

Beat the heat at a local pool

Germany noted for its great abundance of unique, first-rate swimming facilities

Story and photos by Karl Weisel
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Summertime is swimming time in Germany. With a wealth of indoor and outdoor swimming pools to choose from, people of all ages can find just the right complex to meet their recreational and relaxation requirements.

For a list of pools approved by local base support battalion safety officials visit the 104th Area Support Group home page at www.104thasg.hanau.army.mil (go to the bottom of the page).

While nearly every major German town boasts its share of pools, those who explore the terrain in and around Frankfurt will discover several different complexes to choose from. While many people are familiar with the famed "wave" pool—Frankfurt's Rebstockbad, located near the Messe — there are several other unique swimming opportunities in the vicinity.

Frankfurt's Nordweststadt Zentrum features not only an unusual indoor shopping mall, but it also boasts a large sports complex, including the Titus Therme Bad. Although not as large as the Rebstockbad, the Titus Therme features similar amenities such as hot tubs, jet pools, a shoot slide that makes its way through a rock complex and saunas.

Those who would rather enjoy relaxing over a cup of coffee or a meal while the children swim, can do so in a glassed-in restaurant which is situated outside the pool but overlooking the complex. A large, parking garage under the shopping center provides ample parking — or one can reach the Nordweststadt mall by U-Bahn.

A little farther north of Frankfurt one has a choice of spa-like relaxation or another large swimming complex in Bad Homburg. The Taunus Therme, an extensive spa complex with a Japanese theme, features outdoor, heated jet pools and bubble baths, a variety of saunas, sun lamps, thermal pools and more. This one is recommended more for adults as the price is steeper and nudity is mandatory in the sauna area.

Across the street from the Taunus Therme



Bathers cavort in one of the heated pools at Frankfurt's Titus Therme. The facility, located in the Nordweststadt shopping center, features hot tubs, a giant slide, jet pools and more.

is the more family friendly Seedambad which includes giant slides, jet pools, a large outdoor pool, diving pool, playgrounds, a bubble

pool and several children's wading pools. Admission to the Seedambad is normally €3 for adults and €2 for children for two hours, but because renovation is currently in progress on the upstairs indoor pools, the price of admission has been reduced by a Euro for the duration.

During the hotter months Americans can also enjoy a host of other outdoor pools in Frankfurt. Many of them are located on or not far from the Nidda River and U-Bahn stops including the Eschersheimer Pool in Hedderheim, the Hausen Pool in Hausen, the Brentano Bad in Rödelheim and the Höchster Silo Bad in Frankfurt-Höchst.

Remember that no matter where you decide to cool off or enjoy water sports to always use the buddy system and to never mix alcohol and water sports.

Again visit the 104th ASG website (see address below) for a complete list of pools in your area. Or stop by your local base support battalion Safety Office for a list and more tips on staying safe this summer.



Swimmers enjoy the thermal bubble pool at Bad Homburg's Seedambad.



Kayakers make their way down the Loisach River from Austria into Germany near Garmisch.

AFRC adventures

Chiemsee, Garmisch resorts feature range of tours, recreation programs and more

By Karl Weisel and Corey Henderson

Special to the Herald Union

Not sure where to go this summer?

If you haven't taken advantage of the many programs, rental equipment and tours offered by the Armed Forces Recreation Centers in Bavaria, now is definitely the time. With the impending closure of the AFRC Chiemsee resort on Sept. 2 of this year, AFRC officials are urging people to make use of AFRC Chiemsee's hotels, campgrounds, tours and water sports programs before they are gone

forever.

"Whether you consider Chiemsee an 'old friend' or you are simply looking for an excuse to experience its magic for the first time, from now until Sept. 2, 2003, I urge everyone to take the opportunity to participate in Chiemsee's last summer," said Richard LeBrun, general manager of the AFRC resorts in Europe. "With so many recreation options, there is something for everyone to do at the Chiemsee resort. It would be a shame to miss out."

Things to do this summer



Located between Munich and Salzburg, Bavaria's largest lake is the ideal place to relax, go exploring or to hone one's abilities with a sailboat or windsurf board. After earning your certification through a sailing week or windsurf course spend a couple of days on your own exploring the lake and its two notable islands. Boats and

boards are available for rent.

Or rent a bike and zoom around the lake on your own. Visit the many picturesque villages around the lake or catch the excursion boat over to Herrenchiemsee to wander through King Ludwig's Palace or to its smaller cousin, Frauen Insel, with its restaurants and cloister.

From Chiemsee it's only a short drive into Austria, up into the nearby mountains or back

Miles of trails and paved paths provide bladders and bikers with a host of scenic destinations at AFRC Chiemsee and Garmisch.



Photos by Karl Weisel

An oasis in Giessen on the Schiffenberg

Not far from the Giessen Depot rises a mountain of green crowned by the historic Schiffenberg Castle. While the locals have long known about the charms of this lookout over the surrounding countryside, visitors will discover a host of hiking trails and picnic opportunities. The castle is also the setting for a series of concerts ranging from blues to jazz, rock to puppet shows during the summer months. Above: the Skyline Brass Band perform. Upcoming concerts include the rock band Tough Enough June 14 at 8 p.m.,

the Kinzenbacher Brass Band June 15 at 3 p.m., groovemaster Lee Baby Sims June 19 at 8 p.m., Bunks Oldtime Jazzband June 20 at 8 p.m., the Red Bananas Blues Band June 22 at 8 p.m., the Giessener Jazz Big Band June 29 at 3 p.m. and Deep Purple cover band Peep Purple Sept. 5. Visitors will also discover a special exhibit of whimsical statues currently on display through June 29. The metal artworks by Columbian sculptor Edgardo Carmona Vergara range from depictions of people at work and play to Don Quixote (photo left).

to Munich for a day's outing. Consider bringing or renting inline skates from AFRC to see as much as possible of Bavaria's capital city, Munich. Bike paths throughout the city provide bikers and rollerbladers with miles of trails with which to travel from the main train station to the many sights in the city. Be sure to visit the Olympic Village, setting for the 1972 Summer Olympics in Germany, and the Englischer Garten — a huge park area near the Schwabing district which features miles of paved paths, several huge beer gardens, lakes and expanses of grassy areas for picnics and Frisbee free-for-alls.

Besides the sailing and windsurfing programs, AFRC Chiemsee also offers a "Rent A Skipper" program, white water rafting, a two-day scuba diving course and various equipment for rent such as paddleboats and sea kayaks. A Just For Kids program for ages 5-7 and tours to well-known locations throughout the area ensure that family members of all ages will find something to keep them occupied and entertained.

Like the AFRC resort on Chiemsee, AFRC Garmisch also features a wide range of recreational opportunities for all ages. Paragliding, kayaking, mountain biking, hiking and any number of other summer sports are on tap. The resort's extensive checkout center can provide all the equipment if you'd rather go exploring on your own.

AFRC Garmisch also features hotel accommodations and a campground. Even if you decide not to enroll in one of the many sports programs available through AFRC, rollerblading, hiking and biking destinations are in great abundance. Scenic waterfalls, gorges, snow-fed lakes and mountain lodges are all within hiking and biking distance. Or hop in the car and drive through alpine scenery in southern Germany and Austria for a day trip from your home base in Garmisch.

For more information on the many AFRC programs, accommodations and tours visit the AFRC website at www.afrc-europe.com or call civ (08821) 72981, mil 440-2575.