

THE OBERAMMERGAU PASSION PLAY TO ATTRACT THOUSANDS OF VISITORS



The organizers of the Oberammergau Passion Play, a German reconstruction of the events around 2000 years ago in the Middle East, are getting ready for the 41st season. The event in the Bavarian village of Oberammergau has been in action yearly since 1633 and the 2010 play is likely to represent yet another crowd drawer.

The once-in-a-decade Bavarian spectacle named the “**Oberammergau Passion Play**” is as interesting historically as it is as a show. **It started in 1633** when members of the Bavarian village of Oberammergau prayed to God to let them escape from the plague and they would reward the divine intervention by staging a play to commemorate the life of Jesus.

The prayers were miraculously answered, leading to the play being a part of Germany’s cultural calendar even today. **The 5-hour long play is traditionally staged every ten years.** Over 2,000 villagers, including many children, are going to participate in the next year’s event taking place five times a week **between May 15 and October 3.** Only those born in the village or living here for at least 20 years are allowed to perform in the much-acclaimed Passion Play.

The organizers and actors are traditionally going to a huge effort to make the scenery as authentic as possible. Thus no make-up, false beards or wigs are permitted, and many male inhabitants of Oberammergau grow long hair and beards for months prior to the play. Usually, half a million enthusiasts flock to the event and this number is not expected to drop in 2010.

Recently the organizers announced launching a web site designed to support tour operators selling the 41st season of the Passion Play - passionplay-oberammergau.com The website offers information not only about the coming play, the cast and history but also available travel packages and accommodation. Although according to the organizers the festival is selling more slowly than in the past the Oberammergau Passion Play is certain to attract visitors of various religious background as well as cultural interests.

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