

*The*CULTURE *of the*GERMAN PEOPLE

- ❖ Germany has had a lot of influence on the European culture. You can divide Germany in two pieces, the old Prussia in the north and Bavaria in the south.
- ❖ Along with France, Germany is one of the countries with the best image abroad. And there is no lack of reasons for this positive appeal: the country's modern approach, its openness, the quality of life, the multi-national diversity and the creativity with which Germany both renews and preserves its cultural identity. Nowadays a relaxed *laissez-faire* attitude and a liberal sense of curiosity are evident in almost all aspects of life.
- ❖ Berlin is sometimes called the "culture-capital of Europe". After Paris, it's the second most popular tourist site among Europeans.
- ❖ Germany's contributions to the world's cultural heritage are numerous, and the country is often known as “the land of poets and thinkers.”
 - German literature can be traced back to the Middle Ages, in particular to such authors as Walther von der Vogelweide and Wolfram von Eschenbach, considered some of the most important poets of medieval Europe.
 - The fairy tales by Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm are world famous as major contribution to German literature.
 - The theologian, Martin Luther, who translated the Bible into German, is widely credited for having set the basis for modern “High German” language.
 - Many important figures in society and philosophy have come from Germany such as Marx, Heigel, and Kant.

Language - Within the European Union, German is the language with the most native speakers, with more than English, French, Spanish and Italian, because the borders of the German language reach through Austria, Italy, Belgium, Denmark, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and into Switzerland.

- ❖ As a foreign language, German is the third most taught worldwide.

Music - Ludwig van Beethoven was an influential German composer and pianist. Germany's influence in music is noted through the works of, among others, Bach, Händel, Beethoven, Mendelssohn, Mozart, Brahms, Schumann, Wagner, and Strauss.

Tourism - Germany is becoming increasingly popular as a country to visit: In 2004, for the first time every foreign guests registered more than 45 million overnight stays, and according to The German National Tourist Board (GNTB) and the trend is still on the increase.

- ❖ Berlin, Munich, Frankfurt/Main and Cologne are the most popular cities with international visitors.
- ❖ Most tourists come from other European countries, the USA and Asia.
- ❖ With regard to individual states, Bavaria, North Rhine-Westphalia and Baden-Württemberg are the preferred destinations.
- ❖ In addition to historical sights, top-quality concert series, art exhibitions, theater performances as well as major international sports events, not to mention street festivals and atmospheric Christmas markets are just a few of the attractions that bring the visitors flocking.