ODE TO OKTOBERFEST

Dirndls. Lederhosen. Steins. Ringing cheers of ‘Prost!’ It’s Oktoberfest in Munich, but contrary to popular belief, “Wiesn,” as the locals call it, is not a beer festival, but the anniversary celebration of the wedding between the Bavarian Crown Prince and the Princess of Saxony-Hildburghausen. After their wedding in 1810, the newlywed royals commemorated the event with a public party featuring horse racing and beer. According to legend, not a single drop of the liquid gold was spilled on the day of celebration, portending wealth and prosperity for years to come! It wasn’t until 1819 that the horse races were replaced by beer vendors, becoming the Oktoberfest we recognize today. Oktoberfest is, above all, a celebration of Bavarian traditions, so the only beer you’ll find during the festival is brewed within the city limits of Munich. Southern Bavaria was once notorious for its awful fresh water supply—to avoid cholera, the plague, and other such nasty ailments, locals would wet their whistles with the safer (arguably tastier) alternative of beer. So, drink an Oktoberfestbier to your good health, or ‘zum Wohl!’ as the locals shout!

For more on modern Germany, join WorldDenver and the German American Chamber of Commerce on Tuesday, October 27th at 11:00 a.m. MT with Ambassador Wolfgang Ischinger who will share his expert assessment from his upcoming book, A World in Danger: Germany and Europe in an Uncertain Time, including candid insights on the impact of the election outcome on our longstanding allies in Europe. This event is presented in partnership with Wunderbar Together and the World Affairs Councils of America.

CULTURE

Just a hop and a skip across the river (or a stumble, depending on how many Oktoberfestbiers you have had), the Deutsches Museum in Munich, Germany, is the world’s largest museum of science and technology, with about 28,000 exhibited objects from 50 fields of science and technology. Established in 1903, it is among the world’s oldest museums of science and technology and—with a total exhibition space of 66,000 square meters—one of the largest, receiving just over 1.5 million visitors per year. Its unique collection of original exhibits makes Deutsches Museum a leading international venue for collecting, preserving, and celebrating historically significant objects from the world of science and technology. With its exhibitions and accompanying events and activities, it bridges the gap between research and
education, thus fostering innovation in German society.

**CUISINE**

If I say Bavarian Donuts, you say…? If the answer was a yeasted donut with a creme filling, you wouldn’t be wrong per se, but Dunkin’ Donuts wasn’t the first place these delicious fried snacks popped up! In fact, true Bavarian Donuts are known as Ausgezogene Küchle, or “pulled out cakes,” which is helpful as the donuts we will be making do not have the thick Bavarian creme typically seen in the United States. While no one is certain of the true origin of Bavarian cream, during the late 17th and early 18th centuries, many French chefs worked at the court of the Wittelsbach Princes and are said to have learned the technique there, continuing to use the skill upon their return to France. With fewer than ten ingredients, these Bavarian Donuts are easy enough to whip up for Saturday morning or to have as a snack while celebrating your own Oktoberfest!

**BEVERAGE**

The golden lagers that have become inextricably linked with Oktoberfest have more rules and regulations than one might expect! The base style is known as Märzen, which translates as “March,” because it was typically brewed in March, just before the weather became too warm to make beer without risk of spoilage or of fire from boiling the wort. Instead, beer makers slightly increased the ABV to help preservation and kept it in cold storage caves through the warmer months, reaching its full potential in the fall, just in time for the party. In Germany, strict trademark rules dictate that only beers brewed by the six breweries located within the Munich city limits can use “Oktoberfestbier” on their labels and ship it to the tents. This is done largely to protect the locals from outside infringement and large sponsor overkill. Of course, none of this applies to the United States, where brewers are known to slap the Oktoberfest label on nearly every variety brewed in the season. Enjoy your favorite German beer with a splash of lemonade to create the Radler, a Bavarian mixed drink which consists of half lager and half sparkling lemonade.

**INVITATION**

Looking forward to the holiday season, our partners at the German American Chamber of Commerce are happy to announce the Denver Christkindl Market returns for its 20th year! Join them at the new completely open-air location in Civic Center Park for Denver’s annual German Christmas market. Find out what’s new at ChristkindlMarketDenver.com.

Social distancing guidelines will be followed. For more information on the health and safety protocols that will be enforced at this year’s market, click here.