

Tradition & culture

In 1803, the canton of St.Gallen was founded from 12 landscapes. Depending on the region, agriculture, livestock and dairy farming were practiced or people worked for the urban textile industry. This gave rise to a variety of traditions.

Many of these traditions have also been shaped by religious influences.

The **Abbey District of St.Gallen** was an important spiritual centre of the European West. It is a UNESCO World Heritage Site thanks to its architectural richness with the baroque cathedral and the considerable collection of original manuscripts .

In the 19th and 20th centuries, the canton of St.Gallen also became world-famous for its embroidery.

Nowadays, people associate the canton of St.Gallen with the **OLMA**, the Openair St.Gallen and the famous **St.Gallen bratwurst**.

Musical traditions and modern music events

- **Klangwelt Toggenburg** offers musical cultural activities in Eastern Switzerland. These include the natural yodel, the alpine blessing, the bells as elements of alpine culture and the dulcimer as a natural-sounding stringed instrument in dance music.
- **Star singing**
- **Folk music in Appenzellerland and Toggenburg**
- **Open-Air St.Gallen**

Fasnacht: Carnival time

Fasnacht (🔗 [The carnival season is a tradition in Switzerland and is linked to Lent before Easter.](#)) is also called the 5th season.

During this time, cities and many communities throughout Switzerland are transformed into a colourful festival. There are parades with **Guggenmusik** (🔗 [Association of brass music players during Fasnacht](#)), children and adults dress up in costumes and everything is full of confetti.

- **Carnival in the city of St.Gallen**
- **Mask carving and carnival in Sarganserland**
- **Röllelibutzen in Altstätten**

Agricultural traditions

These include the alpine **Alpaufzüge** (🕒 Cattle drive that brings the grazing cows to the mountain pastures for the summer), the traditional cattle markets and **Chilbis** (🕒 Fair or fairground) or the **Alpsegen** (🕒 Prayer of protection, which in some Catholic regions of the Alps is proclaimed every evening by the shepherd/dairyman on a small hill of his alpine pasture) and other traditions:

- **Appenzeller and Toggenburger Alpfahrt**
- **Peasant painting around the Säntis** (🕒 highest mountain in Eastern Switzerland (2501.9 m above sea level))
- **Alpsegen** (🕒 Prayer of protection, which in some Catholic regions of the Alps is proclaimed every evening by the shepherd/dairyman on a small hill of his alpine pasture) in **Sarganserland**
- **Rheintaler Reinholzen** (Video)
- **Sennensattlerei**
- **Senntum carving**
- **OLMA:** OLMA is the largest and most popular public trade fair in Switzerland. It takes place every year in October with topics from agriculture and nutrition. There is an animal exhibition, animal demonstrations, special shows, information stands, product shows and musical entertainment in the OLMA restaurants.

Other festivals and customs

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- **St.Gallen Children's Festival:** The St. Gallen Children's Festival is an urban folk festival that children celebrate together with their parents, grandparents and friends. Schoolchildren of the municipal school buildings parade through the city in festive robes and make performances. The festival takes place every 3 years.
- **St. Gallen book culture:** The production of books has a centuries-old tradition, especially in the city of St.Gallen. The libraries house a historical treasure with elaborate manuscripts and wonderful specimens of the earliest printing techniques as well as important holdings of contemporary book design.
- **Textile country Eastern Switzerland:** Haute couture, fabrics and lace from the canton of St.Gallen are presented on catwalks worldwide.
- **St. Gallen machine embroidery:** Even today, St.Gallen is known as the textile city.
- **all events in the city of St.Gallen**
- **The Ragaz Maibär in Bad Ragaz**
- **Oberrieter Eierlesen in Oberriet**
- **Fire and light customs:** the Spark Sunday, the Kaltbrunner Kläuse or the Flawiler Lägelnacht