

## Commencement of summer in the Wachau and in the Nibelungengau Solstice and the Magic of Fire

**Torch-lit vineyards, impressive fireworks and wonderful opportunities for special moments are what make solstice celebrations in the Wachau and Nibelungengau so memorable every year.**

Spitz, in January 2016. On the last two weekends in June, the well-known Danube region comprising the Wachau, the Nibelungengau and the Krems Valley focuses its full attention on solstice celebrations. These festivities will take place this year in the Wachau on June 18 and in the Nibelungengau further to the west on June 25. More than 20 communities cultivate this old custom in splendid and enjoyable ways. Along with grand fireworks on both banks of the Danube, regular guests from around the globe are attracted every year by the internationally renowned Wachau wines and top culinary delights.

### **Magic of fire in the Nibelungengau plus solstice celebration in Melk**

The most recently established solstice celebrations are held in the Nibelungengau for the 11<sup>th</sup> time – this year on **June 25**. Breathtakingly enchanting fires bathe the banks and communities from Ybbs to Leiben in a magical light. Numerous fireworks and solstice fires plus countless lit torches illuminate both banks, inviting people to take evening cruises out on the river. Melk, the western gateway to the Wachau UNESCO World Heritage landscape, welcomes the approaching summer with an extensive show and the grandest of fireworks.

### **Solstice celebrations in the Wachau, a UNESCO World Heritage landscape**

The beginning of summer is celebrated in the famous Wachau wine towns on the weekend of the summer solstice – on **June 18** in the Wachau. A joyful and festive mood can already be felt in the afternoon of that day in the Danube communities of Aggsbach Markt, Spitz, Weissenkirchen, Dürnstein, Rossatz and Krems. From late afternoon on, the local restaurants along the Danube promenades see to the sustenance of visitors. When darkness falls, thousands of torches are lit in the terraced vineyards of the Wachau, setting this UNESCO World Heritage landscape ablaze in an unforgettable light. The large solstice fires are lit about nine at night when it turns dark. Huge fireworks around ten serve as the fitting culmination of the spectacular solstice festivities.

### **Fiery celebrations on ships**

The spectacle is particularly impressive when watched from aboard a ship. Many shipping lines offer special cruises. It is best not to wait till the last minute when booking a Wachau solstice cruise. The ships are often totally booked out a year in advance. Ships from, among others, Brandner Schifffahrt [www.brandner.at](http://www.brandner.at), DDSG Blue Danube [www.ddsg-blue-danube.at](http://www.ddsg-blue-danube.at) and Donauschifffahrt Ardagger GmbH are sailing that night.

**For information about dates, companies and accommodations in the Wachau - Nibelungengau region, call the hotline at +43/2713/30060-60. Detailed information is available at the website [www.sonnenwende.at](http://www.sonnenwende.at).**

You can find photo material on the Danube Region in Lower Austria in our online picture archive at the website [www.donau.com/bildarchiv](http://www.donau.com/bildarchiv).

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