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Maibaum – maypole, an ancient tradition in Germany



Maypole as a symbol of springtime

The first of May marks the beginning of spring and is celebrated in the Bavarian towns with the tradition of maypole setting up.



- Every year on May 1st a maypole is placed at central places.
- The tree is usually over 30 meters high and nicely decorated.
- Many strong people put up the maypole.

Put up the maypole

According to ancient tradition, the tree is put up after command with thick long rods –called "Schwaibeln" - , which are bound together to "scissors". This work can take over two hours and is very hard.



Maypole - party



The “Maibaumfest” (maypole-party) takes place around the setting up. People are sitting together with drinks, food and brass music.

Steal the maypole



A popular and exciting competition among the villages and towns of neighboring communities is to steal the maypole. According to ancient custom, the tree, which must be beaten several weeks before the day of installation, may be "stolen". Even though the tree is guarded by the citizens, this happens quite often. After the tree has been stolen, very "serious" and funny return negotiations are necessary. The price for giving back the maypole is a large amount of beer, which is then drunk together at the handover.

Tackle the maypole



Resin, spit and a maypole 30 meters high - the village boys do not need a lot of equipment to tackle the maypoles in “Rottenstubben” in Bavaria. They smear resin on their feet, spit in their hands and go up. Winner is, who reaches the top in the shortest time.