks make sure to compare fees. If you want to open an account with a cashier's check from the U.S., the Hypovereinsbank offers the smallest fees, the Sparkasse has the highest. Check the interest rates and monthly fees, though, to get a full comparison of service.

You will not receive receipts when you take money from an ATM machine. You may want to establish a personal system for tracking your account. With internet banking, this is a lot easier to do. There are machines in the lobby of each bank that generate statements for you whenever you choose. Just insert your bankcard and the machine will print out all your transactions since the last time you received a statement. These are separate machines from the *Geld Automats* and are not identified in any way. If you do not do this, the banks, by law, are required to send you a statement and they may charge you for the service. Even if you do internet banking, make sure to pick up a statement at least once a month.

4.2.1 Banking vocabulary

Here are some important banking words or phrases:

| | |
|---------------------------|----------------------|
| <i>BLZ (Bankleitzahl)</i> | Bank Routing Number* |
| <i>Konto nummer</i> | Account Number* |
| <i>einzahlen</i> | to deposit |
| <i>auszahlen</i> | to withdraw |
| <i>der Betrag</i> | amount |
| <i>überweisen</i> | to transfer |

*Memorize or keep these numbers handy as you will use them frequently in many transactions.

4.2.2 Paying bills

One major adjustment to the German way of life will be the difference in bill paying. Germany is a cash based society and writing checks is unheard of and using a credit card is relatively uncommon. Most large grocery stores such as Rewe accept your Eurocard (debit card) but many small grocery stores and specialty shops (bakeries and butchers) only accept cash. For large purchases or monthly billing, you will pay your bills in one of two ways. You may have monthly billing set up as an automatic payment called *Dauerauftrag*. However, you must cancel these auto-payments in writing before you return to the U.S. so you will have to be diligent in keeping track of them (often you have to give 90 days notice!). It is perfectly normal to give out your account number to merchants. This allows them to set up accounts whereby they take money from your account on a monthly or other routine basis. This is the way you pay your rent, your phone bill, your cable bill, etc. It is very safe and it works well. You may also pay your bills by using the *Überweisung* (money transfer) using the pre-printed form that is sent with your bill. You may also fill one out at your bank if one was not sent. The bank teller will usually be very helpful in filling out the form correctly for

you with the proper account names and numbers written in the proper German way (please remember that the German “1” looks like an American “7”, and the German “7” needs to be crossed like a “t”!) The teller gives you a receipt upon completion of the transaction, and the bank then transfers the money from your account to the service provider. The easiest way is to do internet banking, once you’ve figured out all the terminology that goes along with it!

4.2.3 Shipping and customs duties

You will pay 19% sales tax on anything you order over the internet; if your purchase originates from within Germany you also pay it but it’s included in the price. This tax applies to the postage or shipping charges as well. You can be expected to pay a German Customs fee (*Zollgebühr*) ranging from 3 – 16% on books, CDs, DVDs, clothes, etc. On one recent clothes order from the US to Germany the customs and processing fees were a horrifying 33%! The postman will expect cash on delivery so be prepared. You may have to pay the custom duties even if family or friends in the U.S. send items to you as gifts. The computation of these additional customs fees seems to be somewhat random – some high value items come through without extra fees and duties, whereas other small ticket items (i.e., 50 € worth of clothing) come with a demand for customs (i.e., the afore-mentioned horrifying 16 €).

Postal costs when shipping from the U.S. to Germany are far cheaper than shipping goods to the U.S. from Germany. When shipping from Germany, small packages (*Päckchen*) weighing under 2 kilo can go by a very cheap rate (approx. 8 €) and take up to 4-6 weeks to reach the western zone in the U.S. For approx. 20 €, your package can go much more quickly by Airmail. Larger packages (*Postpaket*) weighing over 2 kilo do not qualify for the cheaper, slower method of travel and will always be more expensive and quicker to arrive at their destination. Ask for a booklet called *Service-Informationen* at the Post Office that will outline all the options available – plan light and in advance to save the most!

For English information on postal fees, products, services, etc., go to: www.deutschepost.de.

4.3 Hair dressers

There are several really excellent hair salons (*Friseur*) in the area. In general, the technical ability of the German hair dressers is fantastic. They actually have a 3-year training program that they have to go through, and after their initial exams can go on to get additional training and get their “Master’s License” (*Meister*).

A couple of local Burghausen salons that other ex-pats have been happy with include:

Centrum Chameleon Kosmetik- und Hairstudio

Robert-Koch-Str. 67

08677 913093

Denisa is a native-English-speaker from Australia

Friseursalon Trendline

Marktler Straße13

08677 2160

The stylist Alexandra is the daughter of a Wacker employee and speaks English very well

4.4 Sports and recreation

The first few months after you arrive in Burghausen will be filled with new challenges and activities. Although it may seem that it will never calm down or get easier, it does. It is especially important for spouses to come prepared with hobbies and activities to keep the mind and body busy while husbands or wives are at work. It will be a much happier experience for all if you keep busy and have things that you enjoy doing on a daily basis. Bring exercise DVDs or at-home equipment or develop an exercise program that suits you in this environment. Bikes are extremely common so if you have one bring it and use it. It's a good idea to bring books, DVDs, hobby books and supplies with you. It is important to note that TV programs in English are not available – only CNN International – and neither are daily English newspapers. If you have a satellite dish, you may receive more British programs depending on where you live. You can subscribe to various newspapers such as the International Tribune, but since it is mailed it arrives one or two days late. You may want to subscribe to English/American magazines that interest you. There is a magazine titled *Munich Found* published in English that offers information on cultural and special events, etc., in the Munich area. *Spotlight* is a good monthly magazine in English available in most large newsstands.

Comedy Central allows you to watch their programs online from abroad for free (Colbert Report, The Daily Show) but most major networks (ABC, CBS, NBC, Fox, etc.) do not allow streaming of their programming from outside the United States (unfortunately!!). CNN is also readily available online.

Internet is of course an excellent way to keep in touch with family, friends (you might think about installing Skype on your computer and those of your close friends/family before coming over; it's free), as well as keeping informed about local and international news, but it's important to think about ways of getting involved in the local community and making new friends as well! Think about maybe learning a new hobby that you can develop here such as book binding, beer or wine making, quilting, knitting, weaving, crocheting, painting, web-design, drawing, or whatever. There are a wide variety of excellent adult education classes offered in the local communities at the *Volkshochschule (VHS)* for very reasonable prices. These classes are not only excellent ways of gaining new skills but will also help you meet new people!

The Evangelische Freikirche (Free Evangelical Church) now offers English services in Burghausen! You can check out their webpage for more information: www.freikirche-burghausen.de. Click on the British flag for information in English.

People who keep busy and socially active tend to have a much more positive expat experience in the long run. The most important advice is to get out into the community and start making social contacts with people who share your interests as quickly as possible. Here are some activities available to you in and around Burghausen:

4.4.1 Sports

There are sports clubs in and around Burghausen that offer competitive sporting opportunities (swimming, tennis, bowling, basketball, etc.). Membership fees are generally affordable.

SV Wacker

Elizabethstraße 37, Burghausen (office)

Fields and hall are accessed from behind the Wacker plant

Turnverein 1868

Stadtplatz 110, Altötting (office)

Fields and hall are on Tittmoningstr.

There is a fitness club located on Marklerstraße in Burghausen. The club offers nautilus machines, aerobics, weights, stair masters and recumbent bikes, a sauna as well as fitness training. Costello in Burgkirchen is another popular fitness club.

4.4.2 Summer fun

There is a pool complex that is part of the SV Wacker sports club that is open to the public for a daily fee. You do not have to be a sports club member to swim there. Purchasing 10 visits at once (*Zehnkarten*) or season passes will save money if you intend to go more often. The indoor complex has an Olympic-size pool and a separate diving pool; there are always lanes roped off for lap swimming. During summer months, the indoor pool is closed and the outdoor pool located right behind it is open. It has a separate play pool with a huge water slide. The grounds are grassy with trees and it is a nice spot on a warm summer day. There are also very similar complexes in Burgkirchen and Altötting.

The lake located just below the castle, the Wöhrsee, is open for swimming during summer months. You can buy a season family pass for a very reasonable fee or pay a daily entrance fee. The facilities have a playground, diving boards, lots of grass for picnics, and a nice *Biergarten* as well. Paddle boats are available for rent. During the winter you can ice skate on the lake if it gets cold enough to freeze sufficiently!

4.4.3 Christmas time

One of the most wonderful parts of Christmas in Germany is the *Christkindmärkte* offered in many towns. Altötting has a wonderfully festive market with crafts, sweets, hot spiced wine (*Glühwein*) and lots of Christmas gift ideas. You can find these markets in many towns; Munich, Salzburg and Nürnberg offer the largest and most famous. Other than Altötting, two other local communities with Christmas Markets that are too magical to pass up are the castle belonging to the Countess Stephanie Bruges von Pful in Tüßling, and the Christmas market held in the forest in Halsbach.

A few words about Christmas traditions in Bavaria: St. Nicholas day is December 6th. On the 6th, called *Nicholaus*, the children get small gifts – usually candy, chocolates, an advent calendar, etc. – and the adults generally do not exchange gifts. In the traditional Bavarian Catholic tradition, the Baby Jesus (*Christkind*) brings presents to children in their homes in the early evening of the 24th. Traditionally, the children are out of the house in the mid afternoon, which is when the Baby Jesus brings the Christmas tree and the presents. The exchange of gifts takes place on the evening of the 24th before the children go to bed. The

25th and 26th are both “Christmas” and are both major holidays, with family gathering together for a celebratory dinner (goose or other poultry is traditional fare) on both days. In northern Germany, Father Christmas brings presents to the children, and the American tradition of Santa Claus is also starting to make it’s way into German culture – so a rather mixed bag of family traditions can now be observed in Bavaria. Check out what your friends and neighbors are doing this year!

4.4.4 Travel

Most travel agents in the area will be able to communicate with you well enough – it is rare for someone in this branch to be totally unable to speak English, although all of them will apologize that their English isn’t better!

If you are planning on taking the train someplace (Paris and Vienna are both great destinations by way of a very comfortable train ride!) your best bet is to go directly to the train station and have the travel agent there help you make your booking. It will save you money compared to making the reservations yourself online. Day trips to Munich with a “Bayern Ticket” on the train are very affordable and user-friendly!

4.4.5 Hobbies

Reading The city library (*Stadtbibliothek*) located on Stadtplatz 109 in the Altstadt Burghausen is open from 10 a.m. – 6 p.m. Tuesday through Friday and from 10 a.m. – 1 p.m. on Saturdays. There is a nice selection of English books – both classics and novels – available for check out. You may obtain a library card for approximately 3€ if you live in Burghausen and any library materials will be available for your use.

Wacker has a library available to anyone who has a Wacker employee number. However, most U.S. employees stay on U.S. payroll and will be unable to receive a library card.

Dr. Naue located on Robert-Kochstr. 36-38 Burghausen (as well as locations in Altötting and Neuötting) has a few English books available as well as stationery, office supplies, and cards. You can order any book you would like; compare prices with [amazon.de](https://www.amazon.de) to get the best deal. It takes a week or so for the book to arrive from Naue, and they may charge you for shipping the book back if you choose not to buy it; check with them for possible fees before ordering.

Frauendorfner bookstore on Marienstr. in Altötting has an excellent selection of English paperbacks. They will also order books from the Bestsellers list for you at no risk – you can look at them after they’ve arrived and then decide whether or not you want to order them.

Ordering books via [amazon.de](https://www.amazon.de) is also an easy and relatively inexpensive way of getting English speaking books. By the time you add shipping and customs duties, it’s generally less expensive to buy from [amazon.de](https://www.amazon.de) than it is from [amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com). Another advantage with [amazon.de](https://www.amazon.de) is that you can pay directly from your *Girokonto*.

Craft Supplies Keep in mind that hobby stores here are not as extensive as typical crafts stores in the U.S. (such as Michaels in the Portland, Oregon area). Supplies can also be found at the following:

Please email me at bheller@gmx.de if you have any updated information about the following shops! Thank you!!

The Hobby Shop located in the Altstadt Burghausen offers a wide range of craft supplies and ceramic classes are also available.

Stoff Prinzess (fabric and sewing supplies)
Robert-Kochstr. 53
Burgahausen

Die Kreative Stoffidee (quilting shop)
Kienberggring 1, Burgkirchen
08679 911013

Handarbeits Stube (yarns, patterns and embroidery supplies)
Herman Hillerstr. 6, Burghausen (This is the same street as Robert Kochstr. after you cross Wackerstr.)
08677 62814

Froitzheim (arts and crafts supplies)
Neuötting Str. 21, Altötting
08671 6574

Unterstaller Farbenfachgeschaef (Craftstore specializing in paints of all sorts)
Bahnhofstr. 37 (across the street from the main entrance of the Landratsamt), Altötting
08671 6814

Blumen Frick (a wonderful florist with many do-it-yourself supplies for many crafts)
Stadtmitte, Neuötting and corner of Mühldorfer Str. and Chiemgaustr., Altötting

4.4.6 Adult learning

Volkshochschule (VHS) Burghausen
Kanzelmuellerstr. 87 (Altstadt)
phone 08677/62066
or Marktlerstrasse 16,
phone 08677/9 87 78-0

The VHS is a well-known adult continuing education program in Germany and offers classes on a wide range of topics and interests. Language classes (German classes and conversation groups) are available as well as yoga, aerobics, computer, cooking and countless other topics. Most of these classes are in German which is a great way to practice your new language! Classes typically begin in September for the fall term and in January for the winter/spring. Schedules and other information can be found in the VHS catalog which can be found in the library, banks, or the VHS offices.

4.4.7 Movies

Unfortunately, movies in English in local theaters are hard to come by. “The Cinema” in Munich regularly has English showings. Please note it is recommended to make a reservation for your seats ahead of time. Check out their website for scheduled showings: www.cinema-muenchen.com

Occasionally the cinema in Braunau (Austria) shows movies in English. Their web site is: www.movieplexx.at

You can of course rent DVDs at many local shops in Burghausen/Altötting. DVD players from the U.S. will only play DVDs from the U.S. unless you have a codefree DVD player. Codefree DVDs are legally modified with a special chip inside that allows you to play movies from any of the six or seven worldwide zones. Most all DVD movies (if they originate in the U.S.) will have an English soundtrack available so you can rent DVD movies here and play them on a regular German DVD player. You can order a codefree DVD player over the internet but it is best to bring one with you. You will not find them in the stores here. (They can even be difficult to find in the U.S. but easy to find on the internet.)

4.5 Restaurant tips

4.5.1 General tips for restaurant eating in Germany

If you are looking for traditional or local German food, look for restaurants called *Gasthof*, *Gaststube*, *Gastwirtschaft*, or *Gasthaus*. A *Weinstube* (wine bar) will serve local wines; *Bierhalle*, *Bierkeller*, *Kneipe*, *Biergarten* or something with *Brau* in the name all specialize in beer and they probably also serve traditional Bavarian cooking. Restaurants are required to display a menu with prices including tax outside their doors. In general you will receive a lot of food in Bavarian restaurants and the quality can vary depending on what you are willing to pay.

The evening meal is usually eaten at about 7 p.m., and some restaurants often don't even open until 7 p.m., so dinning out can turn into a late evening.

Generally, you seat yourself when you go into a restaurant. However, do not sit at a table marked *Stammtisch* (table for the regulars). This table is reserved for locals who meet and eat there regularly. They may ask you to move or get somewhat upset if you sit at their table. If the restaurant is crowded, it is quite common for people to share a table . . . but usually not the *Stammtisch* table!

Die Speisekarte is what we call the menu, and *das Menu* is a fixed meal with several courses. If you ask for *das Menu* you will probably receive at least a three course meal so be very careful! The waiter or waitress will ask you for your drink order first. Do not expect to get water automatically; you will need to order it. Bottled mineral water in Germany usually contains carbonation (*Kohlensaure*). If you prefer non-carbonated water, ask for *Stilles Wasser* (mineral water which still may contain a small amount of carbonation). If you want tap water, ask for *Leitungswasser* – and be prepared to get odd looks from your server and fellow guests! Tap water is almost never served in restaurants. Drinks will not be served with ice; many Germans actually consider drinking beverages with ice cubes strange or even

unhealthy.

An *Aboessen* is a lunchtime fixed menu, usually with your drink included, sometimes including a soup or other starter, usually priced around 5-6 €. It's almost always very fast and usually pretty good.

Germans eat with the knife in the right hand and the fork in the left hand. They do not put their left hand under the table. Germans are taught as children never to put either hand under the table, as it's considered rude. When done eating, lay your fork and knife diagonally across your plate with the tip of the knife and the fork prongs pointing to 10:00.

You will need to ask your server for the bill: '*Die Rechnung, bitte.*'. German restaurants do not care how long you sit at your table after you finish eating and will almost never come ask you if you are ready for the bill. Be prepared for the service to be somewhat slow (leisurely!). The wait staff isn't trained here to come back to the table right after bringing your meal to ask "Is everything ok?" so you'll have to catch their attention if something is missing/remiss.

Tipping is in some ways a bit more difficult to figure out in Germany than it is in the US. In general, a tip isn't required or expected, but the server will certainly appreciate it and it's extremely rare and even rude to leave absolutely nothing. The general rule is to round your bill up to an even number/ which even number you choose is up to you, the quality of the service and the amount of the bill. If you're unsure how much to tip, it's always safe and somewhat on the generous side to tip approximately 10 percent. More than that is really unnecessary; the wait staff are paid good wages, and they don't rely on tips at all to make a living.

Payment is made directly at the table and handed to the waitress or waiter. Never leave money on the table and leave like you would in some US restaurants!! Please note that kitchens often close by 10 p.m. even if the restaurant stays open later, and lunch will probably not be served after 2 p.m. although some restaurants have a few light snacks available between 2 p.m. and dinner time. It is also quite common for dogs to be allowed to come into restaurants.

4.5.2 Restaurant tips in and around Burghausen

There are many good restaurants in and around town that we suggest you visit. You will find a wide range of Greek, Italian, Chinese and of course, German. Here are a few suggestions:

German:

| Restaurant | Location | Note: |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------------|--|
| Raitenhaslach Monastery | Raitenhaslach | Excellent atmosphere; good food; try the grilled fish |
| Pachler | Ach, Austria (across the bridge) | Excellent food; lovely view of the castle at night |
| Braugasthof Wein- berger | Ach, Austria | Beautiful in the summer to sit outside in the Biergarten with a view on the river and the castle. They have wonderful desserts. Prices are good. Reservations recommended, especially during the summer with good weather. |
| Gasthof Schwarz | Hohenwart | owners speak English, great for parties or catering |
| Grüben Bar | Altstadt in den Grüben, Burghausen | open evenings only, very romantic, new owners so the quality of the food is unknown |
| Bayerische Alm | Burghausen | owners speak English; excellent view of the castle |
| The Hotel Post | Altstadt, Burghausen | |
| Graminger Weissbräu | Gramming, south of Altötting | Great beer garden, right across the street from the swimming pool |
| Hotel Plankl | Altötting | authentic Bavarian food and ambiance, very friendly owner, excellent steak (“Zweibelrostbraten”) and salad bar |

Italian:

| Restaurant | Location | Note: |
|-----------------------------------|--|---|
| Restaurante Italy | Traunsteiner Str. 24 Altötting | Consistently excellent food, wonderfully warm and welcoming owner Francesco |
| Ristorante Cesare’s Da Claudio | Marienstr. 1 Altötting Anton Riemerschmid Str., Burghausen | Fancy, very good food Good pizza |

Fast Food:

| Restaurant | Location | Note: |
|-------------|---|--|
| McDonald's | Burgkirchner Str., Burghausen, near Marktkauf | Be prepared for the food to taste somewhat different from what you might get in the US |
| McDonald's | Altötting, just off the exit from the 299/Autobahn | |
| Subway | Marktlerstr. Burghausen | Ben & Jerry's Ice Cream, fresh sometimes still warm chocolate chip, peanut butter, and oatmeal cookies |
| Burger King | Mühdorf on the B12 about 40 minutes from Burghausen | |

A note about fast food: Bavarians also eat a wide variety of fast foods which can be delicious, convenient, and maybe somewhat unusual to you – definitely worth a try! Some favorites include: Gyros/Kabob (grilled meat, usually turkey, on a roll with yoghurt sauce and vegetables); Currywurst (large grilled sausage like a Brat, served with a curry sauce that's basically warm ketchup with curry powder, usually comes with french fries); grilled chicken (Brathähnchen), often sold out of a “food truck” parked in a parking lot on certain days of the week; Leberkäsemmelein (the Bavarian classic, most closely resembles a warm bologna sandwich, eaten with either ketchup, sweet mustard or regular mustard).

Chinese:

| Restaurant | Location | Note: |
|------------------|--|-------------------------|
| The Golden Panda | Neuötting and Burghausen | All you can eat buffet |
| Singapur Palast | Burghausen | Near Wacker's west gate |
| Golden Moon | Burghausen, corner of Marktler and Robert-Koch-Str | Above the drug store |

Thai:

| Restaurant | Location | Note: |
|------------|-----------|--|
| Ming's | Altötting | Excellent food; wonderful very unique atmosphere; owners from Hong Kong speak English fluently; reservations recommended |

4.6 Shopping

Many of us use mail order shopping from the states (L.L. Bean, www.llbean.com or Land's End, www.landsend.com).

There is a factory outlet in Ampfing called Dimor that sells jeans at greatly reduced prices (be prepared for sticker shock: jeans typically cost about 50 € here!).

Some clothing shops in Burghausen that you might like include: Modica (on Robert-Koch-Str.) and Mayer (in the Altstadt).

Burghausen actually has a lot of really fun and unique stores, ranging from boutiques and high end antique shops to Dollar Store type bargain outlets; jewelry stores; a really fun housewares stores called *Reisinger*; shoe stores; etc. etc. etc. It's really fun to explore the entire downtown area (Marktlerstr. and Robert Koch Str.) on a warm sunny afternoon. Please don't be put off by the name of the store at the intersection of those two major shopping streets: Mode Hell. *Hell* in German means *light* or *bright*!

Two recommended shops to check out in Munich are Peter Hahn (natural materials only) and Mühlhäuser. If you're in the mood for some serious shopping, Munich is the place to go for a day trip!

In general, there are a lot of fun places to shop in the area. You may find the shopping experience to be a bit different from what you're used to, but it's certainly something that you should experience before heading back to the states. In particular, you might want to think about checking out the shoe stores (funky European fashion and high quality); maybe invest in a new pair of eye glasses (bring the frames back home to have your prescription filled); find some fun unusual toys for family members back home (Spiel 'n Spass in Neuötting has a great selection); explore the outdoor farmers' markets in the area or take a day trip to the Viktualienmarkt, the permanent outdoor market in Munich; or do some antiquing.

4.7 Useful websites

Here are some websites used by fellow expatriates in Burghausen and surrounding areas:

Deutsche Bahn: Train schedules and information, can be viewed in English

www.bahn.hafas.de or www.bahn.hafas.de

Weather in Burghausen area:

www.kleinezeitung.at/kleine

For area codes in the U.S.A.:

<http://www.shorearea.com/areacodesalpha.htm>

The Oregonian:

www.oregonlive.com

Movies:

www.cinema-muenchen.com

www.movieplexx.at (Braunau)

Books, movies, etc.:

www.amazon.de

Information and tickets for the Bayern Muenchen soccer team:

www.bayernmuenchen.de

U.S. Embassy:

www.usembassy.de

Provides a variety of useful information and resources for Americans living in Germany.

The U.S. Consulate General office in Munich is open to the public Mon–Fri, 8-11 a.m. They are available by phone until 5 p.m. each day as well. There is no official mid-day closure for lunch but available staff is reduced during this time. See the enclosed phone list for contact numbers as well as the website above for addresses and more information.

For emails regarding things like tax assistance as well as security alerts from the “American Citizen Services Germany”, send an email to them: GermanyACS@State.gov and request that they send you their regular announcements.

Food and cooking:

www.aloha.com has useful tips, substitutions and conversions for recipes.

4.8 *Drogerie, Apotheke*: Pharmacies, Drug Stores, Medications

A *Drogerie* is a store that sells household goods, cosmetics, personal hygiene items, over the counter cold remedies (primarily plant-based), vitamins and supplements, etc. The health and hygiene items sold in a *Drogerie* are generally less expensive (but possibly also less effective) than their counterparts sold at an *Apotheke*. Müller, dm, Schlecker, and Rossmann are some of the larger *Drogerie* in the area.

Some common plant-based remedies and vitamins can also be bought inexpensively at grocery stores but the names are different so make sure you are familiar with the active ingredients and recommended dosage.

The *Apotheke* (pharmacy) sells all prescription medications, non-prescription over-the-counter medications, as well as non-food health and hygiene products and homeopathic/naturopathic remedies. Homeopathic and plant-based medicines and treatments are generally more popular and widely accepted in Germany and they are strictly regulated for proper dosing and quality controls.

Please note that many non-prescription drugs that you are accustomed to in the U.S. are not available without a prescription in Germany; some (such as Sudafed) aren't available here at all. Many medications that would be readily available in the US in grocery stores or convenience stores (Ibuprofen, aspirin and the allergy medicine Loratidine) are only available in an *Apotheke* here in Germany. Many names of medications are the same (especially the latin names of the active ingredient) but if you can't pronounce the name in a way that they can understand try writing the word down. Tylenol is called *Paracetamol* here, and is also only available at the *Apotheke*. Many *Apotheke* have someone who can speak English. The Sonnen Apotheke in Burghausen, Marktler Str. 36, has several staff members who speak excellent English.

If you tell the pharmacist your symptoms they may be able to give you medication without you having to see a doctor. The plant-based (naturopathic) products can be extremely effective. You'll also notice that teas are used medicinally here to a much great extent than you may be used to in the US.

4.9 Vaccinations

Before you leave the U.S. make sure that you and your family have all vaccinations needed for the move to Germany. One vaccination that several of us were not aware of needing here in this part of Germany was the vaccination for F.S.M.E. *Früh Sommer Meningo Encefelitis*. The FSME season begins in late spring and continues through early autumn, peaking at each end of the season. It comes to Germany from the east and is not present in the U.S. It is also not a problem in most other areas of Germany, even Munich. It is currently reported as problematic in the Altötting/Passau region near the Inn River as well as near Freiberg in the Schwarzwald near the Rhein River. This is so because of the humidity/temperature combination in these areas at this particular time of year create the ideal conditions for the spread of the disease. The disease is spread by ticks; unfortunately Burghausen is a very high-risk region with a significant tick population. In addition to protecting yourself with the FSME vaccination, it's important to do a visual check of your skin after being outdoors to remove any ticks that you may have picked up along your walk. Please talk to your doctor for more information and advice about getting the series of vaccination shots.

The vaccine is available for adults or children. It requires a series of three injections to be completely effective. F.S.M.E. can be much more serious in adults, especially those right around age thirty, than in children, and is fatal between 1 and 3 percent of the time. Currently, only the symptoms of the virus can be treated; there is no "cure". Similar to Lyme Disease, this virus causes Meningitis and Encephalitis and symptoms include high fever, headache, and joint aches.

Since there are also Lyme Disease-carrying ticks in the area (for which there is no vaccination available), it's really important that you check yourself carefully for any ticks after being in wooded or grassy areas, and carefully and completely remove any ticks before they have a chance to settle in!

4.10 Doctors and dentists

We realize that finding doctors and dentists in another country can be a challenging and scary process. For many of us, the ability for our doctor or dentist to speak English is very important. Most professionals in Germany speak English and you may find that a receptionist within the office will speak English as well. Many medical terms that we use in English are actually latin words; your doctor will know the latin terminology although it's all unfortunately pronounced differently in German! Practice, patience and possibly a notepad for writing the word down instead of saying it will all help.

The following is a list of doctors and dentists that our families have been happy with:

| | | |
|--|---|---|
| Asthma | Dr. Josef Leierseder, Dr. Frieml Stadtplatz 1, Mühldorf | 08631/5812 Dr. Frieml is great with kids! |
| Dermatology | Dr. Schlehaider Robert Koch Str., Burghausen | 08677/3841 There's a cosmetologist on staff for pampering while you're wait- ing |
| General surgeon | Dr. Gisela Grösser, Dr. Axel Grösser Burghauserstr. 4a, Altötting Dr. Christian Huss Facharzt für Chirurgie, Sportmedizin Marktler Str. 18 Burghausen | 08671/8063 Tel: 08677/8769341 |
| Dentist | Dr. Werner Metlitzky Wackerstr. 38, Burghausen Dr. Michael Fritz Marktlerstr. 33a, Burghausen Dr. Nennhuber and Dr. Karin Widmann Altötting Native English speaking office manager Dagmar | 08677/5588 08677/2291 08671/4189 great with kids! |
| Ear, nose & throat | Dr. Magdalena Schmid Marktlerstr. 33a, Burghausen | 08677/2022 |
| General Practitioner and Chiropractic | Drs. Stammberger & Steindl Mühldorf Dr. Alexander Koch Mehringerstr. 45, Burghausen | 08631 167848 Dr. Steindl is great with kids! 08677/97860 |
| General Practitioner | Dr. Markus Braun Robert-Kochstr. 26, Burghausen | 08677/64974 |
| General/Orthopedics Knee specialist | Dr. Braun's English is great Dr. Andreas Vogel Marktlerstr. 16, Burghausen | 08677/3068 |
| General Practice/also Naturopathic | Dr. Uwe Scholz Neuöttingerstr. 4, Altötting | 08671/6817 |

| | | |
|--|--------------------------------|-------------|
| Obstetrics/Gynecology | Drs. Missberger & Bettstetter | 08679/81193 |
| | Kienbergring 1, Burgkirchen | |
| | Dr. Roland Marschner | 08677/66330 |
| Ophthalmologist | Marktlerstrasse 14, Burghausen | |
| | Dr. Adam Konieczny | 08677/3001 |
| | Elisabethstr. 8, Burghausen | |
| Orthopedist | Dr. Andreas Gross | 08677/9706 |
| | Robert Kochstr. 56, Burghausen | |
| | Dr. Christoph Brohr | 08677/2413 |
| Orthopedist/ Chiropractic Pediatrician | Marktlerstr. 33, Burghausen | |
| | Dr. Hans-Joachim Schepp | 08677/4425 |
| | Berliner Platz 3, Burghausen | |
| Veterinarian | Dr. Gleissner | 08671/97770 |
| | Bahnhofstr. 12, Neuötting | |
| | Dr. Wilhelm Erber | 08677/4425 |
| Veterinarian | Burghausen | |
| | Dr. Christine Unger | 08677/3154 |
| | Ungerhauserstr. 13, Burghausen | |
| Veterinarian | Dr. Bernhard Staudt | 08671/71101 |
| | Ludwigstrasse, 74, Neuötting | |
| | Dr. Angela Mittermeier | 08679 81015 |
| Veterinarian | Burgkirchen | |
| | Dr. Sabina Halm | 08677/5303 |
| | Elisabethstr. 8, Burghausen | |

4.11 Emergencies or late night problems

If you have any medical issue during the night and you are not sure what to do, call 19222. This is a regional emergency number for this area. After describing the problem, they will either send an ambulance, tell you which hospital to go to, or send an on-call doctor to your house.

In general, medical care in Germany is very good, although hospitals may not be as new and up to date as you might expect. However, prices for emergency care and ambulance fees are considerably lower than the U.S. (i.e., practically free). If you have the option, you may want to travel to Munich or another larger city for non-emergency medical care (the university clinics in Munich are excellent). You can also request a consultation with a specialist, and use this referral to go see the specialist of your choice.

5 Helpful Words and Phrases

5.1 Basic communication

| | |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| Ich verstehe Sie nicht. | I do not understand you. |
| Sprechen Sie englisch? | Do you speak English? |
| Tut mir Leid, mein deutsch ist nicht sehr gut. | I'm sorry, my German isn't very good. |
| Spricht hier jemand englisch? | Does anyone here speak English? |

5.2 On the phone

| | |
|---|--|
| Leider kann ich Sie nicht so gut verstehen. | Unfortunately, I can't understand you very well. |
| Können wir auf englisch reden? | Can we talk in English? |

5.3 At the restaurant

| | |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| Können wir bitte die Karte haben? | Could we see the menu please? |
| Nein, bitte noch einen Moment. | No, not yet. Could you give us a moment please? |
| Wir warten auf jemanden. | We are waiting for someone. |
| Ich hätte gern das/der/die XXX. | I would like the XXX |
| Das habe ich nicht bestellt. | I did not order this. |
| Die Rechnung, bitte. | Could we have the check please? |
| Wir möchten getrennt bezahlen. | We would like to pay separately. |
| Bitte alles zusammen. | All together please. |
| Stimmt so. | Keep the change. |

5.4 At the post office/*Die Post*

| | |
|--|---|
| Wie lange dauert das bei Luftpost/auf dem Land- oder Seeweg? | How long does it take by airmail/sea or land? |
| Wie viel kostet es als Luftpost oder also normales Pakchen? | How much does it cost with airmail or as normal mail? |
| Ich möchte bitte Briefmarken kaufen. | I would like to buy some stamps please. |
| Ich möchte zehn 55 cent Briefmarken bitte. | I would like ten 55 cent stamps please. |

The cost to the U.S. for standard letters is 1.45 €.

The cost of a standard letter to anywhere within Europe is 55 cents.

'Standard' letter: L: 140-235 mm, B: 90-125 mm, H: = 5 mm, weight up to 20 g.

5.5 At the dry cleaners/ *In der Reinigung*

| | |
|--|--|
| Können Sie das bitte reinigen? | Please dry clean this. |
| Ich möchte das reinigen lassen. | I'd like this dry cleaned |
| Das darf nicht gereinigt werden – bitte waschen sie es nur. | This can't be dry cleaned – please just wash it |
| Wann wird es fertig sein? | When will it be finished? |
| Wieviel kostet es ...xxx ...reinigen zu lassen? | How much does it cost to dry clean a ...: |
| ... ein Kleid/die Kleider (das Kleid) | (dress)... |
| ... einen Rock/ die Rocke (der Rock) | (skirt)... |
| ... ein Hemd/die Hemden (das Hemd) | (shirt)... |
| ... eine Bluse/die Blusen (die Bluse) | (blouse)... |
| ... eine Hose/die Hosen (die Hose) | (slacks)... |
| ... eine Jacke/die Jacken (die Jacke) | (jacket)... |
| ... einen Mantel/die Mantel (der Mantel) | (coat)... |
| ... eine Bettdecke/zwei Bettdecken (die Bettdecke) | (comforter)... |
| ... einen Pulli/die Pullis (der Pulli) | (sweater/sweatshirt)... |
| | i.e.: Wie viel kostet es einen Pulli reinigen zu lassen? |
| Hier ist ein Fleck. | There is a stain here. |
| Bitte diese Kleider (diese Stücke) (diese Hemden) (das Hemd) leicht starken. | Please lightly starch these pieces/shirts/ this shirt. |
| They will ask you: ... | |
| Ihr Name bitte. | Your name please |
| Ihre Anschrift, bitte? | Your address, please? |
| Geld vorauszahlen/im voraus zahlen/vorausbezahlen. | Pay in advance |

5.6 At the hairdressers/ (*Friseur*)

| | |
|--|--|
| Ich möchte bitte einen Termin vereinbaren. | I'd like to schedule appointment, please. |
| Ich möchte bitte meinen Termin absagen. | I'd like to cancel my appointment, please. |
| Ich möchte bitte meinen Termin verschieben. | I'd like to reschedule my appointment, please. |
| Kann ich bitte einen Termin für einen Haarschnitt vereinbaren? | Can I please schedule an appointment for a hair cut? |
| Machen Sie "wash 'n go" Haarschnitte? | Do you do "wash 'n go" hair cuts (with no styling)? |
| Ein bisschen ausdünnen, bitte. | Please thin it out a little. |
| Nur ein bisschen kurzen, bitte. Nicht zuviel. | Please just trim it a little. Not too much. |
| Nicht über die Ohren. | Not over the ears. |
| They will ask you: ... | |
| Möchten Sie eine Packung? | Would you like a deep conditioning treatment? |
| Möchten Sie Produkte kaufen? | Would you like to buy some products? |

5.7 At the doctor's office/ *Arzt*:

| | |
|---|--|
| Ich möchte bitte einen Termin vereinbaren. ... und zwar für mein Kind/Mann). | I'd like to schedule appointment, please. (...for my child/husband.) |
| Würden Sie bitte einen kompletten check-up machen? | I'd like a check-up please. |
| Er/es ist (ich bin) erkältet. | He/it has (I have) a cold. (das Kind/das Baby is the child/the baby Note gender neutral pronoun "es") |
| Er hat/ich habe Fieber. 38,5, spoken "38 comma 5" | He has/I have a fever. 38.5 – note that Germans use commas instead of points for decimals |
| Ich habe Rückenschmerzen/Kopfweh/Bauchweh. | I have a back ache/headache/stomach ache. |
| Ich brauche meine/es braucht seine/er braucht seine Impfungen. | I need my/it needs its immunizations. |
| They will ask you: ... Wie hoch ist das Fieber? | How high is the fever? |

5.8 At the dentist's office/ *Zahnarzt*

| | |
|---|---------------------------------|
| Ich habe Schmerzen. | I'm in pain. |
| Ich möchte meine Zähne kontrollieren lassen. | I'd like a check-up |
| Ich möchte meine Zähne nur saubermachen lassen. | I'd like have my teeth cleaned. |

5.9 At the Drugstore/ *Apotheke*

| | |
|---|---|
| Haben sie etwas (homeopatisch/naturopatisch) für eine/ein Erkältung/Schnupfen? | Do you have something homeopathic/naturopathic for a cold? |
| Haben sie etwas (homeopatisch/naturopatisch) für eine laufende/verstopfte Nase. | Do you have something homeopathic/naturopathic for a runny nose/congestion? |
| Haben sie etwas (homeopatisch/naturopatisch) für Husten-/Halsweh? | Do you have something homeopathic/naturopathic for a cough/sore throat? |
| Haben sie etwas gegen Kopfschmerzen/Schmerzen? | Do you have something for headaches/pain? |

5.10 Baby/mother-child group phrases:

| | |
|---|--|
| Es/er/sie wiegt 20 Kilo | He/she weighs 20 kilos (note that babies are gender neutral (es) in German!) |
| Wie viel wiegt er/sie/es/ dein Kind? Futtern Sie ihm Milupa/Brei zu? | How much does he/she/it/the child weigh? Do you give him/her Milupa/mashed baby food? |
| Ich futtere ihm jetzt Milupa/Alete zu. Er isst jetzt Brei/Reisbrei/alle drei Stunden/unregelmäßig. | I give him Milupa/Alete He eats mashed baby food/rice regularly every three hours. |
| Ich stille immer noch, aber er bekommt auch ab und zu eine Flasche. | I'm still breast feeding, but he also gets a bottle once in a while. |
| Wo finde ich (günstige) Kleider für ihn/sie? | Where can I find (inexpensive/good value) clothing for him/her? |
| Wo finde ich Babykleider von guter Qualität? Ist er/es/sie nicht süß!? Es ist sehr süß! | Where can I find good quality baby clothes? What a sweet baby! |
| Wie heißt es/er? | What's his/her name? |
| Welche Größe passt ihm/ihr wohl? | What size do you think he/she needs? |
| Was empfehlen Sie an ... | What do you recommend for ... |
| ... Babyprodukten | ... baby products |
| ... Babynahrung | ... baby food |
| ... Kleider | ... clothing |
| ... Schnuller | ... pacifier |
| Wo kaufen Sie ... | Where do you buy ... |
| Bevorzugen Sie Milupa oder Alete? | Do you prefer Milupa or Alete? |
| Was bevorzugen Sie für Windeln? | What diapers do you recommend? |

6 Cultural Learnings

6.1 Dos and don'ts

It is important to learn the dos and don'ts of a new culture so you don't get caught in an uncomfortable situation. Here are some comments on the things we've learned about the German culture:

6.1.1 Introductions

It can be very surprising the first time you met a large number of strangers at an event, and everyone says something different as they shake your hand. It took me quite a while to figure out that what they were saying was their last name! It's very common here to just say your last name during the hand-shake – you almost never say “My name is” or “Nice to meet you” ...

6.1.2 Shaking hands

Hand shaking has some formal rules here that we don't have in the U.S. For instance: a) always take your left hand out of your pocket while shaking hands, b) always remove your gloves when shaking hands, c) remember to use a good firm grip, d) be aware that Germans shake hands more frequently than we do – at the beginning of most business appointments,

when greeting friends at their house or on the street, when saying good bye, e) always look the person in the eye when you shake their hand, and f) if four people are shaking hands simultaneously, it's considered very bad luck for the two sets of hands to cross over one another! Wait until the first couple has finished shaking hands, then the second couple should shake hands.

6.1.3 Visiting

Don't forget to bring flowers when you are invited to visit someone at their home for cake and coffee in the afternoon or for dinner. A nice box of chocolates or a bottle of wine can be substituted for the flowers. Remember to remove the paper wrapping before presenting your hostess (or host if no woman is present) with the flowers. If you're bringing wine, the bottle should cost around 10€ or more.

Usually Germans take off their shoes at the front door – and in their own home they wear slippers (*Hausschuhe*) inside. As a guest, you may be offered a pair of *Gast Hausschuhe* (guest slippers), or your host/hostess may indicate you can leave your shoes on, but for the most part it's good form to take off your outdoor shoes when entering a home. You might want to consider bringing your own slippers with you to slip into at the door, or wear heavy socks in winter.

6.1.4 Eating etiquette

It's up to you whether or not you choose to conform to German dining manners. It's good to know, however, that some things considered proper etiquette in the U.S. are considered downright uncivilized here! For instance, Germans eat with the fork in their left hand and the knife in the right hand. They don't switch the fork into the other hand to eat after cutting with the knife in the left hand like Americans do. Eating without a knife with the fork in the right hand is considered rather uncivilized or “common” and is only really acceptable in “polite company” for small children. Left-handed people might eat with their fork in the right hand, but the knife will be assisting from the left hand! Also, one grasps a stemmed drinking glass/goblet by the stem – never by the top bowl part of the goblet. Finally, if you are not using your left hand (e.g., when you are eating soup, ice cream, cake) it should be rested on the table beside the plate, not on your lap.

You may hear the greeting “*Mahlzeit*” at about noon. It's translates directly to “mealtime,” and is a rather typical Bavarian greeting specific to the mid-day meal time. It hard to know to what extent it really has anything to do with you eating or not. The only required answer is a hearty *Mahlzeit!* in return!

6.1.5 Shopping

It's customary to say “Grüß Gott” in greeting to the shop owner or sales people when entering a small shop. You may also use “Guten Morgen” (good morning) before noon. “Guten Tag” is not recommended, as it's used in the north and very uncommon in Bavaria. Becoming a *Stammkunden* (a regular customer) at a *Metzger*, *Bäcker*, *Reinigung*, and grocery store can really help you feel integrated into the community. The clerks become really friendly for the most part once they realize you're an American!

6.1.6 Door to door sales

If you subscribe to a magazine (frequently people come door to door selling magazine subscriptions as a fund-raiser) please be aware that the subscription will automatically renew itself unless you send a written notification to the publisher **before** the subscription has come to an end – usually three months before but the time period may vary.

Don't be surprised if someone comes to your door wanting to come into your apartment for something – either to read a meter (*Ablesung*) or even to check (*Kontrollieren*) that you've paid the right amount of monthly fees for television and radio. Other solicitors will also often come to your door asking either for you to buy something (the standard vacuum cleaners, for instance) or asking for a donation. You should always feel free to ask anyone who comes to your door to show identification "Ihren Ausweis, bitte?" prior to letting them in or giving them a donation.

Every year at Christmas various groups (church groups, the veterans of WWII) come door to door asking for donations. You might want to think ahead of time whether or not you want to make a donation to them, so you're not caught unprepared.

6.1.7 Celebrations

The Germans love to party! They are very conscious of not driving while under the influence, however. So, if you ever have a party, make sure to have enough sodas and juices (and lots of mineral water) available. It doesn't have to be refrigerated and you don't need ice. It is perfectly okay to serve beer at room temperature if your refrigerator is too small (the cellar is a good cool storage place!).

When you have a birthday, it's tradition to bring a (preferably home-made) cake or pastries in to work for your colleagues. Usually, people will bring in at least two different varieties. If you want to celebrate with friends, it is expected that you will pick up the tab. If it is a milestone birthday, like 30, 40, 50, etc., it is tradition, but you are not obliged, to offer your friends a meal. Most folks at Wacker will have a small lunch catered in. The older you are, the more money you're expected to spend. Something like *Weißwurst* and *Brezeln* with beer (non-alcoholic or regular, depending on your department) may be appropriate for your 40th, but something more extravagant is expected for your later milestone birthdays. This can be very expensive so you may want to keep quiet about those days!

6.1.8 Customer service

Customer service is nothing like what you're used to back home! The best advice is just not to expect good customer service, then you won't be disappointed. It's slowly changing and companies are starting to improve, but you may need to grit your teeth and get used to being treated like an interruption or nuisance rather than "the King"!

In general, it's important to realize that Germans tend to be more reserved than Americans. It's not that they're unfriendly, it's just that in Germany "friendliness" is generally something for friends, and reserved distance is appropriate with strangers. You probably won't get the friendly, energetic, positive greeting in stores that you're used to back home, but a smile and friendly "hallo" is generally responded to in kind.

6.2 Cultural differences

Generally, there are more differences in culture and values between the Germans and the Americans than you might expect. For example:

- Americans tend to be more individualistic, and Germans are more collectivistic. One way that this makes itself felt is that Germans tend to conform more to general norms, and generally don't like to stand out in a crowd. If you do stand out (in your dress, speech, or child-rearing practices, for example, or if you fail to follow a rule or law such as crossing at the cross walk), be prepared to get "feedback" from the Germans (you may get a strange or dirty look, a "tsk tsk", the famous finger wagging . . . , or even a downright scolding from a German stranger). The German philosophy really is that "it takes a village..." so people are more likely to give strangers feedback if they aren't following the accepted norms.
- Americans are much more positive, and Germans are more skeptical, about uncertainty and change. This means that the "can do" attitude your parents were so careful to instill in you doesn't work here. There are many more things here that can't be changed ("That's just the way things are"). Risk is much more important to Germans when weighing out whether or not to do something new, whereas the Americans will more often focus on the positive benefits.
- Germans are rather more direct than Americans, in that they usually omit the polite buffering that we generally put around direct messages to one another. Don't be put off by the directness; it's simply an attempt to be clear in communicating. In a more collectivist society, they don't have to worry as much about hurting people's feelings and risking severing ties, since the strong societal ties are rather like a fall-back safety net holding them together.

There are many more differences as well. In general, it's important to realize that their ways of doing things aren't the wrong ways, even though it may feel "wrong" at first – it's just different. In fact, our values, priorities, and behaviors often seem "wrong" to them!

It's a highly recommended to read a good book about cultural differences:

- One good recommendation is *Understanding Cultural Differences: Germans, French, and Americans*, by Edward T. Hall and Mildred Reed Hall. It's not too theoretical and has lots of great information.
- *Riding the Waves of Culture*, by Fons Trompenaars is excellent if you want a little more theory and a broader cultural overview.
- *Figuring Foreigners Out*, by Craig Storti has practical exercises to discover your own values and how you might be the same or different from other Americans and Germans. It's not specific about Germany, but has some really good insights into understanding cultural differences including Germany.

6.3 Some important legal differences – with a caveat, of course!

There are many important legal differences between the states and Germany. This section is not meant (caveat) to provide you with legal advice (caveat) but rather simply (caveat) to raise your awareness of some of these differences (caveat):

There are limits to the freedom of speech in Germany which do not exist in the states. This means that there are certain things that are legal in the states but illegal to say/do here, i.e., in Germany it is illegal to claim that the holocaust did not exist, it is illegal to distribute certain types of Nazi materials, it is illegal to insult a police officer, insults must

not be libelous or slanderous to be illegal, and 'flipping someone the bird' (raising one's middle finger at someone) or making other 'obscene' gestures is illegal.

Also, letting your motor idle for longer than a certain period of time is illegal, and it is illegal for children less than 150 cm tall to be transported in a vehicle without the proper booster- or child- seat. As mentioned earlier, it is against the law to drive past the scene of an accident without checking to make sure that no one is in need of first aid. Leaving your car unlocked is also illegal; the rough translation is "inviting theft" and you can get a ticket for it.

You are required by law to register your televisions/radios with the *Gebühreneinzugszentrale*. If you get caught having an unregistered TV, you are subject to fines.

Finally, there are strict restrictions on noise levels and certain periods of the day when no noise audible outside a specific radius is permissible.

If this all seems confusing or overwhelming, ask your neighbor or another native German for some clarifications or tips!

7 Preparing to Leave

7.1 Book recommendation

The Art of Coming Home by Craig Storti is an excellent reference for preparing yourself for the return adjustment. It's not at all uncommon to experience culture shock on your return to the U.S., especially if you've successfully adjusted to the lifestyle here. In fact, you'll find that the lifestyle here is really very excellent once you've gotten used to the culture, and there will probably be many things about life in Germany you find you're going to miss once you return back to the states!

This next section has not been updated since 2001. If you have any feedback/clarifications/information to help make it more up-to-date please email me at bheller@gmx.de. Thank you!!!

7.2 General tips

Here are a few tips when it is time for you and your family to move back to the States. You will want to contact Wacker HR several weeks before to begin preparations.

1. Pets present some special needs as you're preparing to leave:
 - Dogs: Need proof of a rabies shot in English which is dated at least 30 days prior to your flight. It cannot, however, be older than 1 year. A booklet titled *U.S. Customs Service*, available from the U.S. Consulate, says that cats and dogs must be free of evidence of diseases communicable to man when examined at the port of entry. If the animal is not in apparent good health, further examination by a licensed vet may be required at the owners expense. The valid rabies vaccination certificate must accompany the dog. The vet in Burghausen can help you with this process.

- Cats: Need only to appear healthy at the port of entry according to U.S. Customs regulations at the time of printing. There is no requirement for a health certificate or for Rabies vaccine. For current Customs regulations information check the website at www.usembassy.de.
 - For cats and dogs, you need to have the Willamette Travel agent at Wacker book the cat and the kennel in advance. She will need the dimensions and the weight of the kennel with the pet in it in order to do this. This is if your pet is going under the plane. You will need to pay a fee of \$100–\$200 at the airport for the pet. The Willamette Travel agent cannot do this in advance.
2. Movers: You need to fill out customs paperwork for your air and sea shipment. Both need a power of attorney signed. You only sign it where it says signature and date it. You DO NOT need to go to a notary. The movers send you all the paperwork required. The forms are all in English and quite easy to fill out. You also need to send a copy of your passports along with both sets of customs forms. When the movers arrive, you need to watch them very carefully. They don't like to use a lot of packaging material. For our table we bought here, they wanted to use 1 piece. So you must ask them to use extra packaging around items you are worried about.
 3. Electricity: You need to send a fax on the day you move out to OBAG with the current day's meter readings on it. An example letter is included in this document so you can re-create it. They also want to have an address to send the final bill to . . . even if you have it directly taken out of your account. If you give them no new address, they will send the final bill to your old address. Fax number for OBAG: 0800 2030402.
 4. Phone: You need to send a fax to the phone company regarding cancellation. This cannot be done over the phone. An example letter is included. They also want an address to send the final bill to . . . even if you have it directly taken out of your account. If you give them no new address, they will send the final bill to the old address. Fax number for Telekom is 0800 3301005.
 5. TV service: You need to get a cancellation form at HypoVereinsbank. Fill it in with the date you are leaving. You can do this at anytime, you will then get a confirmation in the mail on whether you owe any more money or not. Since this is a fixed rate, you can send this in at anytime.
 6. Bank: You only need to go in and fill out the form with the date that you want the account closed. They then close the account on that specific day. Nothing coming in after that day will be credited on your account. You may want to arrange for an electronic transfer of your balance and/or have a friend sign as a user of your account. This person can see to any necessary transactions after you've gone. You will need to complete an additional form that would allow this individual to withdraw your entire balance in the end because adding someone to your account does not necessarily allow them to close it completely. Experiences so far haven't seemed as clean and automatic as the times should allow. We were told that a cashiers check could only be made out in the form of Euros and that this would not be negotiable in the states. An electronic wire transfer to your U.S. account would have to be arranged before you return to the states. Make sure you check with your bank about penalties for withdrawal of amounts over a certain limit without proper advance notice.
 7. Wacker: Make sure you advise Wacker HR of what you are leaving in the apartment. If you want to sell anything to colleagues, HR will allow you to sell at 20% of the cost, but they will pull the original invoices and provide you with the exact amount. They will then directly bill the colleague so you only need to be there when they pick the items up.

8. Address: If you need to change your address with Wacker, contact HR. They can change it for your paycheck stubs, work mailings, and any other items except Aetna. You should notify Aetna directly via the internet.

7.3 Phone service cancellation example

(Your name and address here)

DEUTSCHE TELEKOM AG
KUNDENSERVICE

Burghausen, den (todays date here)

RUFNUMMER (Your phone number here)
(Your address here)

Sehr geehrte Damen und Herren,

Hiermit möchte ich obigen Telefonanschluß zum (date you want the phone turned off) kündigen.

Bitte senden Sie die Abschlußrechnung an folgende Adresse:

(put the address of where you want the final bill to be mailed to)

Da bis zu diesem Termin noch einige Kosten anfallen werden, möchte ich Sie bitten, diesen Betrag von folgendem Konto abzubuchen:

Hypo Vereinsbank Burghausen

Konto-Nr. (your account number)

BLZ (your banks number)

Für Ihre Bemühungen bedanke ich mich im voraus.

Mit freundlichen Gruß

(Your name and signature)

7.4 Electricity cancellation example

(Your address)

OBAG
SERVICEABTEILUNG
xxxxx LANDSHUT

Burghausen, den (today's date here)

Zähler Nr. (put your meter number here) Ablesung zum (put the date the meter was read here.)

Sehr geehrte Damen und Herren,

Hiermit möchte ich den Strom für meine Mietwohnung (siehe obige Anschrift) abmelden, da wir ausgezogen sind.

Der Zählerstand beträgt (put your meter reading value here) KW/H.

Da wir Ende des Monats zurück nach Amerika gehen, möchte ich Sie bitten, die Stromabrechnung an folgende Adresse zu schicken:

(put the name and address of the person you want the final bill to go to. Even though they take it direct out of your account, they need a place to send the final bill)

Für eine evtl. Nachzahlung bzw. eine Guthabenserstattung bleibt mein Konto bei der Hypo-Vereinsbank Burghausen bis Ende (put the month you will close your bank account here) bestehen:

Hypo-Vereinsbank Burghausen (put your bank name here)

Konto Nr. (put your bank account number here)

BLZ (put your bank's number here)

Meine Arbeitskollegin (put a colleague contact name here) wird mir die Endabrechnung weiterleiten.

Für Ihre Bemühungen bedanke ich mich im voraus.

Mit freundlichem Gruß

(Your name and signature)

8 Embassies and Consulates

In Germany:

U.S. Embassy

Deichmanns Aue 29

W-5300 Bonn 2

Tel: 49-228-3391;

Toll free 24 hour hotline: 0130-826-364

U.S. Embassy Office Berlin

Neustädtische Kirchstrasse 4-5

1080 Berlin

Tel: 49-30-238-5174;

Consular Section:

Tel: 49-30-832-9233

U.S. Consulates General

Düsseldorf, Tel: 49-211-470-6123;

Frankfurt, Tel: 49-69-75350;

Hamburg, Tel: 49-40-41171-351

Leipzig (emergency services only), Tel: 49-341-213-8418

Munich, Tel: 49-89-288-8722 or if busy 288-8723, 288-8724, 288-8729

British Embassy
Friedrich-Ebert-Allee 77
53113 Bonn
Tel: 49-228-916-7331

British Embassy Berlin Office
Unter den Linden 32/34
0-10117 Berlin
Tel: 49-30-201-840

British Consulates General
Düsseldorf, Tel: 49-211-944-8224
Frankfurt, Tel: 49-69-170-0020
Hamburg, Tel: 49-40-448-0320
Munich, Tel: 49-89-211-090
Stuttgart, Tel: 49-711-162-690

British Consulates
Bremen, Tel: 49-421-59090
Hanover, Tel: 49-511-991-9100
Kiel, Tel: 49-431-331-971
Nuremberg, Tel: 49-911-360-9522

Canadian Embassy
Friedrich-Wilhelm-Strasse 18
53113 Bonn
Tel: 49-228-968-0

Office of the Canadian Embassy
Friedrichstrasse 95, 10117 Berlin
Tel: 49-30-261-1161

Canadian Consulates
Düsseldorf, Tel: 49-211-172-170
Hamburg, Tel: 49-40-355-56290
Munich, Tel: 49-89-290-650

In The U.S.:

Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany, 4645 Reservoir Rd. N.W.
Washington. DC 20007-1998
Tel: 202-298-4000

German Consulates
Atlanta, Tel: 404-659-4760
Boston, Tel: 617-536-4414

Chicago, Tel: 312-580-1199
Detroit, Tel: 313-962-6526
Houston, Tel: 713-627-7771
Los Angeles, Tel: 213-930-2703
Miami, Tel: 305-358-0290
New York, Tel: 212-308-8700
San Francisco, Tel: 415-775-1061
Seattle, Tel: 206-682-4313

In The U.K.:

Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany
23 Belgrave Square, London SW1X 8PZ
Tel: (0)-171-235-5033

German Consulates
Edinburgh, Tel: 131-337-2323
Manchester, Tel: 161-237-5255

In Canada:

Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany
1 Waverley St., P.O. Box 379, Postal Station A
Ottawa, ON K2P 0T8
Tel: 613-232-1101

German Consulates
Montreal, Tel: 514-931-2277
Toronto, Tel: 416-925-2813
Vancouver, Tel: 604-684-8377

9 Contact Information

For questions, comments, ideas, revisions, or additions, contact:
bheller@gmx.de