

Special Treatment

Enjoy exclusive comfort and amenities in Munich Airport's VIP Wing. BY LISA MATTE



I'm going to let you in on a little secret. There's a lounge at Munich Airport where you're treated like a VIP regardless of the airline or class of service you're flying. And by VIP, I mean *all* the trimmings, from designated security screening, passport control and clearance through customs and immigration to private car transfers to and from the aircraft.

Opened in 2011, Munich Airport's VIP Wing is located in the south wing of Terminal 1. Designed by Erich Gassmann and Tina Assmann of Munich-based architectural firm Erich Gassmann Architekten, the 13,000-square-foot lounge features an open and airy design showcasing a seamless merger of modern elements and Bavarian tradition. Common areas include quiet workspaces, spacious bathrooms and shower facilities, an interdenominational prayer room, a Bavarian-style beer garden and an extensive buffet.

In addition to transfers to and from the aircraft and expedited clearance through security and immigration, signature services include access to a guest liaison (Who needs to deal with those pesky VAT forms and long lines for the requisite customs stamp when you have a personal assistant eager to expedite your refund?), baggage handling, a multilingual staff and a 370-square-foot fully equipped conference room.

Seeking a bit more privacy? Reserve one of three individually designed suites. At 425 square feet, Schloss Linderhof features a living area with a flat-screen satellite television, WiFi access and a spacious bathroom with a rain shower. The 425-square-foot Neuschwanstein Suite offers a living/dining area, a flat-screen satellite television and a minibar; and the 420-square-foot Nymphenburg Suite includes a queen-sized sleeping nook.

Alas, despite the saying, "The best things in life are free," the VIP treatment comes at a price. Admission for one runs about \$350, with an additional per-person charge of about \$175 for others traveling in the same group.

Too pricey to justify? Take a behind-the-scenes tour of the airport. Fifty-minute coach tours (about \$11 for adults, \$6 for children aged 5–14) depart Monday through Friday at 1:30 p.m. and at 11:30 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. on weekends and holidays. (Groups of 20 or more may arrange a designated tour any day between the hours of 8:30 a.m. and 5:30 p.m.) The seven-and-a-half-mile route traverses the Terminal 1 and 2 aprons, passing by both runways and two fire stations. Other highlights include an up-close look at the airport's freight buildings, maintenance hangars and engine-testing facility.

Another option: A 90-minute tour of an Airbus A380 (about \$17 for adults, \$12 for children aged 5–14) is offered weekends and holidays at 1:30 p.m.



**COMFORT AND
CONVENIENCE:**
Munich Airport's VIP Wing

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