

# Hamburg



Water, water everywhere – Germany’s biggest port has always been outward-looking. Its dynamism, multiculturalism and hedonistic red-light district, the Reeperbahn, all arise from its maritime history. Joining the Hanseatic League trading bloc in the Middle Ages, this long-standing duty-free port has been enthusiastically doing business with the world ever since. In the 1960s, it nurtured the talent of the Beatles. In the 21st century, it’s also a media capital and the wealthiest city in Germany.

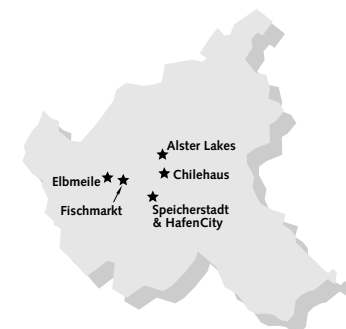
Still overshadowed internationally by Berlin and Munich, domestically Hamburg is known as a natural achiever. Rarely prone to the self-doubt that’s wracked the rest of Germany since reunification, this thriving ‘harbourpolis’ has seen its container ports growing like topsy thanks to new Eastern European business. ‘Boomtown Hamburg’, *Stern* magazine declared in 2006 – with a beautiful cover of the night-time harbour lights twinkling.

Such easygoing self-confidence makes Germany’s second-largest city wonderful to visit. Immigrant workers mingle with students among the Portuguese, Turkish and Asian eateries of vibrant St Pauli and Schanzenviertel. Shipping, TV and newspaper magnates drive their Porsches up to mansions in leafy Blankenese. Defying the city’s renowned *Schmuddelwetter* (drizzly weather), Hamburg’s hipsters lounge on artificial river beaches, while visitors cruise around the Alster Lakes and the neo-Gothic Speicherstadt warehouses, or haggle at the rowdy fish market as cargo ships navigate the Elbe River.

And if this isn’t enough, there are buildings shaped like ocean liners, plus an all-new waterside HafenCity district. The Philharmonic hall being built there is tipped to rival the Sydney Opera House. In which case, the world might finally return some of Hamburg’s attentions.

## HIGHLIGHTS

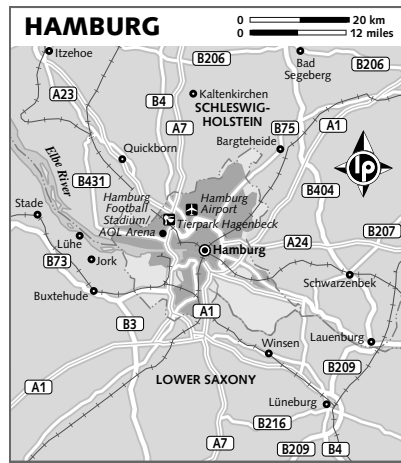
- **Boating** Float through the Speicherstadt canals (p655) or on the Alster lakes (p663)
- **Dining** Munch your way along the Elbmeile (p670), Hamburg’s new gastro strip
- **Shopping** Catch the sights, sounds and smells on Sunday morning at the boisterous Fischmarkt (p662) in St Pauli
- **Grand Designs** Admire the ship shape of elegant Chilehaus (p655)
- **Off-beat** Follow a ‘Hafenklang’ podcast tour around HafenCity (p659) or head for a city beach (p673) in summer



■ TELEPHONE CODE: 040

■ POPULATION: 1.7 MILLION

■ AREA: 755 SQ KM



## HISTORY

In the mid-19th century, one admiring Glaswegian treasurer described Hamburg as the world's 'most mercantile city'. That commercial character was forged early in the city's history, in 1189, when local noble Count Adolf III persuaded Emperor Friedrich I (Barbarossa) to grant the city free trading rights and an exemption from customs duties. It was this step that turned the former missionary settlement and 9th-century moated fortress of Hammaburg into an important port and member of the Hanseatic League.

The city prospered for centuries on the banks of the Elbe before suffering a major setback in 1842, when the Great Fire destroyed one-third of its buildings. While it managed to recover in time to join the German Reich in 1871, this saw it involved in two world wars even less kind than the Great Fire. After WWI, most of Hamburg's merchant shipping fleet (almost 1500 ships) was forfeited to the Allies as reparation. During WWII, more than half of Hamburg's housing, 80% of its port and 40% of its industry were left as rubble, and tens of thousands of civilians were killed.

In the postwar years, Hamburg showed its usual resilience to participate in Germany's economic miracle or *Wirtschaftswunder*. Its harbour and media industries are now the backbone of its wealth. More than 6200 companies in the fields of publishing, advertising, film, radio, TV and music are based in the city. The print media are especially prolific: 15

out of 20 of the largest German publications are produced here, including news magazines *Stern* and *Der Spiegel* and the newspaper *Die Zeit*.

The city is also a major Airbus base, manufacturing parts of the now much delayed A380 super-jumbo.

About 15% to 20% of the population are immigrants, giving the city an exciting, international flavour.

## ORIENTATION

Hamburg is as watery as Venice and Amsterdam. Three rivers – the Elbe, the Alster and the Bille – traverse it, as does a grid of narrow canals called *Fleete*. The Binnenalster and Aussenalster (Inner and Outer Alster lakes) in the city centre accentuate the maritime feel.

The half-moon-shaped city centre arches north of the Elbe and is bisected diagonally by the Alsterfleet, the canal that once separated the now almost seamless Altstadt (old town) and Neustadt (new town).

The Hauptbahnhof (central train station) is on Glockengiesserwall on the centre's north-eastern edge; the ZOB (Central Bus Station) is behind it to the southeast. Three other stations lie west (Altona), south (Harburg) and north (Dammtor) of the centre.

This sprawling city consists of distinct neighbourhoods. East of the Hauptbahnhof is St Georg, a gradually gentrifying red-light district. It's also the hub of the city's gay scene. West of the centre lies St Pauli, home to the Reeperbahn, as well as lots of mainstream clubs and bars. Further west St Pauli merges with the lively Altona district; to its north you'll find its trendy and creative neighbour, the Schanzenviertel.

Select neighbourhoods hug the 160-hectare Aussenalster north of the city centre, with Winterhude and Uhlenhorst on the eastern and Harvestehude and Rotherbaum on the western shores. The Universitätsviertel (University Quarter) takes up the western section of Rotherbaum.

## INFORMATION

### Bookshops

**Dr Götze Land & Karte** (Map pp656-7; ☎ 357 4630; www.mapshop-hamburg.de; Alstertor 14-18) An enormous range of guidebooks and maps.

**Thalia Bücher** (Map pp656-7; ☎ 3020 7160; Grosse Bleichen 19) Also has English books.

## Discount Cards

The tourist office, some hostels and hotels all sell Hamburg discount cards.

**Hamburg Card** (per 1/3 day €7.50/15) Free public transport and museum discounts.

**Power Pass** (1st day €7, each extra day up to 1 week €3) For under-30s, this offers free public transport, reduced rates for museums and sightseeing tours, some free club entries and a free listings magazine.

## Emergency

**Fundbüro** (Lost Property; ☎ 428 113 501; Bahrenfelder Strasse 254-260, Altona)

**Police** Hauptbahnhof (Map pp656-7; Kirchenallee exit); St Pauli (Davidwache; Map pp656-7; Spielbudenplatz 31, nr Davidstrasse)

## Internet Access

**Internet Café** (Map p665; ☎ 2800 3898; Adenauerallee 10; per hr €2; ☎ 10am-midnight Mon-Sat, 10am-1pm Sun)

**Tele-Time** (☎ 4131 4730; Schulterblatt 39; per hr €3; ☎ 10am-midnight)

## Laundry

**Schnell und Sauber** (Map pp656-7; Neuer Pferdemarkt 27; ☎ 6am-11pm)

**Waschbar** (☎ 8972 6425; Ottenser Hauptstrasse 56, Altona; ☎ 10am-midnight)

## Medical Services

**Ärztlicher Notfalldienst** (☎ 228 022) For 24-hour medical advice.

**Emergency Doctor Service Hamburg** (☎ 228 022)  
**Internationale Apotheke** (Map pp656-7; ☎ 309 6060; Ballindamm 39) Pharmacy.

## Money

There are ATMs at the Hauptbahnhof, the airport and all over town.

**American Express** (Map pp656-7; ☎ 3039 3811; Rathausmarkt 10; ☎ 9.30am-6pm Mon-Fri, 10am-3pm Sat)

## Post

**Post Office** (Map pp656-7; ☎ 01802-3333; Dammtorstrasse 14; ☎ 8.30am-6pm Mon-Fri, 9am-noon Sat)

**Post Office** (Map pp656-7; ☎ 01802-3333; Möncke-bergstrasse 7; ☎ 9am-7pm Mon-Fri, to 3pm Sat)

## Tourist Information

**Hamburg Tourismus** (www.hamburg-tourismus.de) airport (☎ 5075 1010; ☎ 5.30am-11pm); Hauptbahnhof (Map p665; ☎ information 3005 1200, hotel bookings 3005 1300; Kirchenallee exit; ☎ 8am-9pm Mon-Sat, 10am-6pm Sun); Landungsbrücken (Map pp656-7; btwn piers 4 & 5;

☎ 8am-6pm Mon, Wed & Sun, to 7pm Tue, Thu, Fri & Sat Apr-Sep, 10am-6pm Oct-Mar; ☎ Landungsbrücken)

**Information booth** (Map pp656-7; Dammtor train station, Dag Hammarskjöld Platz; ☎ 8am-7.45pm Mon-Fri, 10am-4pm Sat) No hotel bookings.

## DANGERS & ANNOYANCES

Although safe and wealthy, Hamburg is also undeniably sleazy in parts, with red-light districts around the train station and Reeperbahn. Junkies and drunks also congregate at the Kirchenallee exit of the Hauptbahnhof and at Hansaplatz in St Georg. Fortunately, there's a strong police presence in these areas, too.

## SIGHTS

### Altstadt & Merchant's District

Hamburg's baroque **Rathaus** (Map pp656-7; Town Hall; ☎ 428 312 010; adult/concession tour €2/1; ☎ English tours hourly 10.15am-3.15pm Mon-Thu, to 1.15pm Fri-Sun) is one of Europe's most opulent, renowned for the Emperor's Hall and the Great Hall, with its spectacular coffered ceiling. Indeed, there are 647 rooms here, but the guided 40-minute tours only take in a small number.

North of the Rathaus, you can wander through the **Alsterarkaden**, where the elegant Renaissance-style arcades shelter shops and cafés alongside a canal.

For some visitors the city's most remarkable building isn't the Rathaus, but another that lies south in the Merchant's District. The brown-brick **Chilehaus** (www.chilehaus.de; nr Burchardstrasse & Johannisswall) is shaped like an ocean liner, with remarkable curved walls meeting in the shape of a ship's bow and staggered balconies to look like decks.

Designed by architect Fritz Höger for a merchant who derived his wealth from trading with Chile, the 1924 building is a leading example of German Expressionist architecture. It's situated in an interesting quarter of town, the Kontorhausviertel, alongside other so-called 'Backsteingotik' buildings (*Backstein* refers to a specially glazed brick; *gotik* means Gothic).

Hamburg's Great Fire of 1842 broke out further west in **Deichstrasse**, which features a few restored 18th-century homes.

### Speicherstadt

The seven-storey red-brick warehouses lining the **Speicherstadt** (Map pp656-7) archipelago, across from the Deichtorhallen exhibition space, are a well-recognised Hamburg



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symbol, stretching as they do to Baumwall in the world's largest continuous warehouse complex. Their neo-Gothic gables and (mostly) green copper roofs are reflected in the narrow canals of this free-port zone.

Such a separate free port became necessary when Hamburg joined the German Customs Federation on signing up for the German Reich in 1871. An older neighbourhood was demolished – and 24,000 people displaced – to make room for the construction of the Speicherstadt from 1885 to 1927.

Today, the area can be appreciated in several ways. Firstly, you can simply wander through its streets. Alternatively, you can look down on it from Hamburg's moored **High Flyer Hot-Air-Balloon** (☎ 3008 6968; www.highflyer-hamburg.de; per 15min €15; ☼ 10am-midnight, to 10pm in winter), just across the water near the Deichtorhallen.

However, perhaps the best way to enjoy the district is to take a *Barkassen* (small barge) trip up its canals. **Kapitän Prüsse** (☎ 313 130; www.kapitaen-pruesse.de; Landungsbrücken 3; adult/

child €12/6) offers regular Speicherstadt tours, leaving from the port. Other *Barkassen* operators simply tout for business opposite the archipelago, near Hohe Brücke. The area is beautifully lit at night.

In the postindustrial age, many of the warehouses have been put to a secondary use, and there are now some eight Speicherstadt museums, including the following:

**Dialog im Dunkeln** (Dialogue in Darkness; Map pp656-7; ☎ 0700-443 3200; www.dialog-im-dunkeln.de; Alter Wandrahm; adult/concession €10/7; ☼ 9am-5pm Tue-Fri, noon-7pm Sat & Sun) A pitch-black journey with a blind guide through re-created natural and urban landscapes gives a memorable impression of what it's like not to see.

**Hamburg Dungeon** (Map pp656-7; ☎ information 3600 5500, tickets 3005 1512; Kehr wieder 2; adult/child €13.95/10.95; ☼ 11am-6pm last entry, from 10am Jul & Aug) The usual camped-up chamber of horrors.

**Speicherstadtmuseum** (Map pp656-7; ☎ 321 191; St Annenufer 2; adult/concession €2.50/1.50; ☼ 10am-5pm Tue-Sun) Relating the area's history (in German).

**Spicy's Gewürzmuseum** (Map pp656-7; ☎ 367 989; Am Sandtorkai 32; adult/concession €3/2; ☼ 10am-5pm Tue-Sun) This spice and herb museum invites you to exercise your olfactory sense to the fullest.

## HafenCity

The Speicherstadt merges into Europe's biggest building site, otherwise known as **HafenCity**. Here a long-abandoned area of 155 hectares is being redeveloped with restaurants, shops, apartments and offices in an enormous inner-city regeneration project. In the next 20 years, it's planned that some 40,000 people will work and 12,000 will live here. There are even plans for a primary school and a university.

The jewel in the crown should be ready much sooner, however, as early as 2009. If you walk to the back of the Speicherstadt and keep going along Grosser Grasbrook, you'll see it. The squat brown-brick former warehouse at the far west of the zone is being transformed into the new **Elbphilharmonie** (Elbe Philharmonic Hall). Pritzker prize-winning Swiss architects Herzog & de Meuron are responsible for the design, which, like their Tate Modern building in London, boasts a glass top. This time, however, they're being far more ambitious, as the glass façade should be taller than its brick base and the roofline will rise in wave-like peaks to reflect the waterfront location. Boosters are already comparing it to the Museo Guggenheim Bilbao and the Sydney Opera House.

For information on this and other plans for the district, pop into the **HafenCity Info-Center** (☎ 3690 1799; www.hafen-city.com; Am Sandtorkai 30; admission free; ☼ 10am-6pm Tue-Sun), where you'll find brochures (in German and English), and architectural models and installations, as well as a café. And if travel podcasts are all the rage (at least among publishers), the HafenCity InfoCenter offers one that's quite trippy and unusual. **Hafenklang** is a 55-minute MP3 'soundscape' tour through HafenCity's streets. The loan of the MP3 player is free, but you need to leave your passport as a deposit.

## Port of Hamburg

South of St Pauli lies one of the largest ports in Europe. Each year about 12,000 ships deliver and take on some 70 million tonnes of goods here. The port sprawls over 75 sq km, accounting for 12% of Hamburg's entire surface area.

Climbing the steps above the Landungsbrücken U/S-Bahn station to the Stintfang stone balcony offers an interesting snapshot, while dozens of **port and Elbe River cruises** put you right in the middle of the action. They start at the St Pauli Landungsbrücken. **Abicht** (☎ 317 8220; www.abicht.de; Brücke 1; adult/child €10/5; ☼ noon Mar-Nov) offers English commentary, while one of the cheapest operators is **Hadag** (☎ 311 7070; www.hadag.de; Brücke 2; adult/child 1hr harbour trip from €9/4.50).

At the piers, you'll also find the **Rickmer Rickmers** (☎ 319 5959; www.rickmer-rickmers.de; Brücke 1; adult/concession €3/2.50; ☼ 10am-6pm), a three-masted steel windjammer from 1896 that is now a museum ship and restaurant. The 10,000-tonne **Cap San Diego** (☎ 364 209; adult/child €4/2) nearby hosts some interesting temporary exhibitions on immigration and shipping.

Just west of the St Pauli landing piers stands a grey structure topped by a copper cupola. This is the entrance to the **St Pauli Elbtunnel** (1911), a 426m-long passageway beneath the Elbe River. It is still used by vehicles and pedestrians, although most cars take the New Elbe Tunnel further west.

## Reeperbahn

Sex sells, and they're hyper-aware of this along Hamburg's vast red-light thoroughfare of the **Reeperbahn**. Sure, it's tamer than the Amsterdam scene, but it's still Europe's biggest – a kind of Champs-Élysées of sex shops, peep shows, dim bars, raucous clubs and in-the-gutter-looking-at-the-stars life stories.

It slowly starts to awaken about 4pm, and over the next few hours crowds of thousands stream in (see boxed text, p661).

Just north of the S-Bahn station is the **Grosse Freiheit** (literally 'great freedom') street, with its bright lights, dark doorways and live sex nightclubs. Smarmy doormen try to lure the passing crowd into clubs; if you're interested, ask about the conditions of entry. Admission tends to be fairly low (around €5), but it's the mandatory drink minimum (usually at least €20) that drives up the cost. Ask at the bar how much drinks cost; we've heard reports of people being charged nearly €100 for a couple of watery cocktails.

South of the Reeperbahn stands the **Davidwache** (Map pp656-7; Spielbudenplatz 31, cnr Davidstrasse). This brick building festooned with ornate ceramic tiles is the base for 150 police officers,

### THE BEST HAMBURG BOAT TRIP?

Hamburg offers so many boat trips, it's difficult to know which to choose. Certainly, highlights include tours of the canals of the Alster lakes and *Barkassen* trips up the Speicherstadt. However, locals will tell you that you don't have to book a cruise to see the port – the city's harbour ferries will take you up the river on a cheap and ordinary public transport ticket.

One oft-recommended route is to catch ferry 62 from Landungsbrücken towards Finkenwerder and change there for the 64 to Teufelsbrücke. From here you can wander along the Elbe back towards town, eastwards to Neumühlen.

Stop for a drink at Strandperle (p673) or book a meal beforehand at Das Weisse Haus (p672) or Le Canard Nouveau (p672). From Neumühlen, you can catch bus 112 back to Altona S- and U-Bahn station or ferry 62 back to Landungsbrücken.

who maintain St Pauli's reputation as the safest area in Hamburg.

People gather outside the nearby **Condomerie** (Spielbudenplatz 18), with its extensive collection of prophylactics and sex toys. They're usually gawping at the gargantuan (and nowadays slightly grubby) condom in the window, to which the shop owner has appended a €100 gift voucher offer to any gentleman who can properly fit it. They say the prize has been awarded twice. Ouch.

Some 50m south along Davidstrasse, you'll see a painted tin wall on the right. This bars views into **Herbertstrasse**, a block-long bordello that's off-limits to men under 18 and to women of all ages.

Further west lies **Harry's Hamburger Hafenasar** (☎ 312 482; www.hafenbasar.de; cnr Balduinstrasse & Erichstrasse; adult/child €2.50/1.50, redeemable against any purchase; ☎ noon-6pm Tue-Sun) bursting with African statues, Asian masks and other paraphernalia shipped back from abroad by now deceased collector Harry Rosenberg. The shop is now run by his daughter; ask her about insider tours, in English, of the secrets of the St Pauli district.

The **Erotic Art Museum** (☎ 317 4757; www.erotikartmuseum.de; Bernhard-Nocht-Strasse 69; adult/concession €8/5; ☎ noon-10pm, to midnight Fri & Sat) does exactly what it says on the tin: presents erotic art from S&M to (mainly) soft porn.

### Schanzenviertel & Karolinenviertel

North of St Pauli lie the **Schanzenviertel** and **Karolinenviertel** districts. Once home to Hamburg's counterculture scene, they have been gentrified in recent years. You'll probably visit this area (bordered by the U-Bahn Feldstrasse, S-/U-Bahn Sternschanze and Stresemannstrasse) because you're staying here, shopping or enjoying one of its restaurants

or bars. However, if you just want to explore, you'll find two lively quarters, where creative media types mix with students among a landscape of doner kebab shops, Italian and Portuguese cafés and funky clothing stores.

One of the most outstanding remnants of the area's rougher days is the graffiti-covered building on Schulterblatt that looks one step away from demolition. This is the **Rote Flora**, now an alternative culture centre, but once the famous Flora Theatre.

### Blankenese

The people of Hamburg say that the better you're doing in life, the further west in the city you live. If those who reside in Övelgönne are making it, those in **Blankenese** (📍 Blankenese, then bus 48 to Krögers Treppe or Weseberg) have arrived. Once a former fishing village and haven for cut-throats, the suburb now boasts some of the finest and most expensive houses in Germany.

For visitors, the area's attraction lies in its hillside labyrinth of narrow, cobbled streets, with a network of **58 stairways** (4864 steps in total!) connecting them.

The best views of the Elbe (nearly 3km wide here) and the container ships putting out to sea are enjoyed from the 75m-high **Süllberg** hill (head through the restaurant at the summit).

Getting off bus 48 at Weseberg – having passed the clutch of beachfront restaurants and cafés and reached the summit of the following hill – you'll see a sign pointing to the nearby Süllberg. If you alight at Krögers Treppe, head up the Bornholtdt Treppe and Süllbergweg. Alternatively, you can get off once the road starts winding and just explore.

### SEX AND THE HANSEATIC CITY

Even those not interested in strip shows usually pay a quick trip to the Reeperbahn just to see what the fuss is all about. You can certainly imagine writers like Charles Bukowski (*Post Office, Tales of Ordinary Madness*), Nelson Algren (*Walk on the Wild Side*) and Damon Runyon (*Guys & Dolls*) giving it the treatment. It has the seedy, lowlife quality needed.

On a busy night there might be as many as 40,000 people cruising the rip-roaring collection of bars, sex clubs, variety acts, restaurants, pubs and cafés collectively known as the 'Kiez'. The abstemious and celibate St Paul, for whom Hamburg's 'sin centre' is named, wouldn't have taken kindly to such displays, but the sightseers come from all walks of life.

Long established as a party place for incoming sailors, the area's popularity peaked in the swinging 1960s when the Beatles cut their musical teeth at the legendary – now defunct – Star Club. Prostitution boomed along the lurid, spidery streets spilling off the Reeperbahn. But then a wave of hard crime and drugs sent St Pauli on a downward spiral, and rip-offs became commonplace (with cheap wine served from expensive bottles, as just one example). Germany's *Sündenmeile* (Sin Mile) had to reinvent itself to survive – which it did.

The answer, as always in Hamburg, was greater commercialisation, as another layer of attractions was added as the No 1 attraction for tourists. In recent years, musicals like *Cats* and *Mamma Mia* have played to sold-out houses on the eastern edge, and stylish nightclubs, bars and even restaurants keep a hip, moneyed clientele entertained until dawn.

The sex industry is still in full swing as girls line up along some streets. However, some of the rougher edges are gone; for example, pimps no longer loiter and leer. With its flashing neon lights and raucous crowds, the Reeperbahn today seems nothing more than a nightly carnival to some visitors. For others, it's a place to observe the *Taxi Driver* underbelly of Germany's wealthiest city.

### Museums

The **Hamburger Kunsthalle** (Map p665; ☎ 428 131 200; www.hamburger-kunsthalle.de; Glockengiesserwall; adult/concession €8.50/5; ☎ 10am-6pm Tue, Wed & Fri-Sun, to 9pm Thu) consists of two buildings – one old, one new – linked by a memorable underground passage. The main building houses works ranging from medieval portraiture to 20th-century classics, such as Klee, Kokoschka and Munch. There's also a memorable room of 19th-century landscapes by Caspar David Friedrich. The stark white new building, the **Galerie der Gegenwart** (Map p665) showcases German artists like Rebecca Horn, Georg Baselitz and Gerhard Richter, alongside international stars like Nan Goldin, David Hockney, Jeff Koons, Barbara Kruger and Gillian Wearing. The view out of the gallery's huge picture windows is also wonderful.

The **Museum für Kunst und Gewerbe** (Museum of Arts & Crafts; Map p665; ☎ 428 542 732; www.mkg-hamburg.de; Steintorplatz 1, St Georg; adult/concession €8/5, from 4pm Tue & 5pm Thu €5; ☎ 10am-6pm Tue, Wed & Fri-Sun, to 9pm Thu) isn't quite so exalted, but its posters, ornaments and temporary exhibitions are always lots of fun. Its vast collection of sculpture, furniture, jewellery, porcelain, musical instruments and household objects

runs the gamut from Italian to Islamic, from Japanese to Viennese and from medieval to pop art eye-candy.

There are period rooms, including an Art Nouveau salon from the 1900 Paris World Fair and a room designed by Belgian architect Henry van der Velde, plus sections on modern poster design, graphic design and Italian design from the 1950s to 1990s (with Bakelite, space age-shaped TVs!). The museum café is integrated into the exhibition space.

The **Museum für Völkerkunde** (Museum of Ethnology; ☎ 01805-308 888; www.voelkerkundemuseum.com; Rothenbaumchaussee 64; adult/concession €6/3, Fri €3/3; ☎ 10am-6pm Tue, Wed & Fri-Sun, to 9pm Thu; 📍 Hallerstrasse) demonstrates seagoing Hamburg's acute awareness of the outside world. The exhibits themselves are stunning, particularly the domed room at the top of the entrance hall's steps, with its carved wooden canoes and giant sculptures from Papua New Guinea. The approach is also refreshingly open-minded and not at all patronising. Modern artefacts and issues from Africa, Asia and the South Pacific are presented alongside traditional masks, jewellery, costumes and musical instruments. There's also a complete, intricately carved Maori meeting hall open from 1.30pm.

### HAMBURG'S UNIQUE FISH MARKET

Every Sunday morning, in the wee hours, an unusual ritual unfolds along the banks of the Elbe, just a few hundred metres south of the Reeperbahn. A fleet of small trucks roars onto the cobbled pavement. Hardy types with hands the size of baseball gloves emerge from the drivers' cabins and set out to turn their vehicles into stores on wheels. They artfully arrange their bananas, apples, cauliflower and whatever else the earth has yielded that week. Others pile up slippery eels, smoked fish fillets and fresh shrimp in tasteful displays. In another corner, cacti, flowers and leafy plants begin to wait for customers. It's not yet 5am as the first of them begin to trundle in, their brains boozy, their eyes red, their moods hyper from a night of partying in St Pauli. May the trading begin.

The Fischmarkt in St Pauli has been a Hamburg institution since 1703 and still defines the city's life and spirit. Locals of every age and walk of life join curious tourists as the beer flows, and you can buy everything from cheap sweatshirts and tulips to a hearty breakfast or a scorched bratwurst.

The undisputed stars of the event – and great, free entertainment – are the boisterous *Marktschreier* (market criers) who hawk their wares at the top of their lungs. With lascivious winks and leering innuendo, characters like Aal-Dieter or Banana-Harry boast of the quality and size of their product. 'Don't be shy, little girl,' they might say to a rotund 60-year-old, wagging a piece of eel in front of her face. But nobody minds the vulgar come-ons. Almost always, the 'girl' blushes before taking a hearty bite as the crowd cheers her on. It's all just part of the show.

More entertainment takes place in the adjoining Fischauktionshalle (Fish Auction Hall), where a live band cranks out cover versions of ancient German pop songs to which everyone seems to know the words. Down in the pit, the beer flows and sausage fumes waft through the air as if it were 8pm and not just past dawn. For those who actually know what time it is, breakfast is served on the gallery, away from the crooners.

Hamburg life thrives here – at the edge of the river – in the good stink of mud and oil and fish. If Bruegel were to paint a picture of Hamburg life, this is where he'd set up his easel.

The Fischmarkt takes place from 5am to 9.30am on Sunday (from 7am October to March).

The **Museum für Hamburgische Geschichte** (Museum of Hamburg History; Map pp656-7; ☎ 428 412 380; www.hamburgmuseum.de; Holstenwall 24; adult/concession €7.50/4, Fri €4/4; ☎ 10am-5pm Tue-Sat, to 6pm Sun) is a bit of a boy's own dream. It's chock-full of intricate ship models, has a large model-train set (only open at certain times; ring ahead) and even includes the actual bridge of the steamship *Werner*, which you can clamber over. Furthermore, it chronicles the city's evolution, revealing little tidbits about its Masonic societies and the fact that the Reeperbahn was once the home of ropemakers (*Reep* means rope). Most exhibits have English annotations.

The **Museum der Arbeit** (Museum of Work; ☎ 428 322 364; Maurienerstrasse 19; adult/concession €4/3, Fri half-price; ☎ 1-9pm Mon, 10am-5pm Tue-Sat, 10am-6pm Sun; ☎ 2 & 3 to Barmbek, ☎ 1 to Barmbek) chronicles the development of the workplace in the Hamburg area, with a focus on the changing rights and roles of working men and women. There's also a section on printing, appropriate for this media city. The museum is on the grounds of the former New York-Hamburg Rubber Company.

Keep an eye out for special exhibitions in the other smaller museums along Hamburg's **Kunstmeile** (Art Mile), extending from Glockengieserwall to Deichtorstrasse between the Alster lakes and the Elbe. In particular, the converted market halls of the wonderful **Deichtorhallen** (Map pp656-7; ☎ 321 030; Deichtorstrasse 1-2; ☎ 11am-6pm Tue-Fri, 10am-6pm Sat & Sun) show international touring exhibitions of contemporary art (Warhol, Lichtenstein, Haring etc) as well as photography by Helmut Newton, Annie Leibowitz and other prominent shooters.

### Churches

The **St Michaeliskirche** (Map pp656-7; ☎ 3767 8100; adult/concession tower €2.50/1.25, tower & crypt €3/1.50; ☎ 10am-5.30pm Apr-Oct, to 4.30pm Nov-Mar), or 'Der Michel' as it's commonly called, is one of Hamburg's most recognisable landmarks and northern Germany's largest Protestant baroque church. From its tower you can better understand the layout of this jigsaw city.

Below the church, in a tiny alley off Krayenkamp 10, are the **Krameramtswohnungen** (Map

pp656-7; ☎ 3750 1988; adult/concession €1/0.50, Fri half-price; ☎ 10am-5pm Tue-Sun), a row of tiny half-timbered houses from the 17th century that, for nearly 200 years, were almshouses for the widows of members of the Guild of Small Shopkeepers. Taken over by the city in 1863, they became seniors' homes until 1969 and are now just a tourist attraction. Only one home is a museum; others are shops or restaurants.

The WWII-damaged **St-Nikolai-Kirche** (Map pp656-7; Ost-West-Strasse; adult/child €2.50/1.50; ☎ 11am-5pm) is now an antiwar memorial, with some chilling photos of the then bombed-out city.

### Zoo & Parks

Hamburgers prefer not to call **Tierpark Hagenbeck** (☎ 5400 0147/8; Lokstedter Grenzstrasse 2, Hamburg-Stellingen; adult/child under 16yr €14.50/8.50; ☎ 9am-sunset; ☎ Hagenbecks Tierpark) a zoo. That's because its 2500 animals are housed in very open enclosures spread across 27 hectares. It's not only elephants, tigers, orang-utans, toucans and other creatures you'll find here, either. There's a replica Nepalese temple, Japanese garden, Art Deco Tor (gate) and similar attractions. A petting zoo, horse-carriage rides and a children's playground mean you'll probably have to drag the kids away at the end of the day.

Closer to the centre is the much-loved **Planten un Blomen**, a landscaped park where there are water and light displays in summer.

### ACTIVITIES

The paved path around the Aussenalster is a popular **jogging** route because it measures nearly exactly 8km, a handy guideline for those checking their performance. It's also suitable for **inline skating** or **cycling**.

Head to Dr Götz Land & Karte (p654) for a wide range of local cycling maps and itineraries. For bike hire, try **Fahrradladen St Georg** (Map p665; ☎ 243 908; Schmilinskystrasse 6).

Hamburg was one of the host cities for the FIFA Football World Cup in 2006, for which its **AOL Color Line Arena** (Sylvesterallee 7, Bahrenfeld) was extensively refurbished. Since declared a five-star stadium by FIFA, it boasts 51,000 fully covered seats and is home to Bundesliga club Hamburger SV.

The stadium lies in the city's northwest, just off the E45/7/27 by car. Alternatively, take S-Bahn 21 or 3 to 'Stellingen' (for the east and north terrace). From Altona station, take S-Bahn 1 or 11 to 'Othmarschen'. Free buses link these stations with the stadium.

Favourite local team FC St Pauli plays at home in the **Millerntor-Stadion** (Map pp656-7; ☎ tickets 3179 6112; Heiligengeistfeld).

### TOURS Alster Lake Cruises

Taking a cruise on Binnenalster and Aussenalster is not only one of the least stressful ways to appreciate the city, but also one of the most revealing, as you cruise past its elegant buildings. **ATG Alster-Touristik** (Map pp656-7; ☎ 3574 2419; www.alstertouristik.de; adult/child 2hr round-trip €10/5) offers regular trips from April to October. The company also offers a wonderful two-hour **canal tour** (€11; ☎ 3-6 times daily, depending on season), which floats past stately villas and gardens; and a two-hour **Fleet tour** (€13; ☎ 3 times daily Apr-Oct), which heads from the Binnenalster to the Elbe and Speicherstadt. Free English-language pamphlets and taped commentaries are available for the Alster and Fleet tours.

If you're the DIY kind, hire your own rowboat or canoe; some travellers tell us it's the most fun they've had in Hamburg. Head to **Segelschule Pieper** (Map p665; ☎ 247 578; www.segelschule-pieper.de; An der Alster; per hr from €12), opposite the Atlantic Hotel, or ask the tourist office about other rental outlets.

### Bus Tours

As with boats, there is a confusing array of bus tours, although these aren't quite such a quintessential Hamburg experience. **Top-Tour Hamburg** (☎ 641 3731, 672 0394; www.top-tour-hamburg.de) offers a choice of four tours, the most popular being the eponymous **Top-Tour** (adult/child under 14yr €14/7; ☎ every 30min 9.30am-4.30pm, hourly in winter). This passes all the leading sights in a double-decker bus during jump-on, jump-off 1½-hour sightseeing tours. You can board at the Kirchenallee exit of the train station and Landungsbrücken, plus the Rathaus, St Michaeliskirche, the Reeperbahn or Speicherstadt. Commentary is in German and English.

**HBB** (☎ 792 8979; www.hummelbahn.de) offers much the same deal, but distinguishes itself with its vehicles, including red London double-decker buses and the 1920s **Hummelbahn Trolley** (adult/child under 12yr/teenager €13/free/11). Bus times are pretty much the same as for Top-Tour and you can board at the Kirchenallee exit of the train station or Landungsbrücken.

Ask the tourist office about other deals.





or mirrors above the bed. The place attracts a mix of gay and straight guests.

**Hotel Wedina** (Map p665; ☎ 280 8900; www.wedina.de; Gurlltstrasse 23; main bldg s/d from €70/90, others from €95/115; (P)) You might find a novel instead of a chocolate on your pillow at Wedina, a hotel that's a must for bookworms and literary groupies. Margaret Atwood, Jonathan Safran Foer, Jonathan Franzen, Michel Houellebecq, Vladimir Nabokov and J K Rowling are just some of the authors who've stayed and left behind signed books. Young and friendly, the hotel's spread over four buildings, offering a choice of traditional décor in the main red building or modern, urban living in its green, blue and yellow houses.

**Galerie-Hotel Sarah Petersen** (Map p665; ☎ 249 826, 0173 200 0746; www.galerie-hotel-sarah-petersen.de; Lange Reihe 50; s/€70-140, d €85-150; ☎ ☑) A place for individualists, this *pension* is very much an extension of its artist owner's personality. Sarah Petersen's professional paintings decorate the walls, and the rooms mix contemporary to 1950s French to classic Biedermeier styles. Some rooms are like suites, with rooftop terraces and separate living areas, but those with external bathrooms are much cheaper (single/double €55/65).

**Junges Hotel** (Map p665; ☎ 419 230; www.junges-hotel.de; Kurt-Schumacher-Allee 14; s €90-110, d €110-120; (P)) Yellow, flesh-pink and orange window panels complement lots of blonde wood in this airy, modern hotel (actually Hamburg's YMCA). However, it's most memorable for the way extra guests can be accommodated in some double rooms, where beds drop down from the wall as in a train sleeper compartment. For adults, these beds costs €25 per person, but kids under 12 stay free.

#### ALSTER LAKES

**Hotel-Pension Schwanenwik** (☎ 220 0918; www.hotel-schwanenwik.de; Schwanenwik 29; s/d €70/90, with shared bathroom €46/66) Enjoy a luxury location and views for less at this humble *pension*, whose breakfast room overlooks the Aussenalster. The place might be a little dowdy, but it's spotless and the owner has cheered things up with lots of framed pictures, especially by Miró. Rooms 19 and 20 also have lake views. Take bus 6 to Mundsburger Brücke.

**Hotel Miramar** (☎ 220 9395; www.hotelmiramar.de; Armgartstrasse 20; s/d €80/100; (P)) The little taste of England promised here means a choice of quintessential English rose or colonial décor,

plus the 50-something owners' irreverent sense of humour. It's a mix you'll either love or hate, but it has its confirmed fans. Bus 6 to Mundsburger Brücke will get you here.

**Nippon** (☎ 227 1140; www.nippon-hotel-hh.de; Hofweg 75; s/d from €95/115, breakfast €10) White walls, low futon beds, rice-paper screens, tatami flooring and occasional splashes of cherry red create a Zen recipe here. Take bus 6 to Zimmerstrasse.

**Hotel Alsterblick** (☎ 2294 8989; www.hotel-alsterblick.de; Schwanenwik 30; s €65-125, d €110-145, ste €160-180) Staff here take some pride in the stained-glass windows and historic lift in the entrance to this terrace building, and even more in the excellent lake view from the breakfast room. Accommodation blends modern and traditional with parquet floors, contemporary furnishings and all the mod cons. Two rooms have balconies, one amusingly off the bathroom. To get here, catch bus 6 to Mundsburger Brücke.

#### SCHANZENVIERTEL & ST PAULI

**Fritz Hotel** (Map pp656-7; ☎ 8222 2830; www.fritzhotel.com; Schanzenstrasse 101-103; s/d €60/90) Cool as a cucumber in white, grey and splashes of red, this stylish townhouse hotel is great for solo urbanistas – types who'll be happy finding their own breakfast in the neighbourhood cafés and who aren't perturbed by a bit of street noise. Given its smallish, pushed-together 'double' beds, though, couples might want to give it a miss.

**Hotel StAnnen** (Map pp656-7; ☎ 3177130; www.stannen.de; Annenstrasse 5; s €80-100, d €90-140; (P) ☎ ☑) A slightly surprising oasis of middle-class comfort tucked away in one of the few quiet streets between the Reeperbahn and Schanzenviertel, this is a favourite with business-people and mainstream travellers for its stylish modern rooms. Even if you're not interested in the free business centre, the pleasant back garden and terrace make a perfect summer retreat.

**Hotel Hafen** (Map pp656-7; ☎ 311 1370; www.hotel-hamburg.de; Seewartenstrasse 9; r €100-200; (P)) Location, location, location. This behemoth of a hotel overlooks the heart of Hamburg's harbour from a small hill. To guarantee a front-facing room you must book a two-night package, but views are among the best in town. The main building, a former seaman's home, is historic and maritime-themed, but there are newer modern wings, too.

#### UNIVERSITÄTSVIERTEL

**Schlafschön** (☎ 4135 4949; www.schlafschoen.de; Monetastrasse 4; s with shared bathroom €55-75, d with shared bathroom €85; (P); ☎ Schlump) Set in the same former hospital as Hadley's, albeit in another wing, this B&B mixes sunny beach-house colours with Turkish throws and Moroccan tiles. The centrepiece is the huge breakfast room, with a balcony overlooking the inner courtyard. Look for the door saying 'Schwest'erhaus' on the left side of the street.

**Hotel Fresena** (Map pp656-7; ☎ 410 4892; www.hotel-fresena.de; 3rd fl, Dammtorpalais, Moorweidenstrasse 34; s €60-80, d €82-106, tr €93-108, q €124-144, breakfast €9; (P) ☎) 'Fresena' sounds fresh and citrusy, and this tidy, well-kept hotel is. You're greeted with African sculptures and interesting photos, but the main impression is how nice the place smells (helped by a largely nonsmoking policy). Several people with minor physical and mental disabilities work here, and between them they speak German, English, French, Russian and North African Arabic.

**Schlaf lounge** (☎ 3868 5387; www.schlaf lounge.de; Vereinstrasse 54b; s/d €70/92; ☎; ☎ Christuskirche) Live like a local in this stylish, streamlined B&B. With lots of blonde wood throughout and extremely attractive rooms in either brown and ochre or dark red and aqua, few guests find it necessary to stray far from home here. Organic fruit, homemade jam at breakfast and home-baked cakes on weekends are extra bonuses.

**YoHo – The Young Hotel** (☎ 284 1910; www.yoho-hamburg.de; Moorkamp 5; s/d €80/95, under 26yr €55/65, breakfast €10; (P)) The superlative YoHo could teach low-cost airline easyJet something about the use of orange. Its tasteful splashes – the winged retro chairs and walls in reception and the burnt-sienna blankets draped across the beds – don't detract from its minimalist feel. Rooms are Zen-like; the only outrageous eye-candy is found in its Syrian restaurant, Mazza, and the 'Occidental' breakfast room.

**Hotel Bellmoor** (☎ 413 3110; www.hotel-bellmoor.de; 4th fl, Dammtorpalais, Moorweidenstrasse 34; s/d €80/100; (P)) White embossed wallpaper and vintage advertising posters line the halls of this pleasant, traditional hotel. Amazingly, it used to be one apartment and many of the bedrooms have been converted from other uses. Singles really stand out here: rooms 14 and 34 in particular feature Art Nouveau-ish bathrooms with stained-glass windows and tiled tubs.

From the breakfast lounge there are good views over Hamburg's rooftops.

#### ALTONA

**25 Hours** (☎ 855 870; www.25hours-hotel.de; Paul-Dessau-Strasse 2; d under/over 26yr €61/101; (P) ☎; ☎ 1 or 11 to Bahrenfeld) A budget design hotel aimed at a younger market, 25 Hours attracts many models and fashion types with its funky décor and upbeat atmosphere. The reception features bright pink chairs and a reception desk that looks like it's wearing a studded belt, but the rooms are a little less Barbie-meets-Barbarella, with white, blues and exposed concrete. The biggest drawback is the location, in a suburban business park. There's a fitness centre nearby, though.

**Clipper Elb Lodge** (☎ 809 010; www.clipper-hotels.de; Carsten-Rehder-Strasse 71; r from €120, with river view from €165; (P) ☎) These spacious designer apartments are kitted out with cream stone bathrooms, black kitchen cupboards and clever LCD TVs that swivel in the wall between the sleeping and living areas. As often happens in Hamburg though, if you're staying in a room at the front of the building, your gaze will be drawn outwards to the Elbe River at the start of the gastronomic Elbmeile. Take bus 112 to Fischmarkt to get here.

#### Top End

**Gastwerk Hotel** (☎ 890 620; www.gasthof-hotel.de; Beim Alten Gaswerk 3, Daimlerstrasse, Altona; r €130-170, breakfast €16; (P) ☎ ☎ ☎ ☎) Hamburg's original design hotel is fashioned from a former gasworks, but warmly coloured furnishings and touches of humour – like the clock in reception stuck at five to 12 and the huge milling chute above the bar – offset the exposed steel and concrete. Located in a suburban business park, the place feels a little stranded, but it's fine if you have your own car or just want to cocoon. To get here, catch bus 2 from Altona to Stresemannstrasse.

**Hotel SIDE** (Map pp656-7; ☎ 309 990; www.side-hamburg.de; Drehbahn 49; r €190-230; (P) ☎) There's nothing shy and retiring about this Matteo Thun-designed beauty, from its eight-storey triangular atrium with colourful light strips to its pale minimalist rooms. Splashes of colour are found in the suites' bathtubs (variously yellow, green-blue or blood-red) and the 1950s-style saucers-from-outer-space sofas strewn across the 8th-floor lounge.



**Raffles Hotel Vier Jahreszeiten** (Map pp656-7; ☎ 349 40; www.affles-hvj.de; Neuer Jungfernstieg 9-14; s €220-295, d €270-345, ste €475-4000, breakfast €14-22; P ☒ ☑ ☒ ☒) This venerable hotel's fame stretches well beyond the shores of the Binnenalster, which it overlooks. With bags of history, it hasn't forgotten to move with the times. Its classic rooms were recently refurbished, while the 100-year-old *Wohnhalle*, where Hamburg society takes afternoon tea, is getting some competition from its own trendy Doc Cheng's restaurant.

**Hotel Atlantic** (Map p665; ☎ 288 80; www.kempinski.atlantic.de; An der Alster 72-79; r per person from €155, breakfast €2; P ☒ ☑ ☒ ☒) Imagine yourself aboard a luxury ocean liner in this see-and-be-seen grand hotel. Built for cruise passengers, it has ornate stairwells, wide hallways and subtle maritime touches. 'Modernised' rooms – still classic-looking – are a big leap up from the standard accommodation. There are BMW and James Bond suites.

Other recommendations:

**Le Meridien** (☎ 210 00; www.lemeridien.com; An der Alster 52-56; r from €210 P ☒ ☑ ☒ ☒) The 'chic' design here is pretty ho-hum formulaic, but the restaurant's front-row lake views are mesmerising, and the beds famously comfortable.

**Park Hyatt** (Map pp656-7; ☎ 3332 1234; www.hamburg.park.hyatt.de; Bugenhagenstrasse 8; s/d from €185/210; P ☒ ☑ ☒ ☒) Huge horizontal spaces make up for the low ceilings in this exquisite, Asian-feeling hotel tucked away in a central *Kontorhaus* (an old-fashioned name for a certain type of clinker-brick office building).

## EATING City Centre

**Sushi for Friends** (Map pp656-7; ☎ 2091 1000; Ballindamm; sushi plates €3-11; ☒ lunch & dinner Mon-Fri, dinner Sat & Sun) Handy after an Alster cruise or some shopping around Jungfernstieg, this restaurant serves spicy-tuna-and-rocket rolls, mango chutney sushi and other innovative

Japanese dishes. Stay downstairs, where it's all white leather banquettes and dark wood – although the colourful cushions strewn across the mezzanine area look enticing, it can get muggy up there, especially in summer.

**Café Paris** (Map pp656-7; ☎ 3252 7777; Rathausstrasse 4; mains €6.50-15) This otherwise quintessentially French brasserie has a very 'Hamburg' lid in the form of its spectacular maritime-and-industry-themed ceiling murals. Come to admire its Art Deco interior and busy but down-to-earth atmosphere.

**Die Bank** (Map pp656-7; ☎ 238 0030; Hohe Bleichen 17; mains €16-28; ☒ closed Sun) Hamburg's most *schmicki-micki* (chichi) downtown eatery is about conspicuous consumption – of 'banker's platters' (prawns, crabs, more prawns and lobster) and 'Bourse toast' (salmon tartare, poached egg, potato purée and caviar). The bar's huge sepia photo of piles of coins had us thinking we'd stumbled back into the 1980s, but the marble columns, lofty ceiling and generally opulent surrounds do impress, and the place buzzes even on a Monday night. Some comfort dishes, such as Wiener schnitzel and *pot au feu* (beef and vegetable stew), are on the menu, too.

## St Georg

**Kantine im Schauspielhaus** (Map p665; ☎ 2487 1239; Kirchenallee 39; meals €4.50-6.50; ☒ noon-3pm Mon-Fri) There's as much theatre in this cheap, bustling basement restaurant as there is on the stage in the theatre above, as waiters patrol between the tables calling out ready orders of cheap pasta, salad or meat, and thespians gossip between rehearsals.

**Café Koppel** (Map p665; ☎ 249 235; Lange Reihe 66; dishes €3.50-7.50) Set back from busy Lange Reihe, with a garden in summer, this largely veggie café is a refined oasis where you can hear the tinkling of spoons in coffee cups mid-morning on the mezzanine floor (although they're still

playing the Buena Vista Social Club some evenings!). The menu includes great breakfasts, lots of salads, stews, jacket potatoes, curries and pasta.

**Turnhalle St Georg** (Map p665; ☎ 2800 8480; Lange Reihe 107; mains €12-20) Intimate is not a word you could use for this converted gymnasium of a local girls' school, but you still sometimes have trouble getting a seat. Exercise rings and ropes remain hanging from one of the thick white beams under the vaulted A-line roof, but designer lampshades and huge, potted trees have been added to the mix. The happy crowd tucks into modern international cuisine.

**Golden Cut** (Map p665; ☎ 8510 3532; Holzdamm 61; sushi €2.50-13, mains €13-25; ☒ dinner Mon-Sat) Hamburg scenesters love this restaurant for three reasons. Firstly, the well-executed menu runs the gamut from carrot-coconut soup with baked black tiger prawns in tempura to French black pudding with truffles. Secondly, patrons can show off in the high-ceilinged room with its olive-green leather chairs and copper-plated leaf chandeliers. Thirdly, and most importantly, they can bypass the strict person on the door and walk straight into the exclusive adjoining club (p673).

**Cox** (Map p665; ☎ 249 422; Lange Reihe 68; mains lunch €9-12, dinner €16-20; ☒ closed lunch Sat & Sun) This upmarket French-style bistro was in the vanguard of the gentrification of sleazy St Georg, and some long-term residents find it a bit snobby. Even they will admit, though, that the changing menu is delicious. Dishes include things like red snapper with basil pesto and Provençale potato salad, or veal in balsamic *jus* with ratatouille and gnocchi.

## Alster Lakes

**Literaturhaus Café** (☎ 220 1300; Schwänenwik 38; dishes €4-15, 3-course menus from €21) If you're strolling around the Outer Alster, don't forget to stroll in here, where creaky parquet floors lead you to a slightly shabby but spectacular baroque café. It's like a charming old Viennese coffee house, with golden walls, cherubs, marble columns, huge chandeliers and leafy garden views. Bistro fare – antipasto, risotto, tarts, salads and roasts – is served.

## Port & Speicherstadt

**Fleetschlösschen** (Map pp656-7; ☎ 3039 3210; Brooktorkai 17; snacks €4-7.50; ☒ 11am-6pm) One of the cutest little cafés you ever saw, this former

customs post overlooks a Speicherstadt canal and has a narrow, steel spiral staircase to the toilets. There's barely room for 20 inside, but its several outdoor seating areas are brilliant in sunny weather. Hamburg is into *Kleinods* (small treasures, in this case buildings) at the moment, and this one is the business.

**Ti Breizh** (Map pp656-7; ☎ 3751 7815; Deichstrasse 39; mains €5-11; ☒ closed Mon) Even if you don't like crepes, this simple Breton restaurant will have you thinking you do. Tuck into a thin, delicious savoury number folded into a perfect square.

**Chilli Club** (Map pp656-7; ☎ 3570 3580; Am Sandtorkai 54; dishes €4-20) This trendy noodle bar is tucked away in the industrial-looking HafenCity. Asian tapas, dim sum and sushi are also served within the restaurant's red-and-black interior. Main meals are served at dinner only.

## Schanzenviertel & St Pauli

**Made in Portugal** (Map pp656-7; ☎ 4319 0991; Schulterblatt 3; snacks €0.60-3.50; ☒ 8am-8pm) The Schanzenviertel teems with Portuguese eateries, especially around the 'piazza' just to the south of this tiny tiled café. This place produces the creamiest custard tarts, as well as simple snacks.

**Die Herren Sempel** (Map pp656-7; ☎ 3868 4599; Schulterblatt 75; dishes €4-8) The sky-blue mural with huge white flowers has become this café's signature. Its tiny entrance opens into an unexpectedly spacious series of retro rooms, plus a small winter garden niche. The range of breakfasts, from the fishy *Sylter* (from Sylt) to the healthy *Frucht* (fruit), is fantastic, and there are also sandwiches and light meals on offer.

## EEL SOUP, ANYONE?

As in any port city, Hamburg's restaurants offer an international mix, which is lucky because the local specialities are something of an acquired taste. More adventurous gourmants might like to sample *Labskaus*, a dish of boiled marinated beef put through the grinder with mashed potatoes and herring and served with a fried egg, red beets and pickles. Or perhaps you'd prefer *Aalsuppe* (eel soup) spiced with dried fruit, ham, vegetables and herbs? **Deichgraf** (Map pp656-7; ☎ 364 208; Deichstrasse 23; mains €14-22; ☒ lunch Mon-Sat, dinner Sat) is one leading local restaurant that can acquaint you with these and other local dishes.

## THE AUTHOR'S CHOICE

**East** (Map pp656-7; ☎ 309 930; www.east-hamburg.de; Simon-von-Utrecht-Strasse 31; r €150-375, breakfast €14; P ☒) Even those who've seen a few design hotels in their time will be impressed by East. Not for it the oft-used template of pale colours and minimalist lines, or the attention-grabbing device of bright retro hues. Rather the walls, lamps and huge pillars of this hotel's public areas all tastefully emulate organic forms – droplets, flowers, trees – giving it an incredibly warm, rich and enveloping feel. Floors are themed by plants and spices, and rooms have open bathroom areas, divided off by flowing curtains. Its Japanese garden and sunken restaurant (p670) are simply stunning.

**Erikas Eck** (Map pp656-7; ☎ 433 545; Sternstrasse 98; mains €5.50-10; 🍷 7-2pm Mon-Fri, 7pm-9am Sat, mid-night-9am Sun) Traditional, wood-lined Erikas has been serving up red-eye specials since the golden oldies always on its radio were first-time hits. Fare includes schnitzels, herrings and *Schweinebraten* (roast pork), and an array of breakfasts – the *belegte Brötchen* (sandwiches) plus accompaniments – from midnight.

**Bok** (Map pp656-7; ☎ 4318 3597; Schulterblatt 3; mains €9-15) What the famous Wagamama is to London, Bok is to the Schanzenviertel. A local mini-chain, it has at least four outlets, however, this one has the nicest ambience. The food is mild and aimed at German palates; duck makes a frequent appearance on the pan-Asian (Thai, Korean and Japanese) menu.

**East** (Map pp656-7; ☎ 309 930; Simon-von-Utrecht-Strasse 31; mains €18-22.50; 🍷 lunch & dinner Mon-Fri, dinner Sat & Sun) This design hotel's euro-Asian restaurant is its most breathtaking feature. Huge fat white columns, slightly wavy and striated like trees, stretch from the basement floor to the high ceiling above the mezzanine. Yakshi's bar. Private lounges are hidden in the white honeycomb wall.

### Universitätsviertel

**Hadley's** (☎ 450 5075; Beim Schlump 84a; dishes €4.50-9; 🍷 Schlump) It's hard to believe this warm, enveloping café was once an ER (emergency room). Through the door curtains, there's a subtle retro mix of olive-green, brown and sienna-coloured fabric lampshades, but the most eye-catching feature is the sunken winter garden, where a buffet breakfast is laid out on Sundays.

**Balutschi** (Map pp656-7; ☎ 452 479; Grindelallee 33; meals €7.50-14) Out the back here, there's an over-the-top *Arabian Nights*-style grotto, where

you remove your shoes and sit on carpets and low benches. At lunch (specials around €5), however, most customers seem to devour the very tasty Pakistani cuisine at tables in the more plain main room.

**Vienna** (☎ 439 9182; Fettstrasse 2; mains €8.50-19; 🍷 bistro service from 2pm, meals from 7pm Tue-Sun) Neighbours whisper proudly that this is Hamburg's best German-Austrian restaurant. Even though it looks like a French country-cottage restaurant, particularly with the overgrown garden hiding its outdoor terrace, the schnitzels, venison and fish are distinctly authentic.

### Altona

**Schweizweit** (Map p671; ☎ 3990 7000; Grosse Rainstrasse 2; mains €4.50-13; 🍷 closed Mon dinner) The strong smell of Swiss cheese might alert you to this small basement bistro's presence before you spot it. Watched over by a cable-car triptych (more *Wallpaper\** than Heidi), you can enjoy its changing noodle and meat dishes, as well as delicious homemade chocolate mousse.

**Filmhauskneipe** (Map p671; ☎ 393 467; Friedensallee 9; mains €6-11) This relaxed café-cum-bistro wouldn't be out of place on Paris' left bank, with its arty clientele and simple but wholesome food.

**Eisenstein** (Map p671; ☎ 390 4606; Friedensallee 9; mains €17.50) This hip international restaurant inside Altona's Zeischallen is a postmodern symphony of stone, steel and wood wrapped around the brick chimney of an old ship propeller factory. The menu runs the gamut from homemade pasta to fish couscous.

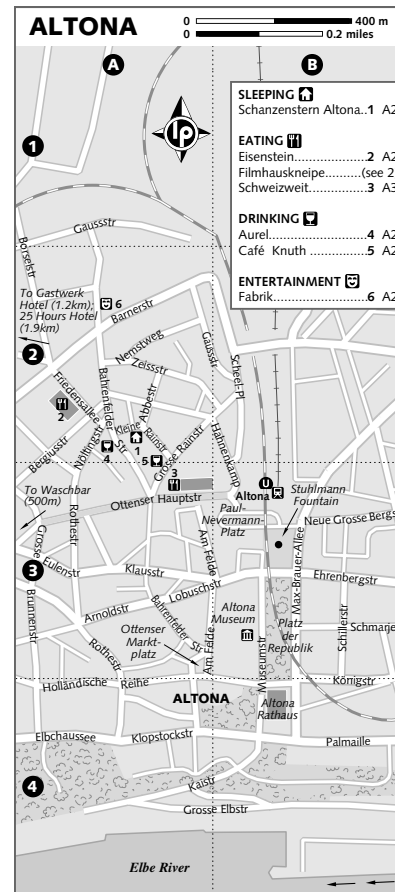
### The 'Elbmeile'

In the last few years, Hamburg's western riverfront, from Altona to Övelgönne, has metamorphosed into one of Germany's hottest

### CHEAP EATS IN THE SCHANZE

The streets of the Schanzenviertel are lined with so many restaurants it's impossible for us to cover even a tenth of them, really. However, if you're on a budget, walk along Susannenstrasse in particular, or Schulterblatt and Schanzenstrasse, and you're sure to find something you like. Seriously cheap eateries include the following:

- **Kumpir** (Map pp656-7; Schanzenstrasse; meals €2.90-3.30) The best outlet of this jacket potato chain; near the Fritz Hotel.
- **Shikara Quick** (Map pp656-7; ☎ 430 2353; Susannenstrasse 20; meals €4.50-7.50) Tasty Indian curries.
- **Thai Cowboys** (Map pp656-7; ☎ 430 8025; Susannenstrasse 18; meals €5.50-9.50) Cheap stand-up Thai fare.



dining scenes. None of the restaurants along the so-called 'Elbmeile' (Elbe Mile) has been awarded a Michelin star (at least not at the time of writing). However, the sheer concentration of eateries and the setting – sometimes stunning, sometimes laughably industrial,

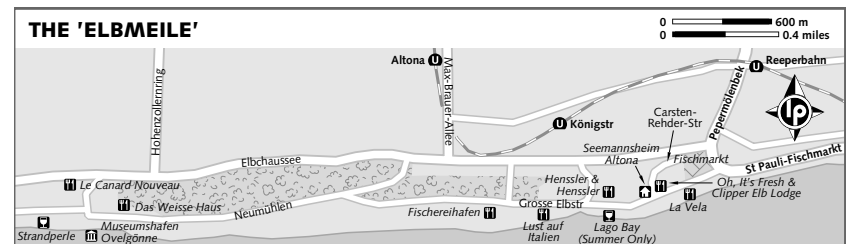
sometimes both – is certainly memorable. The following only represent a portion of what's on offer.

**Oh, It's Fresh** (Map p671; ☎ 3803 7861; Carsten-Rehder-Strasse 71; dishes €2.50-12; 🍷 7am-7pm Mon-Fri, 8.30am-5.30pm Sat & Sun; 🚶 Königstrasse) California meets New York meets Hamburg in this chain outlet, which rates a mention not only for its waterfront location and groovy swinging-London logos, but also for its array of healthy salads, bagels, focaccias and international breakfasts. Flock retro wallpaper, a lounge area and a series of world clocks decorate this light-filled, airy space.

**Lust auf Italien** (Map p671; ☎ 382 811; Grosse Elbstrasse 133; mains €7-18.50) If you just can't be bothered to dress up for an Elbmeile evening, the communal wooden benches of this rustic, unpretentious Italian restaurant are the best place to plonk yourself. The pasta and fish dishes are homy rather than gourmet, but the seafood usually tastes like it's just leapt from the sea. Take a post-prandial stroll for a proper look at the river.

**La Vela** (Map p671; ☎ 3869 9393; Grosse Elbstrasse; mains €9.50-19) Cruise and container ships glide by just outside the window of this buzzing, semiformal Italian restaurant. With such unusually close-up views, it keeps most other things simple: the red-brick interior is uncluttered and the menu is sparse, with about a dozen main choices. The only complicated thing is the enormous wine list. To get here, take the S-Bahn to Königstrasse or bus 112 to Hafentreppe/Fischmarkt.

**Henssler & Henssler** (Map p671; ☎ 3869 9000; Grosse Elbstrasse 160; mains €13-21; 🍷 closed Sun) This smart-casual sushi bar doesn't really 'do' views; it's across the road from the water and has an opaque frontage. However, couples, business-people and young families all come here for the food, and seem perfectly content with the milieu of black wooden chairs, white tablecloths and concrete flooring.



**Fischereihafen** (Map p671; ☎ 381 816; Grosse Elbstrasse 143; mains €13-40) The hokey sea captain's uniform worn by the doorman is the only jarring note at this incredibly elegant, traditional restaurant. It's subtly maritime themed and serves Hamburg's best fish as well as some regional dishes to a mature, well-heeled clientele. Windows overlook the Elbe and a remarkable new ship-shaped office building. Reservations are recommended.

**Das Weisse Haus** (Map p671; ☎ 390 9016; Neumühlen 50; menus €28 & €36; ☎ lunch & dinner Mon-Fri, dinner Sat) A converted fisherman's cottage, this White House would look tiny beside its US namesake, and it's surprisingly cramped given its status as a major culinary player. Chef Tim Mälzer is Germany's answer to Jamie Oliver, so people book a month ahead to submit themselves to his team's 'surprise' dinners. (Vegetarian and other dietary requirements can be accommodated to a limited degree.) Alternatively you can book ahead for a simple lunch (€7 to €9); the best seats among the artfully low-key rooms are in the front winter garden. To get here, catch bus 112 to Neumühlen.

**Le Canard Nouveau** (Map p671; ☎ 8812 9531; Elbchausee 139; mains €16-28, menus €48-99; ☎ lunch & dinner Tue-Fri, dinner Sat) Above the main Elbe-mile strip, this swish contemporary place has a bird's-eye view of the river and imposing glass frontage of its white modernist building. Chef Ali Güngörmüs prepares changing dishes such as lamb with a mustard crust and goat-cheese and fig tortellini, tuna with saffron potatoes and crispy capers, and Valrhona chocolate cake, while sated critics tip him as a contender for a Michelin star. Reserve for dinner; lunch tables are freer. Take Schnellbus 36 to Hohenzollernring Süd.

## DRINKING

For a fuller assessment of the enormous bar scene, check out *Prinz*, *Oxmox* or *Szene*.

**Nachtsyl** (Map pp656-7; ☎ 814 444; Alstertor 1; ☎ from 7pm) Hamburg's inner city is usually like the *Marie Celeste* of an evening, as people head to St Pauli to drink. Yet downtown does boast this unusual beauty, with its high-arched ceiling, embossed wallpaper, reasonably priced drinks and arty clientele.

**Zoë 2/Summun Bonum** (Map pp656-7; Neuer Pferdemarkt 17; ☎ from noon) The battered sofas, rough walls and old lampshades here prove that the

ad hoc, secondhand look so favoured in Berlin is a Hamburg hit, too. Bottled beers and cocktails provide all the sophistication needed.

**Dual** (Map pp656-7; ☎ 4320 8829; Schanzenstrasse 53; ☎ from 11am) Dual's all the better for no longer being one of the central pivots of the Hamburg scene. The vibe's more laidback and less look-at-me within its still-chic orange, 1970s retro interior.

**Nouar** (Map pp656-7; ☎ 430 8949; Max-Brauer-Allee 275; ☎ from 8pm Tue-Sat) A popular bar with students and other denizens of the nearby Schanzenviertel, this place has that relaxed secondhand look going on and a fondness for football during the week.

**Meanie Bar/Molotov Club** (Map pp656-7; ☎ 310 845; www.molotowclub.com; Spielbudenplatz 5; ☎ from 6pm) One of the few venues along the Reeperbahn with some local cred, the retro Meanie Bar sits above the Molotov Club, where an alternative, independent music scene thrives by hosting the likes of the White Stripes, the Hives, Kills and Bravery.

**Tower Bar** (Map pp656-7; ☎ 311 1370; Seewartenstrasse 9; ☎ from 6pm) For a more elegant, mature evening, repair to this 14th-floor eyrie at the Hotel Hafen for unbeatable harbour views.

**Café Knuth** (Map p671; ☎ 4600 8708; Grosse Rainstrasse 21; ☎ from 10am) With this chilled but smoky café-bar, Altona stakes its own claim on the olive-green retro style seen dotted across the city. Students, creative types and work colleagues come to chat over coffee or cocktails. (Forget the food; it frequently takes too long.)

**Aurel** (Map p671; ☎ 390 2727; Bahrenfelder Strasse 15; ☎ from 11am) A long-standing favourite in Altona is this snug bar with an eccentric back room where Stone Age meets baroque.

## ENTERTAINMENT Clubs

**Angie's Nightclub** (Map pp656-7; ☎ 3177 8816; Spielbudenplatz 27; ☎ from 10pm Wed-Sat) When many visitors think of Hamburg nightlife, they immediately think of Angie's. Floy, 'the white queen of soul', plays live as guests – sometimes celebrities – sip cocktails genteelly.

**Astra Stube** (Map pp656-7; Max-Brauer-Allee 200; ☎ from 9.30pm Mon-Sat) This graffiti-covered red building underneath the railway tracks looks totally unpromising, but it's actually a pioneer of the underground scene, with DJs playing experimental electro, techno and drum 'n' bass. It's also in a growing cluster of

## HAMBURG'S UNLIKELY BEACH BARS

When it comes to city beaches, you have to hand it to Hamburg's hardy hipsters for their can-do spirit – or perhaps just sheer obstinacy. Undeterred by the cranes, shipbuilding docks and steel containers decorating their city's workaholic port, they've begun shipping in tonnes of artificial sand to the industrial waterfront, giving these newly created party zones wildly optimistic names like Hamburg del Mar.

The city beach season kicks off in spring and lasts until at least September, as patrons come to drink, listen to music, dance and generally hang out. Ibiza it ain't, but it does have its own special buzz. Here are some of the leading venues, open daily, Hamburg's intemperate weather permitting.

- **Central Park** (Map pp656-7; ☎ 433 684; www.centralpark-hamburg.de in German; Max-Brauer-Allee 277) A beach bar without water? No problem, said the owners of the Waagenbau club who built this summer garden smack bang in the grungy Schanzenviertel. Music, snacks, massages and a kid's playground have been joined by sculpture exhibitions in some years.
- **Lago Bay** (www.lago.cc, in German; Grosse Elbstrasse 150) Lago Bay is wedged between Hamburg del Mar (which looks like a pirates' cove with its famous St Pauli skull-and-crossbones flags) and Hamburg City Beach Club (with its Moroccan lounge). Refreshingly, you can actually swim at this chic retreat. Sun-loungers are arranged around the outdoor pool, while free exercise classes will help you keep fit, er, between cocktails. S-Bahn Königstrasse will get you here, or catch bus 112 to Hafentreppe/Fischmarkt and walk for five minutes straight ahead or west from Hafentreppe; downhill from Fischmarkt to the riverbank and then right or west.
- **StrandPauli** (Map pp656-7; www.strandpauli.de, in German; St-Pauli Hafenstrasse 84) Tuesday is tango night at this *Gilligan's Island* stretch of sand overlooking the heart of the busy docks. The reed-thatched shack looks a bit out of place, but the beer, cocktails and sausages hit the spot. Take bus 112 to St-Pauli-Hafenstrasse.
- **Strandperle** (Schulberg 2) The mother of Hamburg's beach bars is little more than a kiosk, but the people-watching is tops, as patrons linger over the MOPO (*Hamburger Morgenpost* newspaper) with a snack, coffee, beer or local Fritz-Kola. Take bus 112 to Neumühlen, then walk for five minutes straight ahead (west).

clubs, with the popular Waagenbau just next door.

**China Lounge** (☎ 3197 6622; Nobistor 14; ☎ from 11pm Thu-Sat) If you go to one mainstream club in Hamburg, this leading venue probably should be it. Stylish without being snootily exclusive, it boasts four areas playing electro, house, hip-hop and R&B. A huge laughing Buddha looks down on the main floor.

**Cult** (Map pp656-7; ☎ 2982 2180; Grosse Freiheit 2; ☎ from 11pm Thu-Sat) Claiming to be Hamburg's most beautiful club, Cult serves up an unintimidating, good-time mix of '70s and '80s music in its shiny, cathedral-like main room.

**Funky Pussy Club** (Map pp656-7; ☎ 314 236; Grosse Freiheit 34; ☎ from 11pm Thu-Sat) Despite the dreadful name, this artistically decorated place is a hit for its mainstream chart-toppers and hip-hop, dance and house.

**Golden Cut** (Map p665; ☎ 8510 3532; Holzdamm 61; ☎ from 10pm Fri & Sat) Hamburg's beautiful peo-

ple clamber – stylishly of course – to get past the city's most difficult door scene into this exclusive club, where video projections spin over the dance floor while DJs spin soul, funk and house. Eating in the adjoining restaurant (p669) is – no pun intended – a sure entrée.

**Golden Pudel Club** (☎ 3197 9930; Fischmarkt 27; ☎ from 10pm) In a ramshackle fisherman's hut near the waterfront, this underground bar-club plays an eclectic mix of electronic, hip-hop, R&B and reggae to a mixed crowd. There was some building work going on when we visited, however, so double-check listings magazines to make sure it's still there. Take bus 112 to Hafentreppe.

## Cinemas

Several cinemas screen movies in the original language with subtitles. Look for the acronym 'OmU' (Original mit Untertiteln). Venues include **Abaton Kino** (☎ 4132 0320; cnr Grindelhof & Allende Platz, Universitätsviertel) and **3001** (Map pp656-7;

## GAY & LESBIAN HAMBURG

Hamburg has a thriving gay and lesbian scene; find out more at the gay centre **Hein & Fiete** (Map p665; ☎ 240 333; Pulverteich 21; 🕒 4-9pm Mon-Fri, to 7pm Sat), or look for free listings magazine *hinner* (found in many venues listed in this section).

**Café Gnosa** (Map p665; ☎ 243 034; Lange Reihe 93) This attractive olde-worlde café, with its vaguely erotic, vaguely abstract art, is hugely popular and an excellent starting point for gay and lesbian visitors to Hamburg. It stocks *hinner*.

**Frauencafé endlich** (Map pp656-7; ☎ 351 616; Dragonerstell 11) This modern, wood-lined café is a top meeting spot for lesbians. It's located in a women-only hotel ([www.hotel-hanseatin.de](http://www.hotel-hanseatin.de)).

**EDK** (Map pp656-7; ☎ 312 914; Gerhardstrasse 3) 'Small is beautiful' says the sign outside, and for the gays, lesbians and friends who come to this techno-house club it certainly is.

**Pit** (Map p665; ☎ 280 3056; Pulverteich 17) Hamburg's first gay disco, founded more than 30 years ago, has managed to keep up with the times and is still one of the favourite clubs for men.

☎ 437 679; Schanzenstrasse 75, Schanzenviertel). Movies usually cost €5.50 during the week, €7.50 at weekends.

## Theatre

**Deutsches Schauspielhaus** (Map p665; ☎ 248 713; [www.schauspielhaus.de](http://www.schauspielhaus.de) in German; Kirchenallee 39) Germany's largest and most important theatre stage, the Schauspielhaus presents imaginative interpretations of the classics (by Shakespeare, Goethe, Chekhov etc) alongside new works such as *Nipple Jesus*, from *High Fidelity* author Nick Hornby.

**Thalia Theater** (Map pp656-7; ☎ 3281 4444; [www.thalia-theater.de](http://www.thalia-theater.de) in German; Alstertor 1) This intimate, galleried venue with a central stage is fond of cutting-edge adaptations of classics. Interestingly, it's recently been adapting cinema – for example, from Krystof Kieslowski and Lars von Trier – for the stage.

**English Theatre** (☎ 227 7089; [www.englishtheatre.de](http://www.englishtheatre.de); Lerchenfeld 14; ☉ Mundsburg) For more than 30 years now, a cast of predominantly British actors has been performing mysteries, comedies and the occasional classic, such as Tennessee Williams' *The Glass Menagerie*, at this venue in Winterhude.

**Schmidt Theater** (Map pp656-7; ☎ 3177 8899; [www.tivoli.de](http://www.tivoli.de); Spielbudenplatz 24) This plush former ballroom now stages a cornucopia of very saucy musical reviews, comedies, soap operas and variety shows. Midnight shows follow the main performance, and there's a smaller cabaret-comic venue, Schmidt's Tivoli, attached.

**Quatsch Comedy Club im Café Keese** (Map pp656-7; ☎ 0180-544 4411; [www.quatschcomedyclub.de](http://www.quatschcomedyclub.de); Reeperbahn 19) The Keese has had a chequered career. It went from being a dance hall to pick-up bar with table telephones. Now it's a comedy club

run by Thomas Hermann, a (smiling) face frequently seen on German TV.

## Live Music

**Grosse Freiheit 36/Kaiserkeller** (Map pp656-7; ☎ 3177 7811; Grosse Freiheit 36; 🕒 from 10pm Tue-Sat) Among live sex theatre and peep shows, this alternative venue hosts an eclectic mix of pop and rock concerts. The Beatles once played in the basement Kaiserkeller (see boxed text, opposite), where there's now a range of student nights.

**Docks** (Map pp656-7; ☎ 3178 8311; Spielbudenplatz 19; 🕒 from 10pm Thu-Sun) Although it's officially now called D-Club, everyone still calls this place by its former name Docks. It has less than perfect acoustics, but an excellent roster of guitar-led bands and reasonably cheap drinks.

**Knust im Schlachthof** (Map pp656-7; ☎ 8797 6230; Neuer Kamp 30) Many muso types rate this live venue in a former slaughterhouse as the best in town, principally for its atmosphere. Not just gigs, but spoken word, football fan parties, puppet shows and other events are held here.

**Logo** (Map pp656-7; ☎ 362 622; Grindelallee 5) This concrete block of a building in the Universitätsviertel is a great place to catch touring American or British alternative-underground bands.

**Fabrik** (Map p671; ☎ 391 070; Barnerstrasse 36, Altona) Fabrik is an unusual venue in a former foundry, famous for its pink exterior and crane jutting from the roof. It's aimed at a slightly older crowd, with jazz, blues and over-30s disco evenings.

## Musicals

Mainstream musicals are seemingly as popular in Hamburg as they were in London during the 1990s.

## THE BEATLES IN HAMBURG – FOREVER

*'I was born in Liverpool, but I grew up in Hamburg.'* – John Lennon

It was the summer of 1960 and a fledgling band from Liverpool had been assured a paying gig in Hamburg, if only they could come up with a drummer. After a frantic search, Pete Best joined John, Paul, George and Stuart (Sutcliffe) in August that year.

Within days, the band opened at the Indra Club on the notorious Grosse Freiheit to a seedy crowd of drunks and whores. After being egged on by the club's burly owner to 'Put on a show', John went wild, screaming, leaping and shouting, even performing in his underwear and with a toilet seat around his neck.

After 48 consecutive nights of six-hour sessions, the Beatles' innate musical genius had been honed. The magnetism of the group that would rock the world began drawing huge crowds. When police shut down the Indra they moved a block south to the Kaiserkeller – and the crowds moved with them.

At the Kaiserkeller, the Beatles alternated with a band called Rory Storm and the Hurricanes, whose drummer was one Ringo Starr. But they hardly had time to get to know each other before an underage George was deported in November, and Paul and Pete were arrested for attempted arson. All three escaped the German authorities and returned to England. There, as 'The Beatles: Direct from Hamburg', they had their Merseyside breakthrough.

In 1961 the Beatles returned to Hamburg, this time to the Top Ten Club on the Reeperbahn. During their 92-night stint here, they made their first professional recording. Around this time, manager extraordinaire Brian Epstein and the recording genius (now Sir) George Martin arrived on the scene. The Beatles' recording contract with German producer Bert Kaempfert was bought out and they began their career with EMI, with one proviso: exit Pete Best, enter Ringo, a more professional drummer. Stuart Sutcliffe had also quit the band, and sadly not long afterwards died of a brain haemorrhage.

In the spring of 1962 the final constellation of the Beatles was to log 172 hours of performance over 48 nights at Hamburg's Star Club (once at Grosse Freiheit 39, but now long gone). But with their increasing fame in England, they began to shuttle off more regularly for home and foreign shores. To usher in the new year of 1963, the Beatles gave their final concert at the Star Club, immortalised in what would become known as the 'Star Club Tapes'.

The Beatles returned occasionally to Hamburg in later years. But it was the combined 800 hours of live performance on grimy German stages in the city's red-light district that burned away the rough edges of four Liverpool boys to reveal their lasting brilliance.

**Operettenhaus** (Map pp656-7; ☎ 01805-114 113; Spielbudenplatz 1) The big glossy musicals, such as *Mamma Mia*, are staged here at Operettenhaus.

**Neue Flora** (☎ 0180-544 44; Stresemannstrasse 159a) One of Europe's largest theatres, Neue Flora was constructed so as to bring Andrew Lloyd Webber's *Phantom of the Opera* to Hamburg. In more recent times, it has reverberated to the strains of *Titanic* and the love-it-or-hate-it piece that brought the world Patrick Swayze, *Dirty Dancing*.

**Musicaltheater im Hafen** (Map pp656-7; ☎ 0180-544 44; [www.loewenkoenig.de](http://www.loewenkoenig.de), in German; Nordereibstrasse 6) The yellow tent resembling a giant bee situated across the harbour hosts *The Lion King*. To get there take the shuttle from Landungsbrücke 1.

## Opera & Classical Music

**Staatsoper** (Map pp656-7; ☎ 356 868; Dammthorstrasse 28) Among the world's most respected opera houses, the Staatsoper has been directed by the likes of Gustav Mahler and Karl Boehm during its 325-year-plus history. Performances often sell out, but try the Hamburg Hotline (☎ 3005 1300) or visit the box office at Grosse Theaterstrasse 25, about 50m from the opera house.

**Musikhalle** (Map pp656-7; ☎ 346 920; Dammthorwall 46) The premier address for classical concerts is this splendid neobaroque edifice, home to the State Philharmonic Orchestra, among others. Along with the opera house, it's now artistically directed by the world's leading female conductor Simone Young, formerly of Opera Australia and a real star in the classical world.

## SHOPPING

Central Hamburg has two main shopping districts. West of the Hauptbahnhof, along Spitalerstrasse and Mönckebergstrasse (known as the 'Mö'), you'll find the large department stores and mainstream boutiques. However, more elegant shops are located within the triangle created by Jungfernstieg, Fuhlenwiete and Neuer Wall. Most of them are in a network of 11 shopping arcades.

For secondhand shopping, try the Schanzenviertel or Karolinenviertel, particularly Marktstrasse.

In Altona, along Ottenser Hauptstrasse, hip clothing stores mingle with Turkish vendors.

## GETTING THERE & AWAY

### Air

**Hamburg Airport** (HAM; ☎ 507 50; www.flughafen-hamburg.de) has frequent flights to domestic and European cities, including on **Lufthansa** (☎ 01803-803 803; Terminal 4), **British Airways** (☎ 01805-735 522; Terminal 4), **Air France** (☎ 5075 2325; Terminal 4) and low-cost carrier **Air Berlin** (☎ 01801-737 800; www.airberlin.com; Terminal 1).

For flights to/from Ryanair's so-called 'Hamburg-Lübeck', see p688.

### Bus

The **ZOB/Busbahnhof** (Central Bus Station; ☎ 247 5765; www.zob-hamburg.de; Adenauerallee 78; ☎ 6.30am-9pm) is southeast of the Hauptbahnhof and most popular for services to central and Eastern Europe, particularly Poland. **Eurolines** (☎ 4024 7106; www.eurolines.com) has buses to Prague (one-way/return €55/98) and Warsaw (€55/86), for example. Check the Eurolines website for other destinations, including Amsterdam, Copenhagen and Paris.

**Gulliver's** (☎ 253 289 278; www.gullivers.de) goes all over Europe and has a website you can search in English. **Polen Reisen** (☎ 241 427) is one of several Eastern European specialists you'll find in the building.

**Autokraft** (☎ 208 8660; www.autokraft.de) goes to Berlin frequently and charges €24/39 one-way/return.

### Car & Motorcycle

The autobahns of the A1 (Bremen-Lübeck) and A7 (Hanover-Kiel) cross south of the Elbe River. Three concentric ring roads manage traffic flow. For ride-shares, try the **Mitfahrzentrale** (☎ 194 40; Ernst-Merck-Strasse 8).

## Train

Hamburg has four train stations: the Hauptbahnhof, Dammtor, Altona and Harburg. Many of the long-distance trains originate in Altona and stop at both Dammtor and the Hauptbahnhof before heading out of the city. Remember this as you read the timetables or you may end up at the wrong station.

There are several trains hourly to Lübeck (€10.30, 45 minutes), Kiel (from €17.20, 1¼ hours), Hanover (€36, 1¼ hours) and Bremen (€18.30 to €22, one hour). A direct service to Westerland on Sylt Island leaves every two hours (€29, three hours).

There are direct IC connections to Berlin-Hauptbahnhof (€48 to €58, 1½ hours) and Cologne (€68 to €78, four hours). Frankfurt is served hourly by the ICE train (€82, 3½ hours), as is Munich (€111, six to nine hours). There's a direct service to Copenhagen several times a day, but the only direct train to Paris is the night train (otherwise, change in Cologne).

## GETTING AROUND To/From the Airport

The **Airport Express** (☎ 227 1060; www.jasper-hamburg.de; ☎ 6am-11pm) runs between the Hauptbahnhof and airport (€5, 25 minutes, every 15 to 20 minutes). You can also take the U1 or S1 to Ohlsdorf, then change to bus 110.

## Car & Motorcycle

Driving around Hamburg is easy. Major thoroughfares cutting across town in all directions are well signposted. Parking is expensive, however, especially in the city centre.

All major car-hire agencies have branches in Hamburg. **Budget** (☎ 01805-244 388) and **Europcar** (☎ 01805-5000) are both at the train station and airport. The city office of **Hertz** (Map p665; ☎ 01805-333 535; Kirchenallee 34-36) is just opposite the Hauptbahnhof. Local agencies include **Star Car** (☎ 468 8300; Jenfelder Alle 2-4), with cars available from around €30 per day or €50 per weekend.

## Public Transport

The **HVV** (☎ 194 49; www.hvv.de) operates buses, ferries, U-Bahn and S-Bahn, and has several offices, including at the Hauptbahnhof and at Jungfernstieg station.

The city is divided into zones. The **Nahbereich** (central area) covers the city centre,

roughly between St Pauli and the Hauptbahnhof. The **Grossbereich** (Greater Hamburg area) covers the city centre plus outlying communities like Blankenese, and is the ticket you'll most commonly need. The **Gesamtbereich** covers the entire Hamburg State.

S-/U-Bahn tickets must be purchased from machines at station entrances; bus tickets are available from the driver. Only single tickets (€1.55) are available in the **Nahbereich**. Ticket types include the following:

Ticket	Grossbereich	Gesamtbereich
Single	€2.50	€6.50
Day Pass (after 9am)	€4.90	€12.50
Day Pass (all day)	€5.80	€14.30
3-Day Pass	€14.40	-
Group Day Pass (up to 5 people)	€8.10	€19.90

If you catch an express bus or Schnellbus, it costs an extra €1.20. The fine for riding without a valid ticket is €50 and checks are fairly frequent.

Services run around the clock on weekends, but between 1am and 4am Sunday to Thursday the night bus network takes over, converging on Rathausmarkt.

Bikes may be taken onto S-/U-Bahn trains, buses and ferries outside rush hours (6am to 9am and 4pm to 6pm).

## Taxi

Taxis can be found at the Hauptbahnhof, Dammtor and Altona, and at some larger S-Bahn and U-Bahn stations. You can book one by calling ☎ 441 011 or ☎ 666 666.

# AROUND HAMBURG

Hamburg State also boasts the so-called **Altes Land** south of the Elbe, a fertile area of orchards reclaimed from marshy ground by Dutch experts in the Middle Ages. Towns here include Stade, Buxtehude and Jork.

**Hamburg Wadden Sea National Park** is found at the mouth of the Elbe River. This is the smallest of Germany's three mud-flat national parks, in the same vein as the Schleswig-Holstein Wadden Sea National Park (p696) and the Lower Saxony Wadden Sea National Park (p637), where you can climb dunes, hike along dykes, seal-spot, take a horse-and-carriage ride across the seabed or, at low tide, *Wattwandern* (see p637). In the Hamburg Wadden Sea National Park, you can also hunt for amber.

Ask the Hamburg tourist office for more information if you like the sound of either of these options.

However, with Germany's great train system, destinations in surrounding states often make better day trips. For example, Lüneburg (p611) in Lower Saxony is within easy reach, as is Bremen (p641) and Lübeck (p683) in Schleswig-Holstein.

Among Germans, one very popular day trip from Hamburg is by boat to Helgoland (p702). **Förde Reederei Seetouristik** (☎ 0180-320 2025; www.frs.de) operates these services. From April to November, you can catch the fast 'Halunder Jet' (return €55 to €70) from Landungsbrücken 3 or 4. Every Saturday in July and August, the larger 'Wappen von Hamburg' makes a 'traditional' day trip (€44 return).

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