Sprawling Munich (München), home to some 1.5 million people, is the capital of Bavaria and one of Germany’s major cultural centers. (Only Berlin outranks it in terms of museums and theaters.) It’s also one of Germany’s most festive cities, and its location, at the foot of the Bavarian Alps, is idyllic. We’ve scoured the region in search of the best places and experiences, and we’ve shared our favorites below.

1 FROMMER’S FAVORITE MUNICH EXPERIENCES

- **Socializing at the Biergarten:** If you’re in Munich between the first sunny spring day and the last fading light of a Bavarian-style autumn, head for one of the city’s celebrated beer gardens (Biergarten). Our favorite is Biergarten Chinesischer Turm (p. 124) in the Englischer Garten. Traditionally, beer gardens were tables placed under chestnut trees planted above storage cellars that kept beer cool in summer. Naturally, people started to drink close to the source of their pleasure, and the tradition has remained. It’s estimated that, today, Munich has at least 400 beer gardens and cellars. Food, drink, and atmosphere are much the same in all of them. See the “Beer Gardens” section of chapter 6 for more recommendations.

- **Enjoying Munich’s World-Class Music:** The city is home to outstanding classical music; notable are the Bavarian State Opera (p. 168) and the Munich Philharmonic (p. 168). Prices are affordable and the selection is diverse. The season of summer concerts at Nymphenburg Palace (p. 130) alone is worth the trip to Munich.

- **Nude Sunbathing in the Englischer Garten:** On any summery sunny day, it seems that half of Munich can be seen letting it all hang out. The sentimental romantic founders of this park surely had no idea they were creating a public nudist colony. Even if you don’t want to take it all off, you can still come here to enjoy the park’s natural beauty. See p. 142.

- **Snacking on Weisswurst:** Munich’s classic street food, Weisswurst (“white sausage”) is made of calf’s head, veal, and seasoning, and is about the size of a hot dog. Smooth and light in flavor, you eat it with pretzels and beer—nothing else. Weisswurst etiquette calls for you to remove the sausage from a bowl of hot water, cut it crosswise in half, dip the cut end in sweet mustard, then suck the sausage out of the casing in a single gesture. When you learn to do this properly, you will be a true Münchner. See “Eating & Drinking in Munich,” in chapter 2, for more about Weisswurst.

- **Getting Away from It All at the Hirschgarten:** For a glimpse of what Munich used to be, flee from the tourist hordes and traffic to the Hirschgarten,
or “Deer Meadow.” A “green lung” between Donnersberg Bridge and Nymphenburg Park, the area has been a deer park since 1791. In 1890, the largest beer garden in the world was built here, seating 8,000 drinkers. The Hirschgarten remains Munich’s most tranquil retreat, a land of towering oaks, chestnuts, and beeches, attracting lovers of the great outdoors—and those who like to pack a picnic lunch or enjoy an open-air game of chess. See p. 142.

**Exploring Trendy Haidhausen:** For decades, this district on the right bank of the Isar River was known as a blue-collar and low-rent sector of Munich. In the 1970s, however, hippies and artists created a cross-cultural scene that made Haidhausen, not Schwabing, the hip place to hang out. Today, it is the place to see and be seen—especially if you’re a Schicki-Micki (a club-going Bavarian yuppie), a person who dresses only in black, or one of the Müeslis (European granolas). The place to go is one of the bars or cafes around Pariser Platz or Weissenburger Platz. Take the S-Bahn to Ostbahnhof or Rosenheimerstrasse and get with it! See p. 72.

**Attending Oktoberfest:** It’s called the biggest keg party in the world. Müncheners had so much fun in 1810 celebrating the wedding of Prince Ludwig to Princess Therese von Sachsen-Hildburghausen that they’ve been rowdying it up ever since for 16 full days from September 21 to October 6. The festival’s tent city is at the Theresienwiese fairgrounds, and the Middle Ages lives on as oxen are roasted on open spits, brass bands oompah you into oblivion, and some 750,000 kegs of the brew are tapped. There are even tents where Bierleichen (beer corpses) can recover from drunkenness, listening to soothing zither music.

**Seeking R&R at Olympiapark:** Site of the 1972 Olympic Games, this 296-hectare (731-acre) park and stadium is a premier venue for various sporting events and concerts. You can swim in one of the pools, and you’ll find jogging tracks, gyms, and even an artificial lake. To cap off your visit, take the elevator to the top of the Olympiaturm for a panoramic view of Munich and a look at the Bavarian Alps. In summer, free rock concerts blast from the amphitheater, Theatron, by Olympic Lake. See p. 143.
such works as *Nymphs Paying Homage to the Goddess Flora*, Bavarian rococo reached its apogee. See p. 136.

- **Spending an Afternoon in the Botanischer Garten:** If you’re not a plant lover, you’ll be converted here. Laid out between 1909 and 1914 on the north side of Nymphenburg Park, it’s one of the most richly stocked botanical wonders in Europe. You can wander among the 22 hectares (54 acres) and some 15,000 varieties of plants; a highlight is the Alpine garden with rare specimens. In late summer, the heather garden is a delight. See p. 142.

- **Checking Out Market Day at Viktualienmarkt:** The most characteristic scene in Munich is a Saturday morning at this food market at the south end of the Altstadt. Since 1807, Viktualienmarkt has been the center of Munich life, dispensing fresh vegetables and fruit from the Bavarian countryside, just-caught fish, dairy produce, poultry, rich grainy breads, moist cakes, and farm-fresh eggs. Naturally, there’s also a beer garden. There’s even a maypole and a statue honoring Karl Valentin (1882–1948), the legendary comic actor and filmmaker. Even more interesting than the market produce are the stallholders themselves. See p. 165.

- **Rafting along the Isar:** Admittedly, it doesn’t rival the Seine in Paris, but the Isar is the river of life in Munich. If you can’t take in a country walk in the Bavarian Alps, a walk along the left bank of the Isar is an alternative. Begin at Höllriegelskreuth and follow the scenic path along the Isar’s high bank. Your trail will carry you through the Römerschanze into what Münchners call the Valley of the Mills (Mühltal). After passing the Bridge Inn (Brückenwirt), you will eventually reach Kloster Schäftlarn, where you’ll find—what else?—a beer garden. After a mug, you’ll be fortified to continue along signposted paths through the Isar River valley until you reach Wolfrathausen. Instead of walking back, you can board a raft made of logs and “drift” back to the city, enjoying beer and often the oompah sound of a brass band as you head toward Munich. See p. 186.

- **Taking a Dip at Müller’s Public Baths:** Müllersches Volksbad, at Rosenheimer Strasse I (S-Bahn to Isartor), is one of the most magnificent public baths in all of Germany. This is no dull swimming pool but a celebration of grandeur, *fin de siècle* style. Karl Hocheder designed this Moorish/Roman spectacle between 1897 and 1901, an era of opulence. When the baths opened, they were hailed as the most modern in Europe, surpassing all but those in Budapest. Completely renovated, the baths today have a “gentlemen’s pool” with barrel vaulting and a “ladies’ pool” with domed vaulting. There are also sweat baths and individual baths for those who like to let it all hang out—but in private. Alas, the Zamperlbad, or doggie bath, is no more.

- **Spending a Night at the Hofbräuhaus:** Established in 1589 by Duke Wilhelm V to satisfy the thirst of his court, the Hofbräuhaus is not only the city’s major tourist attraction but also the world’s most famous beer hall, seating more than 4,000 drinkers. In 1828, the citizens of Munich were allowed to drink “the court’s brew” for the first time, and it turned out to be habit forming. A popular song, “In München Steht ein Hofbräuhaus,” spread the fame of the brewery. To be really authentic, you drink in the ground-floor Schwemme, the historic beer hall considered the heart of the Hofbräuhaus. Here, some 1,000 beer buffs down their brew at wooden tables while listening to the sounds of an oompah band. More rooms, including the Trinkstube, a restaurant for 350, are found
upstairs, and in summer, beer is served in a colonnaded courtyard patio with a lion fountain. The waitstaff, in Bavarian peasant dress, appears carrying 10 steins at once. Pretzels are sold on long sticks, and white Radis (radishes) are cut into fancy spirals. See p. 174.

2 FROMMER’S FAVORITE BAVARIAN ALPS EXPERIENCES

- **Boating on the Königssee:** A romantic poet would praise this lake, near Berchtesgaden in Bavaria, for the forest-covered mountains that surround its cold, deep, dark waters. The baroque chapels and fairy-tale hamlets on its shores supplement its natural grandeur. The boat you ride will be powered by very quiet electric motors, so you can hear the extraordinary echoes that bounce off the rock faces. See p. 197.

- **Hiking in the Bavarian Alps:** In summer, Alpine hiking is a major attraction in Germany. Hikers can observe a variety of wildlife, often including endangered species. Two of the best areas are the 1,240m (4,070-ft.) Eckbauer peak, on the southern fringe of Partenkirchen, and the Berchtesgaden National Park, bordering the Austrian province of Salzburg. See chapter 12.

- **Ascending the Zugspitze:** If the gentle inclines of the Harz Mountains or the Thuringian forests aren’t dramatic enough for you, ride the cable car from Garmisch-Partenkirchen to the top of Germany’s tallest mountain, 2,960m (9,700 ft.) above sea level. The view from the top is suitably panoramic, and you’ll find an appealing aura of German-ness that comes from the climbers and trekkers who fan out across the hiking trails. See p. 216.

- **Experiencing a Bavarian Spa:** In Germany, the question isn’t whether to visit a spa, but rather which spa to visit. Each resort has its own virtues and historical associations and can supply a list of the health benefits associated with its awful-tasting waters. Whatever your choice, you’ll emerge more relaxed and with a greater appreciation of German efficiency and sensuality. The most famous spa in the Bavarian Alps is Bad Reichenhall (p. 200), 135km (84 miles) southeast of Munich.

3 THE BEST MUSEUMS

Financial prosperity, artistic flair, and academic curiosity have helped the people of Munich develop some of the finest museums anywhere.

- **Deutsches Museum**, Munich: Since 1925, this museum has been one of the most important showcases of science and technology in the world. Occupying an island in the Isar River, it features many hands-on and historical exhibits. See p. 131.

- **Alte Pinakothek**, Munich: This massive and symmetrical building is one of the most visible in Munich, with a wraparound garden where urbanites like to walk during lunch hour. Inside is a staggering assortment of important paintings from every era. See p. 127.

- **Dachau Concentration Camp Memorial Site**, Dachau, near Munich: Heinrich Himmler first organized Dachau as a concentration camp for enemies of
During the Middle Ages, Germany, including Munich and Bavaria, was divided into intensely competitive feudal states and principalities. This unstable atmosphere encouraged the construction of fortified castles. As hostilities died down, architects began to design for comfort, style, and prestige, adding large windows, gilded stucco and plaster, frescoes, and formal gardens. As a result, Bavaria is full of all kinds and styles of Burgen (castles) and Schlösser (palaces).

- **Neuschwanstein**, near Füssen: When the creators of California’s Disneyland needed an inspiration for their fairy-tale castle, this was their model. Neuschwanstein is the most lavishly romantic (and impractical) castle in the German-speaking world. A 19th-century theatrical set designer drew it up in a neo-feudal style. The man who ordered its construction was (who else?) “Mad” King Ludwig II of Bavaria. See p. 228.

- **Hohenschwangau Castle**, near Füssen: It was completed in 1836 and built on the ruins of a 12th-century fortress. Its patron was the youthful prince regent, Maximilian II of Bavaria, who used it to indulge his taste for “troubadour Romanticism” and the life of the English country manor. See p. 229.

- **Schloss Nymphenburg**, Munich: It was originally conceived and constructed between 1664 and 1674 as an Italian-inspired summer home for Bavarian monarchs. Subsequent Bavarian kings added to its structure, and by around 1780, the building and lavish park bore a close resemblance to the French palace at Versailles. A highlight of the interior is the green, gold, and white banqueting hall, with frescoes and ornate stucco that are among the most memorable in Bavaria. See p. 136.

- **Schloss Linderhof**, near Oberammergau: This palace, built in the 1870s, was a teenage indulgence of Ludwig II. Its architects created a whimsically eclectic fantasy, inspired by Italian baroque architecture. In the surrounding park, Moorish pavilions and Mediterranean cascades appear against Alpine vistas in...
THE BEST SPAS

1. **Residenz**, Munich: The official residence of the Wittelsbach dynasty from 1385 to 1918, the Residenz is a grand royal palace. Of particular fascination is the Antiquarium built in 1569, the largest Renaissance ceremonial hall north of the Alps and the oldest surviving part of the palace. The Cuvilliés Theater is one of the finest rococo theaters in the world, and the treasure trove that forms the Schatzkammer is one of the grandest in Germany. See p. 134.

2. **Partnachklamm**: One of the most dramatic walks in all of the Bavarian Alps starts from the great winter sports resort of Garmisch-Partenkirchen. A signposted trail leads to the dramatic Partnachklamm Gorge. Carved from solid rock, the route passes two panoramic bottlenecks amid the thunder of falling water and clouds of spray. See “Hiking in the Bavarian Alps” in chapter 12.

THE BEST WALKS

1. **The Royal Castle Walk**: For one of the grandest panoramas in all of the Alps (in any country), hike up to the Marienbrücke, the bridge that spans the Pöllat Gorge behind Neuschwanstein Castle. From here, if you’re up to it, you can continue uphill for about an hour for an amazing view of “Mad” King Ludwig’s fantasy castle. See “Neuschwanstein & Hohenschwangau” in chapter 12.

2. **Bad Reichenhall**: Many spa lovers head for this remote corner of Bavaria to “take the waters.” Europe’s largest saline source was first tapped in pre-Christian times, though the place now has a 19th-century aura. Some of the hotels in the town are better than others, but all have equal access to the spa and lie about a 5-minute walk away. See “Bad Reichenhall” in chapter 12.

3. **Bad Tölz**: On the Isar River, this resort town became a spa in 1946 when its iodine-rich springs were discovered. Its water park, Alpamare, is one of the largest in Germany, and it’s filled with saunas and solariums. Even if you don’t take the spa waters, the well-preserved Old Town is worth a stopover, with many houses dating from the 17th and 19th centuries. See “Bad Tölz” in chapter 11.

4. **Bad Wiessee**: Within easy reach of Munich, only 53km (33 miles) to the north, this spa town opens onto the beautiful lake, the Tegernsee. It is known for its mineral springs rich in iodine and sulfur. Bad Wiessee, with its advanced medical facilities, is a year-round resort, with swimming and boating in summer, and skiing on the nearby Bavarian Alps in winter. While having a holiday at this spa, you can also take day trips to Salzburg and Innsbruck in Austria. See “Bad Wiessee” in chapter 12.

5. **Neues Schloss, Chiemsee**: Called “a monument to uncreative megalomania,” this castle, begun in 1878 by Ludwig II, stands on the island of Herrenchiemsee, in the midst of Chiemsee, one of the most beautiful lakes in the Bavarian Alps. The chief attraction is its splendid Great Hall of Mirrors, the most authentic replica of the more famous hall at Versailles outside Paris. Ludwig was able to spend only 9 days in the palace. At his death, only 20 of the 70 rooms he envisioned had been completed. See p. 204.
7 THE MOST CHARMING LAKE RESORTS & VILLAGES

- **Sternbergersee**: This beautiful lake is where many a Münchner go for a holiday. It’s only 27km (17 miles) to the southwest of Munich. Centering around the town of Berg, the unofficial capital of the lake region, Sternbergersee enjoys a 6.4km (4-mile) scenic coastline studied with historic castles, including one where Ludwig II was imprisoned after he was certified as insane. See “Sternbergersee” in chapter 11.

- **Tegernsee**: A lake and a resort town on the eastern shore of its water share the same name. Long known as one of the most beautiful lakes of Bavaria, Tegernsee lies just 48km (30 miles) southeast of Munich. It is surrounded by mountain peaks, one reaching a height of 1,890m (6,200 ft.). The ritziest resort town along the lake is Rottach-Egern where you find the best hotels and cuisine. See “Tegernsee” in chapter 11.

- **Ammersee**: Many Münchners have summer homes at this lake region 39km (24 miles) southwest of Munich. One of the best places for food and lodging along the lake is the large village of Herrsching, a venue for summer concerts and known as a retreat for artists. A short ferry ride takes you to Diessen, the lake’s most idyllic fishing village. Summer steamship cruises traverse the lake, and you can also rent various boats. See “Ammersee” in chapter 11.

- **Berchtesgaden**: Although its reputation is somewhat tainted by its association as a retreat for Hitler, Berchtesgaden is one of the most idyllic Alpine towns in the Bavarian Alps. It is celebrated for its beautiful scenery on the Ache River at the foot of the Watzmann, the second highest peak in Germany. It’s a center for exploring the splendid lake of Königssee with its crystal clear waters in a fjordlike setting. See “Berchtesgaden” in chapter 12.

- **Mittenwald**: A town on a former trade route at the foot of the Karwendel mountain range, this town, one of the most colorful and beautiful in Bavaria, is especially popular for its winter sports. The town is also known for its violin-making trade, a tradition dating back to 1684. See “Mittenwald” in chapter 12.

8 BEST HOTEL BETS

- **Best Historic Hotel: Hotel Vier Jahreszeiten Kempinski München** (089/2125-0; www.kempinski-vierjahreszeiten.de) is one of the most famous hotels in the world—the lineage of this hostelry stretches back to 1858. Maximilian II himself took a personal interest in the hotel’s establishment, even going so far as to aid its founder financially. The Walterspiel family brought it to worldwide prominence, and over the years it has entertained the greats and near-greats. See p. 86.

- **Best for Business Travelers: The Hilton Munich Park** (800/445-8667 in the U.S. and Canada, or 089/3-84-50; www.hilton.com) is a modern 15-story structure geared to business travelers, with the necessary business amenities. It is close to many corporate headquarters and has the best conference facilities of any hotel in the city. Actually, the hotel
was an office block until pressed into service as a hotel for the 1972 Olympics. After business is concluded, you can unwind at the hotel’s health club. See p. 88.

- **Best for a Romantic Getaway**: Roman- tik Hotel Insel Mühle (☎ 089/8-10-10; www.insel-muehle.com), built around a 16th-century mill, has a romantic, antique decor and rooms with sloping, garretlike ceilings. It is known for its old-world restaurant with massive beams and a wine cellar. Though far removed from the hustle and bustle, it’s only 9.5km (6 miles) west of Munich’s Marienplatz. See p. 100.

- **Best Trendy Hotel**: The Mandarin Oriental (☎ 089/290-980; www.mandarinoriental.com/munich) is the choice of visiting celebrities, including fashion models, dress designers, and the media elite. Its discreet style and formal elegance appeal to those who don’t want to be “too obvious” by staying at one of the lavish, bigger hotels. See p. 86.

- **Best Lobby for Pretending You’re Rich**: Bayerischer Hof & Palais Montgelas (☎ 089/21-20-0; www.bayerischerhof.de) is an old-fashioned European formal hotel with a deluxe lobby filled with English and French furniture and oriental rugs. It’s been called the “living room” of Munich. “Meet you in the lounge of the Bayerischer Hof” is often heard. As hotels go, there’s no more impressive place to meet for a drink. See p. 83.

- **Best for Families**: Four Points Hotel by Sheraton München Olympiapark (☎ 800/368-7764 in the U.S. and Canada, or 089/357510; www.starwoodhotels.com) is right at Europe’s biggest sports and recreation center and rents many triple rooms that are ideal for families. It’s among the most modern and best-kept places in the city, and your child may meet some of the sports heroes who often stay here. At Olympiapark, the entire family can use the sports facilities, including a large Olympic-size swimming pool. See p. 66.

- **Best B&B**: Gästehaus Englischer Garten (☎ 089/3-83-94-10; www.hotel englischergarten.de), close to the Englischer Garten and its summer nudes, is an oasis of charm and tranquillity in fashionable Schwabing. It offers attractively furnished rooms; those in the annex are really small apartments with tiny kitchenettes. When the weather’s right, breakfast is served in the rear garden. See p. 98.

- **Best Service**: Eden Hotel Wolff (☎ 089/55-11-5-0; www.ehw.de) employs some of the most thoughtful staff in Munich. The attentive, efficient, unhurried, yet down-to-earth English-speaking staff here gets the job done, anticipating all your needs. See p. 88.

- **Best Location**: An der Oper (☎ 089/290-02-70; www.hotelanderoper.com) is in the heart of Munich, steps away from the central Marienplatz. Stay here and in moments, you’re shopping along the Maximilianstrasse or exploring the traffic-free malls near the Bavarian Nationaltheater. See p. 90.

- **Best Health Club**: München Marriott Hotel (☎ 800/228-9290 in the U.S. and Canada, or 089/36-00-20; www.marriott.com) has a well-equipped fitness center that includes a swimming pool almost 14m (44 ft.) long, whirlpools, hydrojets, a solarium, and state-of-the-art exercise equipment. There’s also a Kosmetik-Kabine for beauty treatments and massages, plus separate saunas for men and women. See p. 97.

- **Best Hotel Pool**: The state-of-the-art indoor pool at the Arabella Sheraton Grand Hotel München (☎ 800/325-3535 in the U.S. and Canada, or 089/9-26-40; www.starwoodhotels.com) is on the 22nd floor, offering its own waterfall to go with the city views. Although many hotels in Munich have
pools, none competes with this choice. And that’s not all—the hotel also has five whirlpools, two mixed saunas (open to both men and women), and a trio of steam rooms inspired by ancient Rome, each ideal for après-swim (after your swim). See p. 99.

• Best Spa Hotel: The curative spa of Bad Reichenhall is the finest and best equipped in the Bavarian Alps. The best hotel here is Steigenberger Axelmannstein (08651/77-70), which is set in lovely gardens of 3 hectares (7 1/2 acres). Its spa equipment is always kept in the finest condition, and its bedrooms, cuisine, and on-site entertainment make it one of the great discoveries of Bavaria. See p. 201.

9 BEST RESTAURANT BETS

• Best All-time Favorite: In business since 1901, albeit not in the same location, Boettner’s (089/22-12-10) offers a cuisine that is better than ever and still uses only top-quality ingredients like lobster and fresh white truffles. Housed in a Renaissance structure in the center of Munich, the restaurant has a cuisine lighter than in the past but still featuring those rich old Bavarian favorites for those who want to indulge. See p. 104.

• Best Fusion Cuisine: A luxe restaurant ranking at the top of all those in Bavaria, Schuhbecks in den Südtiroler Stuben (089/21-66-900) evokes California freestyle. A culinary celebrity, chef Alfons Schuhbeck blends Eastern and Western cuisine in his sublime offerings, depending a lot on California for his inspiration. The menu changes based on the best produce in any season. See p. 108.

• Best Spot for a Romantic Dinner: At this great Italian restaurant, Acquarello (089/470-4848), he or she will definitely say yes to your proposition. Classical music sets the stage for a romantic evening, and the host promises that the perfumelike fragrance of the restaurant will linger for a lifetime. From figs to almonds, the food is from the gods—at least that. See p. 120.

• Best Spot for a Business Lunch: Restaurant Mark’s (089/29098-875), in the prestigious Mandarin Oriental, is the chic business luncheon spot of Munich. The movers and shakers of the Bavarian capital gather in the informal lobby-level setting of Mark’s Corner to make the big deal. Menu items change according to the season and the inspiration of the chef, and, as you dine, you can practically feel euros changing hands. See p. 109.

• Best Spot for a Celebration: A coveted address known to savvy local foodies, Gasthof Weichandhof (089/891-1600) is set in an old farmhouse where diners always seem to be celebrating something—a marriage, a divorce, or whatever. The Bavarian food is good and affordable and you can hang out until midnight, feasting on everything from roast suckling pig to endless servings of apple strudel. See p. 122.

• Best Wine List: Geisel’s Vinothek (089/55-13-71-40), in the Hotel Excelsior, is the best spot in Munich for a taste of the grape. Dedicated to Bacchus, this deliberately unpretentious choice has one of the city’s finest collections of Italian, French, Austrian, and German wines—all sold by the glass. You can also order Italian cuisine. See p. 110.

• Best Value: Palais Keller (089/212-09-90) is housed in the cellar of one of the most elegant hotels in Munich (the Bayerischer Hof), but it still offers
• **Best Continental Cuisine: Tantris** (☎ 089/36-19-59-0), in Schwabing, serves the city’s most refined cuisine, a treat to the eye as well as the palate. Hans Haas is one of the top chefs of Germany and is forever sharpening his culinary skills as he wines and dines the celebrated people of Europe. Nothing in Munich equals the service, flavors, and delight found here. See p. 118.

• **Best French Cuisine: Bistro Terrine** (☎ 089/28-17-80) has food that tastes so authentically French that you’ll think you’re in Lyon. Menu items are often more inventive than the Belle Epoque atmosphere of this Art Nouveau bistro in Schwabing implies. The menu changes with the seasons—for example, in autumn, nuggets of venison might appear with hazelnut-flavored gnocchi and port-wine sauce. See p. 119.

• **Best Seafood: Austernkeller** (☎ 089/298-787) prepares not only the freshest oysters in town but also an array of delectable seafood selections that range from mussels to clams and sea snails to the wonderful lobster Thermidor. The kitsch collection of plastic lobsters shouldn’t put you off: The food is far more worthy than the decor. See p. 108.

• **Best Bavarian Cuisine: Nürnberger Bratwurst Glöckl am Dom** (☎ 089/291945-0) is Munich’s coziest restaurant. Here you can enjoy Bavarian cuisine so authentic that it’s hardly changed since the restaurant opened in 1893. Bavarians, often looking as stern as one of the Dürer prints on the wall, come here for all their favorite dishes—just like great-grandmothers made 100 years ago. See p. 116.

• **Best for Celebrity-Watching:** One of the most iconoclastic restaurants in Munich, **Lenbach** (☎ 089/549130-0) serves first-rate Continental and Asian cuisine. Its diners often make the next day’s gossip columns. That might be Catherine Zeta-Jones devouring a plate of foie gras and sweet roasted peppers, Richard Gere digging into the grilled scampi with fresh herbs, or Robert Redford ordering the Thai curry with tiger prawns. See p. 111.

• **Best Beer Garden:** In the Englischer Garten center of Munich, **Biergarten Chinesischer Turm** (☎ 089/3-83-87-30) is our favorite place for soaking up the local suds—some of the best in the world—and lingering over long, filling Bavarian meals such as homemade dumplings, a specialty. To the sound of an oompah band, you can drink the night away while devouring huge baskets of pretzels with your beer. See p. 124.

• **Best for People-Watching:** Right on the Marienplatz (what Times Square is to New York), the virtual heart of Munich, you can enjoy coffee and snacks at **Café Glockenspiel** (☎ 089/26-42-56). This is the most frequented cafe in Munich, and it gets especially busy around 10:30am daily when hordes show up to watch a miniature tournament staged by the clock on the city hall facade. Sit back and enjoy your coffee and pastry as an international parade of humanity marches before you. See p. 123.

• **Best Picnic Fare:** **Alois Dallmayr** (☎ 089/213-51-00) offers not only Munich’s best picnic fare but also Germany’s. With the food you can gather up here, you could even invite the queen of England for lunch in the Englischer Garten. One of the world’s most renowned delis, this supermarket of goodies has elegant selections like foie gras, but it also offers more democratically priced (and mundane) fare. See p. 104.

the most bang for your euro. Its well-prepared cuisine of Bavarian and German dishes is priced about the same as that found in far less desirable beer halls and **Weinstuben** (wine taverns) nearby. Let a smiling waitress in a frilly apron introduce you to Tafelspitz here, the fabled boiled-beef dish. See p. 116.
THE BEST BEER HALLS & TAVERNS

- Hofbräuhaus am Platz, Munich (☎ 089/22-16-76): The Hofbräuhaus is the world’s most famous beer hall and can accommodate some 4,500 beer drinkers on any given night. Music from live bands and huge mugs of beer served at wooden tables combine to produce the best of Bavarian nighttime fun. See p. 174.

- Biergarten Chinesischer Turm, Munich (☎ 089/3-83-87-30): In the Englischer Garten between the Isar River and Schwabing, this is the best Biergarten in the largest city-owned park in Europe. Beer and plenty of Bavarian food, hail and hearty, are served until the cold winds of autumn blow. It’s riotous fun. See p. 124.

- Hirschgarten, Munich (☎ 089/1799-9199): In Nymphenburg Park, west of the center, this beer garden lies in a 200-hectare (494-acre) park. It can handle an astonishing 8,000 beer drinkers at once and is, in fact, the largest open-air restaurant in Munich.