

Post



Scott Farnsworth

Aug 11, 2024 · 6 min read

Lübeck: On the waterfront - August 12, 2024

Updated: Sep 14, 2024

SUMMARY

Off to Lübeck and I'm struck with how different it feels from our previous several locations - cleaner, greener, fewer smokers, less graffiti and trash... Turns out we've now moved into the former West Germany. Coincidence? I don't think so! We're staying right across the Trave river from the Altstadt (Old City) island, the city's heart. We cross a bridge to the island. It's beautiful with lots of OLD (we're talking 12th-17th century) buildings, charming streets lined with quaint houses and lots of flowers. We spend the afternoon looking for cheap-but-dressy clothes for our cruise home on the Queen Mary II. We're successful but

have lost most of the afternoon in the doing. At dinner we're turned away from our first choice restaurant (half full) because the kitchen is too backed up. Our second choice is excellent and we're given a glass of pink bubbles for the inconvenience of having to wait 5 minutes. - Karen

[Photos](#) | [Previous](#) | [Next](#) | [Index](#)

DETAIL

It's an uneventful drive from Schwerin to Lübeck. The former was a part of former East Germany and the latter was a part of former West Germany. We'll see if we can tell any difference. Upon entering the city we see flashing cop car lights and protesters marching down a cross street chanting something. Everyone has on a yellow safety vest. When they get across our street they scatter like their assignment is over and they can get on with their Monday.

In the hotel we're told our room is not quite ready. They do have a ready room if we're in a hurry, but if we wait we'll have a view of the water. We ask the receptionist girl what she recommends and she says we should wait. She keeps emphasizing that with the "available now" room you can't open the window" (wink, wink). The room DOES have an A/C but you can't open the window. We wait for the better room. Later we learn what everyone learns: the building's A/C doesn't work for sh*t and this 'being able to open the window' thing is critical.

We leave our luggage securely hidden in the back of the car and go to walk to the island. It's fairly big and round with water flowing down both sides. Obviously easier to defend and thus why the city is here at all. We see full size motor boats with tiny electric engines. They go fast enough to be fun, but slow enough to let your 10 year old drive. We consider renting one ourselves, but put that off for later.

Karen suggests we walk all the way around the outer edge (road/walking path) of the island and then doing all the streets back and forth. It's a big island and I think she's over estimating our ability to walk that far. We do walk a very long way and even still we're only half-way around the island. Being hungry we head across the island, back in the direction of our hotel.

At the center of the island we find lots of places to eat and pick one that specializes in everything. That should have been a clue. They weren't very good at anything.

Clothes shopping is our next 'todo'. Karen tries on lots of thing and settles on a short black dress at the Oxfam thrift. Scott finds a "nice sports coat" at C&A. It 40€ marked down to 20€. On checkout it's marked down again so final price is 9.99€. I protest, saying "that can't be right". Yep, it is.

We get into our hotel room. There's a nice view of the water. The room seems to be south facing so it gets the sun all day. Ouch.

Heading back outside we pass the nice big glass enclosed 'smoker's lounge'. Man oh man do a lot of people here in Germany still smoke! We lay down on a couple of deck chairs on the grass next to the patio. The lady at the bar gave us drink menus. The view is wonderful, the water with different kinds of boats and the island with its big church, its two spires pointing in slightly different directions. The smell is of the cigarettes being smoked just upwind of us. Cigarettes at first from one direction and later two big long cigars from another.

We order our cocktails ask that they be put on our room tab. On the electronic device I sign with my finger and then have to select whether I want to tip 15%, 20%, 25%, or 30%. Below that are two buttons each with one totally inscrutable German word. I'm sure one means "decline to tip" and the other means "custom amount", but heck if I can tell.

A tip customary in this situation, in Europe, is 0% (or a euro or 0.50€ coin, if you're nice). Since so much commerce is happening by credit card, where you don't get a bit of change back, they're switching to the American tipping system, which is too bad. Hey Europe: you're welcome.

Having chosen a restaurant for dinner we walk the 20 minutes to get there. Oh no, sorry, the kitchen is already too busy, we can't take any more clients (1/3 of their tables are empty). Only after we leave does Karen think we should have offered to sit and drink until the kitchen rush has calmed down. There's positives to being a pair of lushes.

The next place we try is the #1 restaurant in Lübeck, but it's not terribly expensive. They're normally at a busy pedestrian intersection but one street is totally torn up for some public works project. So now they're temporarily at the end of a "really not very pretty" cul-de-sac. They say they can seat us, in five minutes. That's do-able, especially with these two delightful flutes of complementary pink champagne we were just handed! Thank you.

Dinner is really good as is the wine. The enormous wooden beams that hold up the building are exposed and painted a shiny black, making the place look like the galley of an old galleon. We expect Vasco da Gama to come strutting out at any moment with our entrees.

On the wall, in a very old German font, it says "an gottes segen ist alles gelegen" which Google Translate says means "everything depends on God's blessing". Well we certainly feel blessed for getting to eat here.

It's fairly dark as we head for 'home'. It's such a change from the midnight sun just a few weeks ago in Norway. People are still out everywhere, walking somewhere, or just smoking.

At the hotel we change and head to the indoor pool. As requested I stand under the shower before I get in. It feels delightful. Karen, still dry, finds it too cool for her tastes.

Back at the room it's still warm, window open or not. Outside it's quite cool but we have no fan to bring that air in. Opening the door to the hallway moves the hall air into our room, not the desired effect. Solution, sleep on top of the big duvet. Or at least try.

Photos



In Lübeck but without a hotel room yet, we go for a walk. The old city is on an island, the river flowing around on both sides. Many pretty buildings. The blue sky, sun shine, and reflections all help.



We love this old circular tower that was left intact, but also filled with a house. So cute!



Is it possible to have a bad meal in Germany? Yes. Yes it is.



Such great old architecture. And lots of tourists (mostly German) out enjoying it.



So much smoking here! It's nice out, so the smokers can do their thing out there. But when it's cold and/or rainy we're sure this is a very popular room.



Cocktails on the grass in the deck chairs overlooking the river. The two cigar smokers behind us haven't shown up just yet.



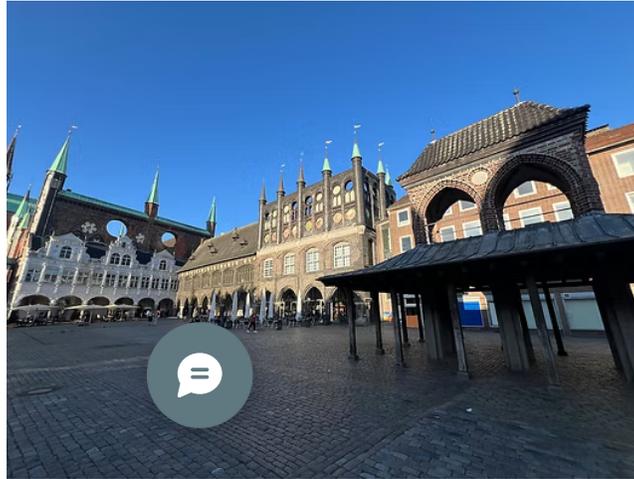
Our view. Perhaps at one time those two spire pointed in the same direction.



FARNSNIENTE 



"Heaven, I'm in heaven..." Karen needs fancier shoes for the cruise. These range from 9 to 20 euros each (i.e. per pair). Will they last the entire nine days? We're going to find out.



The Rat Haus (city hall) and markt square.



German dinner, yum!



Walking home we get a good view of our hotel from the island.

[Previous](#) | [Next](#) | [Index](#)

Subscribe Form

Email Address

Submit



©2023 by FarnsNiente. Proudly created with Wix.com