

# Bremen

**Bremen** is a city in northern Germany, population 500,000+.

## Understand

### History

Bremen was once a member of the medieval Hanseatic League and is still one of the most important cities in northern Germany. Together with the city of Bremerhaven on the North Sea it forms Germany's smallest state. Bremen has a more than 1200 years of history, and was most of the time an independent city state.

### Geography

Bremen is a rather long and narrow city, lined along both sides of the river Weser. Along the north-west/south-east axis it stretches 1 km, but across only 2 km.

## Get in

### By air

Bremen airport (**BRE**) is located in the south-west of the town and offers flights to most bigger German cities and some European destinations. It's easily accessible by public transport (tram line 6, about 15 minutes from the city center) and by car. Major carriers are OLT, <http://www.olt.de/index.php?id=2&L=0> Ryanair and Lufthansa.

### By train

Regular and frequent services connect Bremen with the rest of Germany. There are two trains every hour to Hamburg in the north and Osnabrück, Münster and the Ruhr Area in the South as well as to Hanover. In the west lie the cities Delmenhorst and Oldenburg and the Frisian islands. There are also trains (via main station) connecting the peripheral areas of Bremen ( 2 times per hour to North Bremen, final station Bremen-Vegesack, or to Verden via Mahndorf or Sebaldsbrück, See: <http://reiseauskunft.bahn.de/bin/query.exe/en> for more information, language selection on the right).

### By car

Autobahn 1 runs to Hamburg in the north and Cologne in the south but do check the traffic information! The A27 goes north to Bremerhaven and Cuxhaven and south towards Hanover, Braunschweig, Berlin and other eastwards connections.

## Get around

### By Foot

Much of Bremen (or at least the part frequented by travelers) can be negotiated by foot - the best way to explore the old city and its surrounding districts.

### By Shared Car

Members of the Cambio car-sharing network, whether in Germany or Belgium, can hire cars - Bremen is the company's headquarters.

### By Bus/Tram

Bremen offers an intensive public transportation network with street-cars (trams) and buses. For public transportation timetables and ticket fares see <http://www.bsag.de/eng/index.php/> (English). There are night busses or trams (indicated by an "N"), through alot the whole night, but not as frequently as in daytimes (hourly). Fares on the night network are one euro in addition to normal individual, group or day fares (2008). You can buy bus tickets on the bus or tram, but is slightly cheaper to buy a set of 4 rides or a day pass for individuals or groups, or a weekly pass for individuals. Note that on trains, tickets must be purchased before you board.

### By Taxi

Taxis are found nearly everywhere and every time but they have got their price (about 1,25 EUR/km).

### By Bike

You can hire bicycles at the railway station and several bike shops in Bremen. See <http://www.adfc-bremen.de/> (German only). Bremen is a quite bike-friendly city mostly due to its former mayor who is an avid cyclist (who despite the wishes of his bodyguards rode his bike every day to his office or he simply walked to the office.)

## See

- **Rathaus** (Town Hall) this is one of the finest in Europe and as such has been included on the UNESCO World Heritage List. Building work started in 1410 and it is seen as an important display of the wealth and freedom of the city. Tours of

- the interior are conducted by the Tourist information office at 11am, noon, 3pm and 4pm
- **Dom St Petri** (Cathedral of St Peter) is over 1200 years old, and its huge towered façade dominates the main square. the interior is impressive with some fine painted details on the ceilings. There is a treasury displaying the collection of the cathedral. Entrance is free, for €1 you can climb the Southern Tower offering nice views over the whole city
  - **Roland** this statue on the main square is of the Knight Roland who was a protector of trade. It appears in many European cities especially those involved in the Hanseatic League. Bremen's is considered one of the finest and is included with Town Hall on the World Heritage List.
  - **Die Bremer Stadtmusikanten** (Town Musicians of Bremen) perhaps the most well known figures associated with Bremen are the characters from the Brothers Grimm Fairy Tale, their image adorns many of the souvenirs in the city. Next to the Town Hall is a much photographed statue of them.
  - **Böttcherstrasse**, is the incredible *Jugendstil* (Art Nouveau) street that runs from the main square towards the river. There are many fine façades and courtyards all with large amounts of design detail. There is an impressive Glockenspiel that chimes at regular intervals. There are lots of shops and several Museums, including the impressive Paula Modersohn-Becker Museum. Haus Atlantis (now the Hilton) has an impressive spiral staircase just inside, at the top of which is the staggering Himmelshaal (unfortunately it is not normally open to the public).
  - **Am Wall** is a lovely park next to the former defensive moat, which offers a nice place to sit and relax.
  - **Schnoor** this area of twisting lanes is a lovely place to wander aimlessly looking at in the many shops and also at the world smallest hotel (see Sleep)

## Do

Stroll around the city center and visit the Schnoor-Viertel with its old medieval buildings. If interested in arts visit the Bremer Kunsthalle (museum of art) with one of north Germany's finest collections. If you like football, visit a match of the local team Werder Bremen in the stadium.

If you want to see green fields, cows, bikers and **in line skaters**, visit "Blockland" (<http://www.blockland.de/dasblock.html> ,page in German with some pictures) to enjoy the agricultural side of Bremen's nature. It is located near the river Wümme, roughly in the west of the university. You can drive (by bike or skates) along the dike and take an ice-cream at one of the farms (some also sell organic food). In winter there is no ice cream but the river and small creeks for ice skating.

On October 03, 2008, the **indoor ice skating** season will start again at Paradise, the skating hall in Walle (<http://www.paradice.de/> ,page in German). Paradise is opened from October to February.

## Events

- January 6th: "Eiswette": a funny tradition where a tailor checks if he can cross the river Weser without getting wet feet.
- February: carnival in Bremen, more South-American than Cologne style
- April: Easter market
- June: "vision parade": techno parade along the Weser, "Breminale" art festival along the River Weser
- August: International Bremen Summer, circus festival LA STRADA, "Festival Maritim" in Bremen-Vegesack (in the northern end of Bremen)
- October (2nd half): "Freimarkt" (free market), one of the biggest and oldest fairground festivals in Germany, right north of the railway station
- November: International Cutter Race / "Kutterpullen" tournament (rowing contest on the Weser river)
- December: Christmas market around the city hall

The monthly free event magazine MIX has hosts an event calendar online (German only). <http://www.mix-online.de/>

## Buy

- **Kluten**, are a traditional sweet from Bremen. They are cubes of peppermint, partly covered in chocolate. **Hachez**, near the Town Hall, is a traditional Bremen based Chocolatiers and their store is well worth a visit to buy the Kluten, though they are also available at many other places throughout the center.

### *Areas*

- **Schnoor** is a den of tight lanes selling boutique style products including Jewelry, African Artifacts, Paper Models and a year round Christmas Shop. There are also a lot of shops selling tourist souvenirs.
- **Böttcherstrasse**, This wonderful Art Nouveau street has many outlets catering for upmarket/high quality products.
- Markets are out on most of the squares around the Town Hall.
- **Lloyd Passage, Obernstrasse, Sögestrasse** are the main shopping streets with all the main High Street chains.

## Eat

Many restaurants cater for the hungry and will satisfy anyone. Several cafes and restaurants line the "Schlachte" along the Weser river while another popular area is the "Viertel" south of the Kunsthalle. Many traditional dishes from Bremen and Northern Germany are very satiable. This region is famous for cabbage (Grünkohl- green cabbage), fish (smoked eel, herring, smelt in March), an old sailor's meal called Labskaus (lobscouse) consisting of mashed potatoes, corned beef, onions, fried egg and beetroot or chick ragout (very fine) as well as red fruit jelly or Butterkuchen (cake with yeast and

topped with lots of butter, sugar and almonds). You can find some fish restaurants in **Böttgerstrasse**. "Knigge" is the name of a traditional coffee house in Bremen.

## Drink

The world-wide known **Beck's Beer** is brewed in Bremen. Guided brewery tours in English and German are offered.

The "Ratskeller" is a wine cellar and restaurant with a famous collection of wines and the oldest wines in Germany.

There are many bars, pubs and cafes in Bremen: the **Schlachte** along the Weser and the **Viertel**, a young and lively quarter.

If you like beer and pretzels, try the "Schüttinger" brewery house (next to Böttgerstrasse) where several types of beer are brewed and served directly.

## Sleep

### Budget

- **International Youth Hostel** Kalkstr.6, 28195 Bremen, tel +49(421)171369, fax +49(421)171102
- **GastHaus Bremer Backpacker Hostel** Emil-Waldmann-Strasse 5-6, 28195 Bremen, tel +49(421)2238057
- **Townside Hostel Bremen** Am Dobben 62, 28203 Bremen, tel 49(421)78015

This hotel has a very strong claim to being the smallest Hotel in the world. In fact if you stay here you have the whole hotel to yourself as it has just one room. It has a great location in the heart of the Schnoor district. It is based on the tradition of small hotels catering for newly wed couples seeking somewhere to consummate their marriages after the ceremony, and is aimed at a market that can help continue this tradition.

For more info see: [www.wikipedia.org](http://www.wikipedia.org)

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