

Neuhaus am Rennweg -- A Party Animal Turned Romantic

Do you know what doesn't get mentioned too often? I'll tell you: Germany's Fifth Season.

Now before you go asking what that is, I'll tell you. It's Carnival Season — you know, that Mardi Gras kind of thing that happens right before the start of Lent — except Germany starts celebrating it in November, in towns like Neuhaus am Rennweg in [Thuringia](#).

A good Carnival party isn't the only thing to do here, ya know. November's also the month for the *Lichterfest*, a Lights Festival held right at the Marktplatz towards the end of the month.

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It's not the only two parties they throw around town. Come October, they hold their own Oktoberfest; which is also the same month for Neuhaus' Wine Festival and its *Hoffest*. And December is the right time to hold the Christmas Market, also at the Marktplatz.

As much as I could sit here all day writing about the town's festivals and cultural events, it would do a serious injustice to the other things to see around here — the first being its countryside.

Neuhaus am Rennweg is lucky enough to lie along the Rennsteig, a long-distance hiking route that's known for its outstanding views. Don't want to hike that far? Fair enough, do the 11km Nature Trail, or smaller Nordic Walking trails instead. You can follow that up with a spa service or two.

Have I earned that deep-tissue massage yet?

Hey, it beats the whole Ice Diving thing they do in the winter. Speaking of cold weather, you gotta

try the 250-meter tubing track. Nothing like careening downhill with your hair on fire, is it? ;-)

In my most humble opinion, winter's got to be the best time. Where else can you downhill ski, cross-country ski, or take a horse-drawn sleigh ride? And it's all right if you don't have equipment, or know how to ski, for that matter — they got equipment rental places, and even a ski school.

Besides, the gorgeous Town Church is probably its most stunning when covered by a freshly fallen snow. Looks like something right out of a Thomas Kincade painting.

Ugh, I'm not sure where all this romanticism came from — didn't I start off talking about Neuhaus am Rennweg's party-animal side? ;-)