

## Wermelskirchen Is Where Punk Rock Greets Christmas

Standing under the massive tree in front of the old Wermelskirchen town hall, it's hard not to feel the Christmas spirit. Planted in 1870, this Christmas tree is decorated each December and is considered a major local treasure.

It's the largest living Christmas tree, and surrounded by the yuletide craft market and half-timber buildings of old town, it provides a festive focal point you'll definitely want to get on camera. *Oh Tannenbaum* takes on a whole new meaning here!

But Christmas spirit isn't the only thing Wermelskirchen is full of — a rebel spirit has quite the presence as well...

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The *AJZ Bahndamm* showcases the local punk and hard rock scene year round. The rock band Skin of Tears got its start here, and as the entrance prices are low you will want to be sure to catch a show while you are in town. Who cares who will be playing? You could be hearing the next big thing for next to nothing. :-)

In addition to the concerts, all summer long you can take part in one of the motorcycle church services hosted in the Eipringhausen district of Wermelskirchen. Held on the 3rd Sunday of each month between April and October, there are more than 600 attendants in an average week. The crowd is really something to see.

Usually after the service there is a convoy show by the participating biker groups, and the people are really willing to interact with you to show off their bikes and outfits.

If you are in Wermelskirchen in August, you will also want to go to the annual fair and craft show. With amusement park style rides, concerts, and a large craft and food market, it usually held on the last weekend of the month.

The final day of the fair there is a big fireworks show, which is surprising due the many older wood structures throughout the area, but the locals seem to be throwing caution to the wind in favor of a worthwhile show.