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Press-Information

The Mainau Flower Year 2018 Fascination Africa

Mainau Island takes visitors on a journey to southern climes in the Flower Year 2018 with the theme “Baobab and Bonobo – Fascination Africa”. The rich diversity of cultures and nature of this fascinating continent will be presented throughout the entire Flower Year.

Africa is the second largest continent in the world after Asia. And as such, a continent of great diversity; not only has it many different ethnic groups and cultures but also rich plant and animal worlds. Installations, events and typical dishes give visitors to Mainau Island in 2018 an insight into the exotic diversity of Africa.

Magnificent blossoms throughout the year

The Orchid Show in the Palm House traditionally opens the Mainau Flower Year. In keeping with the annual theme, this year’s show with the title “On Tarzan’s Windowsill” takes visitors to the Central African rainforest. Among others the orchid species *bulbophyllum* is shown from 16 March to 6 May. There is also an exhibition with impressive photographs of bonobos by the internationally-renowned nature photographer Christian Ziegler. Bonobos are chimpanzee-related apes which live in the rainforests of the Democratic Republic of Congo.

The annual Flower Display in the palace church St. Marien starts at the same time. Cut flower arrangements of indigenous South African plants like strelitzias and gladioli can be seen at the “Spring Greetings from the Cape” show from 16 March to 8 April.

Spring flowers also awaken outside in the park at the start of the Mainau Flower Year. Over a million crocuses, tulips, narcissi and hyacinths line the Spring Avenue and adorn the island’s flowerbeds. These are followed by rhododendrons and azaleas in the park and gardens. Early in May, tree peonies from China and Tibet flower in a variety of colours in the Peony Garden. Visitors can also

experience the annual theme in the Butterfly House from 10 May to 17 June when many African butterflies flutter through the air.

Flower of love, desert sands and savanna animals

Numerous installations and plantings are dedicated to the larger regions of Africa. For example, there will be a desert landscape with a replica of the Cheops pyramid including sphinx made of sand on Mainau's eastern promontory. Native African crops will be presented at a West African farm garden near the island's farmyard. South African plants will adorn the Mediterranean Terrace where there will be a special display of various agapanthus plants (flower of love) which generally bloom in July/August. An East African grassland landscape will be represented on the lawn in front of the palace including five stylized large animals of the savanna.

The next highlight of the Flower Year is the rose month of June. More than 1,000 varieties of the Queen of Flowers bloom along the Wild and Bush Rose Promenade and in the Italian Rose Garden, which Grand Duke Friedrich I of Baden laid at the foot of the castle in 1871. The most beautiful rose is chosen by visitors taking part in the vote for the Mainau Queen of Roses (8 June to 1 July).

The annual Dahlia Show has a long tradition on Mainau. It colourfully announces autumn's arrival in the Lakeside Garden. More than 12,000 dahlias in over 250 varieties provide a spectacular firework of colours wooing visitors into voting for the Mainau Queen of Dahlias (31 August to 7 October). There are some attractive prizes to be won for those taking part.

The Autumn Exhibition in the Palm House traditionally closes the Flower Year. It is dedicated this time to the topic "Coffee – Africa's Gift to the World" and is on show from 21 September to 21 October. The plant with the name *coffea arabica* originally came from Central Africa's highlands.

Seasonal Gardens "Black and White"

The seasonal gardens are designed anew each year. Presented for the 16th time in 2018, the experimental gardens covering an area of 100 square metres each are the result of prize-winning designs by landscape architecture students from the Weihenstephan-Triesdorf University and the Ankara University in Turkey. The five gardens, open 17 May to 21 October, provoke thought about whether

opposites - geographical or social - can be overcome in our society.

Exhibition about animal observation from space

This exhibition is all about the global migration of birds and other animals as observed using modern technology from space with the animal observation system ICARUS from the Max Planck Institute for Ornithology Radolfzell. Visitors can get to know this worldwide unique research project at the exhibition “From Lake Constance to Africa – on a long-haul flight with ICARUS” from 15 June to 16 September 2018 at Mainau Palace. Presented in a clear and comprehensible way, it gives inquisitive visitors detailed information about the scientific and technological part of the ICARUS project and also gives them the opportunity of getting involved themselves as researchers. There will also be several activity days in connection with the exhibition. Project imitator Prof. Dr. Martin Wilkelski will be a guest at several of talks held on Mainau.

New and remarkable

Mainau park and gardens are constantly being redeveloped for the benefit of visitors. And so there will be some new and remarkable things to discover on the island in 2018. These include a newly designed Medicinal Herb Garden where visitors can learn about centuries-old local plant knowledge and also about the cultivation of Indian and Chinese medicinal plants. The plants requirements; a sunny spot or a shadier one under a pergola have been created in the approx.800m² fan-shaped garden. Signs with sounding names like motherwort, monk’s pepper and comfrey await visitors and give information about the plant’s medicinal properties used in the past or still today and also tip for visitors on planting medicinal herbs in their own gardens.

From the Flower Year 2018, a newly created plateau on the island’s steep south-eastern slope continuing on from the Rose Garden will provide visitors with a breath-taking panoramic view across Lake Constance in the direction of Meersburg. Various seating heights invite visitors to linger for a while and relax. The wood used for the viewing platform came from Douglas firs grown in the island’s own forests on the neighbouring mainland.

The Count’s Festivals

The Count’s Festivals are always highlights of the Mainau Year. The Count’s Island Festival invites visitors to “Stroll around, shop, enjoy” again in 2018. International exhibitors present trends and fashions for garden lovers, all sorts of

accessories for the home and garden and also lifestyle and wellness products around Mainau Palace and in the Rose Garden from 31 May to 3 June. There are also stands selling all kinds of hand-crafted articles, delicatessen products and herb and spices. The motto of the Count's Palace Festival in 2018 is once again "Noblesse Oblige". Exclusive jewellery, fashion articles and accessories are presented at this special shopping experience from 3 to 7 October held in rooms of the baroque Mainau Palace not normally open to the public. An accompanying programme of musical performances, a historic fashion show and also a presentation of the latest hats from Countess Diana's Hat Studio takes place in the palace's festive White Hall.

Swedish Customs

The Bernadotte family's roots lie in Sweden and so Swedish traditions have always been upheld on Mainau Island. This includes the Midsummer Festival celebrated in Scandinavian countries at the time of the summer solstice. Mainau Island also holds a cheerful colourful festival on 23 June according to Swedish customs with dancing around the midsummer tree and also Swedish sounds and delicacies. The traditional Lucia singing 12 December and the Swedish Lucia Festival 13 December bring light in the dark days. Lucia, personified on Mainau by a female member of the Bernadotte family, wears a crown of candles on her head, her companions carry lights in their hands. On the eve of the Lucia Festival, local school children sing carols in the palace courtyard from 5.45pm. This is followed by a concert in the palace church and a Christmas buffet in the Palm House.

"In Love – Engaged - Married"

Marrying on Mainau Island – the perfect venue for the happiest day of your life. Everything you need to create a truly exceptional day is here on the island; the Red Salon in the baroque Mainau Palace for civil weddings, the baroque palace church for church weddings. The Italian Rose Garden, with spectacular views over Lake Constance, or the Palm House are two venues for the aperitif afterwards. There are several rooms on the island catering for wedding receptions of up to 200 people. Exhibitors at the Wedding Fair "In Love – Engaged – Married" present everything else for the happiest day of your life from bridal clothes to hairstyles, jewellery and cosmetics to wedding reception ideas.

Culture on Mainau Island

Mainau Island is the perfect setting for a connection between culture and nature. A varied programme of exhibitions, theatre, concerts and cheerful colourful events enhance the ocean of flowers in the park and garden. On 1 July, school musicians and amateur music ensembles from Baden-Württemberg, Austria and Switzerland give musical performances under the motto “Mainau Sounds” in Mainau Park. The series is staged by the Mainau European Cultural Forum (EKFM) in cooperation with the State Institute for School Sports, Art and Music Baden-Württemberg, the Foundation “Singing with Children” and the Ministry for Culture, Youth and Sport Baden-Württemberg. The American Drama Group Europe will perform classical theatre in the palace courtyard 12 July.

A special musical highlight is presented 5 July under the sun canopy in the palace garden when there’s an open-air concert with the Southwest Philharmonic Constance performing Verdi’s opera “Nabucco” sung by the Czech Philharmonic Choir Brno. The successful “Jazz under Palm Trees” series started in 2008 by Mainau European Cultural Forum (EKFM) will continue in 2018. The concert series provides a platform for young international performers and also local musicians.

It’s not just children’s hearts that will beat faster at this year’s winter exhibition with the title “Build, Drive, Play” on show in the palace from 9 November 2018 to 10 February 2019. The exhibition shows historic and current toys of the popular Swedish brand BRIO.

A Paradise for Children

Mainau is a paradise for children. The island offers little visitors lots of variety, nature experiences and fun. They can romp around and discover lots of new things at the adventure playgrounds “Water World”, “Blumi’s Lakeside World” and the “Dwarf Village” in Mainau’s Children’s Land. There’s also a farmyard with petting zoo and pony rides. The Butterfly House with its unique diversity of species fills children’s eyes with joy. Mainau also has children-friendly admission prices. Admission is free for children up to the age of 12. The island has been awarded the “family holiday” quality seal several times by the Tourism-Marketing GmbH Baden-Württemberg and the German Hotel and Catering Association.

Mainau Gastronomy

Mainau gastronomy is an important part of the Flower Island. The chefs produce special menus for the annual

theme and will serve their guests some typical African dishes this year. There are ten gastronomic premises offering a wide range of foods; from a bistro with kiosk at the island's mainland entrance to the palace café in the baroque castle and the Schwedenschenke restaurant in the style of a Swedish country inn. Since 2014, totally new accents have been set by the á la carte Comturey restaurant at the harbour with a beer garden, ice-cream parlour and the "Täglich Brot" bakery where the island's bakers sell their homemade wood-oven baked wholegrain spelt bread. The banquet rooms at the Comturey offer spectacular views of the lake and are a great venue for special family occasions or company events as is the subtropical Palm House on the palace terrace.

Mainau Academy

Mainau has always seen itself as a place of nature education, nature experience awareness and horticulture. Mainau Academy workshops show how this can be applied in everyday life. Topics range from orchids, perennial plants, tub plants and rose care up to macro-photography workshops and diving rod seminars.

Visit www.mainau-akademie.de for more information.

Forest Experience on the Mainland

Since 2013, the nature experience offers on the island have been extended to include an area owned by Mainau Erlebniswald GmbH on the adjoining mainland. Visitors to Mainau can actively experience the forest ecosystem and encounter nature here on a very personal level under the theme "All outside, Everything's possible". There is a sensory path with several stations, an over 100-metre-long boardwalk rising up to about 9 metres above ground, a climbing parcours and also near-natural tree houses up to 30 metres above ground. A beer garden at the nearby former St. Katherina convent enhances the offer. Numerous cultural events are also held here. The "Mainau Forest Experience" is reached by foot from the Mainau carpark.

Visit www.mainau.de for more information.

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