

Beat: Local

A Half-Millenia of Reformation

Almost 500 years since Martin Luther

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USPA NEWS - This year, Germany begins twelve months of festive celebrations to mark the 500th year of the Reformation. October 31st of 2017 is also marked as a special national holiday, joining the ranks of the Day of German Unity, Christmas, and New Year's Day.

From Berlin, the ICE will whisk you away to the quaint town of Lutherstadt Wittenberg in just forty minutes. It's all blue skies and clear weather for the beginning of the 500th anniversary of Martin Luther's reformation. In October of 1517, the professor of theology nailed his famous '95 Thesis' onto one of the doors of the Schlosskirche in Wittenberg, thus propagating a wave of changes and new denominations in the Christian faith.

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Lutherstadt Wittenberg has a whole host of activities that will keep travelers and locals busy for the coming year starting with the kickoff event at the Luther Garden. Tree saplings were planted by various local officials and members of the clergy to start the celebrations under a pavilion in the shape of a crucifix. A total of 500 trees will be planted over the next few months, one for each year since the Reformation. A historical market will be placed in the town square along with themed exhibitions in the Town Hall and along a few of the old streets.

In between the sausage stalls and beer stands are locals selling handmade products such as pottery, home decoration items, and cookies. Most if not all of the vendors are dressed in traditional German clothing typical of the 1500s with wooden stalls to match. The Wittenberg 360 exhibition will feature the city's close history with the Reformation as well as information on the lives of Luther and Melancthon. Visitors are encouraged to ask for more information at the local tourist office opposite the famous Schlosskirche.

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