

Happiness Hotspots in Hamburg

Where to find
your happy place



Cornelius Hartz

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Dear seekers of happiness,

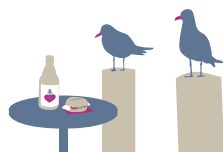


While it's no secret to Hamburg's residents that theirs is the most beautiful city in Germany, they are nonetheless delighted each time this is confirmed quasi-officially – like in 2016, when The Economist's annual 'Global Liveability Ranking' rated Hamburg one of the best cities to live in the world – the only German city to make the grade; or in 2012, when a Düsseldorf-based market research company surveyed 180 architects to find Germany's most architecturally outstanding cities – first place: Hamburg; or at the opening of the Elbphilharmonie concert hall, attended by German Chancellor Angela Merkel and the Federal President. While their presence was highly unusual for a concert hall opening, it made perfect sense to the city's residents, who have every reason to believe they live in the "secret capital" and are quick to try to change the minds of anyone who thinks otherwise.

Of course, the cachet of "Germany's most beautiful city" – or even "the most beautiful city in the world" are about as objective and meaningful as the title "the best band in the world", self-proclaimed by German punk-pop band 'Die Ärzte' a few decades ago. But here, too, those who agree are keen to cite this and in Hamburg this applies to a statistically high proportion of the population. Why exactly this is, is highly subjective. For some, it's the musicals, for others, the music and club scene, for yet others it's the architectural highlights the city has to boast, the financial infrastructure, the ships and the port or the flora and fauna (Hamburg boasts the largest number of trees in any European city – yet another superlative!)

Whatever it may be, it goes without saying that Hamburg is bursting with "happiness hotspots". While the selection presented in these pages is inevitably highly subjective, I hope, nevertheless, that visitors to the city will enjoy it every bit as much as the locals, the 'Quiddjes' (the dialect word for people from elsewhere) and all those who already love the city. Hamburg deserves it.

Sincerely yours, Cornelius Hartz



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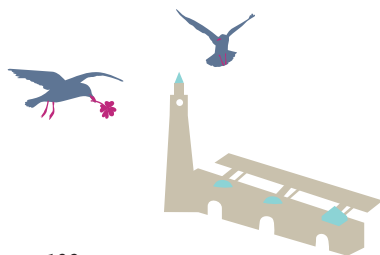
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Regional rules

1 *Kaufhaus Hamburg*

This wonderful store that only sells products made in Hamburg and the surrounding area has been around since 2012. In that time, its product range has changed somewhat – in the beginning, the team headed by owner Bastian Hertel focused on expensive high-end products, like a sophisticated watch designed exclusively for the store. Over time, however, it became increasingly clear which items sold best and what the customer base really was. Then, as today, it's equal parts tourists looking for an unusual souvenir – something other than just the typical ship in a bottle or 'I ♥ Hamburg t-shirt' – and average locals, who have grown to love the store and who like to buy local produce.

The interior of the shop is reminiscent of a light-flooded period apartment, which is part of its charm, as is the varied range that one could spend ages browsing. There are countless fashionable accessories, from loop scarves and hats from 'Atelier Steinkopf' based in the Schanzenviertel district to elegant earrings from Ilkajewels in Winterhude and hand-crafted handbags from Minuk from Altona. Kaufhaus Hamburg also stocks books from Hamburg's independent publishers Mairisch; cosmetics from Eimsbüttel-based Brooklyn Soap; postcards with sayings in the local dialect from Labskaus Design, Wedel; stylish home accessories from St. Pauli's dekoop; Concrete Home Design from Poppenbüttel, as well as sweets from Barmbek manufacture Naschhafen and the tasty (and currently extremely trendy) Gin Sul produced by Altonaer Spirituosen Manufaktur ... and much more besides!

Each item on sale here is lovingly designed and made with great attention to detail in small local workshops and ateliers. Mass-produced items are nowhere to be found here and the sales staff are personable and friendly. It is instantly apparent that everyone who works here loves what they do – and that atmosphere is contagious.

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- 📍 Kaufhaus Hamburg, Lange Reihe 70, 20099 Hamburg
www.kaufhaus-hamburg.de
 - 🚌 Public Transport: Bus Route 6, Stop: Gurlittstraße



For kids big and small

2 *A Miniature Wonderland*

There are lots of queues: there's a queue at the entrance to get tickets, as well as at several points inside 'Miniatur Wunderland', but there's simply no getting around it. For years, this attraction, housed in an old warehouse in the Speicherstadt district, has topped the list of things to see and do for visitors to Hamburg. In fact, it seems to grow more popular by the year; new sections are constantly being planned and built, which appears merely to reflect the constantly growing demand. Barely a visitor to Hamburg doesn't at least plan to visit the world's largest model railway exhibition.

Although nowadays just a handful of children are likely to say they want to be a train driver when they grow up, the exhibition is especially popular among families – it's always full of kids, eyes wide in wonderment. Grown-ups need to be patient to find a space at the metal barricade separating visitors from the model railway landscapes. But it's worth the wait – the meticulous work and painstaking attention to detail that goes into creating the various landscapes, which range from the Alps to Scandinavia, to Italy, the Harz region and even the USA, can only really be fully appreciated up close.

As is the case among many model railway enthusiasts, it's not the trains that are the main attraction, but the countless tiny plastic figures. Made to a scale of 1:87 they are placed into regularly changing scenes from the mundane to the more exotic. It's these tiny characters who are sure to impress – no matter the age of the visitor. During her last concert in Hamburg, British singer Adele enthusiastically told her fans that she had spent the day at Miniatur Wunderland: "it's amazing", she gushed, "the best thing I've ever seen!"

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- Miniatur Wunderland, Kehrwieder 2-4, Block D, 20457 Hamburg
www.miniatur-wunderland.de
► Public Transport: Bus Route 111, Stop: Am Sandtorkai



A daytrip to Brittany

3 Breton Bistro ‘Ti Breizh’

For several years now, Brittany has been back in fashion, due in no small part to the bestselling crime fiction stories about inspector Dupin (who’s nearly always eating). A Breton cookbook was even published recently to accompany the series. The publishers are on to a good thing – Brittany has plenty to offer in culinary terms. But whether one follows the recipes at home or not, the best place to enjoy Breton cuisine is directly from the producer, who in this instance, is the chef based in an old townhouse in Deichstraße, the beautiful street of listed buildings between Hamburg’s old town and the harbour. We are, of course, talking about the restaurant ‘Ti Breizh’ (pronounced: Ti Bräis), which calls itself the ‘Home of Brittany’.

The dishes served here really aren’t to be found anywhere else in the Hanseatic city – Galettes (wafer-thin crepe-style buckwheat flour pancakes) served with savoury fillings, such as mussels and shallots braised in white wine, Roquefort sauce and walnuts, or warm goats cheese, honey and Cassis-onion jam, and the list goes on with speciality after

speciality. Of course, for dessert they serve a real Crêpe with home-made dark chocolate sauce or topped with chestnut purée and vanilla ice cream or caramelised baked apples. But this establishment has even more to offer than Brittany on a plate – the front area of the restaurant houses the ‘Boutique de la mer,’ which stocks classic striped Breton shirts and jumpers, among other things. Visitors will feel like they’re on a seaside holiday, especially in the summertime when it’s warm enough to sit outside. With the

Nikolaifleet canal running directly behind Deichstraße, guests can even take a seat on a platform in the middle of the water and watch the boats sail past. It’s wise to make a reservation.

TIPP

All of the buildings in Deichstraße, dating from the 17th to the 19th century, are worth a look, as is the Cremon peninsula to the east of Deichstraße, the location of many historic warehouse buildings.

📍 Ti Breizh – Haus der Bretagne, Deichstraße 39, 20459 Hamburg
www.tibreizh.de

▶ Public Transport: U-Bahn U3, Station: Rödingsmarkt

