

# News from the City Hall

## Information

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**City of Nuremberg  
Communication and  
City Marketing Office**

**Head:**

**Andreas Franke**

Fünferplatz 2

90403 Nürnberg

[www.presse.nuernberg.de](http://www.presse.nuernberg.de)

### **Nuremberg Christkindlesmarkt 2024: “The Little Town of Wood and Cloth”:**

In the heart of the city, on Nuremberg’s Main Market Square, the Nuremberg Christkindlesmarkt, one of the most famous Christmas markets in Germany, enchants visitors young and old each year. On Friday before the first Sunday in Advent, 29 November 2024, at precisely 5:30 p.m., the Nuremberg Christkind Nelli Lunkenheimer appears on the balcony of the Church of Our Lady to open “its” market with a festive prologue. From then until Christmas Eve, guests from all over the world are welcomed. 2023, the Christkindlesmarkt drew more than 2 million guests – evidence of the unbroken appeal of this tourist destination. For the citizens of Nuremberg, a stroll through the lanes of the market – especially on weekday evenings or on the morning of Christmas Eve – is a must during the Advent season.

#### **Traditional Wares on Offer**

More than 170 wooden stands with red-and-white cloth roofs, lovingly decorated by market vendors, fill the market square during Advent and give the Christkindlesmarkt the name “The Little Town of Wood and Cloth”. Almost 180 merchants present a deliberately traditional range of wares: Nuremberg gingerbread, fruit bread, baked goods and sweets, typical Christmas decorations such as “Rauschgold” angels, crèches, Christmas tree ornaments and candles, toys and crafts. A favorite souvenir from the Christkindlesmarkt is a “Nuremberg Prune Man”, a figure made from dried plums. For refreshment during a stroll through the market, the famous Nuremberg bratwurst and mulled wine are always at hand.



Employees from the city cast a critical eye on the booths and products on offer. They carefully examine the lighting and decoration. Pine swags made of plastic are forbidden, as well as a constant background noise of “Christmas favorites” played from tape or carnival rides. But it’s not only city regulations that give the Christmas Market a special flair. The merchants themselves are wholly committed to creating an attractive and tasteful atmosphere. And this effort is rewarded. Each year since 1981, the city honors the most beautiful booths with its “Prune Man” in gold, silver and bronze.

The traditional look of the Nuremberg Christkindlesmarkt has set an example for other Christmas markets. “The Little Town of Wood and Cloth” is also popular as a picturesque backdrop for television productions.

### **First Mentioned in 1628**

The Christkindlesmarkt is one of the oldest Christmas Markets in Germany. The evidence of a pre-Christmas fair on the Nuremberg Main Market Square goes back to the middle of the 17th century. The oldest verifiable written mention of the Christkindlesmarkt comes from 1628: On the bottom of a 19-centimeter-long bentwood box, an inscription in black ink reads “Regina Susanna Harßdörfferin von der Jungfrau Susanna Eleonora Erbsin (oder Elbsin) zum Kindles-Marck überschickt 1628” (Regina Susanna Harßdörfferin from the maiden Susanna Eleonora Erbsin (or Elbsin) given at the Kindles-Market 1628). The oval pinewood box has flowers painted on its top and is in the collection of the Germanisches Nationalmuseum.

A list from 1737 gives insight into the merchants of that era. It shows that almost all types of Nuremberg craftsmen were represented at the market. A total of 140 artisans were allowed to offer their wares.

At the end of the 19th century, the market lost importance and changed its location several times. It was revived in the 1930s. The National Socialists used the tradition-filled event to polish Nuremberg’s image as “Germany’s Little Treasure Chest” and improve their own calendar of events. In 1933, the Christkindlesmarkt was moved back to the market square of “the most German of German cities” and opened with a romanticized ceremony. An





actress dressed as the Christkind, accompanied by two "Rauschgold" angels, recited an opening address, a children's choir sang and church bells rang. During World War II, no Christmas Market was held in Nuremberg.

### **A New Start after World War II**

In 1948, three years after the end of World War II, the first newly-founded Christkindlesmarkt took place in the fully destroyed Old Town. Friedrich Bröger, playwright and son of the Nuremberg poet Karl Bröger, wrote a prologue which is still recited by the Nuremberg Christkind today. In 1948, the Nuremberg actress Sofie Keeser played the Christkind. She kept this role until the beginning of the 1960s. The next Christkind, Irene Brunner, was also an actress and kept the part until 1969.

### **Where the Christkind is at Home**

Since then, a new Christkind has been chosen every two years. Local media invite young women from Nuremberg to apply for this voluntary post if they are between 16 and 19 years old, at least 160 centimeters tall and not afraid of heights. They submit a photo which appears in local newspapers and the internet, giving readers the opportunity to vote for their favorite Christkind. The six candidates with the most votes then appear in front of a jury which chooses the winner.

In December, the Christkind has hardly a moment of peace, because it has more than 170 appointments in nursing homes, kindergartens and other charitable institutions. The Christkind appears four times a week to guests at the market and Children's Christmas Market. And the Christkind also travels throughout Germany, visiting other Christmas Markets, appearing in television and radio and serving as an ambassador for the Nuremberg Christkindlesmarkt and the city.

### **The Christmas City**

A whole range of programs and events surrounding the Christkindlesmarkt transform Nuremberg in December into a fascinating Christmas City. The charming market created by Nuremberg's sister cities, which is located just around the corner from the main market, lends an international atmosphere. Little visitors can enjoy the Children's Christmas Market with its historical carousels and cultural program in the





“Sternenhaus”. During the Lantern Procession of Nuremberg’s school children, more than 1 000 girls and boys carry self-made lanterns to the castle hill, where the Christmas story is performed on an open stage. Exhibit of crèches, traditional crafts and Christmas traditions, rides in a post coach and the festive illuminations in the Old Town put every visitor to the Franconian metropolis in the holiday spirit.

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### **The Nuremberg Christmas Market in the Internet**

You can find everything you need to know about the Christkindlesmarkt at the internet address [www.christkindlesmarkt.de](http://www.christkindlesmarkt.de). Take a virtual stroll through the market, be enchanted by the Christkind or order delicious gingerbread online – those are just some of the possibilities on offer at this site. On the German and English versions of the website, there are a variety of interesting offerings such as live-cams or picture galleries – which will inspire your visit – in addition to all necessary information. The official internet page of the Nuremberg Christmas Market was created in close cooperation with the Nuremberg Convention and Tourism Office, the City’s Market Office and the Office for Communication and City-Marketing of the City of Nuremberg.

