

## Who am I and why have I written this book

I worked for years in marketing tourist destinations. During that time I travelled the world for work. Later on I moved to Munich, I had two fantastic kids and changed my professional path to one where I didn't need to travel, but to write and communicate instead.

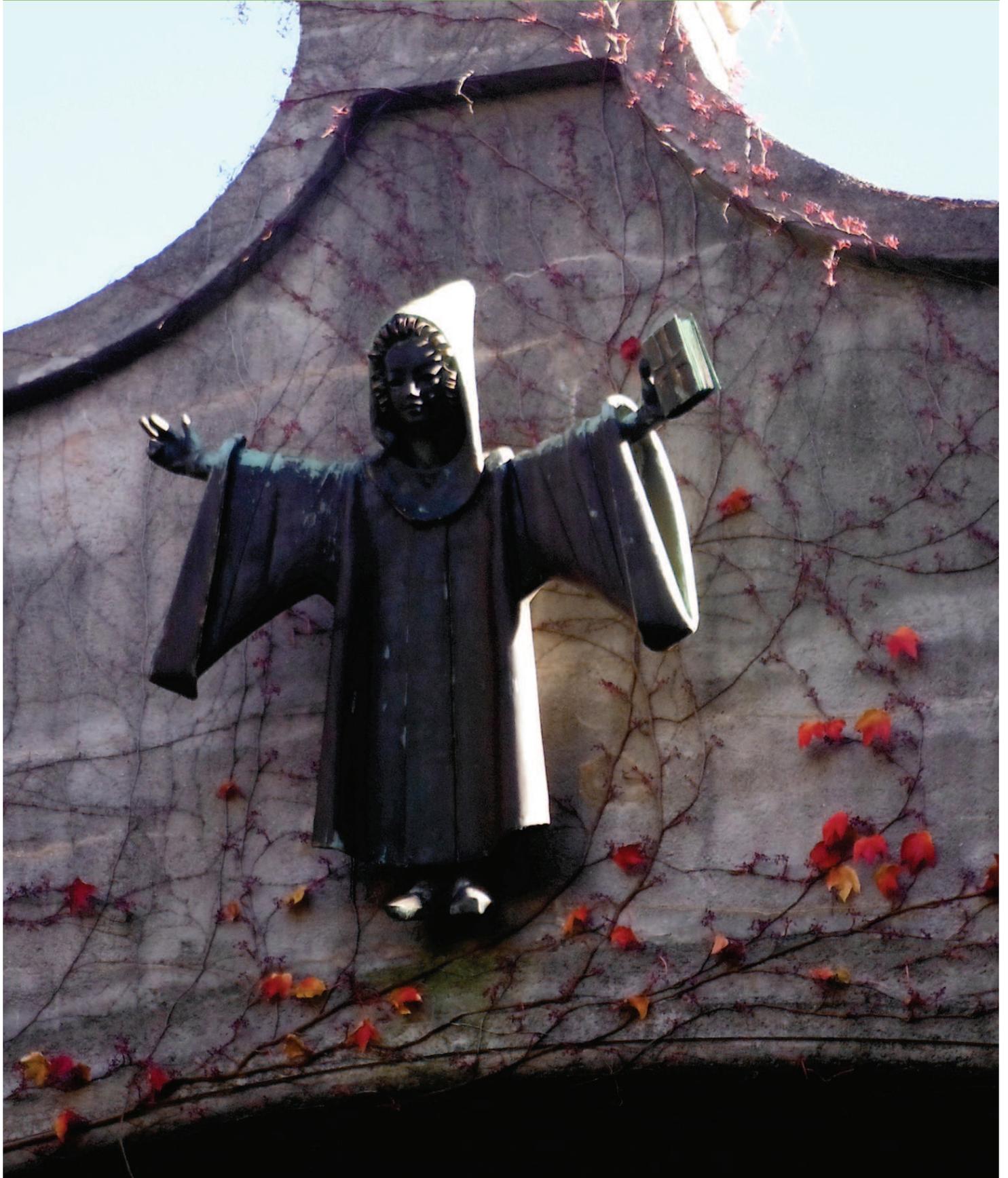
I also started writing for pleasure: I became a blogger and created a resources guide for foreign parents in Munich, and it became very successful. And I continued travelling too, but for pleasure instead.

But then I realised that my travelling customs had completely changed since I started doing it with my children: Until then I had always liked to find my way around with travel guides, but now these were now quite useless: What they suggested was usually not children orientated, or my kids didn't enjoy it very much. What we looked for when we travelled was no more spending hours in an art gallery, resting in a spa or visiting ruins, instead we were now keen to find the coolest playgrounds in town, routes in nature where we could go with a pushchair or only visit museums where we could touch things, learn or experiment.

That's when I decided to join my tourism knowledge, my pleasure for communicating, my thrill for writing and my joy for travelling with my kids, in this guide. People who plan to visit Munich with children will enjoy this incredibly child-friendly city with its loads of wonderful playgrounds, fantastic swimming-pools, fun shows, the kind of museums that kids like, super interesting things to see and many other places around Munich: leisure parks, nature round the corner from the Alps, loads of lakes, forests, caverns... Both kids and grown-ups will love it.

I would have never been able to finish this project without the invaluable amount of help I have received from so many people: mamaenmunich's readers who have inspired me to write this: Helen, who helped me with the title and the marketing ideas; Jordi, who gave me so many tips; Alberto who taught me some desktop publishing; Landa, who listened to my comings and goings every step of the way; Caro, who introduced me to my editor; Gemma for her ideas and enthusiastic motivation; my mom-friends, who have helped brainstorm some of the suggestions listed here; Mikey, who has read, re-read and proofread every single word of this book, without his fantastic help this wouldn't have been half as well-written as it is, Caroline, who nicely checked the format, Anton, who kindly checked the German spelling and helped me with the history facts; my family: most especially my loving mother and brother, but also my German family, they all are always proud of whatever I do; Walter, who, with his incredible eyes, is author of most of the images in this book and whose unconditional love, support and patience allow me to set and reach all the goals I dream, no matter how crazy. And Max and Leo, with whom I was luckily born a second time, to a life full of adventures, trips, fun, knowledge and so much love; the two have been the real reason behind this project. This book is really because of and written for them.

# Some history





## The origins of Bavaria within Germany

First of all let's do a little exercise. Think about how we say, for instance, the word "English" in different languages: in German it's *englisch*, in French it's *anglais*, in Spanish, it's *inglés*, in Italian it's *inglese*, in Norwegian it's *engelsk*. Let's do the same exercise with the word "French": *französisch* (German), *français* (French), *francés* (Spanish), *francese* (Italian), *fransk* (Norwegian). And now the word "Spanish": *spanisch* (German) *espagnol* (French), *español* (Spanish), *espagnolo* (Italian), *spansk* (Norwegian), or the word "Norwegian": *norwegisch* (German), *norvégien* (French), *noruego* (Spanish), *norvegese* (Italian), *norsk* (Norwegian).

Fine, now let's find the translation of the word "German" in all those languages too: in English it's *German*, in German it's *Deutsch*, in French it's *allemand*, in Spanish it's *alemán*, in Italian it's *tedesco*, in Norwegian it's *tysk*.

Have you noticed anything strange about this? You have, haven't you? It's strange that when we refer to English, French, Spanish or Norwegian, for instance, all the words are similar to each other, even when we say them in different languages. But when we refer to those living in that central European country known as Germany, the words don't resemble each other at all!

Why is this? The answer is that this central European country, known today as Germany, didn't start to come together as one country until the middle of the 19th century. Before this unification they were 39 different states, each with their own history and origins.

These states, some of which were ruled by kings, some by princes and some by dukes were heirs of the Germanic Peoples, a group from the North of Europe who spoke similar languages with a common origin. They were a mixture of original Celtic peoples: the *Baiern* or the *Bajuwaron* (who gave their name to Bavaria) and the barbarian peoples who arrived in the German invasions between the 3rd and the 8th centuries: the Teutons (that's where the Italian name: *tedesco*, the German name *deutsch*, and the Norwegian name *tysk* come from), the Germans (that's the name chosen in English), the Alemanni (who gave the name in French: *allemand* and in Spanish: *alemán*), the Angles, the Burgundians, the Saxons, the Jutes, the Suebi, the Vandals, the Vikings, the Visigoths and a few more.

As feudal systems developed, the rule of the Guelphs and the Ghibellines gave way to the Wittelsbach dynasty and the towns of Kehlheim and Straubing rose to prominence.

In the 12th century the duchy of Bavaria was divided into two: Palatinate and Upper Bavaria. This North-South division has marked the region's history right up until today, as Munich and Nuremberg continue their rivalry.

In the 16th century Bavaria was reunified and in the 17th century survived the Thirty Years War intact only to suffer under absolute monarchs, who used their realm to play European politics. The lack of internal development left Bavaria ripe for change when the revolutionary armies of France arrived at the end of the 18th century.

At the beginning of the 19th century the Confederation of the Rhine was created by Napoleon Bonaparte during the Napoleonic Wars. These French-allied client states became the German Confederation in the aftermath of his defeat: 39 states (not including Bavaria) with a single market and later a customs union. The Confederation was not strong and ended in the Unification of Germany in 1871, led by Prussia. This unification meant an empire, Bismarck's empire. If the Holy Roman Empire was considered the first empire, this would be the second empire, lasting until the First World War. Using historical comparisons for legitimacy, as part of their propaganda, the Nazis described their regime as the third empire, the Third *Reich*.

## History of Munich

Have you noticed in Munich the recurring image of a monk with a hood? This symbol of Munich is inspired by the monastic origins of the city. In fact the name Munich comes from the German word *Mönche*, meaning monks. In the 7th century monks from an abbey located by Lake Tegernsee founded a small monastery in what today is the city's centre: *Peterskirche*, the Church of Saint Peter.

In the 12th century the Bavarian Duke Henry the Lion of the Gelf dynasty, wanting to promote the town's economy, built a bridge on the river Isar and at the same time destroyed another to the North, near Freising. The town's growth increased when Frederick I (known as Barbarossa) allowed Munich to mint coins and gave it the right to levy customs duties. Later the town was ruled by the Wittelsbach dynasty (a name that you will often see when traveling around the city, e.g. *Wittelsbacher Brücke* – the Wittelsbach Bridge)

In the 14th century Duke Louis IV of Bavaria was elected King of Germany and Holy Roman Emperor, and chose Munich as his residence. This not only helped the town's continued growth, but also gave it one of its most important symbols, its colours: black and gold, the same of the Holy Roman Empire. This century ended with many rebellions of the bourgeoisie against the nobility which forced the duke's residence to be moved to the outskirts of the town. It also saw the building of a city wall and, in the aftermath of the Black Death, the persecution and expulsion of the Jews.

In the 15th century the town's Gothic cathedral, the *Frauenkirche*, was built. The peak of the Gothic movement was mirrored by a cultural peak for the city culminating in its designation as the capital of Bavaria in 1506.

During the 16th century, the power of the bourgeoisie was reduced as the city became the centre of the Wittelsbach dynasty's power. At the end of the century the Duke William V founded the famous brewery *Hofbräuhaus* (which literally means the Court's Brewery).

In the 17th century Munich returned to prominence as the capitol of Duke Maximilian I. In the first half of the century, the city was wracked by plague and the

Thirty Years War, being occupied by Swedish troops. However the city and Bavaria survived the war in one piece and managed to prosper again.

In the 18th century it was ruled by Maximilian II Emanuel and Maximilian III (that's why Max is a very common name among the children born in this city) and the *Englischer Garten* (the English Garden) was created.

In the 19th century the city enjoyed a golden age of culture and art. The neoclassical architects Leo von Klenze and Friedrich von Gärtner (who gave their names to the Klenzestrasse and Gärtnerplatz) designed Ludwigstrasse, Königsplatz and extended the royal residence. Also in this century Maximilianstrasse, now one of the most exclusive streets in city, was developed and the district of Schwabing became a cultural haven where many writers and painters lived. This is where the expressionist movement "*Der blaue Reiter*" emerged, with artists such as Kandinsky and Franz Marc.

In the early 20th century, Munich did not suffer much physical damage during World War I. However the population of the city suffered heavily during the war through lack of basic foodstuffs and fuel shortages. At the end of World War I, a kind of Soviet Republic survived in the city for nine months before the rebellion was suffocated by North German troops. Between 1918 and 1933 the Weimar Republic provided little peace. Although democratic, the Republic was weakened by reparations, military coup d'états, attempted revolutions and a huge economic crisis.

From 1920 onwards Nazism grew in Munich and in 1923 Hitler attempted a coup d'état against the Weimar Republic. Although a farcical failure with Hitler landing in prison, the Nazi party took hold of the city. In 1935, during the mythologizing of the Nazi state, Hitler named it the "Capital of the Movement".

In 1939 World War II broke out and lasted until 1945. In these years the city was the target of many air raids suffering greatly from the destruction. After the war, all efforts were directed to rebuilding, and from that moment Munich directed itself towards industry and tourism which slowly drove its economic growth.

In 1972 Munich hosted the XX Olympic Games. This event meant a huge investment in public transport, the first underground and light rail lines were created, and the Olympic Park was constructed. The Park is still to this day heavily used for sport and cultural events, among other activities. Nevertheless the Munich Olympic Games will tragically always be remembered for the Black September terrorist attack. A group of Palestine terrorists took a group of Israeli sportspeople and coaches hostage inside the Olympic village. After a siege and bungled rescue attempts, it ended tragically in the death of all hostages, some terrorists and a policeman.

Nowadays Munich and the surrounding region is one of the world's richest areas. Especially after World War II many companies which had their headquarters in Berlin or in East Germany moved their offices to Munich. Today Munich hosts the headquarters of large corporations such as BMW, Siemens, Allianz and MAN.



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