



WORDS ELISABETH KING

BEYOND THE STEREOTYPE A NEW MUNICH IS BOOMING

STEREOTYPES take decades to die and many never do. Munich positively encourages its “laptops and lederhosen” image, smug in its status as the hi-tech and high culture capital of Germany. But few places skewer the Bavarian capital’s addictive blend of the old and the futuristic better than Mixed Munich Arts, a booming cathedral of techno that matches its rivals in Berlin. Opened three years ago in a derelict power plant, the vast concrete halls not only play host to ear-splitting house, hip-hop and electro, but also to classical concerts, art exhibitions and a gourmet restaurant packed with the city’s leading suits. Reinvention is a common thread everywhere you look. Traditional Bavarian restaurants, apart from tourist traps, are becoming thin on the ground. Yet most visitors still want to order a pork knuckle the size of a small dog - if only to brag to their friends on instagram. That’s why the historic Wirtshaus Hohenwart was refurbished in 2014. The grand late 19th century building was gutted and refurbished with original furnishings, a vintage bowling alley and a menu that makes no concessions to modern tastes.

Monocle magazine and Mercer Quality of Life indexes regularly routinely rate Munich among the world’s top 10 most liveable cities for its world-class museums, post-modern hotels, progressive bars and restaurants and shopping. You can find world-famous landmarks such as the Hofbrauhaus, Marienplatz and Englischer Garten on your own, it’s time to take a look at the city’s modern urban lifestyle.

The Michelin guide (viamichelin.com) lists 80 restaurants “worth a visit” in Munich from cosy bib gourmands to multi-starred establishments such as Tantris, where

chef Hans Haas has helmed the ranges for over 20 years. Chef Tohru Nakamura is half Japanese and half German, and his menus at Geisels Werneckhof restaurant lean heavily on both heritages. Awarded a Michelin star in 2014, the Munich-born maestro dishes up smart combos such as pigeon with chanterelles, sea aster and meadowsweet and suckling pig with white beans, lettuce and gyoza dumplings.

Top of the tipling list is one of the craft brews from Camba Bavaria, a trendy brewery just outside the city, but there’s over 200-plus craft brews from around the world ready to pour.

The historic Schrammehalle close to Munich’s famous farmer’s market, the Viktualienmarkt, was first revamped in 2005. Sadly, it failed to fire. In late 2015, the two-storey market hall became Germany’s first Eataly, based on the original in Turin. It’s the full box and dice Italiano from pizzaoli, butchers, bakers, baristi, gelato bars, wine and beer.

Germany might be one of the world’s biggest coffee exporters without growing a bean. But if filter coffee leaves you cold, Munich is dotted with new generation cafes that serve mean lattes, short blacks

and flat whites. Top of the list is Man Versus Machine Coffee Roasters, which combines sleek Scandinavian decor with single-origin beans roasted on site.

The big Bavarian beer brands such as Paulaner and Franziskaner can be downed from Melbourne to Manhattan. Munich is pushing its craft beer prowess and the journey begins as soon as you leave the plane. Airbrau, Europe’s only airport brewery, uses hops only from Bavaria’s Hallertau region and pumps out brews such as Jetstream, a pilsener, and Aviator, a double bock. Tap-House Munich won the prestigious Fizz Award 2015 for Germany’s best new beer concept. Top of the tipling list is one of the craft brews from Camba Bavaria, a trendy brewery just outside the city, but there’s over 200-plus craft brews from around the world ready to pour. Getranke Oase Liebsch is beer heaven, a speciality store stuffed with 500 craft brews from Bavaria, other parts of Germany, the US and Belgium.

Change is the only constant in Munich’s rotating bar and club scene. The area around Ostbahnhof claims to have the highest concentration of clubs, discos and bars in Europe. Other hip but less frenetic areas to trawl are Glockenbach, Gartnerplatz, Haidhausen, Westend and Schwabing. Party mile is the Feierbanane (translation: party banana, named after its curving shape), between Maximiliansplatz, Stachus and Sonnenstrasse, packed with over 20 clubs.

There’s a booming cocktail scene, too. Couch Club stocks over 100 gins and there’s plush sofas to sink into as you sip on one of the expertly made cocktails. A silver Zeppelin scoots back and forth across the bar at Padres, an American-

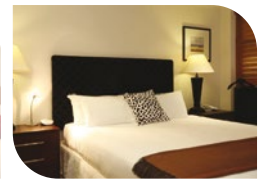
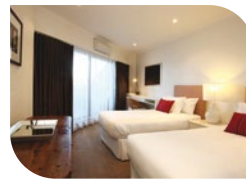
SYDNEY'S LARGEST SERVICED SUITES

style sports bar serving 120 made-from-scratch cocktails. Zephyr was fingered by The New York Times for its cocktails such as Voodoo Swizzle using locally distilled spirits. For a sophisticated speakeasy vibe, look no further than The Martini Club, where you can sign up for cocktail-making classes.

The "Ring For Champagne" bell at Hotel Lux has become one of the most instagrammed images in the world. Around the corner from the Hofbrauhaus, a polished spiral staircase winds up to the individually designed suites. Most are understated but true creatives might prefer the Ponyhof room, co-designed by artist Hans Langner, known as the Birdman for his quirky bird-themed postcards. Warning: it's wraparound electric blue.

What do you get when a hip-hop artist, a former pro-surfer and a DJ team up to design a hotel? The Flushing Meadows Hotel & Bar, easily Munich's most talked about hotel. Located in a converted post office, there are 11 loft rooms, the atmosphere is relaxing rather than too-cool-for-its-own-good and cocktails are served in the rooftop lounge.

A 10-minute stroll from the Theresienwiese, home of Oktoberfest, the Cocoon Stachus is booked out months ahead of the first keg being tapped. "Check in and chill out" is the legend of this reasonably priced hotel with funky '60s and '70s design references.



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