

## **Independent Traveler Infos # 07 TGAC**

**Visiting restaurants, cafes and bars in Germany:** No doubt that you will figure out how it works by yourself – it even might be amusing, but a few tips can be helpful to enjoy a relaxed time visiting Germany. First of all, Germany offers a great variety of restaurants regarding style and cuisine, many cafes, bars and pubs. Especially during summer time many places have outdoor seating, sometimes hidden in the backyards. With the exception of high-class restaurants you will not be seated. Just walk in and pick the table of your choice. Don't rely on english menus, better bring a phrase book or a little dictionary – or ask the staff or the people at the table next to you. You don't get water for free, you have to pay for each glass or bottle you order. There is not such a thing like free refills for coffee, soda or water. If you want ice, you have to explicitly order it and some places might not have it! In many German states smoking was recently prohibited inside public restaurants and bars. Some places offer so called "smoker rooms". Despite the German's reputation as a law-abiding folk, the new non-smoking regulation can be ignored at some places, especially at late night bars and small beer pubs. The tip is usually about 10%. Basic restaurants might not be used to handle credit cards. Therefore make sure, that you always bring enough cash to pay the check – just in case. To "open a tab" at a bar or pub is not common. If you hand over your credit card before you have finished drinking, the barman either thinks you want to pay now or you can just enjoy the big question marks in his or her eyes. If you want to get separate checks, tell the staff in advance when you order. If it is crowded in a bar or pub, it's OK to pay the check directly at the bar counter instead of waiting for the waiter or waitress. And one more thing – do not expect German pubs, restaurants or bars being airconditioned, the overwhelming majority of it is not no matter how hot it may get in July or August! But much more important – enjoy the German food and beverages and have fun!

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