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MEDIA RELEASE

LEIPZIG EVENT HIGHLIGHTS 2026 (selection)

Leipzig, 20 January 2026. In 2026, Leipzig offers a wide range of experiences shaped by major anniversaries, landmark cultural events and internationally recognised festivals. The year brings together long-established traditions and contemporary formats, ranging from classical music and opera to film, jazz and alternative culture.

Key anniversaries include the **225th anniversary of the birth of composer Albert Lortzing**, celebrated with a dedicated opera festival, the **25th anniversary of the a cappella – International Festival for Vocal Music Leipzig**, and the **50th anniversary of Leipzig Jazz Days**, one of Germany's longest-running jazz festivals. Alongside globally recognised events such as the Leipzig Bachfest, Wave-Gotik-Treffen and DOK Leipzig, these anniversaries highlight Leipzig's status as a city of music, culture and creative exchange. Open-air concerts at historic castles and palaces, outdoor events in the Leipzig New Lakeland and the **opening of Stadthafen Leipzig (Leipzig City Harbour)** as a new hub for urban water tourism offer visitors the chance to explore the surrounding cultural landscape while enjoying the city.

The following selection highlights key dates for international visitors. A full and regularly updated event calendar can be found at www.leipzig.travel/events.

Theme Year 2026: 'TACHELES. Year of Jewish Culture in Saxony' (all year round)

With more than 80 events organised by over 20 cultural institutions, Leipzig plays a central role in Saxony's Year of Jewish Culture. Highlights include major concerts at the Leipzig Gewandhaus featuring works by Paul Ben-Haim and Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy, exhibitions, readings and Leipzig's Jewish Week.

Info: www.tacheles.sachsen.de

Magical Tropical Lights at Zoo Leipzig (until 8 February 2026)

After dark, Zoo Leipzig's Gondwanaland transforms into an immersive light and sound experience. Glowing installations, rhythmic soundscapes and atmospheric illuminations turn one of the largest tropical halls in Europe into a distinctive winter evening experience.

Info: www.zoo-leipzig.de

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ANTARCTICA at Panometer Leipzig (from 24 January 2026)

A world premiere by artist Yadegar Asisi: the monumental 360° panorama ANTARCTICA immerses visitors in the icy vastness of the southern continent, from towering glaciers to penguins, whales and seals. An impressive combination of art, science and scenography reveals the untouched beauty and fragility of this unique natural space.

Info: www.panometer.de

BurgenLandKlänge – Concerts in the Leipzig Region (all year round)

Throughout the year, the BurgenLandKlänge concert series brings music to historic venues across the Leipzig region. More than 100 events take place at around 15 distinctive locations, ranging from imposing castles and palaces to monastery ruins, former quarries, and open-air stages located by lakes and in spa gardens. The programme features medieval music and classical concerts, as well as jazz, blues and contemporary pop. It combines diverse musical genres with striking heritage settings, such as the castles of Colditz and Trebsen, the Rochlitz mountain quarry, and the lake stage at Kriebstein.

Info: www.region.leipzig.travel/burgenlandklaenge

Viva Frida Kahlo – Immersive Show at Kunstkraftwerk (from 14 February 2026)

The life and work of iconic Mexican painter Frida Kahlo are brought to life through large-scale projections, sound and digital storytelling in the latest exhibition at the Kunstkraftwerk Leipzig. The former power plant is now one of Europe's most innovative venues for immersive art.

Info: www.kunstkraftwerk-leipzig.com

Discover Colditz Castle with the HistoPad (season starts 1 March 2026)

Prisoner-of-war camp, asylum, hospital: Colditz Castle looks back on an eventful history. This unique lost place comes to life with the HistoPad tablet guide. An emotional journey through time takes you through the Renaissance castle of Frederick the Wise. Ten escape stories from the Second World War, when Colditz Castle was a prisoner-of-war camp for Western Allies, are brought to life.

Info: www.schloss-colditz.de

Leipzig Book Fair and Manga-Comic-Con (19–22 March 2026)

With over 2,000 exhibitors from more than 40 countries, the Leipzig Book Fair is one of the major spring events for the publishing industry. Together with Europe's largest reading festival "Leipzig Reads" and the parallel Manga-Comic-Con for fans of comics, manga and the like, it draws close to 300,000 guests to the Leipzig Exhibition Centre and the city.

Info: www.leipziger-buchmesse.de

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World's first Asterix Park outside France at BELANTIS (28 March 2026)

This spring, the world of Asterix, Obelix and Idefix will be brought to life. BELANTIS amusement park will open its new themed area, 'Idefix's Adventure Land', inviting families with children to embark on a journey of discovery. The season opening marks the beginning of the park's transformation into the world's first Asterix park outside of France.

Info: www.belantis.de

CAGGTUS Leipzig (17–19 April 2026)

One of Germany's leading gaming festivals, CAGGTUS Leipzig focuses on gaming culture, community and live interaction. Over the course of three days, visitors can participate in gaming sessions and competitions, enjoy shared festival experiences and meet well-known streamers and content creators. They can also explore various attractions, including a large entertainment area, a LAN party and a dedicated streaming zone.

Info: www.caggtus.de

Lortzing 26 – Leipzig Opera Festival (24 April – 3 May 2026)

Albert Lortzing and Leipzig have a lot in common. Not only were many of his operas premiered in Leipzig, but he also appeared on stage as an actor and singer. In 2026, the composer will be honoured with a Leipzig Opera Festival to mark his 225th birthday and the 175th anniversary of his death. The festival will include the premiere performances of "Der Waffenschmied" on 24 April 2026 at the Musikalische Komödie (Musical Comedy Theatre) and "Regina" on 25 April 2026 at the Oper Leipzig.

Info: www.oper-leipzig.de/de/lortzing26

Spinnerei Gallery Tour (25–26 April and 5–6 September 2026)

The former cotton mill site is now home to eleven galleries and over one hundred studios of painters, photographers, sculptors, and conceptual artists. The most famous of these is the painter Neo Rauch, one of the leading figures of the New Leipzig School. During the Spinnerei Spring and Autumn Gallery Tour, visitors can delve into contemporary art in the exhibition spaces and gain a fresh perspective on all the galleries, including the non-commercial art centre HALLE 14.

Info: www.spinnerei.de

a cappella Festival – 25th Anniversary (1–9 May 2026)

Founded in 1997, the International Festival for Vocal Music a cappella has established Leipzig as a key meeting point for the international vocal music scene. Spanning over a week, ensembles from around the

globe showcase contemporary and traditional a cappella repertoire in concert halls and cultural venues across the city, reflecting the diversity and vibrancy of today's vocal music landscape.

Info: www.a-cappella-festival.de

Seven Lakes Hike – Leipzig New Lakeland (8–10 May 2026)

The Seven Lakes Hike is one of Central Germany's largest hiking events, offering a wide range of guided and individual routes through the Leipzig New Lakeland. Over several days, participants explore former mining landscapes transformed into lakes, combining nature, industrial heritage and active travel within easy reach of Leipzig.

Info: www.7seen-wanderung.de

Wave-Gotik-Treffen (22–25 May 2026)

Since 1992, Wave-Gotik-Treffen (WGT) has been one of the world's most influential festivals of the gothic, dark and alternative music and culture scene. Each year, tens of thousands of visitors from more than 40 countries transform Leipzig into a city-wide stage, with concerts, club nights, performances, exhibitions and themed events taking place across numerous venues. One of the festival's most iconic moments is the Victorian Picnic in Clara-Zetkin-Park.

Info: www.wave-gotik-treffen.de

Opening of Stadthafen Leipzig (May/June 2026)

Once completed, the city harbour will become the centrepiece of the tourist waterway network. The 4,000 sqm harbour basin will offer moorings for three passenger ships, 40 sports and family boats, and berths for paddle boats. Six additional berths for passenger ships will be located on the outer pier. Alongside buildings for storing and renting boats, there will be a service building for catering that will also serve as an exclusive event venue in this maritime setting.

Info: www.stadthafen-leipzig.com

UEFA Conference League Final 2026 (27 May 2026)

On 22 May 2024, the UEFA Executive Committee announced that Leipzig will be the venue for a European Cup final. Leipzig will host the Conference League final in 2026. This means that, after the 2006 World Cup and UEFA EURO 2024, the city will be hosting top-class football for the third time in two years.

Info: www.uefa.com

Leipzig Bachfest 2026 "In Dialogue" (11–21 June 2026)

The Leipzig Bachfest is one of the most important international music festivals. It will take place in 2026 under the motto "In Dialogue" and will honour the great composer Johann Sebastian Bach. Renowned performers from all over the world, as well as the Gewandhausorchester and the St Thomas Boys' Choir, will perform in over 150 events at the original venues of the Thomaskantor, who worked in Leipzig for 27 years.

Info: www.bachfestleipzig.de

2nd Leipzig Coffee Festival (5–7 July 2026)

Founded in 2025, the Leipzig Coffee Festival celebrates coffee as a cultural, social and creative practice. Bringing together coffee enthusiasts, roasteries and industry representatives, the festival showcases Leipzig's and Central Germany's vibrant coffee scene through tastings, workshops, talks and social events.

Info: www.leipzigcoffeefestival.de

Highfield Festival (14–16 August 2026)

Set against the lakeside scenery of Lake Störmthal, Highfield Festival is one of Germany's major open-air music festivals. The 2026 line-up is headed by Kraftklub, Beatsteaks, Marteria, SDP, 01099 and Feine Sahne Fischfilet, representing a cross-section of some of the most influential and widely followed acts of the contemporary German music scene. Over three days, the festival attracts a large audience from across Germany and neighbouring countries for live music and festival culture by the lake.

Info: www.highfield.de

CON SPIRITO – Leipzig Chamber Music Festival (12–20 September 2026)

The Leipzig Chamber Music Festival CON SPIRITO reflects the salon tradition of Leipzig as a city of music. Under the 2026 theme 'Tacheles – Jewish Tunes of the Leipzig Romantics', concerts will take place at European heritage sites in Leipzig, including locations associated with Bach, Grieg, Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy, the Schumanns and Wagner.

Info: www.conspiritoleipzig.de

Leipzig Festival of Lights – Day of the Peaceful Revolution (9 October 2026)

Each year on 9 October, Leipzig commemorates the first large Monday demonstration of 1989, which is regarded as the starting point of the Peaceful Revolution in the former GDR. The Day of the Peaceful Revolution includes a peace prayer and speeches on democracy, as well as the Leipzig Festival of Lights. This event uses artistic light installations and public events to reflect on civic courage and democratic values from past days to the present and future.

Info: www.herbst89.de, www.lichtfest.leipziger-freiheit.de

Leipzig Jazz Days – 50th Anniversary (17–24 October 2026)

Celebrating its 50th anniversary in 2026, Leipzig Jazz Days are one of Germany's longest-running and most respected jazz festivals. Since its foundation in 1976, the festival has presented an internationally curated programme featuring renowned jazz musicians, innovative newcomers and cross-genre projects. Concerts take place at a wide range of venues across the city, including concert halls, churches and club stages.

Info: www.jazzclub-leipzig.de/leipziger-jazztage

DOK Leipzig (26 October – 1 November 2026)

Founded in 1955, the International Leipzig Festival for Documentary and Animated Film is among the leading international festivals of its kind. The festival brings together filmmakers, producers, distributors and journalists from around the world, presenting a wide-ranging programme of screenings, premieres, industry events and discussions across Leipzig's cinemas and cultural venues.

Info: www.dok-leipzig.de

Mendelssohn Festival Leipzig (1–8 November 2026)

The Mendelssohn Festival Leipzig commemorates the legacy of Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy, whose work as Gewandhauskapellmeister decisively shaped Leipzig's musical life. Every year around the anniversary of his death on 4 November, the festival features symphony concerts, chamber music, and discussion events.

Info: www.gewandhausorchester.de, www.mendelssohn-haus.de

Opening of "Fireland at Leipzig Zoo" (2026)

The Tierra del Fuego area at Leipzig Zoo is scheduled to open in 2026. The first animals are expected to move in at the beginning of this year. This ambitious project includes a 140-metre-long underwater tunnel, through which visitors will be able to observe sea lions and penguins up close. Leipzig Zoo launched the "Zoo of the Future" project 25 years ago. The aim was to move away from merely exhibiting animals and instead allow them to live in environments appropriate to their species. The modernisation is scheduled for completion by 2028.

Info: www.zoo-leipzig.de

Leipzig Christmas Market (24 November – 23 December 2026)

Dating back to 1458, Leipzig Christmas Market is the second oldest in Germany. It has earned a legendary reputation for its unique cultural and culinary offerings in the pedestrian-friendly, illuminated city centre.

The Christmas goods on offer are complemented by highlights such as organ music and performances of Johann Sebastian Bach's Christmas Oratorio in Leipzig's churches, brass band performances on the tower of the Old Town Hall, and, last but not least, the fairy tale forest and Santa Claus's consultation hours.

The numerous castles and palaces in the Leipzig Region also offer the chance to experience the magic of Christmas within their ancient walls, like at Rochlitz Castle and Colditz Castle.

Info: www.leipzig.travel/christmas