



Amazing facts from the Hamburg Metropolitan Region



Hamburg

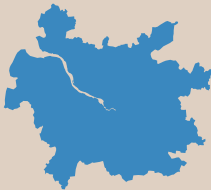
Did you know that the residents of the Hamburg Metropolitan Region are the happiest people in all of Germany?\*

Stretching across an area of around 26,000 square kilometres, the Hamburg Metropolitan Region includes the Hanseatic City of Hamburg – which lends its name to the region – and the surrounding areas between the North and Baltic Seas. The region's combination of urban flair, sandy beaches, picturesque old towns, rural beauty and Northern German charm seems to create the ultimate recipe for happiness. Isn't this reason enough to take a closer look? So why not embark on a discovery tour from the Wadden Sea to Ludwigslust, and from the island of Fehmarn to the Lüneburg Heath! We can assure you that you will discover plenty of surprising and amazing things along the way. 95 of these amazing facts have been compiled for you here – enjoy the read!

\*Glücksatlas. Deutschen Post 2014



One figure equates 100,000 inhabitants



Hamburg Metropolitan Region

# More inhabitants than New Zealand or Ireland

Did you know that the Hamburg Metropolitan Region has a larger population than New Zealand or Ireland? The region between the North Sea and the Baltic Sea is home to **around 5 million people** on an area of approximately 26,000 square kilometres, while New Zealand has a population of 4.5 million and Ireland of 4.6 million.

## Maritime



### The world's second biggest sailing regatta

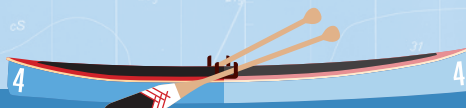
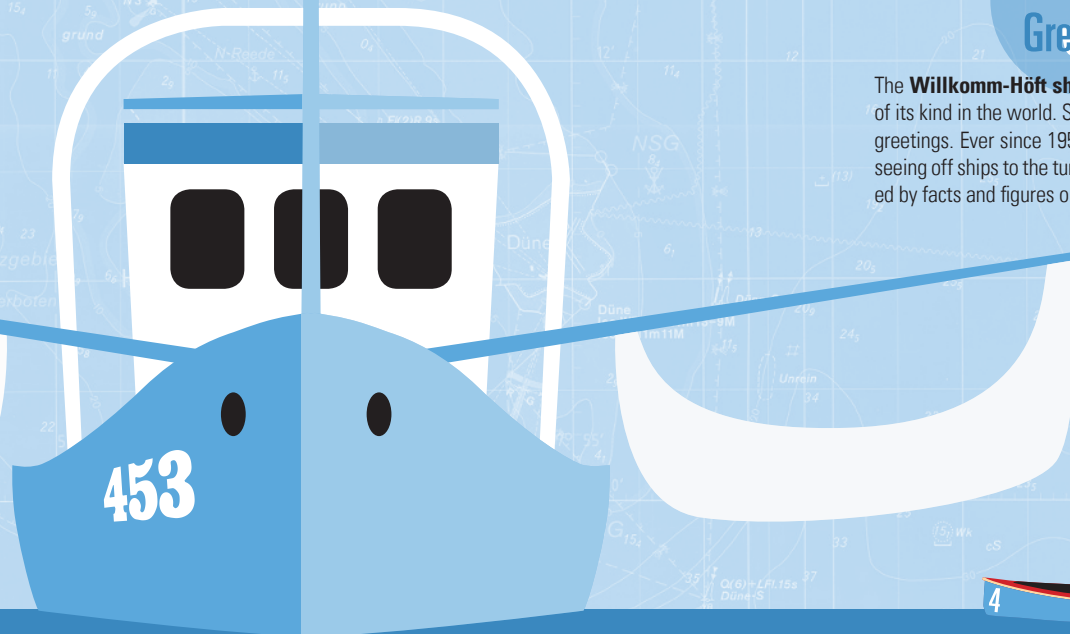
Each year, the world's sailing scene gathers in the Bay of Lübeck, when Travemünde hosts its **international sailing regatta**, which usually takes place in July. **The Travemünde Week** is the world's second biggest sailing event after the Kiel Week. So, hoist those sails!

[www.travemuender-woche.com](http://www.travemuender-woche.com)

### 3 Greeting the world's mariners

The **Willkomm-Höft ships welcome point in Wedel** is the only one of its kind in the world. Several times a day, this is the place for maritime greetings. Ever since 1952, the welcome point has been welcoming and seeing off ships to the tune of each ship's national anthem – complemented by facts and figures on the ship, its country of origin, and its cargo.

[www.schulauer-faehrhaus.de](http://www.schulauer-faehrhaus.de)



## A seaman's paradise

Holstein Switzerland does not only stand out for its rolling hills, but also for its **150 scenic lakes** – among them the Großer Plöner See, the Dieksee and the Kellersee. So why not test the waters in the Hamburg Metropolitan Region!

[www.holsteinischeschweiz.de](http://www.holsteinischeschweiz.de)



## Kronsnest — Germany's smallest ferry

Ship ahoy! In the Hamburg Metropolitan Region you can go on board Germany's smallest ferry, which operates on the River Krückau between Seester and Neuendorf. The small timber bark "Kronsnest" provides space for up to seven passengers and a couple of bicycles. What is more, the "Kronsnest" is the **only hand-operated ferry in all of Schleswig-Holstein**. The crossing is performed using the old maritime tradition of sculling: the thwartwise motion of the oar at the stern propels the vessel forward.

[www.fahre-kronsnest.de](http://www.fahre-kronsnest.de)

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## The biggest North Sea spa

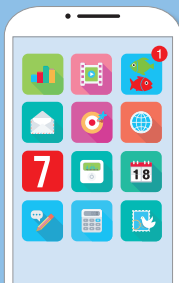
Ever wondered where Germany's biggest North Sea spa is to be found? Just head for Cuxhaven! Where the River Elbe meets the North Sea, more than 3 million overnight guests appreciate the **healthy climate and the diverse landscape** – from the Wadden Sea to the beaches of the North Sea, and from the dunes and the expanse marshes to quiet lakes and moors.

[www.cuxland.de](http://www.cuxland.de)

## A text message from the fishing cutter

"Codfish, salmon and herring on sale from 10 am at the marina!" Fish lovers know that the best fish comes straight from the cutter. And isn't it wonderful that the fishermen from the coast of Schleswig-Holstein are **not only experts in fishing but are also well-versed in mobile communication**: customers are informed via SMS on the place and time of sale.

[www.fischvomkutter.de](http://www.fischvomkutter.de)



## More bridges than any other European city!

Did you know that the city of Hamburg has **more bridges than Venice, Amsterdam and London put together**? With a total of 2,500 bridges, Hamburg has more bridges than any other European city. Bear in mind though that not all of these bridges can be crossed as signal bridges are included in the count.

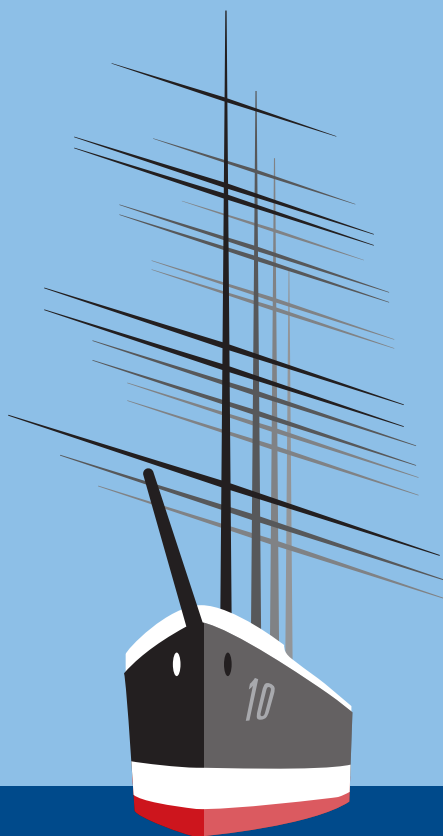
[www.hamburg.de](http://www.hamburg.de)

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## A lighthouse with a history

Did you know that Travemünde boasts Germany's oldest lighthouse? The **Alter Leuchtturm Travemünde** was first mentioned in official records around 1330. Today, the historic 31 metre tower with its eight storeys hosts a maritime museum that provides visitors with insights into the history of navigational lighting technology.

[www.travemuende-tourism.de](http://www.travemuende-tourism.de)



## Travemünde's famous landmark

The **four-masted bark "Passat"** is Germany's biggest preserved sailing vessel. Today, the protected bark is moored near the Trave estuary and functions as a museum ship and a youth hostel. With its 56 metre-high masts, this magnificent sight has become Travemünde's landmark.

[www.travemuende-tourism.de](http://www.travemuende-tourism.de)



## Hanseatic Towns



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## A Hanse stronghold

Did you know that the **Hamburg Metropolitan Region** comprises **six other Hanseatic towns** besides Hamburg – the city that lends its name to the region? These are Wismar, Lübeck, Buxtehude, Stade, Lüneburg and Uelzen.

[www.hamburg-travel.com](http://www.hamburg-travel.com), [www.wismar.de](http://www.wismar.de),  
[www.luebeck-tourism.de](http://www.luebeck-tourism.de), [www.buxtehude.de](http://www.buxtehude.de),  
[www.stade.de](http://www.stade.de), [www.lueneburg.info](http://www.lueneburg.info), [www.uelzen.de](http://www.uelzen.de)

## An old town with distinction

Did you know that, in 1987, the old town of Lübeck was the first historic city centre in Northern Europe to be recognised as a UNESCO World Heritage Site? Lübeck is also known as the “**city of seven towers**” – which refers to the towers of the five Gothic red-brick churches in the old town of Lübeck.

[www.luebeck-tourism.de](http://www.luebeck-tourism.de)



## Gothic red-brick architecture meets maritime flair

In 2002, the old town of Wismar on the Baltic Sea coast was also included in the UNESCO World Heritage list. Do you know what Wismar's emblem is? It is the “**Swedish Heads**”, the colourful busts of Hercules with a lion

[www.wismar.de](http://www.wismar.de)

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## Pub after pub

The Hanseatic town of **Lüneburg** has the **second highest density of pubs in all of Europe – just after Madrid!** Little wonder that the picturesque city centre of this medieval university town is hugely popular among tourists, students and residents alike.

[www.lueneburg.info](http://www.lueneburg.info)

## Islands

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### The “southern Swedish” island

After the Thirty Years’ War, the Baltic **island of Poel** belonged to the Swedish Empire, only becoming German territory in 1903. This is why the residents of Poel humorously refer to their little island as “southern Sweden”. For three days every summer, the Swedish Festival pays homage to this past.

[www.baltic-sea-mecklenburg.com/region/baltic-sea-resorts/island-poel](http://www.baltic-sea-mecklenburg.com/region/baltic-sea-resorts/island-poel)

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### Europe’s biggest river island

Did you know that Europe’s biggest river island is situated right in the middle of the Hamburg Metropolitan Region? In the heart of the Hanseatic City of Hamburg, you will find the island district of **Wilhelmsburg**. Located on the River Elbe, it belongs to the administrative district of Mitte – and in terms of area size, Wilhelmsburg is also **the biggest of Hamburg’s 104 districts**.

[www.hamburg.de/wilhelmsburg](http://www.hamburg.de/wilhelmsburg)

### An island of superlatives

Heligoland is simply unique: as well as being Germany’s only offshore island, **Heligoland** offers a number of other unique characteristics: it is **the world’s smallest nature reserve**, it is the most iodine- and oxygen-rich region in Germany, and it is home to Germany’s safest means of transport: the traditional Börteboot vessel. The island also boasts Germany’s brightest lighthouse.

[www.heligoland.de](http://www.heligoland.de)

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### A city that boasts both an island and a lighthouse

A city with its own island in the sea: the Hanseatic City of Hamburg is the only major German city that can boast this privilege: the **island of Neuwerk** on the Elbe estuary near Cuxhaven. What is more, Neuwerk is also home to **Hamburg’s oldest building** – a lighthouse erected in 1330, which then served as a fortress.

[www.hamburg.de/neuwerk](http://www.hamburg.de/neuwerk)

### The sunniest place in Germany

Who would have thought that Germany’s sunniest place **is to be found in the very north of the country**? Thanks to its favourable air currents, the Baltic island of Fehmarn records the highest number of sunny days in all of Germany – making the island a popular destination not only just for windsurfers.

[www.fehmarn.de](http://www.fehmarn.de)

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# Business and Technology



## Keep the flag flying

Did you know that the Hamburg-based company **FahnenFleck is one of Europe's biggest flag manufacturers** and hoists the flags for international sporting events? During the 1972 Olympics in Munich, this family-owned business even served as official advisor for all merchandising activities, and during the 2016 FIFA World Cup, FahnenFleck was in charge of adorning all of the football stadiums with flags. For Andreas Fleck and his staff it is of course a point of honour to put their heart and soul into supporting **Hamburg's application for the 2024 Olympic Games**.

[www.fahnenfleck.de](http://www.fahnenfleck.de)



## Competitive and economically strong

The Hamburg Metropolitan Region is one of the **most competitive regions** in Germany and Europe. One indicator of this is **the gross domestic product of the Hamburg Metropolitan Region**: with a GDP of 177.432 million euro (as of 2012), the region is ahead of e.g. the Berlin/Brandenburg metropolitan region (168,360 million euro) and the Hanover/Braunschweig/Göttingen/Wolfsburg metropolitan region (124,821 million euro).

[www.hk24.de](http://www.hk24.de)

## 22 The world's longest immersed tunnel

The world's longest underwater motorway tunnel will soon **connect the Baltic island of Fehmarn with the Danish island of Lolland**. The 18-kilometre tunnel, which is currently in the planning phase, is due to be completed in 2021. Since 1963 these two locations have been linked by ferries operating between Puttgarden (Germany) and Rødbyhavn (Denmark).

[www.fehmarn.de](http://www.fehmarn.de)





## A long tradition in printing

The von Stern'sche printing works in Lüneburg is **Germany's oldest printing house** and has been **family-run ever since** it was established. Today, the company is in its 14th generation of ownership. In 2014, the company celebrated its impressive 400-year anniversary.

[www.vonsternsdruckerei.de](http://www.vonsternsdruckerei.de)



## Busy hands

Excellent infrastructure, highly skilled professionals, innovation-friendly businesses and internationally renowned research institutes: little wonder that the unemployment rate in the Hamburg Metropolitan Region has been falling steadily over the past ten years. With a rate of 6.6 percent (as of June 2014) it is lower than that of the Berlin/Brandenburg metropolitan region (9.9%) and the Hanover/Braunschweig/Göttingen/Wolfsburg metropolitan region (7.1%). The best-performing district of the Hamburg Metropolitan Region is Rotenburg (Wümme) with an unemployment rate of 4.2 percent.

[www.hk24.de](http://www.hk24.de)

## "Green Ferry" between Hamburg and Copenhagen

At its Hamburg site, the technology group Siemens is especially active in the area of renewable energies: for instance, Siemens staff in Hamburg have developed a hybrid drive for the Scandlines ferries **along the so-called Vogelfluglinie** (Bird Flight Line) – while at the same time creating the largest hybrid ferry in the world. The innovative hybrid system stores excess electrical energy in batteries, which allows one of the diesel-driven generators on the ferry to be eliminated. Fuel consumption is thus reduced by 15 to 20 percent.

[www.siemens.com](http://www.siemens.com)

## Germany's oldest stock market

Hamburg was Germany's first city to "go public": the Hamburg Exchange was established in 1558 as Germany's first stock market. Back then, it was one of altogether four European stock markets. Today, the Hamburg Exchange is the **oldest operating stock exchange in Germany**.

[www.hamburger-boerse.de](http://www.hamburger-boerse.de)

## 27 The port of Hamburg – gateway to the world

The port of Hamburg is **Europe's second biggest container port** (measured in TEU handling, with Antwerp leading in terms of tonnes handled) – and is ranked 15th in worldwide comparison. For the Hamburg Metropolitan Region, the port is not only the central trading hub but also one of the city's major tourist attractions.

[www.hafen-hamburg.de](http://www.hafen-hamburg.de)

## 28 The world's second largest marshalling yard

Did you know that Maschen on the Hamburg/Hanover railway route boasts Europe's biggest marshalling yard? Located south of Hamburg, the **Maschen yard** is also the second largest just after the Bailey yard in Nebraska, USA.

[www.hamburg-logistik.net/en](http://www.hamburg-logistik.net/en)

## TWENTYNINE



## Location for high-flyers

While Airbus, Lufthansa Technik and Hamburg Airport are widely known, it is less known that the Hamburg Metropolitan Region is also **one of the world's top three locations for aviation**. In addition to the said three players, around 300 other companies are currently active in the field of aviation.

[www.hamburg-aviation.de](http://www.hamburg-aviation.de)

## Germany's largest private railway

The town of Uelzen is the "home base" of Germany's largest private railway, the **Metronom**. Each day, the Metronom trains, which are mostly double-deckers, carry more than 100,000 passengers through the Hamburg Metropolitan Region, Bremen and Lower Saxony.



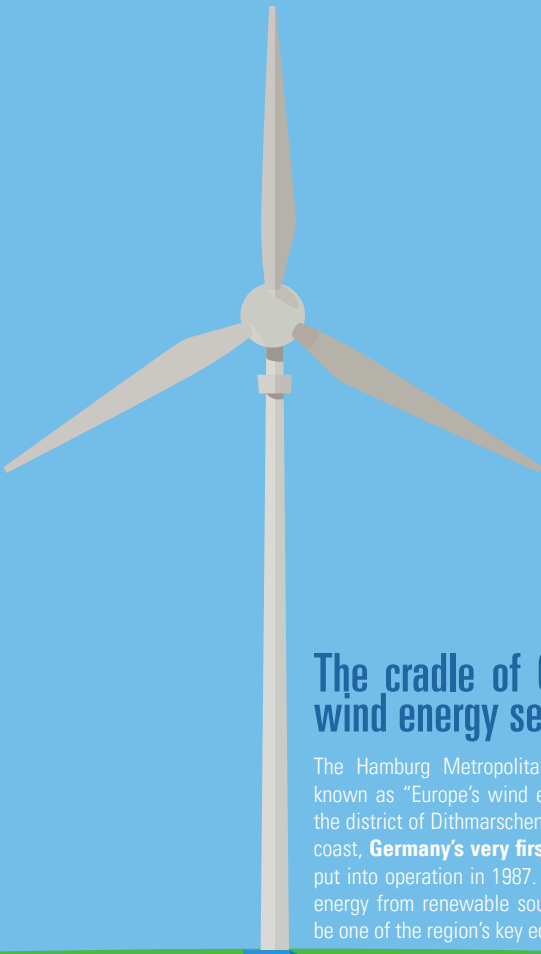
[www.der-metronom.de](http://www.der-metronom.de)

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## A busy waterway

Did you know that the **Kiel Canal** is the world's busiest shipping lane? The Kiel Canal links the North Sea at the Elbe estuary to the Baltic Sea at Kiel. The canal cuts through Schleswig-Holstein at a length of **almost 100 kilometres**, allowing ships to avoid the 800 kilometre detour via the northern tip of Denmark.

[www.nord-ostsee-kanal-info.de](http://www.nord-ostsee-kanal-info.de)



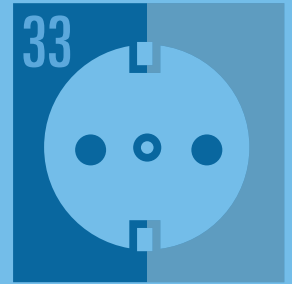
## The cradle of Germany's wind energy sector

The Hamburg Metropolitan Region is also known as "Europe's wind energy capital". In the district of Dithmarschen on the North Sea coast, **Germany's very first wind park** was put into operation in 1987. The generation of energy from renewable sources continues to be one of the region's key economic factors.

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[en.erneuerbare-energien-hamburg.de](http://en.erneuerbare-energien-hamburg.de)

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## A surplus of renewable energy

Did you know that the district of Dithmarschen in the north-west of the Hamburg Metropolitan Region **generates more renewable energies than it uses**? With its considerable surplus, Dithmarschen is ranked first in a German-wide comparison and serves as a role model for other regions. Thanks to its high ratio of solar, wind, biomass and geothermal energy, Dithmarschen has been classified as a "100% plus" renewable energy region.

[www.dithmarschen.de](http://www.dithmarschen.de)

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## Hotspot for biogas

The district of Rotenburg on the Wümme is a leader in the production of biogas: the district is home to **114 local biogas plants**, where combustible gas is created through the fermentation of waste and renewable raw materials.

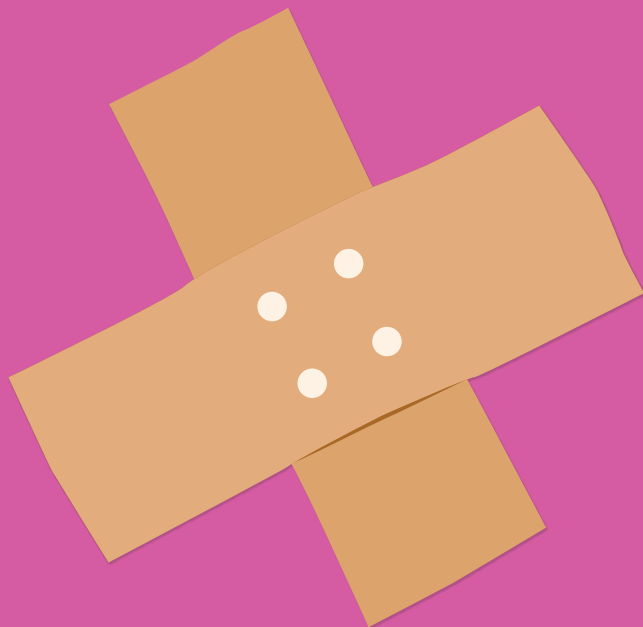
[www.lk-row.de](http://www.lk-row.de)

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## European centre for renewable energies

When it comes to **renewable energies**, all eyes in Europe are on the Hamburg Metropolitan Region. With a workforce of **more than 25,000 people** in the areas of wind energy, solar energy and biomass, the region is considered to be the European centre for renewable energies. Pioneering work, production and know-how go hand in hand in the Hamburg Metropolitan Region.

[en.erneuerbare-energien-hamburg.de](http://en.erneuerbare-energien-hamburg.de)



## Innovations + Awards

### 36 „Made in Hamburg“



Did you know that many of **today's world-renowned products** are made in Hamburg and its surrounding areas? Back in 1891, for instance, ship-owner Albert Ballin came up with the idea of a cruise liner to prevent his vessels from lying idle during the winter months. And the idea of a retractable dog leash stems from Manfred Bogdahn, who in 1973 invented the Flexi lead. Today, his company is the world leader in this segment. Other inventions from the region include the self-adhesive plaster, **Tesa adhesive tape**, the Advent wreath, **water wings**, the ballpoint pen, **Labello lip balm**, the ice lolly, **Nivea cream**, and the foldable Falk map.

### An explosive discovery



Another explosive invention in the most literal sense stems from the Hamburg Metropolitan Region: **in 1866, Alfred Nobel invented dynamite in Geesthacht**. In order to protect the residents of the town, he conducted his experiment on a float on the River Elbe.

[www.industriemuseum-geesthacht.de](http://www.industriemuseum-geesthacht.de)

### Where the hidden heroes live

Did you know that the Hamburg Metropolitan Region boasts an **above-average ratio of "hidden champions"**? This term refers to **world market leaders** that are largely unknown to the public. The Hamburg Metropolitan Region has 29.4 hidden champions per one million residents – the average ratio of larger German cities being 14.2. Among these businesses are Basler AG, a manufacturer of digital cameras and artificial vision systems, Still GmbH, a manufacturer of fork-lift and platform trucks, as well as Helm AG, a chemical distributor.

[www.marketing.hamburg.de](http://www.marketing.hamburg.de)

### 39 City of Nobel laureates

The Hanseatic city of Lübeck is particularly proud of three of its former residents: Nobel Prize winners **Thomas Mann** (Nobel Prize for Literature 1929), **Willy Brandt** (Nobel Peace Prize 1971) and **Günter Grass** (Nobel Prize for Literature 1999). Lübeck has honoured each of these three famous sons of the town with a respective museum.

[www.luebeck-tourism.de](http://www.luebeck-tourism.de)



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## A carbon-reinforced network: CFK-Valley

The CFK Valley is located in the Hamburg Metropolitan Region – and not in San Francisco. More precisely, this **network of expertise on carbon-fibre reinforced plastic** is located in the Hanseatic city of Stade. At the CFK Valley, around 100 businesses and research institutions are currently working on this innovative lightweight material.

[www.cfk-valley.com](http://www.cfk-valley.com)



## „European XFEL“ – light years ahead

Did you ever wonder what “European XFEL” stands for? It stands for “European X-Ray Free-Electron Laser Facility”, and it is the **world's biggest and most powerful X-ray laser facility**. The European XFEL is currently being constructed at the DESY research centre in Hamburg. From 2016, scientists from around the globe will be able to conduct research with the XFEL. To these ends, a unique 3.4 kilometre underground tunnel for X-ray light is being developed, which runs from the DESY site to the town of Schenefeld in Schleswig-Holstein.

[www.xfel.eu/de](http://www.xfel.eu/de)

## Model region for e-mobility

Hamburg is **one of Germany's eight model regions for electromobility**: in the green metropolis of Hamburg, hundreds of electric vehicles are used by e.g. pizza delivery services, the police force and Deutsche Bahn and are paving the way for sustainable transport.

[www.hamburg.de](http://www.hamburg.de)

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## Award-winning innovation: treating tinnitus with pop tunes

In March 2015, the Hamburg-based medical technology start-up Sonormed won one of the leading entrepreneurial prizes: Sonormed's invention “**Tinnitracks**”, a special music therapy for tinnitus, was awarded first prize at the start-up competition of the international technology conference “South by Southwest” in Austin, Texas. Thanks to the computer programme “Tinnitracks”, persons affected by tinnitus can customise their favourite music for therapeutic purposes.

[www.tinnitracks.com](http://www.tinnitracks.com)

44 BOOK-STOP

## Enjoy a good read

Did you know that there are around **130 book stops** in the Hamburg Metropolitan Region? No, this is not a typo: we are talking about **bookshelves in coaches**. These are stocked with second-hand books, and passengers may not only read them during their journey but are also allowed to take them home. Likewise, passengers may stock the red shelves with books that they have already read.

[www.vhhbus.de](http://www.vhhbus.de)

## 45 Next stop: patent office

Inventive talent is truly engrained in the greater Hamburg region: the federal state of Hamburg is one of Germany's leaders in patent applications. It is currently in third place behind Bavaria and Baden-Württemberg (per head of population). In the area of trademark applications and based on applications per capita, the city state of Hamburg is even number one in Germany – with 183 filed patents per 100,000 inhabitants. The same applies to the area of design applications, where Hamburg recorded 78 applications per 100,000 inhabitants.

(Annual Report 2013)

[www.dpma.de](http://www.dpma.de)



## Enriching your everyday life

“Inventions enrich your everyday life” – this is the guiding principle of “**Erfinderladen Hamburg**” – **Hamburg's first inventors' shop**. Offering the latest product innovations, this walk-in shop opened in the summer of 2014 in the district of Eimsbüttel. Some of the patented products, useful everyday aids and curious odds and ends on display are “made in Hamburg” – a truly inspiring experience for customers.

[www.erfinderladen-hamburg.de](http://www.erfinderladen-hamburg.de)

# Art and Music



## The world's biggest metal festival

Wacken – this small town in the district of Steinburg enjoys a roaring cult status in the most literal sense: based on the motto “Louder than Hell”, Wacken is the venue for the **Wacken Open Air** heavy metal festival. Each year in August, around 75,000 hard rock and heavy metal fans make their way to the world's biggest metal festival in Wacken.

[www.wacken.com](http://www.wacken.com)

## 48 Jimi Hendrix's last concert

What do Jimi Hendrix and the island of **Fehmarn** have in common? It was on this Baltic island that Jimi Hendrix gave his very last concert! In early September 1970, **only a few days before his death, he performed at the Love and Peace Festival** on the island of Fehmarn. To honour the memory of this legendary rock musician, a memorial stone has been erected on the Flügge beach.

[www.fehmarn.de](http://www.fehmarn.de)

## 49 Chamber music – traditional and innovative

The **Hitzacker Summer Music Festival is Germany's longest-standing chamber music festival**. First held in 1946, this festival features chamber opera, medieval music, lute songs as well as contemporary works, thus being one of the most innovative festivals of its kind. Venues include concert halls, churches, and open air venues in the Hitzacker vineyard.

[www.musiktage-hitzacker.de](http://www.musiktage-hitzacker.de)

## Sweeping like a hurricane

With more than 70,000 visitors, the Hurricane Festival in the municipality of Scheeßel between Hamburg and Bremen is **one of Germany's biggest music festivals**. Each year since 1997, the Eichenring motorcycle sand racetrack is transformed into a unique festival environment – featuring selected artists from alternative to electro pop and rock.

[www.hurricane.de](http://www.hurricane.de)

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## The majestic sound of the organ

Did you know that several of the world's 32 famous **Arp Schnitger organs** can be found in the Hamburg Metropolitan Region? Surviving instruments of this highly influential organ builder can be found e.g. in Hamburg, Elmshorn, Itzehoe, Eutin, Stade, and Jork. In terms of its resonant capacity, the Arp Schnitger organ in Hamburg's St. Jacobi Church is even the largest restored Baroque organ of the North German type.

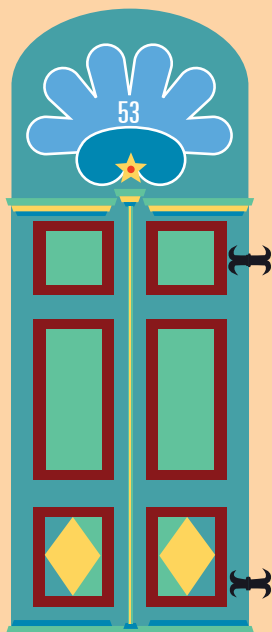
[www.jacobus.de](http://www.jacobus.de)

## All that glitters is not gold

With its countless golden ornaments, Ludwigslust Palace is often referred to as "the Versailles of Mecklenburg". And yet many of the chandeliers, busts and picture frames are in fact **made of cardboard!** Manufactured in the 18th century by the "Ludwigsluster Carton-Fabrique", they continue to mislead visitors even today. Another special feature is Europe's largest altarpiece – to be found in the Stadtkirche Ludwigslust, which is situated directly on the palace grounds.

[www.mv-schloesser.de](http://www.mv-schloesser.de)

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## Bridal doors in the Altes Land

The timber-framed houses of the Altes Land region are not only beautiful to look at; many of them also stand out for their **exceptional façades** with their beautifully crafted, colourful bridal doors. These doors could only be opened from the inside, and usually only on two occasions: when the groom would carry his bride over the threshold, and whenever a deceased family member would be removed.

[www.urlaubsregion-althesland.de](http://www.urlaubsregion-althesland.de)

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## A unique train station

Anyone who ever travelled to or through Uelzen by train will have instantly noticed this colourful train station. This building is the **last piece created by Viennese artist and architect Friedensreich Hundertwasser**. The renovated building was inaugurated as the "Hundertwasser Station" as part of the Expo 2000.

[www.hundertwasserbahnhof.de](http://www.hundertwasserbahnhof.de)

## A special day in the country

The **Kulturelle Landpartie** series of events is well known in the Hamburg Metropolitan Region – and it is **even the largest exhibition series of its kind in Germany**. Between Ascension Day and Whitsun, around 600 artists and craftsmen showcase their works in more than 100 venues across 80 different villages of the Wendland region.

[www.kulturelle-landpartie.de](http://www.kulturelle-landpartie.de)

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## Big stars in the big park

With its 120 hectares of land, the **park surrounding Ludwigslust Palace** is the most extensive landscaped park in all of Mecklenburg. The park also provides the setting for the famous "Kleines Fest im großen Park" event, which is part of the annual Mecklenburg-West Pomerania Music Festival. **International artists** such as Elton John and Montserrat Caballé have performed here on the spectacular open-air stage to the backdrop of the beautiful Baroque palace of Ludwigslust.

[www.mv-schloesser.de](http://www.mv-schloesser.de), [www.festspiele-mv.de](http://www.festspiele-mv.de)

## Gallery in the green

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The donor couple Brigitte and Herbert Gerisch started off by adding more and more sculptures to their then private garden in Neumünster. Today, the **Gerisch Sculpture Park** is a popular destination for outings: visitors can stroll through the park created in English landscape style and view the works of renowned contemporary artists such as Horst Antes and Markus Lüpertz.

[www.gerisch-stiftung.de](http://www.gerisch-stiftung.de)



# Countryside and Nature

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## The world's smallest nature reserve

With an area of 1.1 hectares, the **Lummen cliff on the island of Heligoland** is the world's smallest nature reserve, while also boasting the highest density of breeding birds. What is more, the Lummen cliff is **Germany's only breeding ground** for offshore sea birds such as the common guillemot, the northern gannet, and the black-legged kittiwake.

[www.helgoland.de](http://www.helgoland.de)

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## On the trail of the Bismarck dynasty

The **Sachsenwald** is Schleswig-Holstein's largest self-contained forest area and has been the property of the Bismarck family since 1871. The museum, the mausoleum and the **Otto von Bismarck** Foundation honour the memory of this former German chancellor, who lived there until his death in 1898.

[www.hilms.de/de/der-sachsenwald](http://www.hilms.de/de/der-sachsenwald)

## Pinneberg — the “cradle of the forest”

Did you know that the **world's largest integrated tree nursery** is located in Pinneberg northwest of Hamburg? Pinneberg, which used to be a sparsely wooded district, has become known as the “cradle of the forest”. It is home to 290 tree nurseries, which produce more than one million saplings per year.

[www.kreis-pinneberg.de](http://www.kreis-pinneberg.de)

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## Swiss hiking in the Hamburg Metropolitan Region

Did you know that you can go on a Swiss hiking trip in the middle of the Hamburg Metropolitan Region? **Stormarn Switzerland and Holstein Switzerland** literally stand out for their hilled landscapes. The names of these regions emerged in the 19th century in an attempt to boost tourism at a time when trips to Switzerland were highly popular.

[www.holsteinischeschweiz.de](http://www.holsteinischeschweiz.de)  
[www.tourismus-stormarn.de](http://www.tourismus-stormarn.de)

62

## Vast landscapes and circular villages

The Elbhöhen-Wendland nature park is famous for its circular villages — well preserved and almost unparalleled **settlements from the Middle Ages**. These villages can take different shapes, from perfectly circular to oval-shaped, as houses were formed around a central circular square.

[www.rundlingsdorf.de](http://www.rundlingsdorf.de), [en.elbtaaleue-wendland.de](http://en.elbtaaleue-wendland.de)



## The green ribbon

Approximately 90 kilometres of the former German-German border cut through the Elbtalaue biosphere reserve in Lower Saxony. From nature's point of view, this offered certain advantages: **fully isolated and untouched for decades**, this stretch of no-man's land is now known as the "green ribbon" and comprises **numerous valuable habitats**.

[www.elbtalaue.niedersachsen.de](http://www.elbtalaue.niedersachsen.de), [www.erlebnisgruenesband.de](http://www.erlebnisgruenesband.de)



64

## "Eat to maintain"

In the Elbtalaue biosphere reserve, residents and farmers have joined forces in founding Germany's first "ark region": old, **endangered domestic animal breeds** such as the **Bentheim Black Pied pig** and the Vorwerk chicken are bred and marketed here – based on the motto "eat to maintain".

[www.arche-region-elbe.de](http://www.arche-region-elbe.de)

65

## A purple sea of blossom

The **Lüneburg Heath nature park** is home to Central Europe's largest integrated heath land. From late July, the soft heath landscape is immersed in radiating purple and rosy pink –creating a blaze of colour that is loved dearly not only by the local moorland sheep.

[www.lueneburger-heide.de](http://www.lueneburger-heide.de)

66

## Sustainable development by five

Did you know that **five out of the 15 German UNESCO biosphere reserves** are located in the Hamburg Metropolitan Region? These are the Schaaalsee biosphere reserve, the Elbe River Landscape, as well as the Wadden Sea, which accounts for three as it is situated in the three federal states of Hamburg, Schleswig-Holstein and Lower Saxony.

[www.unesco.de](http://www.unesco.de)

## A landscape characterised by castles

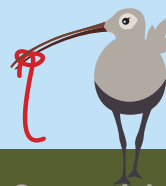
The district of Northwestern Mecklenburg is characterised by more than 100 castles and manor houses. **Bothmer Castle is the largest preserved Baroque palace in Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania**. Its 270 metre Feston Avenue lined by trimmed Dutch lime trees is a garden monument that is unparalleled in Germany.

[www.mv-schloesser.de](http://www.mv-schloesser.de)



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68



## The Wadden Sea: Germany's largest national park

Did you know that **only the tropical rain forest exceeds the Wadden Sea in terms of bio diversity**? The Wadden Sea is the natural habitat of more than 10,000 species of flora and fauna. A surface area the size of a desk, for instance, is home to 150,000 mud snails alone. For its outstanding diversity, the Wadden Sea has been awarded the status of UNESCO World Heritage Site.

[www.nationalpark-wattenmeer.de](http://www.nationalpark-wattenmeer.de)

69

## A world of mud

While you mightn't notice any differences when hiking through the Wadden Sea landscape, there are actually three different types of mud to be found here: **the mudflats**, the almost black silt consisting of millions of diatoms, the somewhat harder **muddy sands**, home to the wadden worm, and the **flats**, the hard, wave-shaped surfaces further out.

[www.nationalpark-wattenmeer.de](http://www.nationalpark-wattenmeer.de)



## Wadd a world record!

A world record was set on the Wadden Sea during the 2014 **Mudflat Olympics in Brunsbüttel** in the district of Dithmarschen: as part of the "Wadden Angel" competition, 350 participants threw themselves into the mud, synchronically moving their limbs like angels for five minutes.

[www.wattolympiade.de](http://www.wattolympiade.de)



## The world's most unusual postal address

Did you know that the Dodauer Forst near Eutin has an **oak tree with its own postal address**? The Bridegroom's Oak is more than 500 years old and serves as a **very special dating platform**: anyone in the search for love can write a letter to the oak tree and have it delivered by post. Anyone interested can access the tree's knothole with a ladder and search for suitable candidates.

[www.holsteinischeschweiz.de/braeutigamseiche-1](http://www.holsteinischeschweiz.de/braeutigamseiche-1)

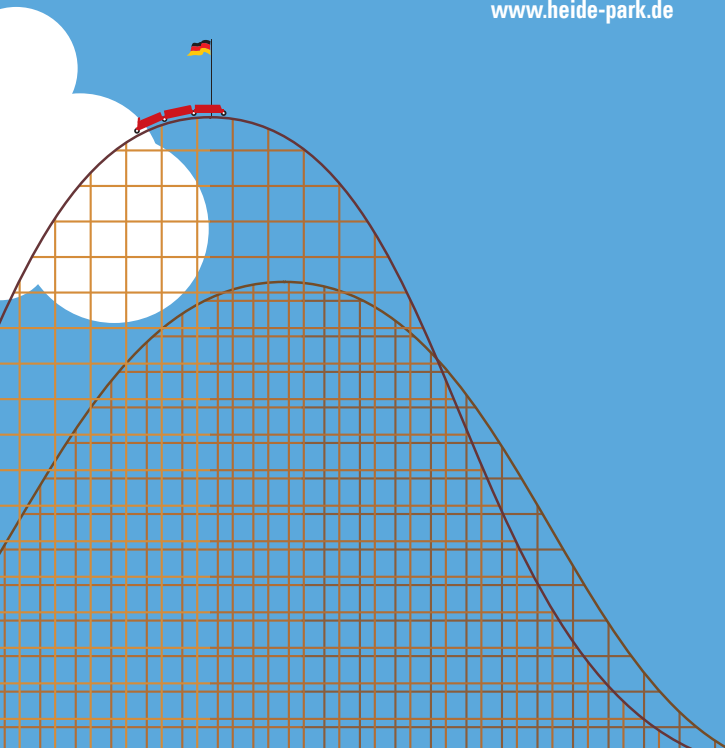
## Leisure and Leisure Parks

72

### A wooden track with world reput

The greatest achievement in the history of the **Heide Park Soltau** was the launch of the wooden roller coaster Colossos in 2001. With a height of 60 metres, it is not only **the second largest wooden roller coaster in the world**, but also the largest and fastest in Europe. The Colossos has contributed to the park's international reput and even attracts roller coaster fans from as far away as the United States.

[www.heide-park.de](http://www.heide-park.de)



73

### Where the wild things are

Did you know that **Lüneburg Heath Wildlife Park** is **Germany's most species-rich wildlife park** and one of the country's biggest animal parks? Rare animals such as Siberian tigers, wolverines and prairie dogs can be found here. Between March and October you can experience amazing shows and guided tours.

[www.wild-park.de](http://www.wild-park.de)

### The Wild West in the Hamburg Metropolitan Region

Ever since 1952, the Kalkberg Stadium in Bad Segeberg has been the venue for the Karl May Festival, where each year a different adventure story by the German novelist is re-enacted. Expect **real horses, plenty of action, and famous actors**. Back in the 1950s, the locals of Bad Segeberg would have worked here as extras, costumers and grooms.

[www.karl-may-spiele.de](http://www.karl-may-spiele.de)



75

## A miniature giant: Miniaturwunderland Hamburg

The world's biggest model railway rattles along in Hamburg! And yet, at the Miniatur Wunderland there is so much more to see than the miniature railway. This **fascinating miniature world** is in fact one of the main attractions in Northern Germany. If you're in Hamburg and the weather is poor, why not take a city tour without your umbrella – on a scale of 1:87.

[www.miniatur-wunderland.de](http://www.miniatur-wunderland.de)



## Heath farmers, beekeepers and timber-framed houses

The collection of the **Hösseringen Museum Village** includes around 45,000 rural cultural exhibits from the Lüneburg Heath – spanning anything from a needle to a combine harvester. The village itself comprises 26 buildings that were disassembled in different parts of the heath and re-erected in the museum village in order to showcase the region's history.

[www.museumsdorf-hoesseringen.de](http://www.museumsdorf-hoesseringen.de)



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## On safari through the Lüneburg Heath

No other region in Germany has such a high density of leisure, adventure and animal parks as the Lüneburg Heath. Did you know, for instance, that the **Weltvogelpark Walsrode** is the world's biggest bird park? And did you know that the **Serengeti Park Hohenhausen**, established in 1972, is Germany's biggest safari park?

[www.weltvogelpark.de](http://www.weltvogelpark.de)  
[www.serengeti-park.de](http://www.serengeti-park.de)

78

## Bad Bevensen – the relaxing oasis

When **drilling for oil in 1964, workers accidentally discovered a mineral spring in the town of Bevensen**. Thanks to this discovery, Bevensen, which had been a climatic spa since 1929, then ascended to the status of a state-accredited mineral health spa in 1976. Ever since then, the official name for the town has been Bad Bevensen. The iodine-saline springs invite you to take a curative bath in the Lüneburg Heath's centre of wellness and health.

[www.jod-sole-therme.de](http://www.jod-sole-therme.de)  
[www.bad-bevensen-tourismus.de](http://www.bad-bevensen-tourismus.de)



# Wildlife and Animals

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## A sanctuary for seals

The Seal Centre Friedrichskoog is Germany's **only authorised shelter facility for seals that have been found sick or abandoned**. The premises on the North Sea coast of Schleswig-Holstein are widely known from "Hallo Robbie!", a ZDF television series that was largely filmed there.

[www.seehundstation-friedrichskoog.de](http://www.seehundstation-friedrichskoog.de)

80



## Hanging out with the bats

The caves underneath the **Kalkberg rock in the district of Segeberg** are home to seven different bat species. With more than 20,000 of these nocturnal mammals, the limestone caves of these unique rock formations are **the biggest natural winter habitat in Northern and Central Europe**.

[www.noctalis.de/en](http://www.noctalis.de/en)

81

## Rhea population at the Schaalsee

Have you ever seen a rhea, and have you ever been to the Schaalsee? If not, you now have the opportunity to do both: located at the former German-German border, the Schaalsee with its UNESCO biosphere reserve is home to Europe's only rhea population. So why not venture out to the Schaalsee and experience these **South American ratites, which can reach a height of 1.4 metres**.

[www.schaalsee.de](http://www.schaalsee.de)



## Siberian guests on the Elbe marshes

Each year, more than 10,000 winged winter guests arrive on the Elbe, when the **barnacle geese from Siberia visit their wintering grounds on the Elbe marshes**. Between March and May, they return to their breeding grounds on the coast of the Arctic Ocean in Siberia and the island of Gotland in the Baltic Sea.

[www.maritime-elbe.de](http://www.maritime-elbe.de); [www.erlebnis-elbe.de](http://www.erlebnis-elbe.de)

83

## What's a wadden worm?

Did you know that a **sandworm on the Wadden Sea eats and filters 25 kilos of sand per year**? These worms grow to a length of 20 to 40 cm, and you will find forty of them per square metre. This means that the entire Wadden sand is being filtered to a depth of 20 cm by these amazing creatures every year.



[www.nationalpark-wattenmeer.de](http://www.nationalpark-wattenmeer.de)

## Food and Drink

Food and Drink

### A head of cabbage for everyone in Germany

84

Europe's biggest cabbage-growing region is located in the district of **Dithmarschen**. Around 80 million heads of cabbage are harvested each year on more than 2,800 hectares of land – averaging **one head of cabbage per German citizen**! Each year in September, Dithmarschen hosts its annual Cabbage Days festival to celebrate the year's harvest.

[www.dithmarschen.de](http://www.dithmarschen.de)

85

### Glückstadt Matjes Week

Did you know that Glückstadt in the district of Steinburg is famed beyond the region's boundaries for its culinary specialty, the Glückstadt Matjes herring? Every summer, Glückstadt honours this **local specialty, which is still produced by hand today**, with its dedicated Matjes Weeks.

[www.glueckstadt-tourismus.de](http://www.glueckstadt-tourismus.de)



86

### A vitamin wonder from the Baltic coast

Ludwigslust in the east of the Hamburg Metropolitan Region is home to **Germany's biggest growing area for sea buckthorn**. Stretching over an area of 120 hectares, the plantation in Ludwigslust is arguably one of the biggest in Europe. The fruit of the sea buckthorn has a vitamin content of 200 to 800 milligrams per 100 grams – **five to eight times more than that of lemons**!

[www.stadt-ludwigslust.de](http://www.stadt-ludwigslust.de)



87



## The carrot kingdom

In the Hamburg Metropolitan Region, carrots have their say too: in **Bardowick** in the district of Lüneburg you will find the **centre of Germany's biggest carrot growing area**, and the residents of Bardowick take pride in crowning a new "carrot queen" each year.

[www.bardowick.de](http://www.bardowick.de)

88

## Germany's most advanced sugar refinery

Germany's biggest and most advanced sugar refinery is situated in **Uelzen**. The plant belongs to Nordzucker AG, which is the second largest sugar-producing company in Europe.

[www.nordzucker.de](http://www.nordzucker.de)

89

## A "kiss certificate"

In the medieval town of Grabow, a "kiss certificate" is a popular asset – not only for lovers: you can actually acquire one in the **Grabow works, where the famous Schokokuss ("chocolate kiss") is produced**. Here you can practice your skills and produce your very own chocolate-coated marshmallow treat.

[www.schaummanufaktur-grabow.de](http://www.schaummanufaktur-grabow.de)

90

## Europe's biggest orchard

Did you know that **the Altes Land** region is Europe's largest enclosed fruit growing area? The Altes Land has an estimated 10 to 15 million fruit trees, and around 300,000 tonnes of apples are harvested here each year. In fact, **one out of four apples consumed in Germany is sourced from this region south of the River Elbe**. During the apple and cherry blossom season, the idyllic orchards are a popular destination for thousands of visitors from near and far.

[www.urlaubsregion-altesland.de](http://www.urlaubsregion-altesland.de)



# Cycling



Cycling

## The Old Salt Route — a long-distance cycle path with distinction

In the Middle Ages, **this route was used to transport Lüneburg's salt to Lübeck**, which then was exported to the Baltic Sea region. Today, the Old Salt Route serves as an excellent cycle route and has received a three-star rating from the German Cyclists' Federation (ADFC).

[www.hlms.de](http://www.hlms.de)



## 93 Outer space on the Wedel marshes

In the Hamburg Metropolitan Region you can **discover the universe by bicycle**: the **planet trail** along Wedel's land protection dyke takes you all the way to the Hetlingen Schanze on the banks of the River Elbe. Equipped with visual and tactile maps and ten model planets, the discovery trail offers you a tangible experience of the solar system.

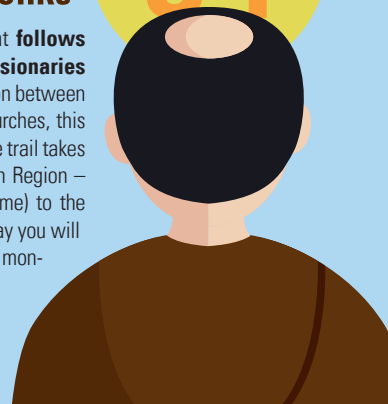
[www.holstein-tourismus.de/en-holstein](http://www.holstein-tourismus.de/en-holstein)  
[www.wedel.de](http://www.wedel.de)



## Following in the footsteps of the monks

The Mönchsweg is a cycle route that **follows the trail of the first Christian missionaries of the Middle Ages**. As a cooperation between the public sector and the regional churches, this project is unparalleled in Germany. The trail takes you across the Hamburg Metropolitan Region — from the district of Rotenburg (Wümme) to the Baltic island of Fehmarn. Along the way you will pass by numerous historic churches, monasteries, castles and manors.

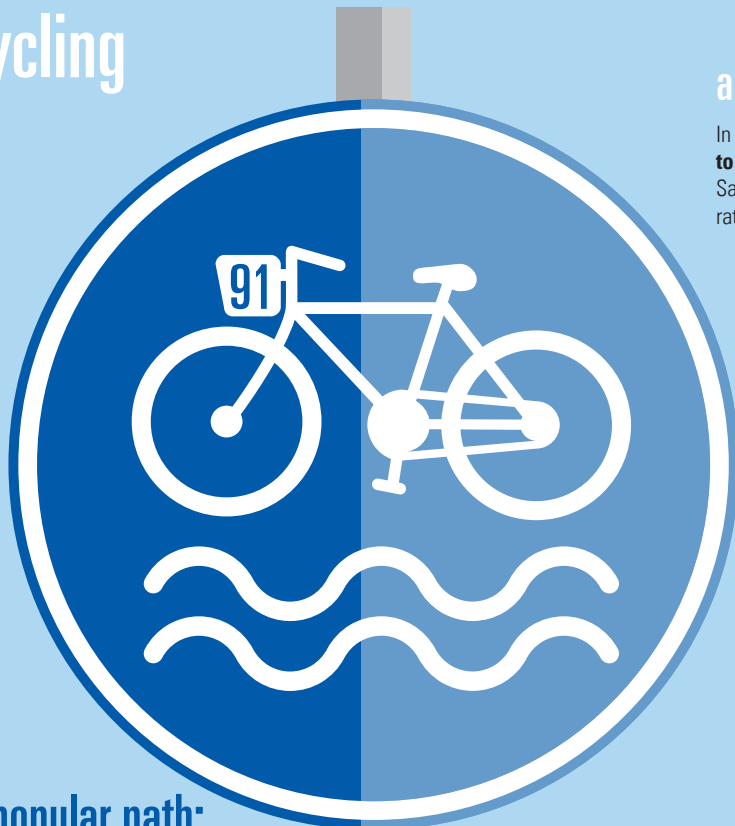
[www.moenchsweg.de](http://www.moenchsweg.de)



## A popular path: the Elbe Cycle Route

Do you know Germany's most popular cycle route? It is indeed the Elbe Cycle Route, which in 2015 was honoured with this title for the eleventh consecutive time by the German Cyclists' Federation (ADFC). The complete route takes you from the Giant Mountains in the Czech Republic all the way to the North Sea. **When you cycle along the stretch between the Ludwigslust district and Dithmarschen, you will pass through the entire Hamburg Metropolitan Region**. So why not drop a gear along the way and leisurely explore the River Elbe, the region's main artery. It couldn't get any better than that!

[www.elbe-cycle-route.com](http://www.elbe-cycle-route.com)



## „White skin“ for a perfect sound

Acoustics and space will cause a sensation in January 2017, when the **Elbphilharmonie Hamburg** opens its doors to the public. **The concert hall's unique “white skin” surface** will virtually play the lead role: the 10,000 gypsum fibre panels on the vaulted ceiling and walls of the Grand Hall and the suspended sound reflector will guarantee **excellent acoustics for each individual seat** – thanks to world-class acoustician Yasuhisa Toyota.

[www.elbphilharmonie.de](http://www.elbphilharmonie.de)





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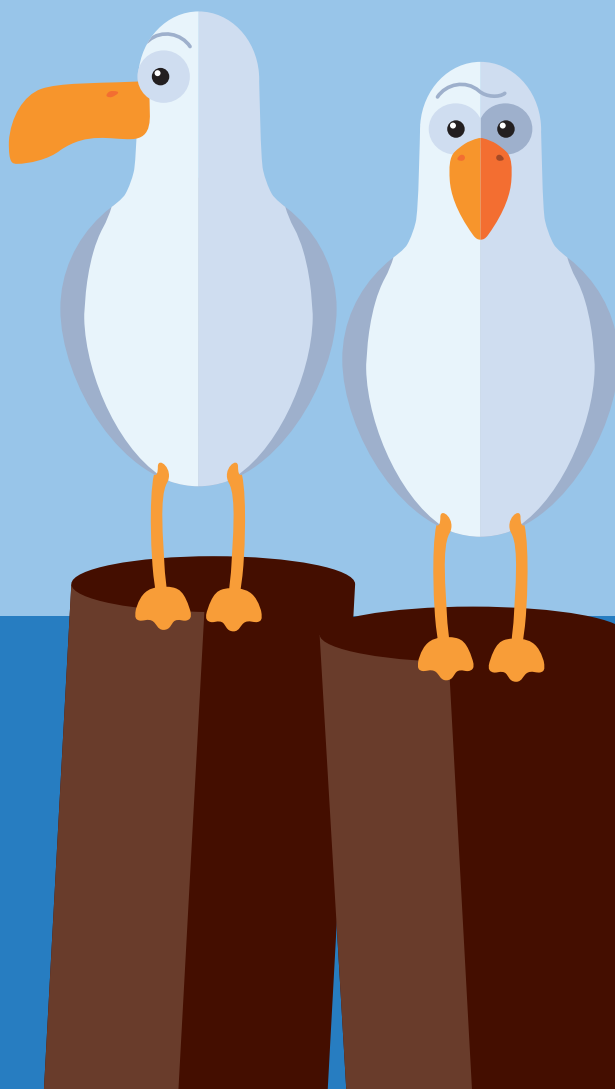
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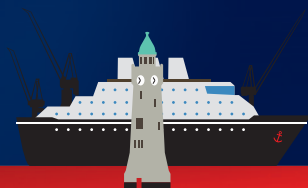
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