

Selected highlights and events in Niedersachsen (Lower Saxony) in 2026

- **January 2026: New Year's Day dip in the North Sea**

Traditionally on 1 January, intrepid locals and visitors take to the chilly waters of the North Sea in various coastal resorts in Niedersachsen to welcome the new year. After this impressive display, participants and spectators alike can revive themselves with hot drinks and live music – and it's a good time to fire up the barbecue too!

www.nordsee53grad.de/veranstaltungskalender

- **24 - 25 January 2026 (alternative date: 7–8 February 2026):
Upper Harz dog sled race in Clausthal**

Clausthal-Zellerfeld has been hosting this dog sledding adventure for many years now. The event attracts thousands of winter enthusiasts and dog lovers every year. Alongside some top competitors from the German and Dutch national dog sled teams, the race also draws in many amateur 'mushers'. As usual, only purebred sled dogs can enter the race.

www.oberharz.de/en/events/events-in-the-oberharz/sled-dog-adventure

- **6 – 8 March 2026: Mystica Hamelon in Hamelin**

A medieval fantasy market: experience traditional camp life, complete with knights in armour, medieval craftspeople and tradespeople, jugglers and musicians – the stuff of myths, fables and legends! Clad in traditional costumes, enthusiasts from across Europe make their annual pilgrimage to the town of the Pied Piper to join the festivities on the marketplace over an area of 25,000 m².

www.hameln.de/de/veranstaltungen/mysticahamelon

- **12 April 2026: ADAC Marathon in Hanover**

With the IAAF Silver Label, the ADAC Marathon has become a fixture in the calendar of major national and international running events. The Hanover marathon is famous not only for its very fast, flat route, but also for its professional organisation and varied supporting programme. www.marathon-hannover.de/

- **22 – 26 April 2026: 39th European Media Art Festival in
Osnabrück**

The EMAF has been one of the most important hubs of international media art since the 1980s. As a meeting place for artists, curators, distributors, gallerists and visitors with a special interest in the subject, this event plays a significant role in shaping the relevant issues, aesthetics and future of media art. The festival offers both a contemporary and a

historical perspective with a programme that includes experimental films, installations, performances, digital formats and hybrid forms. www.emaf.de/en/

- **24 April – 3 May 2026: 10th Wilhelmshaven Schweinswal-Tage porpoise festival**

The southern coast of Wilhelmshaven provides the backdrop for a unique spectacle of nature: each year in spring, pods of porpoises gather in the Jade Bay. For seven days, porpoise-watching excursions are organised by boat or on land so people can witness this fascinating natural phenomenon. In addition, ‘porpoise criers’ on South Strand, photo walks, nature documentaries and presentations by international researchers round off the extensive programme. www.schweinswaltage.de

- **25 – 26 April 2026: Altes Land Blossom Festival in Jork**

In the Altes Land region, the cherry trees come into blossom first, followed by the apple trees about ten days later. As a result, about 10 million fruit trees transform Germany’s largest contiguous fruit-growing region into a fairytale landscape of pink and white. Magnificent half-timbered buildings, splendid ornamental gates, grassy embankments and sparkling blue waterways form an idyllic backdrop for the Blossom Festival (Altländer Blütenfest) over the first weekend in May. Along with the traditional costumes and dancing, a must-see highlight is the crowning of the new Blossom Queen. www.tourismus-altesland.de/portal/seiten/altlaender-bluetenfest-904000441-20380.html

- **30 April 2026: Walpurgis Night in the Harz Mountains**

The Walpurgis Festival is a traditional European celebration dating back to the pre-Christian era. A thousand years ago, the original inhabitants of the Harz mountains were already celebrating their own version of the spring festival, in which they welcomed the spring by offering various sacrifices. The Harz Walpurgis Nights are celebrated in more than 20 towns and villages throughout the region. The centre of this bubbling cauldron can be found in the towns of Bad Grund, Braunlage, Hahnenklee, Sankt Andreasberg, Schierke and Thale. en.harzinfo.de/festivals-events/walpurgis-night

- **14 - 17 May 2026: International kite flying and wind chime festival in Norddeich**

Spectacular kites and exotic flying objects, as well as entertainment for children, food and impressive air shows are regular attractions at the Norddeich Kite Festival. With its maritime charm and international flair, complemented by an attractive location on the North Sea overlooking the isles of Juist and Norderney, this popular event is a magnet for kite aficionados and beach holiday makers alike. www.drachenfest-norddeich.de

- **14 – 25 May 2026: Göttingen International Handel-Festival**

The International Handel Festival in Göttingen is the world's oldest festival of Baroque music. The shows will take place in different locations across the town and whole region, at both covered and open air venues, featuring well-known stars from the Baroque music scene as well as talented newcomers. www.haendel-festspiele.de/en/

- **16 May – 19 September 2026: 34rd International Fireworks Competition in Hanover**

Every year, visitors to the Fireworks Competition are mesmerised by the beautiful works of art in the sky created by the world's leading pyrotechnicians to the accompaniment of suitably atmospheric music. Germany's first fireworks competition has long since become a classic in its field. www.feuerwerk-hannover.de/en/

- **22 - 24 May 2026: Norderney White Sands Festival**

Traditionally, the Whitsun weekend marks a special date in the calendar for sports fans and party-goers on the island of Norderney. Thousands of visitors flock to the North Sea island to watch Germany's best windsurfers and beach volleyball players. At night, the festival grounds on the beach transform into a party animal's paradise. www.whitesandsfestival.de www.whitesandsfestival.de

- **22 May – 7 June 2026: KunstFestSpiele in Hanover Herrenhausen**

The international KunstFestSpiele is a performing arts festival offering an impressive programme of musical theatre, concerts, theatre, performances, installations and much more besides. Over 20 productions will be presented at around 60 events in the Royal Gardens of Herrenhausen and the city of Hanover. From installations to in-house productions and premieres – there's a bit of everything! www.kunstfestspiele.de/en/

- **29 - 31 May 2026: 35rd Emden Matjestage herring festival**

This is where the little fish take centre stage: the Matjestage festival celebrates the tradition of herring fishing in Emden, which dates back over 450 years. Boats from Germany and abroad moor in the inland port and Ratsdelft harbour basin, bringing with them a touch of maritime nostalgia. Live bands and the Matjeslauf (herring run) provide fun entertainment. www.matjestage.de

- **3 – 10 June 2026: 36th Emden-Norderney Film Festival**

Located by the North Sea, the International Film Festival is among the country's most highly regarded, not just in Germany but around the world too. It's become a meeting

place for numerous representatives of the film industry in Germany and Northwestern Europe. Featuring 100 films shown on seven screens, the festival is first and foremost a popular major event, drawing in around 24,000 visitors who value the warm, personal atmosphere and the chance to see filmmakers up close. www.filmfest-empden.de/en/

- **5 – 20 June 2026: 56th Annual Harzburg Music Days**

Every year, Niedersachsen's third oldest festival of classical music offers an exclusive programme with top-class orchestras, soloists and ensembles. The annual international festival is organised by the Society for the Promotion of the Harzburg Music Days and runs for a traditional festival week. www.harzbuerger-musiktage.de

- **7 June 2026: UNESCO World Heritage Day**

Since 2005, World Heritage Day has been commemorated every year in Germany on the first Sunday in June with events held at all World Heritage Sites. For Holiday Destination Niedersachsen, these are the Fagus Factory in Alfeld, St Mary's Cathedral and St Michael's Church in Hildesheim, the Rammelsberg Mines in the Harz mountains, the Upper Harz Water Management System, the Old Town of Goslar and the Wadden Sea. www.unesco-welterbetag.de/en

- **19 – 21 June 2026: Hurricane Festival in Scheeßel**

Three days of the finest bands: around 65,000 fans are expected at this indie, rock, pop, electronic and hip-hop festival every year. International stars, German acts and emerging artists will be there to rock the four stages again this year. www.hurricane.de/en/

- **21 June 2026: Fête de la Musique in Hanover**

The world's largest music festival doesn't require tickets or fees - anyone can go, anyone can play, even in Hanover. What counts is that everyone enjoys making music. In addition to a wide range of musical styles and musicians, there will be many locations in the city centre where it will be possible to simply make music – as a soloist or ensemble, spontaneously or planned, with or without a conductor. The biggest Fête de la Musique in northern Germany is a truly communal experience. www.hannover.de/Kultur-Freizeit/Freizeit-Sport/Feste-Saisonales/Fête-de-la-Musique

- **3 – 12 July 2026: Marksmen Festival (Hanover Schützenfest)**

The drill command of 'Im Doubliertritt, Marsch!' ('In double step – march!') is the traditional starting signal for the world's longest procession of marksmen – one of the highlights of this festival, which has been celebrated since 1529. On the first Sunday of

the festival, some 10,000 members of marksmen associations, folklore and carnival societies, joined by various companies and institutions, form a traditional procession through the Old Town. Over a period of ten days, the world's largest marksmen festival offers lots of things to see and experience, from the Bruchmeister (ceremonial stewards) to marksmen skills, high-speed funfair rides, marquees and Hannover's cult drink, Lüttje Lage, consisting of beer and a shot, served in separate glasses, but drunk simultaneously! www.schuetzenfest-hannover.de

- **3 July – 16 August: Summer festival in the Autostadt**

The summer festival offers plenty of musical highlights with 22 national and international artists ensuring that festival feeling in the Autostadt. A lively supporting programme for young and old with holiday workshops, play areas, and climbing towers round off the event. One particular highlight is the Cool Summer Island, an offshore floating island at the sand terraces in the harbour basin.

www.autostadt.de/en/events/summer

- **16 - 19 July 2026: Deichbrand Festival at Cuxhaven Sea Airport**

This popular rock festival spans four days and is a festival for both young and old. There is discounted admission for children aged between eight and twelve years old accompanied by an adult guardian. Around 60,000 fans of indie, rock, pop, electronic, and hip-hop beats are expected – and all of them can stock up on everything they need in the dedicated festival supermarket. www.deichbrand.de/en/

- **22 July – 9 August 2026: Maschsee Festival in Hanover**

A chance to experience that holiday feeling and maritime flair in the middle of town! Over 19 days, visitors to Niedersachsen's largest local festival can take a culinary and artistic trip around the world. Year after year, international cuisine, free concerts, water sports activities, open-air dance evenings and an exciting programme for children guarantee a non-stop holiday feeling for everyone. www.maschseefest.de/en/

- **25 July – 2 August 2026: 81th Summer Music Days in Hitzacker**

Each summer, for nine days around 1 August, this music festival transforms the picturesque half-timbered town of Hitzacker on the Elbe river into a cultural hotspot with a reach far beyond Niedersachsen's state boundaries. www.musiktage-hitzacker.de/

- **29 July – 2 August 2026: Summertime @ Norderney**

This music festival is held on Norderney's north beach. A festival of different genres in a maritime setting. There's something to suit every musical taste – pop, rock, party music and even classical feature every year. www.summertime-norderney.de/

- **31 July – 2 August 2026: 14th International StreetArt Festival in Wilhelmshaven**

The International StreetArt Festival in Wilhelmshaven transforms the city into a vibrant open-air gallery every year. International street artists create impressive graffiti, murals, and sculptures. Visitors can watch the artwork come to life and enjoy a unique atmosphere of creativity and culture. en.streetart-wilhelmshaven.de/

- **5 – 9 August 2026: ConQuest of Mythodea in the grounds of the Rittergut Brokeloh manor**

Every August since 2004, Brokeloh has hosted the ConQuest of Mythodea, a live action role playing event. The Rittergut Brokeloh, a former feudal estate covering an area of more than 100 hectares, is located around 50 km to the west of Hanover and provides the ideal setting for the mythical continent of Mythodea. This major event attracts around 6,000 players and 1,500 spectators every year. mythodea.de/en/

- **7 August – 13 September 2026: Magic of Light in the Park of Gardens in Bad Zwischenahn**

From 8 PM to midnight, the park shines in a spectrum of colours under the theme "Illumination – Magic of Light in the Park." A blend of garden light design, event lighting, and creative light objects creates a unique experience, featuring light sculptures, projections, and captivating patterns. www.park-der-gaerten.de/en/

- **8 – 9 August 2026: M'era Luna Festival Hildesheim**

M'era Luna is a metal, gothic rock and industrial music festival in Hildesheim, which attracts around 25,000 fans in quirky dress every year. The dark music scene's big get-together is held at the airbase in Drispstedt. As well as performances by around 40 bands, the festival also features readings, a vibrant market area and the Gothic Fashion Show, which has become something of a tradition. www.meraluna.de/en/

- **9 August 2026: 90th Duhnen mudflat racing in Cuxhaven**

The world-famous horse race on the seabed, held since 1902 in the Wadden Sea off Duhnen, is one of the most spectacular events in the international racing calendar. No other event in the world offers a comparable equestrian spectacle, where racehorses and

harness racers compete against the backdrop of one of the world's busiest shipping lanes. www.duhner-wattrennen.de

- **21 – 25 August 2026: Brokser Heiratsmarkt folk festival in Bruchhausen-Vilsen**

Every year the Brokser Heiratsmarkt, one of northern Germany's biggest folk festivals, attracts several hundred thousand visitors to the climatic health resort of Bruchhausen-Vilsen. The site spans over nine hectares, around 3000 square metres of which is exhibition space with commercial marquees. This market in the climatic health resort of Bruchhausen-Vilsen welcomes up to 400,000 visitors on five days, which makes it one of the six largest folk festivals in northwestern Germany. www.brokser-heiratsmarkt.de

- **22 August – 9 September 2026: Burgplatz Open Air in Brunswick**

One of the highlights in Brunswick is the annual music theatre open air event at Burgplatz, set against the impressive historic backdrop of the Cathedral and Dankwarderode Castle. Carl Maria von Weber's Der Freischütz is performed outdoors, delighting music lovers. www.staatstheater-braunschweig.de/produktion/der-freischuetz

- **Tba 2026: Celle stallion parade at the State Stud Farm**

In 2025, the Celle State Stud Farm stallion parade made its comeback after a six-year break, celebrating its 290th anniversary in style – and the spectacle is set to continue in 2026. Among the highlights are the historic carriages and the grand dressage quadrille featuring 24 stallions, regularly showcased in the historic grounds during the parade. www.landgestuetcelle.de/de/aktuelles/drei-tage-celler-hengstparade-vor-ausverkauftem-haus.html

- **4 - 5 September 2026: Pflasterzauber in Hildesheim**

At Pflasterzauber (Pavement magic), nine venues in central Hildesheim host performances by German and international artists. Niedersachsen's biggest street art festival has been held annually since 2008, captivating thousands of visitors with fantastic, whimsical, and astounding performances of the highest standard. www.pflasterzauber.de/

- **16 – 20 September 2026: 33rd International Film Festival in Oldenburg**

Every autumn, the International Film Festival brings a touch of Hollywood glamour to the former royal seat. It's one of Europe's largest independent film festivals and

regularly presents innovative cinematic contributions that break the mould and question what we take for granted. No wonder the festival is also one of the most popular fixtures among stars of the film industry: in previous years, stars such as Nicolas Cage, Til Schweiger and Veronica Ferres have attended the festival. www.filmfest-oldenburg.de/en/

- **Tba 2026: Sülfeleistertage salt festival in Lüneburg**

A medieval extravaganza on the theme of salt: once a year, Lüneburg organises a festival in honour of the salt pan owners of yesteryear, who made a significant contribution to salt production and thus the town's wealth. The medieval Sülfeleister market, complete with vagabonds, jugglers and soothsayers around the St Johannis Church, thrilling contests and the annual parade give the event a distinctly traditional flair. www.suelfeleistertage.de

- **2 – 4 October 2026: Sailing-CUP in Wilhelmshaven**

Every year, the end of September sees the launch of the oldest regatta for traditional sailboats on the German North Sea coast. One of the highlights of the regatta is the closing parade through the Kaiser Wilhelm swing bridge – guaranteed to give you goosebumps and a spectacular photo opportunity! Those who dare can take to the water, but there's also plenty to enjoy for those who prefer to stay on shore. www.wilhelmshaven-sailing-cup.de

- **2 – 11 October 2026: 419th Kramermarkt festival in Oldenburg**

Tradition and a family-friendly atmosphere – two of the key phrases that sum up Kramermarkt in Oldenburg. Over a million visitors attend the largest folk festival in the north west, which runs for ten days. Some 250 stalls and rides guarantee top entertainment and a carnival atmosphere at the festival grounds at the Weser-Ems Halls. www.oldenburg-tourismus.de/veranstaltungen/event-tipps/kramermarkt

- **10 - 18 October 2026: 18th Annual Migratory Bird Days in the Lower Saxony Wadden Sea National Park**

For nine days in October on the North Sea coast of Niedersachsen and on the East Frisian Islands (Ostfriesische Inseln), everything revolves around the migratory birds that flock to the Wadden Sea from the far North every autumn in their thousands. Bar-tailed godwits, dunlins and other wading birds stop off here to gather strength for their onward flight to their wintering grounds in Southern Europe and Africa. Many Nordic geese even spend the entire winter on the coast. www.zugvogeltage.de/

- **Tba November 2026: Mumme Festival in Brunswick (Braunschweig)**

For centuries, Brunswick Mumme, a thick, sweet malt extract, was a best-selling export for craft brewers and generated a great deal of trade for merchants in the Hanseatic city. At the end of the 20th century, production was temporarily halted, but Mumme has been available to enjoy again since 2008. The annual Mumme Festival is a celebration of this traditional beverage, which today is used as an ingredient in various specialties. www.braunschweig.de/leben/innenstadt/veranstaltungen/mummegenussmeile/2025.php

- **10 – 16 November 2026: 40th Brunswick Film Festival**

Originally founded by 20 university students, who were dissatisfied with the films on offer at the city's cinemas, the Brunswick International Film Festival is now the oldest film festival in Niedersachsen. Cinephiles can look forward to many galactic film adventures. A wide range of new films and famous classics will be screened over seven days, comprising international and local productions, from short films to documentaries, which will attract film lovers in their droves to the Lion City. One highlight of the festival is the presentation of the ten film awards – public and panel awards – for European debut and second films, the EDDA international short film prize and the Die Europa acting award. www.filmfest-braunschweig.de/en/

FURTHER INFORMATION

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About Tourist Board Niedersachsen (TourismusMarketing Niedersachsen or TMN)

The TMN is the central point of contact for tourism in Niedersachsen (Lower Saxony). The company was founded on behalf of the Niedersachsen Ministry of Economic Affairs, Transport and Housing in 2001 and, since January 2014, has been a wholly state-owned company. The TMN's main task is to develop and implement measures for the future-oriented positioning of Niedersachsen in national and international tourism competition in cooperation with regional tourism stakeholders. The focus is on regional and national marketing of Niedersachsen as a tourist destination, the development of brand concepts, Internet portals and quality management systems for tourism offerings.