

Countdown to Oktoberfest Tucson

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What was once a week's worth of wedding celebrations in honor of Crown Prince Ludwig and Princess Therese of Saxony-Hildburghausen has since become a 16-day festival held yearly in Munich, Germany—and all across the globe. Dubbed the world's largest Volksfest (or people's fair), this now famous German gathering starts in late September and runs into the first week of October. Since the first Oktoberfest of 1810, this celebration has expanded to entertain some six million people in Munich, Germany, not counting the rest of the world.



For Tucson, this year marks the eighth anniversary, celebrating at Hi Corbett Field. This four-day festival transforms the city with partygoers who enjoy German-style foods, dancing, 100-plus arts and crafts booths and an endless supply of beer.

In addition to dancing the polka, over a dozen groups plan to perform over the course of four days?however, plans are still being finalized. What we do know is that several locally based groups like The Maguire Academy of Irish Dance, Tir Conail Irish Dancers, The Clogging Desert Stars and the Rincon/University High School Pep Band will rock out, all leading up to the celebration's headlining band, The Hofbrauhaus Band, located under the big tent.

Now, no Oktoberfest would be complete without beer. After all, there seems to be an endless supply of liquid gold flowing from almost every tent, but not every brand is sold. After all, this is a German festival. This weekend Paulaner Original Munich Premium Lager, Trumer Pils, St. Pauli Girl and New Belgium Hoptober beer will be available. Additionally, beer is sold in commemorative mugs marking Tucson's eighth annual Oktoberfest.

At the food tents, you can find traditionally cooked German-style bratwursts with sauerkraut, German potato salad, corn beef sandwiches, hamburgers, hot dogs and turkey legs that help fill visitors' bellies, many who are looking to have a taste of the German-inspired cuisine. For those with a sweet tooth, enjoy Strudel, Baklava, Irish Soda Bread and Cotton Candy among other treats. But, remember to bring your appetite.

Support your local community for a weekend of family-fun. Admission is \$3 for adults and children under 12 are free. All proceeds from the four-day extravaganza benefit the Optimist Clubs of Tucson?an organization that helps underprivileged children, who need a little help, succeed. What better way to bring people together in support a much deserving cause?

For more information on Oktoberfest, visit www.tucsonoktoberfest.org.