# WÜSTENBERG

*the King's Gambit*



When Wüstenberg take the stage, the air changes instantly. From the very first second you feel the force that Franz Wüstenberg and his seven-piece band unleash – an interplay of explosive energy, warm folk, and poetic lyrics. After a 17-city tour as special guest of Fiddler's Green, Wüstenberg were invited to Wacken Open Air, to Maré de Agosto on Santa Maria – the oldest festival in the Azores – and to stages across Europe. In autumn 2026 they played their first headline tour of Germany.

Franz's twangy voice paints vivid pictures of inner battles, new beginnings, and a world full of magic. „I need pressure, energy, playfulness – but also conflict, drama, and a touch of melancholy. That combination creates an electrifying, living mixture for me."

Sitting far from everything in an 1880 stone house in the countryside, Franz Wüstenberg knew one thing: his new beginning had to be powerful, yet more honest and vulnerable – entirely himself. That tension defines the sound: crunchy electric guitars and driving drums set against the intimate tones of fiddle, mandolin, and piano.

After a successful decade as frontman of The O'Reillys and the Paddyhats, Franz Wüstenberg has opened a new chapter – one that clearly bears his own signature. There's the hard rock fire of Thin Lizzy, the poetic depth of Glen Hansard, and a Celtic spark that keeps flying around.

The debut album The King's Gambit was released in February 2026 – and this band doesn't rest: the second album, Fox in the City, follows in 2027. The first move has been made. The game has only just begun.








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|---|---|
| Franz Wüstenberg | vocals, acoustic- & electric guitar |
| Simon Scherer | banjo, mandolin, backings |
| Béatrice Wissing | violin |
| Catherine Kuhlmann | piano, organ |
| Torben Richter | electric guitar, backings |
| Alexander Lauer | bass guitar, backings |
| Phil Kämpflein | drums |



*“The King’s Gambit – an album full of character, drive and artistic clarity.”*
**Frontstage Magazin**

The eight songs on Wüstenberg’s debut album “The King’s Gambit” were recorded at the renowned “Studio Nord” in Bremen, Germany (Bela B., Die Fantastischen Vier, Heinz Rudolf Kunze and many more).

Alongside sound engineer Gregor Henning, Franz Wüstenberg worked on this album with producer and songwriter Jörn Schlüter, who made his name as the head of Bremen’s Americana virtuosos Someday Jacob and through his work with greats such as Vance Powell (Jack White) and Ryan Hewitt (Red Hot Chili Peppers, The Lumineers). He has also been writing for ROLLING STONE for more than 20 years.

“The King’s Gambit” was mixed by GRAMMY® artist Joe Joaquin.

*“Not a cautious debut, but a powerful statement”-* ***Mix1.de***

*“Wüstenberg stand for folk rock that doesn’t rely on quick effects, but on tension.”*
***- Medienkonverter.de***

*“The King’s Gambit: an honest masterpiece”*
***-Mikroundmanuskript.de***

*[...] confident, emotional and with a sound that sticks right away.“*
***- NoRushWebzine***








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## Live / Press

*"With his new project, Franz Wüstenberg manages to strike a balance between catchy folk rock and genuine depth. The songs have structure, conviction, and emotional substance—without losing any of their dynamic edge."*
**NoRush Webzine**

*"The band drove the room to its peak and set the tone for the rest of the night."*
**Country Music News**

*"Opening with the catchy 'Call Me a Fool,' the band immediately won the audience over."*
**PowerMetal.de**

*"Folk rock from German lands – Wüstenberg open up the big barrel and do it remarkably well. Rock-driven elements and traditional folk instrumentation work hand in hand here, complementing each other as equals."*
**Musix**

## Tour

**Special guest of Fiddler's Green**
17-city tour 2025 · 1,000–1,500 cap (Germany & Switzerland)

**Wacken Open Air · Maré de Agosto (Azores)**
"Wüstenberg make Wacken shake" – Oberberg-Aktuell

**First headline tour 2026**
Berlin, Hamburg, Siegen, Frankfurt, Karlsruhe, Oberhausen

**2027: new album "Fox in the City"**
Heldenfest · WGT Leipzig · Poyenberg · tour with d'Artagnan





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