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Early spring, I was fortunate to have an inexpensive ticket to Frankfurt and ended up discovering Wiesbaden. The city, with its friendly residents, festivals and beauty, captured my heart. I had to share this historic find with my husband.

December found us back in Wiesbaden for the Twinkling Star Christmas Market. After checking in at the [Hotel Radisson SAS Schwarzer Bock](http://www.radissonblu.com/hotel-wiesbaden) (<http://www.radissonblu.com/hotel-wiesbaden>), we bundled up and ventured out to the excitement of Schlossplatz, which was transformed by the [Wiesbaden Twinkling Star Christmas Market](http://www.wiesbaden.de/en/living-in-wiesbaden/festivities-markets/markets/twinkling-star-christmas-market.php) (<http://www.wiesbaden.de/en/living-in-wiesbaden/festivities-markets/markets/twinkling-star-christmas-market.php>).



http://www.travelandescape.ca/2012/12/wiesbadens-twinkling-christmas-market/1922_stephan-richter/

Credit: **Stephan Richter**

Walking the streets while sipping *gluhwein* (mulled spiced hot wine) in the cold allowed the holiday spirit to creep through us. We toured some of the more than 130 stalls of arts, crafts and culinary treats, then watched skating at the Hessian State Theatre.

Walking back to Schlossplatz to refill our *gluhwein*, we gazed up at shapes of the star decorations. They looked like flowers. We discovered these 10-metre-high, brightly lit decorations were actually lilies and represented the city's coat of arms. It was a clever and beautiful way to light the area.

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Credit: Wiesbaden Marketing

Families and adults all enjoyed. There were rides, a life-size Christmas crèche and a beautifully decorated Christmas tree in front of the town hall, with about 3,000 environmentally friendly light bulbs and approximately a thousand gold and blue ribbons.

But the best view was from the top of the ferris wheel, erected on the Mauritiusplatz in the pedestrian zone. From state capital to the entire market, the view for everything includes seventy lit lilies. I was so busy taking it all in, I forgot to take photos.

The market lasts from November 27th (always the month before Christmas) and ends December 23rd, 2012. Tours are offered daily at 2 p.m. and 4 p.m. in German; for English, tours are on Saturday and Sunday at 4 p.m. Starting at the main entrance of Market Church, tours last one hour, and cost 6.50 euros per person.



(http://www.travelandscape.ca/2012/12/wiesbadens-twinkling-christmas-market/1_wiesbaden-marketing-gmbh/)

Credit: Wiesbaden Marketing

More Things To Do in Wiesbaden

For shopping, the best is available. Along Wilhelmstrasse, known as the "Rue," and in the adjacent Burgstrasse, boutiques offer international, exclusive brands. Fashion and jewelry designers surpass expectation. I liked the interesting shops in Wiesbaden's historical district, where boutiques and shops are smaller and less expensive, but still maintain style and quality. An added bonus are the culinary delights, and history shines through in the Opera House, casino and many parks and government buildings.

For a true German spa experience, I liked the [Kaiser-Friedrich-Therme](http://www.wiesbaden.de/en/sports/baths/kft/kft.php) (<http://www.wiesbaden.de/en/sports/baths/kft/kft.php>). However, my husband was more comfortable at [Thermalbad Aukammtal](http://www.wiesbaden.de/en/sports/baths/thermalbath/index.php) (<http://www.wiesbaden.de/en/sports/baths/thermalbath/index.php>) on the first floor, with bathing suits. Both offer exceptional services.



(http://www.travelandscape.ca/2012/12/wiesbadens-twinkling-christmas-market/1511_paul-mu-ller/)

Credit: Paul Muller

There are not enough words to express the charm and interests of Wiesbaden. It has been attracting tourists for more than 100 years and surely will in centuries to come. It's not just the buildings, activities and charm that make the place, but also the people, with their warm and welcoming hospitality.

Joy to the world! We're honouring WORLD CELEBRATIONS

(<http://www.travelandscape.ca/tag/global-celebrations/>) all month on Travel+Escape!

MARALYN HILL



Maralyn Dennis Hill, [The Epicurean Explorer](http://www.theepicureanexplorer.com) (<http://www.theepicureanexplorer.com>), is past president of the International Food Wine & Travel Writers Association, effective Dec. 31, 2012. She contributes to numerous publications, and her articles cover luxury market, spas, corporate retreats, business events and culinary tourism, from simple to gourmet. Maralyn says, "I was born to travel and tell the tale. I'm energized by different cultures in every aspect, from food, wine and destination, to conducting business. Travel represents a continual geography lesson."

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