

# TRAVEL

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## Port of Hamburg looks out rather than in

City mixes culture, wealth, commerce

By Paula Butturini  
New York Times Syndicate

From the delicate spires of its church steeples to the towering cranes that arch over the busiest port on the Elbe, Hamburg, Germany, is a city that mixes culture, wealth and commerce with commerce, trade and sin.

Nestled around two pristine lakes and a warren of narrow canals, downtown Hamburg is invaded by ice skaters during the coldest days of winter and filled with flitting sailboats in the warmer months.

One of Europe's most important ports for the past 800 years, Hamburg, unlike many German cities, looks outward rather than in. Anglophilia is a municipal pastime.

English — in some of London's plummier accents — is spoken often and well, and tweed skirts, cashmere and pearls, and nautical styles are everywhere.

It is a city of old money, based on trade, manufacturing and publishing, and one that prides itself as much on its conservative demeanor as on its liberal political bent.

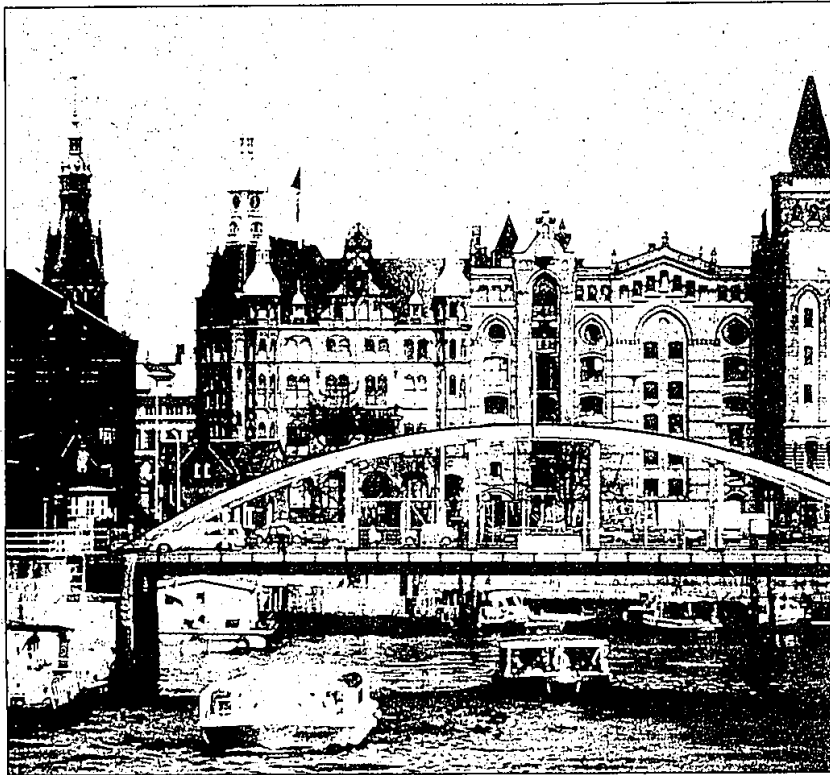
The wealthy — the city is reputed to be Germany's millionaire capital — have their furs, but rather than flaunt the ankle-length minks favored in Munich, Germany, or Düsseldorf, Germany, they tend to play them down, favoring ski parkas trimmed in fox or sable.

Many of the city's most stylish shops are in the 10 Passagen or indoor arcades behind Jungfernstieg, Hamburg's Bond Street, so that shoppers won't be discouraged by the weather, which is often gray and chilly.

**EVENTS**  
The Museum of Hamburg History opens Tuesday through Saturday from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Admission is \$2.50. For more information call 35 04-23 60.

The State Opera, at 35 Grosse Theaterstrasse, will perform Puccini's "Turandot" on March 10 and 13; Mozart's "Idomeneo" March 12 and 21; Wagner's "Tannhäuser" March 15 and 22; Puccini's "Tosca" March 18 and 19; Mozart's "Marriage of Figaro" March 14, 17, 20, 24, 26 and 28; and Donizetti's "Don Pasquale" March 19 and 27.

For reservations, which can be made no more than two weeks in



Built around 1888, the warehouses of Hamburg's Free Port are red brick buildings with Gothic trimmings, today considered a monument to their time.

advance, call 35 17-21 between 11 a.m. and 2 p.m. or between 4-6:30 p.m. Admission ranges from \$2.50 to \$5.

The Hamburger Kunsthalle, one of Germany's premier fine-arts museums, has a startlingly good collection of German Expressionists, including Max Beckmann and Ernst Ludwig Kirchner. Those of a more romantic nature should visit the halls with paintings by such 19th-century artists as Caspar David Friedrich.

The museum is directly across from the main train station at 1 Glockengießerwall. It is open Tuesday through Sunday from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Admission is \$2.50.

For more information call 24 86-26 12.

### WHAT TO SEE

If the Elbe is the lifeblood of the bustling port, two man-made lakes, the Inner and Outer Alster, form the city's heart. Picture a 19th-century Manhattan with a Central Park of water, not trees, and one begins to envision the city center. Foot and bicycle paths line the lakes, which offer broad views of the city and its tiled and copper roofs.

Not far away lies the city's bustling port, where 14,000 ships load and unload each year. An hour-long boat tour of the harbor gives visitors

an anything but romantic idea of the city's commercial life. Tours leave regularly from the St.-Pauli-Landungsbrücken piers and cost \$9. The Speicherstadt, the 19th-century brick and gabled warehouse quarter, is still used to store carpets, raw silk, tobacco and other commodities.

The favorite spire is Der Michel, formally known as St. Michaelis, the most important Baroque church in northern Germany, whose expansive white, gold and mint-green interior is a rarity among the usually austere Protestant churches in this part of the world. Twice a day, at 10 a.m. and at 9 p.m., a trumpeter plays a flourish from the great

steeple, now under renovation. On Sundays the trumpeter sounds only once, at noon.

For a look at how the elite lived in earlier days drive out the Elbschloss, a wide, winding, mansion-lined avenue along the bluffs of the Elbe. Farther west is the village of Blankenese, once the home of ships' captains and fishermen who lived in tiny cottages.

Nearly 6 million emigrants from Northern and Eastern Europe poured through Hamburg between 1850 and 1920, seeking passage to America. Visitors whose ancestors left Europe from the port can visit the city's Historic Emigration Office, temporarily housed at the

Tourist Information Center at the Bieberhaus, just outside the main train station on Hachmannplatz, to search for their family history.

For a \$30 fee, researchers will scan microfilm passenger lists of an entire year. Sometime this spring, the office will move into new headquarters at the Tourist Information Center at the port itself, St.-Pauli-Landungsbrücken.

The office is open Tuesday through Saturday from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. and reopens from 2 p.m. to 5 p.m. Tuesday through Friday. For more information call 30 05-12 20.

### WHERE TO STAY

For travelers seeking quiet elegance and a bit of luxury the Hotel Abtei, at 14 Abelstrasse, is an apt choice. Each of the 13 rooms is decorated with fine English antiques; bathrooms combine modern conveniences with vintage touches such as antique tiles or marble fixtures, and each room has a sound system stocked with classical music.

A small restaurant is planned for spring. A double room, with full bath and breakfast, runs from \$160 to \$220. The Abtei is a few minutes' walk from the Outer Alster and easily reachable by subway from the city center. Reserve early. For more information call 44 29-05.

Among the most celebrated of the major hotels is the Vier Jahreszeiten, at 9-11 Neuer Jungfernstieg, whose imposing white facade presides over the Inner Alster. Double rooms are from \$250 to \$310. For more information call 34 94-683.

The Baseler Hof, at 11 Esplanade, is just a half block from the Inner Alster. Visitors should reserve one of the recently renovated rooms, where updated furnishings dispel the drabness of the untouched wings.

The Baseler Hof's restaurant, where a substantial free breakfast buffet is open to guests, has been smothered up. A double room with bath is from \$105 to \$115. For more information call 35 90-60.

Budget choice: The 20-room Pension Helga Schmidt, at 14 Holdanndamm, is a short walk from the main train station and a block from the Outer Alster. The rooms, on the second through fourth floors, are small but neat and clean. A double with private bath costs \$70, with breakfast an extra \$7. There is no elevator. For more information call 280 21-19.

Travelers who arrive without reservations should visit the Tourist Information Center inside the main train station or at the airport, where clerks who speak English can book rooms at various prices. It's a good way of finding a budget hotel, which in Hamburg means spending \$70 to \$75 for a double with private bathroom.

The traveler pays a \$4 non-refundable booking fee and a small deposit ranging from \$2 to \$25, which the hotel subtracts from his bill.

## Swap for vacation home abroad

By Everett Potter  
Special Writer



For Lori Horne, a San Francisco resident, traveling to Europe for three or four weeks of vacation every year has never posed a major financial problem — even though she and her husband Mark have three young children.

The family has stayed in a small village near Ravenna, Italy, in a beachfront apartment in Mallorca and in Paris, "in a huge apartment in Montparnasse, near the Luxembourg Gardens, with a maid who not only cleaned but cooked every day."

This year they're going to Barcelona for the summer Olympic Games. Wealth has nothing to do with their travels. The Hornes are part of a growing number of Americans who exchange their home for a home abroad.

Lori Horne liked exchanging so much that she and a partner, Paula Joffe, bought International Home Exchange five years ago. It's now the largest such company in the United States and is affiliated with InterVac, a network of 22 independently owned home-exchange companies throughout the world.

Here's how it works. Potential ex-

changers fill out a registration form with a detailed description of their house or apartment, including nearby attractions and recreational facilities, preferred travel dates and destination.

Then, for a fee of \$45 plus \$12 postage, the listing will appear in one of three exchange books, which are issued in February, April and June. For \$11 more, a photograph can be published, although only about a third of the listings are illustrated.

Those who list accommodations receive all three books, which contain a total of about 8,300 listings. A recent directory offered listings in every major western European country, as well as Australia, Brazil, Mexico and New Zealand. They included high-rise apartments overlooking the beach in Rio de Janeiro, cottages in Ireland's County Wicklow and charming houses on the islands outside Stockholm.

It's up to the lister to make contact with potential exchangers through letters and phone calls. Flexibility in terms of time and place is very important. For example, it might be easier to arrange a three-week exchange in Denmark in August than a two-week swap in Paris in June.

"You can save an enormous amount of money, especially if you have children," Horne said. "Let's face it. Who can afford a week in a European hotel with three kids, let alone three or four weeks?"

For those who voice concern about leaving their house in the care of

strangers, Horne has a veteran's advice.

"People don't come to take your silver," she said, laughing. "If you have anything valuable or breakable, just lock it up. If you have pets, you can board them. Ask for references and when the exchangers arrive, meet them or have a friend meet them. If you don't want young children, then say so."

"Exchanging puts you into a certain frame of mind," Horne said. "I have to take care of this house," you think, "because someone else is taking care of mine." In 10 years we've never had a problem."

For more information contact International Home Exchange, P.O. Box 590504, San Francisco, Calif. 94159 or call (800) 756-1663.

Here are some other home-exchange companies travelers might want to consider:

The Vacation Exchange Club, founded in 1960, is the oldest such company in the country. A \$50 registration fee buys a listing in one of four books the club releases each year, with 10,000 listings yearly.

For more information contact Vacation Exchange Club, P.O. Box 820, Haleiwa, Hawaii 96712 or call (800) 638-3841.

At Better Homes and Travel, owner Linda McCall charges a \$50 registration fee and then attempts to match prospective exchangers with up to 12 partners. For a successful match, she charges a "closing fee" of between \$150 and \$600.

"These other companies are just publishers," she said. "I take care of the headaches of matching people."

Not everyone can find a match. McCall stresses, noting that people in popular destinations such as New York City, San Francisco or Florida have a better chance than those who live in the Midwest.

For more information contact Better Homes and Travel, 30 E. 33rd St., New York, N.Y. 10016 or call (212) 689-6608.

Both active and retired teachers of all levels can use Teacher Swap. Established in 1968, the company publishes directories in December and June, with supplements in March and September. There is no charge for a listing. One directory and one supplement are \$35 and all four publications are \$45.

For more information contact Loan-A-Home, 2 Park Lane, Apt. 6E, Mount Vernon, N.Y. 10552 or call (914) 664-7640.



photo courtesy of Altamir Riont A Car

High-rise apartments overlooking Ipanema Beach in Rio de Janeiro are just one possibility for travelers who want to swap homes — instead of stay at a hotel.

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