



STORYTELLING – STORIES FROM LÜBECK AND TRAVEMÜNDE

(publication is free of charge)

LÜBECK

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LÜBECK

A DUTCHMAN IN LOVE WITH LÜBECK

Lübeck without the status of a UNESCO World Heritage is like a Michelin-starred chef without stars, says Jan Kruijswijk. What does Lübeck have in common with the Pyramids of Giza, the Ruins of Olympia, Stonehenge and the Great Wall of China? They all belong to the group of over 1,000 historic sites around the world that have been given the protection of UNESCO World Heritage status. 39 of these sites are located in Germany, and Lübeck has been one of them since 1987.

Lübeck was founded in 1143 as the first port on the Baltic Sea and quickly developed into the rich and mighty "Queen of the Hanseatic League". The Old Town island is one of the most beautiful examples of the red-brick Gothic style of Northern Germany. The seven church spires have dominated the city's silhouette since the Middle Ages. In addition to the famous Holsten Gate, it is worth seeing the historic Town Hall, the salt storage buildings, which were used to store the "white gold", the Hospital of the Holy Spirit, the impressive merchants' houses and the medieval alleys and courtyards. The archaeological subsoil of the Old Town with around three million finds is also part of the World Heritage Site.

Someone who knows everything there is to know about it, is the tour guide Jan Kruijswijk. The native of the Netherlands with his unmistakable Rudi Carrell accent and beloved Norwegian jumpers has been living in Lübeck since 1991. "I came to Lübeck because of love", he says in reference to his wife Dorit, whom he met while drinking the popular spiced wine "Glühwein" with some colleagues at Lübeck's Christmas Market. At that time he was still working for Dräger as an engineer in Zoetermeer in the Netherlands, but quickly relocated to Lübeck and has never regretted it. "Lübeck is far more than a beautiful backdrop", he raves. "Here, you breathe history and it's at the centre of life." After retiring, he made a new profession out of his hobby of showing business customers "his" Lübeck once their working day was done.

Since 2007 he has been offering regular guided tours, explaining the "Queen" and what makes Lübeck a UNESCO World Heritage Site – in German, English and Dutch, of course. "There was a gap in the market when I started at the Association of Lübeck Tour Guides", he says with a laugh and strokes his grey beard. He particularly enjoyed dressing up for the costume tours as Jan Janszoon van Wijck, a Dutch captain who spent the winter of 1668 in Lübeck with his galleon "Seelöwe". He took a room in the Seafarers' Guild and enjoyed the food and drink, especially the French red wine, which matured in Lübeck's cellars into the now famous Lübeck red wine "Rotspoon". "I once got some very special praise from one visitor", laughs Kruijswijk with a wink. "After the walk around the city he said, thanks for the great tour – and you did really well with the Dutch accent!" This Captain Jan Janszoon van Wijck may explain how Kruijswijk manages to make his guided tours so exciting and unforgettable for visitors. He tells stories. "My secret is a mix of entertainment and history. A guided tour only takes two hours, and I don't want to bore my visitors with too many facts and figures. You can find many details on Wikipedia", he says. "But I want to inspire with my stories, so that our guests want to come back to learn more about the city."

And what does the UNESCO brand mean for Lübeck? "It is a promise", reflects Kruijswijk. "Lübeck without the status of a UNESCO World Heritage is like a Michelin-starred chef without stars. Visitors from all over the world can rely on the fact that the UNESCO seal means they will find something very special here." The most common question on his tours relates to the destruction during World War II. "Lübeck was fortunate in its misfortune", is his response. "Around three quarters of the Old

Town survived the War almost untouched despite the devastating air raid of 1942." Then in 1944, Lübeck was declared supply port of the International Red Cross and this made it off-limits to further bombing raids.

Kruijswijk especially enjoys taking his visitors through the old Seafarers' Quarter around St. Jacob's church. The traces of medieval life can still be seen here and this provides great material for his stories. There is, for example, St. Jacob's church for seafarers, St. Gertrude's Hostel for weary pilgrims, the Seafarers' Guild as a meeting place for captains, the Castle Gate that used to be the cause of genuine last-minute panic at times, and the Hospital of the Holy Spirit in which the poor and sick had to make a vow of obedience, chastity and poverty to be admitted. Still, you did get a free meal and three litres of beer every day adds Kruijswijk with a grin, knowing well that it was better to drink dark beer than water during the Middle Ages as protection against diseases. Beer was also part of the crew's daily rations on board of trading ships, so it was no wonder that there were around 160 breweries in Lübeck in the Middle Ages.

"Many believe that the Middle Ages were romantic", explains Kruijswijk. "But that's not true. It was a daily battle for survival. Disease and death lurked everywhere." That was also why rich Lübeck merchants were so generous with donations, as they were worried about their salvation and wanted to buy their place in paradise. This resulted in many charitable foundations, such as the Füchtingshof, which offered refuge to impoverished widows and orphans. The little alley houses in the rear courtyards of the Old Town are a special tourist attraction – spruced up like little doll's houses, they make popular holiday apartments. The humble wooden huts used to be home to servants, simple seafarers, or were rented by small businesses, and could not even be heated because of the fire risk. 70 of these historic alleys and courtyards have been preserved to this day and are an integral part of many guided tours.

"The alleys are simply part of Lübeck and each one tells its own special story", says Kruijswijk. He could talk passionately and enthusiastically about "his" Lübeck for hours, but even the best guided tour has to come to an end. Just one question is left: What is his favourite place in Lübeck? "The Christmas Market of course", he replies with a smile. "I found my great love there in the protection of the historic Town Hall." How romantic!

LIVELY WORLD HERITAGE SITE

OF TRADITION AND BEAUTIFUL THINGS

Sometimes that 's the way things go: two things fit together like pieces of a jigsaw. In that case, it's fate that has decided to bring two worlds, two life stories, two people together. That's doubtless what happened when the paths of Marcus Niendorf and Dietlind Wolf crossed. He is a pharmacist and owner of Lübeck's Löwen Pharmacy, she a multi-talented artist. And their common vision is their Löwenmanufaktur (Löwen hand-made production).

There is a smell of lavender, cardamom and sandalwood in the air. The starry sky on the high ceilings is hand-painted, the furnishings a harmonious blend of restrained modernity and antique treasures from the 18th century. A visit to the Löwen Pharmacy is like travelling through time. Essential oils are in the air and visitors are assailed from all sides by the history they transport. This proud patrician house is a jewel at the heart of the Old Town as it is Lübeck's oldest town house. Built around 1230, it is even around 250 years older than our famous Holsten Gate. "The Empress Elisabeth, wife of the Holy Roman Emperor Charles IV, resided here during a state visit in 1375", Marcus Niendorf relates.

And there is much to relate for this Lübeck pharmacist as in fact he could equally well have become a historian or architect, such is his seemingly limitless knowledge of the history of this brick building which has been so closely linked to his family history since 1812, the year the Löwen Pharmacy was opened. The Hanseatic tradition, the age of the Buddenbrooks, the chronicles of Lübeck have left their mark and can still be felt in the rooms of the Löwen pharmacy. The concept with which Marcus Niendorf has forged his niche, fits well with this atmosphere so steeped in history. "I took over the pharmacy from my father as the youngest of four children in the fourth generation. After the war, he rebuilt the business and made it profitable. And, of course, it was expected of me that I would continue the tradition. That is a great source of pleasure to me, especially because I have found a strategy which I think has the potential to ensure the survival of the pharmacy in the way I envisage."

We are talking about the hand-made Löwen production business. Since 2006, Marcus Niendorf has been developing traditional formulas based on sources from the family archives of his great grandfather. The idea of turning the clock back and creating a counter-movement to the rapidly automating world of the pharmacy had been going through his head for some time, and it took more definite shape on a visit to a convent pharmacy in Florence. He received support in the initial period from the nursing staff at Lübeck's University Clinic. A calming oil with which to treat patients suffering from panic attacks was needed, and it brought success. The birth of a new product line: oils for the psyche. They bear expressive names such as "Löwenbändiger" (lion-tamer), "Balsam für die Seele" (balm for the soul) or "Löwenkraft" (strength of a lion), and they have proven their worth with customers of the Löwen manufactory. "It all fits together with perfect logic", says Niendorf, "we have here this house steeped in history, I have this inexhaustible family archive and my specialist knowledge as well as my vision of the Löwen manufactory in the pursuit of which I have devoted all my efforts."

Indeed, the decidedly broad product range now includes herbal formulas in the areas of the mind, the immune system, travel and birth, to name but some. And yes, visually too, it fits perfectly with the "beautiful old pharmacy world" of the Löwen pharmacy.

This is where Dietlind Wolf comes into play. Marcus Niendorf's matching piece of the jigsaw, so to speak, as they share the same interests and the same vision. "Things have to be beautiful." Architecture, art, design, tradition, love of detail and authenticity, these are the things that the two — at first sight so different — protagonists of this story have in common.

Dietlind Wolf is an artist through and through. "I was born creative, if you like, that was evident even in kindergarten. Luckily they followed the Montessori principle which gave me many opportunities to express my creativity. I still have a lot of pictures of myself from this time", she recalls. And so after completing her Abitur school-leaving exams, she embarks on a decidedly varied artistic career. Textile design in the haute couture field in Italy and Switzerland, a restaurant run as a collective, a teaching job in Hamburg at the Academy for Fashion and Design, prop styling for international magazines, principally in the area of food, and finally photography and her own line of ceramics.

When their paths cross, Dietlind Wolf had had her studio in Hamburg for many years. Love finally led her from there to Marcus Niendorf and to Lübeck. And here the two of them now live, in a venerable patrician house, above the Löwen pharmacy, at the heart of things in Lübeck's world cultural heritage site, the UNESCO Old Town. The conversion work on the 120 square metres on the top floor is far from finished; it's an ongoing process. "We take a lot of pleasure in architecture and we have a lot of ideas in our heads, some of which can be realised and some maybe not", the pair muses. In the pharmacy below, on the other hand, the creative energy on show knows no bounds. "The Löwen manufactory is our baby, and to a degree also our legacy for Lübeck", Marcus Niendorf explains, looking at his wife. Once again, it is clear how well this couple complement each other as the two creative talents are developing the beautiful product design on their own, creating the perfect stage for their tinctures and creams in the photos in their online shop. With an unbelievably sure eye for style, Dietlind Wolf creates the perfect setting for the product, herbs, miniature bowls and drawings — once learned never forgotten, and some people are simply born with it. "I am passionate about conveying the authenticity of something in the photo. Luckily, this trend already exists in food photography and I would like to apply it to pharmaceuticals, too", she explains. Perhaps it is this very authenticity which makes the overall package so charming. Pharmacist and artist, Lübeck and the Old Town island and a vision of tradition and beautiful things.

www.loewen-apotheke-luebeck.de

www.facebook.com/Loewen.Manufactur

www.instagram.com/loewenmanufactur

www.dietlindwolf.blogspot.com

LÜBECK'S NEW MUSEUM AREA: THE EUROPEAN HANSEMUSEUM

The Hanseatic League – from trading association to global player. A tour through the European Hansemuseum. The Hanseatic League was a successful model. Originally. Eventually, it came to an end. The European Hansemuseum explains the rise, fall and legend of the erstwhile commercial power and invites you on an interactive journey through 600 years of Hanseatic history.

How did it all begin? Why did merchants band together in the Middle Ages? Haven't they been competitors? How did they live and what did they have that others did not? On an area of over 4,000 square metres, visitors can experience the boldness of longrange trading and learn about life in a foreign place, the fight for privileges, wealth, power, piracy, plague, belief and death. If there's something worth knowing about the Hanseatic League, you are sure to learn it here.

The journey begins underground at an excavation site. Archaeologists have uncovered a piece of history here, which takes visitors back to the beginnings of the City of Lübeck. The city was founded in 1143 as the first German port on the Baltic Sea and it quickly became clear: Lübeck had what it takes to be "Queen of the Hanseatic League": a protected island town, a gateway to the Baltic Sea, good transport connections and of course the merchants' instinct for profit and new trading connections. The tour continues through an imaginary portal to the banks of the Neva. There is no exact date for the founding of the Hanseatic League and no written contract, but the League may well have been born here in foreign lands in the high reeds against a backdrop of heavily laden cogs. In 1193, merchants from Low German cities meet on the banks of the river before travelling further to Novgorod, elect a leader and proceed in the protection of the group to conduct lucrative business in the Russian trading metropolis.

Lübeck in 1226. The city is growing and a sea of redbrick develops over time. More and more people move to the emerging trading city and living space behind the city's walls becomes scarce. Lübeck's merchants have become extremely wealthy thanks to long-range trade. They begin to build their houses from fired brick rather than wood and loam. The journey through time continues on to the year 1361, to the "Oude Halle", the Hanseatic trading office ("kontor") at Bruges, which was the centre of "global trade" north of the Alps at that time. Here, they traded in woollens from Flanders, spices, silk and brocade from Italy, furs and wax from Russia, tropical fruit from Spain, relic bags from Cologne and armour from Milan.

However, the international trading routes not only bring wealth and power, but also disease and death. The plague, for example, carried off around a third of Europe's population in the 14th century. In London in 1500, visitors see how the Hanseatic merchants also make enemies abroad due to their wealth and far-reaching privileges. They are not entirely blameless in this, though. Their privileges and upmarket lifestyle cause major resentment among the local population. It peaks with an angry mob attempting to storm the Hanseatic kontor known as the "Steelyard". Problems and disagreements are also increasingly apparent within the Hanseatic League itself, which becomes very clear at the "Hansetag" meeting (Hanseatic Day) in Lübeck in 1518. The Reformation begins in 1517. New values sweep across large swathes of Europe and new conflicts arise as a result. The fortunes of the League fade despite all efforts and successes, such as the Peace of Westphalia of 1648.

The last Hansetag is held in Lübeck in 1669. The final leap through time takes visitors to Bergen in Norway, where the local Hanseatic kontor is converted to a Norwegian kontor in the mid-18th century. That was the end of the Hanseatic League, but life went on. For the erstwhile "Queen of the Hanseatic League", too. The legend of the Hanseatic League persists and is still tangible today. In 1980 the New Hanse is founded in Zwolle in the Netherlands to keep the spirit of the Hanseatic League alive as a community of and cultural exchange between the cities. The "City League THE HANSE" now has 183 members in 16 countries and each year one of the member cities hosts the Hanseatic Days, the "family reunion" of the Hanse cities.

www.hansemuseum.eu

TWO OPPOSITES COLLIDE

ON THE INTERACTION BETWEEN CHURCH AND CULTURE IN LÜBECK

In the parsonage of Lübeck Cathedral, steaming coffee stands on the dining table and self-picked apples have been prepared. Margrit Wegner, pastor at Lübeck Cathedral, is sitting opposite Jörg-Philipp Thomsa, Head of the Günter Grass House. Who better to conduct the discussion when the question is: Clerical Lübeck, secular Lübeck, two opposites with nothing to say to each other or which can indeed find a connection?

Domestically, the question has long since been settled between the two interlocutors. They are married with one child and they blend wonderfully as a couple and a team although their respective professions point in such different directions — or not? “We did indeed meet through our work”, says Jörg-Philipp Thomsa laughing. There was an idea at the time for a discussion group with prison inmates on the subject of “Guilt and Shame” on the basis of the Günter Grass novella “Katz und Maus” (Cat and Mouse). “I wrote an email to the Cathedral parsonage to find out whom I could best turn to in the prison on this subject, and whether, for example, a prison chaplain would be the right person to contact. Margrit replied and we met for lunch.” Both of them had already moved to Lübeck for their jobs although originally they come from different parts of Germany.

Margrit Wegner was born in Hamburg and she was aware of her calling from an early age. My home parish, church music and youth work were formative influences on me and led to my desire to become a pastor”, she explains. A degree in theology was followed by the post of assistant vicar at Hamburg’s Michel church and then that of vicar in the district of Steilshoop, characterised by high-rise apartment blocks, before transferring to Stockholm Cathedral in Sweden. Her first post as pastor finally took Margrit Wegner to the Chapel of St. Jürgen in Lübeck. But how did she come to be the first woman to become pastor at Lübeck Cathedral in 2010? “Martin Klatt who is now my colleague, encouraged me to apply”, she recalls. “I was very keen on the idea of working there as I had already fallen in love with the Cathedral before even moving to Lübeck. I was attending a concert at the time and it was genuinely love at first sight.”

When Margrit Wegner takes up her post at the Cathedral, Jörg-Philipp Thomsa is already Head of the Günter Grass House. Born and brought up on the Lower Rhine, he studied German and History at the University of Duisburg-Essen. He came to Lübeck for the first time in 2005 as a tourist and was immediately fascinated by the town. “I liked the town so much that I returned one year later to serve an internship in the Buddenbrook-House — ideal for a Thomas Mann fan like me”, says Thomsa with a grin. And it was here that they met for the first time after a reading: Günter Grass and Jörg-Philipp Thomsa. The start of an intensive collaboration. Thomsa becomes an academic trainee in the Günter Grass House and finally its Head in 2009, always with the full support of the man who lent his name to it and who died in 2015.

There they are now, the pastor and the museum curator, and the original question about opposites. “There are definitely connecting elements in our work”, Jörg-Philipp Thomsa opines. “It’s a matter of great concern to both of us to relate the themes of our “bosses” to today’s times and identify contemporary references. What are the questions that preoccupy people today?” For example, religion, finiteness, the question of guilt and responsibility — these are central, recurring themes in the works of Günter Grass. “That gave us the chance to find common ways of communication”,

Margrit Wegner explains. "For example, one time we held a joint service with a reading from 'Cat and Mouse'."

Both of them place great emphasis in their work on addressing as wide an audience as possible and also involving the next generation. There are regular services in the Cathedral for children and productions of children's musicals while the guided tours of the vaults — available on request — are very popular with young and old. "I can get the kids excited especially when I show them the marble angel blowing bubbles. I usually have bubbles with me so the children can blow some too. That's really magical", the pastor enthuses. Children are also very welcome in the Günter Grass House. "Every year, we organise a children's festival in collaboration with the Willy-Brandt-House which is very well received, and we have the pleasure of greeting around 2,000 visitors", Jörg-Philipp Thomsa recounts. "We would like to break down this misguided awe of art and culture", he continues. "For example, when we opened the new Günter Grass House in 2012, Helge Schneider came as the main act. And from time to time, we also have Jonathan Meese here with an exhibition. Lübeck needs this disruption in its cultural life."

Cultural life in Lübeck enjoys an almost symbiotic relationship with the churches in the Old Town. The churches can also be experienced as cultural spaces. Its cultural heritage represents an obligation as Lübeck was after all the stage where major composers and organists such as Dietrich Buxtehude plied their trade. Even Johann Sebastian Bach followed the call once and came to the Hanseatic town to learn from the best. So it's no surprise that Lübeck's Academy of Music collaborates with the Old Town churches and that church music enjoys special status. "Culture in our churches is sometimes still not fully appreciated by outsiders", Jörg-Philipp Thomsa states. "There are so many concerts staged in Lübeck's churches, that is out of the ordinary."

In this way, clerical and secular institutions join hands in Lübeck to shape the future of the town together, on an equal footing. With God and Grass and new paths of communication — opposites that resolve themselves.

FOOD & DRINKS IN LÜBECK

MARZIPAN WITH LOVE – LÜBECK'S SWEETEST EXPORT SUCCESS: J.G. NIEDEREGGER

Behind the proud facade of the original Niederegger store on Breite Straße, hides what may well be one of the city's best-kept secrets. Protected by bullet-proof glass and known only by the immediate family and the head confectioner, sweet-toothed fans still puzzle in vain over the special ingredient that makes Niederegger Marzipan what it has been since 1806: "marzipan of world renown".

The subtle mix of almonds, sugar and the magic ingredient has also retained its noble character for 200 years and remains as ever an exquisite delicacy. Of course, the marzipan tastes particularly good in the place where the spirit of the original confectioner and company founder Johann Georg Niederegger and the passion for this unique product can still be felt, in the original store opposite the historic Town Hall. Simply follow the "golden thread" that greets you on the ground floor and – embedded in the floor and ceiling of the building – ultimately leads you from one loving detail to the next. Old baking moulds on the walls, the "Classic", the small marzipan bread, recreated in the lift button, the wallpaper and that of the company logo, and last but not least the entertaining Marzipan Salon, where you can learn about the eventful history of Niederegger Marzipan. Here, you will also come across a few of the most famous marzipan lovers: from the Tsar's mother Luise to Thomas Mann and Wolfgang Joop, you can read their own Niederegger anecdotes. Hungry? Then why not relax and end your visit in the delightful café atmosphere, indulging in the store's famous marzipan nut cake while you contemplate one of the most fascinating Lübeck success stories at leisure.

www.niederegger.de

BLOSSOMS AND AWARD-WINNING CHOCOLATE

SWEET DREAMS COME TRUE AT THE "EVERS & TOCHTER" FACTORY

The small artisan production facility of Evers & Tochter is hidden behind the façade of a house in Lübeck's Old Town. Angela Evers conjures up candied blossom dreams here – lovingly crafted by hand blossom-by-blossom and coveted as decoration the world over. Her new passion lies in making chocolates with unusual flavours – handmade and internationally recognised.

The garden behind the house is both a paradise and a working plot. Every morning, while things are flourishing and blooming, Angela Evers harvests asters, horned violets, daisies, hibiscus and rose petals here. She candies the fresh flowers on the same day using her secret recipe, preserving the aroma, taste and colour (almost) for eternity.

Evers & Tochter represents high quality, fine flavour, a special passion for detail, sustainability and fair trade. The ingenious woman in her late fifties began her new craft in 2006, "learning by doing", as she says – with a lot of patience, creativity and a desire to start a new business idea after 20 years as a freelance fashion designer. Her daughter Dana Li handles the marketing and web presence for the small family company. "We are a great team and complement one another

perfectly", says her mother Angela proudly. Edible flowers are now a very popular decoration all over the world, especially in delicatessens and patisseries, where they are used to embellish cakes, pastries and much more besides. Angela Evers has also candied herbs like parsley, thyme and woodruff. "But flowers are more popular and sell better", she adds.

Fine chocolates with equally bold flavour compositions are her new passion and the second mainstay of the business during the flower-poor months of autumn and winter. The creative newcomer already scooped gold and silver at the last International Chocolate Awards for her white chocolate bar with gin spice and milk chocolate with truffle salt, and she came away with the silver medal from her first appearance at the world championships in London. Congratulations!

Her big clients include Dior, Swiss department store chain Globus and the KaDeWe store in Berlin; she is on the radar of well-known food scouts all over the world. It hardly gets better than that. This success also means round-the-clock work for Angela Evers though. How does she do it all? "I played basketball for 32 years. That helps me to keep both feet firmly on the ground, to dribble, to endure and to blast off when I can score!", she explains, describing her recipe for success with a smile. She doesn't know what her next winner will be, but it is bound to be something sweet!

www.eversundtochter.de

THE PERFECT MENU

RESTAURATEUR MANFRED MIERA IS REINVENTING HIMSELF AND EVERYONE CAN TASTE IT

His name is Miera. Manfred Miera. The man is a statement just as much as the five gold letters on a dark-red background hanging above the entrance to his gourmet restaurant on Huxstraße. Miera has been a constant major player of the Lübeck gastronomy scene for almost 30 years with a delicatessen, bistro, restaurant on the first floor and neighbouring wine bar, and despite that, he is happy to reinvent himself.

Miera stands for quality and haute Mediterranean cuisine, sourcing his ingredients predominantly from the region. His culinary motto: "We cook with the sun of the South and the produce of the North". His outstanding cuisine and his good wines are popular not just with the people of Lübeck, but have also long found him fame in Feinschmecker, on Tripadvisor and with other gastronomic tipsters. Does Miera the restaurateur have Italian roots? The name would certainly suggest so and he does look like it could be true. "No, the name comes from Upper Silesia", explains Manfred Miera with an amused grin. "But I did learn to cook in an Italian restaurant in Scharbeutz and do seem to have got stuck with the Mediterranean angle."

He had the urge to try something different when he first finished his training and began to cook vegetarian food. "It was fun to develop dishes that no one had made at that time. That was the appeal." Always reinventing yourself, "shedding your skin", as Miera calls it and becoming at ease with a new skill, that has remained his passion to this day. Just recently, he developed a new gastro concept for his two restaurants in Lübeck and Neustadt. "We have reinvented ourselves once more, because we want to become more down-to-earth and accessible for our guests. The king is dead, long live the king!" reports Miera happily of his latest culinary coup, which should lure young people

in particular "away from their burger haunts". "Ultimately, we're taking a risk in changing our cuisine to a clear southern European style, doing away with the filling German main course, in favour of a Mediterranean menu with starter, pasta, fish, meat, dessert – i. e. a proper menu, if people want it, and all at moderate prices." In terms of quality, he likes to rely on his own nose and direct contact with the small producers and growers from whom he prefers to buy. "Eating naturally well, that is modern quality of life."

Does Miera covet a Michelin star? No, he doesn't need one, he says self-consciously and adds mischievously: "The people I like to serve couldn't afford the food and the people who could afford it, I don't want to serve." Well, he speaks his mind and as king I suppose he's allowed to do that. Bon appetit!

www.miera-restaurant.de

(Information in German)

TIMELESS BEAUTY IN NEW GARB - SEAFARERS' GUILD

Sometimes it takes two princes to wake a sleeping beauty with a kiss. Frank Höhne and Michael Engel have accepted the challenge and fulfilled a long-held dream with the takeover of the management of the Seafarers' Guild.

The proud gabled house opposite the seafarer's St. Jacob's church has been a home for mariners since 1535 and, since 1866, has also been home to one of the city's most famous restaurants. It is this special atmosphere of real history that makes a visit to the Seafarers' Guild such a unique experience to this day. Yet, even timeless beauties need a live-cell therapy from time to time. "Combining the tradition of the building with modern everyday life requires a lot of sensitivity", stresses Frank Höhne. The two new bosses are focussing on "fresh, affordable cuisine of the highest quality". The menu, which is laid out like a newspaper, is changed every one to two months and can also be taken away as a souvenir. The 51-year-old is especially proud of his Southbend Grill, which he uses to "prepare the perfect steak". The house brand "The Captains" is also new. Beers, wines, sparkling wines and spirits are all available under the maritime name, which you will find all over the establishment. The garden in the inner courtyard, which is accessible directly from the Engelsgrube, is the place to sit in summer. While listening to Frank Höhne talking about the many innovations and crucial little things, you have a good feeling that the balancing act between preserving and modernising has been achieved with great success. Give it a try!

www.schiffergesellschaft.de

(Information in German)

MORE THAN COFFEE AND CHOCOLATE - ONE FAIRTRADE

What comes to your mind when you think of fairtrade? Eccentric shops tucked away in the most obscure parts of the city, that are exclusively packed by bearded do-gooders? Not so in Lübeck! With over 30 suppliers of fairtrade products Lübeck is the first city in Schleswig-Holstein to be declared a Fairtrade City, in 2011. If you would like to take a look at how colourful, modern and creative the world of fairtrade can be, then you should definitely pay a visit to ONE Fairtrade in Königstraße.

A glance at the large display windows of the corner shop demonstrates the wide variety of goods on offer. From high-quality hammocks from El Salvador and hip bamboo bowls from Vietnam to imaginative bags from Thailand – around the world in 75 square metres! Owner Juliane Aigner is particularly proud of the cheerful bags. "My sister discovered those on one of her travels. For me fairtrade is more about the principle than it is about the seal. It is about sustainable production, good working conditions and fair wages. The seamstresses make the bags from scraps of material left over from their traditional costumes. They are fantastic for spring with their bright colours!". Meanwhile, Juliane's partner Aykut Kayabas gets to work on the large roaster, the iron heart of the store. The machine hisses and steams and finally the inimitably delicious aroma of freshly ground coffee wafts through the air. The perfect souvenir: "Liubice", Lübeck's old-Slavic name, means "the lovely one" and is the only fairtrade coffee that is roasted here on site.

He has just had the name patented. "Two mild, light varieties of coffee are combined with a small shot of espresso – you have to try for yourself to discover how wonderful that tastes", he says with a wink.

www.one-fairtrade.de

(Information in German)

THE GIN MAN

We're sitting at the bar and Clemens Dietrich is standing behind it in his natural habitat or at least that's what it feels like. There's no need of a table to talk at here because we are all familiar with this situation from the TV: You can have a good conversation with the bartender at the bar. Carefully he lays a slice of bacon on the iced glass, looks up and grins devilishly from behind his beard: "How did I end up here? My pooch did a pooch outside the front door."

What used to be a building site on Lübeck's Untertrave and apparently a popular route for walking your dog, has been the polished diamond of "Dietrich's" — café, wine bistro and bar since 2015. The man behind the bar is Clemens Dietrich, qualified restaurateur, youth travel guide and first and foremost a passionate bartender with a vision. "We work to the credo of "If you drink, do it right", he explains and gives the gin its last tea infusion. And guests entering the small bar get an immediate feel for how you do it right, Dietrich-style. The restrained music, the atmosphere, the light, the service — the all-pervading style is one of a chic after-work club with much understatement. Here you don't just take a drink, the drink is celebrated — in its preparation, in the way it's served and in the drinking.

A leap in time: Berlin 2004, Oranienburger Straße, the party mile and in the thick of it, Clemens Dietrich behind the bar. "That's where I got started in this profession. Pure bartender cliché with 150 cocktails at the double, plenty of show, not so much quality, a lot of partying and lots of women", says Dietrich with a wink of the eye and he grins again. His seasonal job as a youth travel guide fits the picture and he sticks with it even later during his years training to become a qualified restaurateur in Kleinmachnow near Berlin, his home since his childhood. Finally, on one such youth trip, Lübeck appears on the scene in the form of — you've guessed it — a woman, his wife who is a native of Lübeck. Today the two of them live in Lübeck, have a small son and Clemens Dietrich has found his passion in life, "Dietrich's".

The bar is famous among residents of Lübeck and connoisseurs of the restaurant scene for its extensive range of gins. Around 200 select drops are to be found on the wooden shelves behind the bar which take up the entire wall. "Actually, this specialisation on gin was not planned from the outset. Things just turned out that way because my regular customers asked for more and more varieties", explains Dietrich who has now started experimenting and even wins international competitors with his outstanding creations. Here the gin is given an infusion of black tea or blended with a cold brew with cocoa beans. The exquisite results are well received by his sophisticated clientèle as is the exceptional service. "The customer is of course king here, and we are his court and want to deliver service to match. After all, nobody wants to be king of a back court(yard)", says Dietrich in praise of his dedicated team. Everybody works hand-in-hand here with the same objective: pleasure for all the senses with a "drink and serve style" of the highest quality. This aspiration is paying off, and "Dietrich's" is featured in the most prestigious guides, acting as an ambassador for Lübeck's young restaurant scene. "The goal along the way? To establish a top world bar in Lübeck and to be mentioned in the same breath as Lübeck marzipan and our UNESCO world heritage status", states Clemens Dietrich, rolling up his sleeves and paving the way. So raise your glasses to the toast of gin gin!

www.dietrichs-luebeck.de

(Information in German)

IT'S THE RIGHT CUT THAT MATTERS - ROTTER GLAS

MODERN GLASS DESIGN AND UNIQUE SPECIAL PIECES FROM LÜBECK

"I've loved Rotter Glas since I was a little girl", explains the personable company director Birgit Rotter in her unmistakable American accent. "As a child at home in California I used to press my nose up against the glass door, as my parents kept the special glasses in a cabinet and only put them on the table on Sundays."

The passion for collecting came from her grandparents, who wanted to send their children, who had emigrated to America after the War, a greeting from home with the beautifully cut glasses from the Lübeck factory. So it was no surprise that fifteen-year-old Birgit wanted to visit the factory when she came to the Hanseatic city for the first time as an exchange student at the Katharineum school. That's also when she met her future husband Wolfgang Rotter for the first time. "But I only had eyes for the glasses back then", she explains with a wink.

After studying business management in California, she returned to Lübeck in 1986 for an internship. And she made her way back to the Rotter Glas factory too and once again met Wolfgang Rotter, who invited the young lady there and then to take a romantic sailing trip to Grömitz. This was not just the start of a German-American love story, but also the foundation for the current success of the Rotter Glas brand. A few years passed before she took over management of the family company from her husband, however, during which the entrepreneurial business woman first brought up her own "baby" – alongside their two sons Carl and Christoph – the "Artemani" gallery for small manufacturers in Lübeck's Old Town.

As the new head of Rotter Glas, Birgit Rotter has been responsible for marketing and sales since 2013, and is breaking new ground to increase the brand's fame and attract new international customers. She proudly explains that her circle of clients now includes an exclusive superior hotel on Bora Bora in the South Pacific and a gourmet restaurant in Kyoto, Japan. And by the way, Kate Moss was so impressed by a Rotter glass at the recent opening of the new Dior shop in London that she wouldn't drink out of anything else. "Our glasses are full of passion, quality and sensuality and I would like them to be loved – for a lifetime, like I love them", says Birgit Rotter of the love of her life. "You don't need to have everything, but what you have you love!"

Rotter Glas is famous all over the world for modern glass design, superb cutting and brilliant colours. The family company was founded in Silesia in 1870. All glasses are still finished purely by hand to this day and are precious unique pieces. More than 150 cuts have been developed over the generations. The "Kugelbecher" has a special cult status and is painstakingly cut using the spherical drilling process patented by Carl Rotter back in 1929.

www.rotter-glas.com

CUT FROM THE RIGHT WOOD

WITH THEIR VIOLIN WORKSHOP, JULIA JOSTES AND SIMON EBERL HAVE FULFILLED A DREAM

Julia Jostes and Simon Eberl set up their own violin production workshop in Lübeck in 2016. The young couple spent a long time searching for the perfect location for themselves, their two children (3 and 5 years old) and their shared craftsmanship. After detours to Berlin and Hamburg, the family found a new home in the Aegidien district in the historic Old Town.

In their workshop, Julia Jostes (35) and Simon Eberl (37) make stringed instruments in the best tradition of craftsmanship with much passion, patience and love of detail. These two violin makers from the Frankfurt region learned their rare craftsmanship at the renowned international State Vocational School for Instrument Making in Mittenwald. It was there that the two got to know each other and fell in love. After their trade examination, they became journeymen in order to gain experience with other violin makers and perfect their own art.

Their desire to set themselves up in business with their centuries-old craft led them to Lübeck in 2016. "We took an immediate shine to the town, it was all so beautiful and the history of this old Hanseatic town was visible everywhere", says Simon Eberl going into raptures. "First and foremost, however, the Academy of Music is here as well as many theatres, and that played a role in our choice of location as a violin maker needs professional musicians as potential customers." The discovery of an empty shop in the Old Town - the former Musikhaus Porsche - proved the tipping point for the couple as they had the chance to convert it to a violin production workshop based on their own ideas. "I took that as a sign", Julia Jostes recalls. "I knew then we had found our destination in Lübeck." They are very impressed with the neighbourliness in the Aegidien district, everybody knows each other and they say hallo; they are there for each other. And as the two of them live no more than 50 metres from their workshop, a harmonious blend of work and family is guaranteed. The couple have specialised in the maintenance, repair and above all the production of new violins, violas and cellos. The works of the Italian masters such as Giuseppe Guarneri and Antonio Stradivari are still in demand as the classic models to emulate. Every new instrument that leaves the workshop is a unique specimen, hand-made in an elaborate process, and always bearing the personal signature of Julia Jostes and Simon Eberl. The tonewood used forms the most important basis for a truly outstanding tone. For that reason, the two of them personally select all the woods that they use for their instruments from the tonewood dealer they have come to trust. For the top, we normally use high-quality spruce from the Dolomites in northern Italy, and for the bottom, ribs and scroll, we take maple wood from Bosnia."

To swap notes with other violin makers and discuss their craftsmanship, Julia Jostes and Simon Eberl take part in competitions and workshops, for example the renowned Oberlin Violin Makers Workshop in Ohio, USA. In 2018, they took part in the competition of the Violin Society of America there where they won the silver medal "for tone in quartet". The open community practised by the younger generation of violin makers is very popular as the days of secretiveness commonly found in workshops of yore, are now over. "Today, we meet at conventions and share our knowledge", Simon Eberl relates. "For example, violin making has made big strides in quality over the last ten years, and some of the new instruments today can hardly be distinguished any more from an old masterpiece in terms of tone."

www.geigenbau-jostes-eberl.com (Information in German)

ACTIVE NORTHERNERS

A CRAB ON THE WAKENITZ

CANOEING ON THE WAKENITZ – THE AMAZON OF THE NORTH

A canoe tour on the Wakenitz is one of the most stunning leisure activities and one of the best ways of seeing Lübeck's natural surroundings. The river is affectionately known as the "Amazon of the North" in Lübeck.

Because the eastern bank was a restricted area along the former GDR border for decades, the wild overgrown embankment here has remained almost undisturbed. The romantic river landscape was designated a conservation area in 1999. "The canoe tour from Lübeck to Rothenhusen takes around five hours and is also suitable for beginners. You paddle for three to four hours, interspersed with breaks", explains Lothar Krebs, and he should know, as he has been running his canoe centre for 33 years, hiring out canoes for tours on the Wakenitz and other waterways in the area.

The experienced teacher discovered his passion for canoeing in 1983 in Sweden, enthusiastically bringing the idea home with him. What began as a small venture, has over time become the largest canoe tourism business in the region, and now also includes the Wakenitzhaus in Rothenhusen as a central port of call, with its modern guest house, canoe rental station, camping area and since 2017 a tent hotel too. "Thanks to the weak current, the Wakenitz is also ideal and safe for inexperienced paddlers", says Lothar Krebs, though he does advise his guests to wear life jackets at all times.

"Ultimately, canoeing is not a computer game; everything is live!" adds the former teacher with a smile. He loves the real adventure in nature that he can offer his guests on the "Amazon of the North". Our tip: a tour in the large Canadian canoe around the island-shaped Old Town of Lübeck – with Lothar Krebs acting as both helmsman and city guide!

www.kanu-center.de

(Information in German)

OH WHAT A BEAUTIFUL CHRISTMAS

At Christmas time, Lübeck is an especially popular meeting place with a uniquely beautiful world heritage backdrop and a long tradition. The Christmas market at the Town Hall was first mentioned in records as early as 1648. Today, ten Christmas scenes transform Lübeck every year into the "Christmas Town of the North", enchanting guests from near and far. One of the best known and most beautiful Christmas markets is the Artisans' Market in the medieval Hospital of the Holy Spirit which is held in the church hall, in the former "residential cubbyholes" in the nave and the historical cellar vault. Here, around 120 artisans from Germany, Scandinavia and the Baltic states show the diversity of their old and new craft techniques. Jana Nitsch, goldsmith, poet and musician from Lübeck, has been among the select exhibitors for many years.

THE FACES OF THE CHRISTMAS MARKETS

JANA NITSCH – GOLDSMITH, POET AND MUSICIAN

"I always get butterflies in my tummy even when setting up the Christmas market", says Jana Nitsch, her eyes shining. "I love the days before things kick off. I enjoy seeing the other exhibitors again and the family atmosphere. There is such a feeling of anticipation." The trained goldsmith (34) has been exhibiting her unusual jewellery in the Hospital of the Holy Spirit for the last eight years, and being allowed to return every year is almost like receiving the ultimate accolade.

Jana Nitsch has furnished her six square metre "cubbyhole" with a mobile workbench, two glass cabinets and small folding travel cases in order to present her craft and creative jewellery collection in the best possible light in the smallest possible space. "The Christmas market in the Hospital of the Holy Spirit gives me home advantage and great advertising", says this artisan who is a native of Lübeck. "Many visitors also later drop by my studio in the Essigfabrik (vinegar factory) and take their time in selecting their favourite pieces, or ask me to produce a piece of jewellery based on their own ideas." Her pieces of jewellery are unique, hand-made specimens of silver, gold and gemstones. "I love experimenting and I often work with text and tongue in cheek to give my creations an individual touch", the bubbly artist says in describing her work. For example, she likes to use everyday objects in her jewellery pieces such as bottle caps, buttons, Lego blocks and coffee beans — there are no limits to creativity. She calls her concept "the life of things" which also includes devoting a poem or song to her "babies" as she lovingly refers to her jewellery pieces.

Whenever the four walls of her Christmas cubbyhole drive her into claustrophobic rage as she jokingly explains, she also likes to play her accordion as music is her second passion besides her work as a goldsmith. She performs over 70 times a year with her husband Marcus as the "TroubaDuo", and the two of them have already recorded various CDs. They play a mix of klezmer, Balkan beats and street music. Jana Nitsch has also made a name for herself in Lübeck as a poet. "Das Wortgewand" (word garment) is the title of her volume of poetry, a collection of songs, poems and illustrations. An all-round artistic talent!

<http://www.jana-nitsch.de> / www.luebecker-weihnachtsmarkt.de

THE FAIRYTALE FORREST OF THE BELLI FAMILY

One special location which has excited the smallest visitors to the Christmas markets for generations, is the Fairytale Forest at the foot of St. Mary's Church. It first opened its doors in 1962 and since then it has put a smile on children's faces every year at Christmas time. The fairytale motifs originally served as shop-window decorations for the Karstadt department store almost 60 years ago before they were moved to the St. Mary's churchyard as a pre-Christmas attraction for families with children. The cherished tradition of the Fairytale Forest now includes 23 "berths" where the finest fairytale figures of the Brothers Grimm and others can be found — from King Thrushbeard and Cinderella, via Hansel and Gretel and the Sleeping Beauty to Pippi Longstocking, Jim Button and Max and Moritz.

One person who has been there from the beginning and who is particularly fond of the Fairytale Forest, is travelling show artist Peter Belli who was born in 1963. Even as a small boy, he helped his parents at their sweet stall in the Fairytale Forest, was allowed to take care of the fairytale figures, inspected tickets for the children's merry-go-round with his two brothers and did his homework in the last carriage of the children's railway. "I was rocked backwards and forwards and every time the carriage went over the sleepers, it shook — and there was no way to keep your writing neat." He went to school in Lübeck from Grade 4 onwards but only from November to March when the family set up its winter camp on Volksfestplatz. Otherwise, this family of travelling show artists moved from funfair to funfair right across the country, and little Peter went to a different school every week with the other travelling show children. It didn't do him any harm, "I always had lots of friends", the 56-year-old happily recalls, but when it came to his two daughters and his grandchildren, he always set great store by a permanent school and good training. He would have liked best of all to be a car mechanic but the family business was more important, and so Peter Belli learned all the manual skills from his father and in the end took over his parent's business. "There's nothing a travelling show worker can't turn his hand to", he explains with a grin. "And if there's something he can't do, he keeps trying until he can." No sooner said than done — and so this likeable travelling show artist with his heart in the right place is today a genuine self-made man. Crêpes, fishing for ducks and pitching at cans make up his business with the addition of doughnuts and the children's railway in the Fairytale Forest.

When the Fairytale Forest Association "Pro Lübeck e.V." ran into financial difficulties at the beginning of 2000 and there was a threat of the forest being sold to Denmark, Peter Belli took over the chairmanship of the association and bought up the fairytale figures and their berths at a stroke. "The Fairytale Forest is quite simply part of Lübeck, otherwise there's something missing in the Christmas market", he states in justification of his commitment which continues to this day. "It's simply a part of our childhood — not just for me but for generations of Lübeck residents." The association is regularly dependent on donations in order to fund the restoration of the mobile fairytale figures and their wooden berths and to construct new ones year for year.

Brockensammlung Lübeck, for example, recently adopted Mrs. Holle and Pippi Longstocking. "Without our supporters and sponsors, the Fairytale Forest would not be able to survive", says Peter Belli. "I would like to express my heartfelt thanks for this commitment." His own dedication goes without saying for him even if it takes up a lot of his time and work. He takes charge of almost all the repair work himself, "although my wife and some volunteers sew the clothes for the dolls, that's not really my bag."

www.luebecker-weihnachtsmarkt.de

TRAVEMÜNDE

THE SUCCESS STORY OF THE SEASIDE RESORT TRAVEMÜNDE

told by Wolf-Rüdiger Ohlhoff

International celebrities like Josephine Baker, Sophia Loren, Thomas Mann, Caterina Valente and Gunter Sachs have all beaten a path to Travemünde. Wolf-Rüdiger Ohlhoff knows them all, not personally, but no one knows more about Travemünde as a meeting place for the rich and famous than the amateur historian from Travemünde. He is a walking encyclopaedia.

Everything began in 1802 when the seaside resort of Travemünde was founded and life in the traditional fishing village was truly turned on its head. Sea bathing became fashionable at that time in the better circles, albeit only from a wooden bathing machine or in one of the six warm water bathing pools on the beach. 3.000 visitors came to bathe in the first year alone, bringing money with them; the coastal architecture that is so typical for Travemünde today sprang up quickly. The queues at the bathing machines and in the warm water bathing pool became ever longer, until finally in 1873 a public swimming facility was constructed on piles in the water. This was an immense boost to bathing operations, as large numbers of visitors could now bathe at the same time in the sea, though separated into male and female areas as before. Technical progress brought the first steam shipping line to Travemünde in 1824.

Weekly the side-wheel paddle steamer *Princessia Wilhelmine* brought visitors across the Baltic Sea from refined Copenhagen to Travemünde. Shipping connections from and to Saint Petersburg, Riga and Reval quickly followed, which were used by rich Russians to reach the great cities of Europe. Famous Russians who lodged in Travemünde at that time were Ivan Turgenev, Nikolai Gogol and Fyodor Dostoyevsky. Travemünde really began to fill up from 1882 onwards, when the first railway came and a couple of years later, when cars started to become a common mode of transport. Famous names like Joseph von Eichendorff, Emanuel Geibel, Richard Wagner, Clara Schumann, Edvard Munch and of course, Thomas Mann, all feature the list of prominent visitors to the historic seaside resort. In July 1914, Franz Kafka wrote in his diary: "In the afternoon briefly put bare feet in the sand. Felt unpleasant". It was still unbeseeing at that time to show bare skin in public.

Gambling was a magical draw for high society and had a decisive impact on Travemünde's reputation as a fashionable seaside resort. In 1833, it was officially approved in the "Kurhaus" – now the A-ROSA Resort. For forty years gambling was banned under Chancellor Bismarck and the gaming tables in Travemünde were put away. Gambling was allowed to start a new in 1949, this time in the "Kursaal", dating from 1914, which is now the Columbia Hotel Casino Travemünde. This helped the resort to achieve an incredible comeback in the post-war era as the glamorous "Monte Carlo of the North". The casino-nightclub "La belle Epoque", was legendary, creating a furore in the 1950s and 60s with shows featuring international stars. A "nogo zone" of 15 km prevented citizens of Travemünde from gambling everything away themselves. This was instituted because the town elders were concerned that daily temptation in the nearby casino might drive the locals to speedy ruin.

Does Ohlhoff have a favourite place in Travemünde? Of course, two even! He loves listening to the Passat Choir live on-board the four-masted barque Passat, and sitting on the bench of the new pier to watch the majestic ships coming in going out – just like in olden times. Madness!

MERMAID MEETS NEPTUNE

PETRA AND MIKE WÖBKE ARE IN THEIR ELEMENT WHEN IT COMES TO THE SUBJECT OF FISH

It's been years since there has been any meat on the table in the Wöbbke's home; they are fish-eaters with a passion. Fish is on the menu five times a week, in all its variations. Husband Mike takes on the cooking duties in their home, which wife Petra finds an excellent idea.

"Fisch-Wöbbke" is somewhat hidden away in Kurgartenstraße/corner of Rose — a little distance from the shopping promenade Vorderreihe in Travemünde. This specialist fish shop is known to holiday-makers and "genuine" Travemünder for its home-made salads and tasty smoked fish. During the main season, customers even put up with queuing up in front of the shop. You can catch sight of the tempting specialities through the shop window — from smoked eel "Schlutuper style", via herring, halibut, kippers, rollmops and butter mackerel all the way to cold-smoked nori salmon and salmon confectionery. There is also fresh fish but only to order.

Petra Wöbbke has been the boss in the fish shop since 2002. The family business was founded in 1962 by her mother. Initially, it consisted of a mobile fish counter in a VW van before she opened her first shop in Lübeck in 1963. The 18 square metre shop in Travemünde has been open since 1970, fitted out single-handedly at the time by Petra's father. Even as a child, Petra Wöbbke frequently stood behind the counter and played "shop". Even back then, the Wöbbkes had specialised in smoked fish from their own family production, and things have stayed that way. The smoked fish is delivered fresh from the oven by sister Manuela who has taken over the family smokehouse in Lübeck-Karlshof from her father. The fish rolls to go are very popular for those looking for a snack between meals, and they are freshly prepared in the shop with the desired filling. The rolls, too, are top quality — from Simon the baker round the corner. Today, Petra Wöbbke is a tough businesswoman with 14 employees, Hanse entrepreneur and much in demand as a specialist for work in the Hanse Association. Husband Mike wears the trousers in the salad kitchen. Every day, this trained cook with thirty years' experience with fish conjures up as many as twenty different salads with his team — including sea algae salad and ten types of marinades, some classic dishes but also with a liking for innovative creations of his own. His biggest hits are the mild herring fillets with herbs and red onions of which he sells around 200 kilos every week during the summer season. Mike Wöbbke sees himself as an "ambassador" for fish and would like to enthuse people for fish as high-quality food of the future. To do so, he underwent additional training as a "fish sommelier" in 2017 and since then, he has been happy to share his knowledge. He offers courses and lectures on the subject of fish and tasting sessions for his in-house fish specialities. A completely new line of business, therefore, which is opening up and ensuring that the family business constantly receives new ideas. This includes so-called "pairing" as they express it in professional circles. Because "fish has to swim" as they say, and at his tastings, Mike always recommends a matching white wine or a light red wine with the fish. Great idea!

The couple Petra and Mike are particularly proud of their latest award from the specialist fish magazine "Seafood Star" 2018 for the "best fish concept at a tourist location". Incidentally: Even if the holiday guests have long since returned home, they don't have to do without the tasty smoked fish because they can have their ideal fish from Wöbbkes delivered throughout the country to their home address by forwarding agent. Just give us a call!

www.fischwoebke.de (Information in German)

GIRL POWER WITH A SEA VIEW

GERMANY'S YOUNGEST CAPTAIN IS HOLDING HER OWN AS THE NEW BOSS OF THE PRIWALL FERRIES

She is young, slight and blond and she knows what she wants. As the youngest captain in the German shipping industry, Dorothee Gaedeke dropped anchor in Travemünde in 2018, swapping "her" coaster ILKA for the Priwall ferries in the seaside resort. The 30 year-old is now the first female head of ferry operations run by Lübeck urban transport, and she is mastering her job with conviction and professionalism.

Born in Lübeck, Dorothee Gaedecke inherited her love of the sea from a young age. Even as a child, she was allowed to accompany her father on sailing trips across the Baltic where the rocking of the waves gently lulled her to sleep. No wonder, therefore, that she very soon knew what she wanted to be when she grew up: a captain! So after school, she single-mindedly completed her degree in Marine Engineering in Bremen. It was quite clear to her that she was entering a male-dominated domain. "Sometimes I was the only woman in the courses and the same again later on board ship", she says. As a woman, do you have to be better than a man? "Yes, that is expected of you, in fact, you always have to prove yourself. It wasn't always easy", she recalls looking back. "As the only woman in the crew, I frequently had to defend the honour of women in a man's profession, but the clear hierarchy on board helped to define your position. Everybody did their job and there was no room for prejudice or macho talk." After only 24 months as a 1st Officer, she achieved her goal, and was awarded her captain's licence as one of the few women in Germany to hold this qualification. Respect!

Dorothee Gaedeke sailed all over the North Sea and the Baltic in the *MS ILKA* before deciding to return to land and swap her place on the bridge for the job in the small ferry building in Travemünde. The reason was love which was yearning for her on land. But she didn't want to do without the familiar roll of the waves completely. So together with her fiancé, she fulfilled a dream and bought a sailing boat. "That was the deal", she says laughing. "I can't give up the sea altogether." And the two of them spend all their free time on the water, as he too shares her passion for the waves and the sea. That is happiness!

For Dorothee Gaedeke, the job as manager of ferry operations represents a major challenge as she is responsible for 34 employees — from the ship's captain to the check-out staff — three large car ferries and the two Norder ferries for foot passengers and cyclists. And of course it also includes the smooth operation of ferry traffic to Priwall and back. No easy task as after all, the ferries carry more than three million passengers and around one million vehicles per year. She recounts that she also enjoys taking the helm on one of the ferries from time to time, and her eyes light up, but that is a rare occurrence for reasons of time, she says. Her new honorary office also promotes girl power in a male domain. She has been elected as the first female chairperson of Lübeck's Association of Ships Officers and Captains. "A great honour", she says proudly and smiles with great self-assurance. "As a woman, I can really make waves." Hats off to her!

A BED UNDER THE BALTIC SKY

SWEET DREAMS ARE GUARANTEED IN THE SLEEPING BEACH CHAIR

It's a magic moment when the first tender pink rays appear on the horizon at daybreak, and the beach in Travemünde is bathed in the dewy dawn. The seagulls strike up their maritime concert, and a new day begins in the real North.

Since 2016, guests in Travemünde have been able to enjoy the perfect sunrise on the Baltic Sea beach, snuggled up in soft bed linen with a cup of coffee in their hand — in one of the four cosy sleeping beach chairs. They are located on the beach promenade on the broad sandy beach with a direct view of the sea.

It is the ultimate childhood dream to spend a night on the beach under a clear starry sky. This dream can now come true here in the Bay of Lübeck — and with a degree of comfort that can only be offered by your bed at home or in a hotel. Because who wants to leave for home or their holiday accommodation after a beautiful day on the beach with a swim in the Baltic Sea, a lot of sunshine and even greater relaxation? The day can be brought to a better close over a glass of red wine directly by the seaside, with your feet in the sand and the roar of the waves in your ear — this is pure bliss.

The sleeping beach chair is 1.40 metres wide and equipped with fluffy cushions and thick duvets, romantic lighting, a bottle of water for the night and some light reading matter for the evening. A tarpaulin can be fastened over the entire area of the chair, protecting you from wind and weather. Two lateral portholes and the transparent front of the tarpaulin reveal a view of the Baltic Sea beach and the sea itself even if the cover is pulled up. At night, these windows can naturally be obscured from prying eyes.

In the morning, you are woken not by the alarm but by nature — with the soft red hues of dawn, the roar of the surf, a concert of seagulls and the aroma of coffee. Because on request, a complete breakfast can be served directly at the sleeping beach chair. Tables and chairs are at the ready on the small wooden terrace — this is how the day should begin.

Freshly invigorated and well rested, guests can then explore their surroundings. Travemünde has a lot to offer. Anyone wanting to get to know the bay from a different perspective, should undertake an extended walk along the steep coast of Brodten. Over the course of centuries, the sea has fashioned a rough cliff here as high as a tower. On one side, you have a free view over the Baltic Sea, the white sails of the ships and big vessels coming to Travemünde from Scandinavia. Landwards, the scene is dominated by gleaming rape fields in the spring and blooming North German flora by the wayside.

And later take a refreshing dip in the Baltic Sea waves, soak up the warming sun or maybe spend a second night in your sleeping beach chair under the starry sky — it's so hard to tear yourself away.

www.travemuende-tourismus.de

WHY IS THE PLAICE FLAT?

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FROM THE SEA – A VISIT TO THE OSTSEESTATION PRIWALL

Who'd have thought. Pipefish, jellyfish, shrimp, gurnard and lumpfish – they all live in the Baltic Sea and almost seem to keep us company when we go swimming. The native sea dwellers might not be as famous as the clownfish Nemo, but they are just as fascinating in their own way, amazing around 15,000 visitors a year to the Ostseestation on the Priwall Peninsula.

Marine biologist Thorsten Walter turned his dream into reality here, establishing aquariums and an environmental station in the new BeachBay resort. Not only can you look, but you might actually get to touch a crab or a real starfish. Thorsten Walter calls his concept "oceanography for everyone", working patiently and passionately day after day and with a flair for education to make it a reality. Many visitors with children come to him during school holidays and at weekends, but otherwise it is usually large groups, including countless kindergarten and school classes. In addition to tours through the Ostseestation, he also offers the children landing net courses, beach walks or microscope instruction. Adults too enjoy listening to Thorsten Walter reveal the secrets of the local underwater world, which usually finishes with one delicious fish recipe or another.

"That's part of it", grins the congenial marine expert. But does he like eating fish where he so lovingly protects his charges? Sure, and he prefers to buy it from the Travemünde fishermen who sometimes bring him exotic examples for his collection from their cutter trips.

And why is the plaice actually flat? Thorsten Walter's response: It isn't really, it just swims on its side!

www.ostseestation-priwall.de

(Information in German)

JUST LAY IT ON THICK

A PORTRAIT OF TWO TRAVEMÜNDE ARTISTS — FRAUKE KLATT & NINETTE MATHIESSEN

Instinctive painter meets artisan. Frauke Klatt meets Ninette Mathiessen. Two painters, as different as Luu and Lee, yet united by a talent for bringing their very personal view of the sea and the maritime world to life on canvas.

It is apparent immediately when you enter Frauke Klatt's studio: here is a passionate water sports enthusiast at work, expressing her love for the sea, the wind and sailing in matchless paintings. Billowing sails and vividly foaming waves pull the observer into the scene, making the power of the sea something tangible.

Frauke Klatt breathes life into the scenery with thickly applied, vibrant colours. "My large-format acrylic pictures express the full dynamic of sailing, but also the leaden silence of the calm on a muggy summer's day". Someone once told her that you feel "wet" when you look at her pictures, which happens to be one of the biggest compliments you can pay a marine painter. The long-term resident of Travemünde revolutionised international marine art in 1997 with watercolours on old canvases. Pictures like people, on whom time has left its mark and are full of life precisely because of that.

The life and work of the "art craftswoman", as Ninette Mathiessen calls herself, are rather a different story. She only entered the public domain as an artist six years ago. Her fresh and free approach has been conquering the regional art scene ever since.

With good ideas, lots of initiative and modern, expressive pictures, which are intended to "have a simple decorative effect and bring joy". The fish is always at the heart of her work. This is her trademark and in some ways also a memento of her first commissioned work. Fish motifs for a fish restaurant: sometimes the answer's close at hand. Thus, the little girl who earned her first pennies with street painting, has become a gallerist and artist able to make a living from her passion.

You won't find fine brushstrokes in her work. Her pictures are as wild as the sea: She goes to work with palette knives and artists' blades, creating clear motifs with unusual materials like mortar and packing paper, always different, always maritime and of course always featuring that now proverbial "Mathiessen fish".

Circumnavigator: Frauke Klatt has designed the official poster for the Travemünde Sailing Week 18 times since 1997. She prefers to explain the great variety of her works in person by appointment. www.frauke-klatt.de (Information in German)

Local patriot: Ninette Mathiessen organises an art exhibition with ten Lübeck artists every year. Her gallery and art workshop are on Bertlingstraße, opposite the Strandbahnhof in Travemünde. www.diekunstwerkerin.de (Information in German)

www.diekunstwerkerin.de

www.frauke-klatt.de

SCULPTED FROM STONE

UNIQUE MEMORIES FROM THE BALTIC BEACHES

They are sometimes angular, or round, or rough, or completely smooth and sometimes even sparkle a little when you turn them this way and that in the sun. They tell stories that are as diverse as their composition, they give flight to our imagination and fascinate us with their uniqueness.

Stones are ten a penny and yet here in particular they develop their very special charm. Who hasn't dropped one in their pocket during a walk on the beach – with the feeling that they've found a really special example? Stones are a little piece of eternity and perhaps that's why they have healing properties when it comes to the trials and tribulations of life. In any case, that's how it was for Kristin Wolf, a young woman who felt one day that her life simply couldn't go on as before. She was going to the beach on a daily basis at the time.

"The stones gave me strength and to some extent saved my life". They certainly changed Kristin Wolf's life for ever. The number of her finds steadily grew, as did the idea of sending little messages with them. The first went to her boyfriend: two little bodies of Baltic rock leaning on one another – a moment of closeness sculpted in stone. The framed piece decorated their home from then on and attracted the attention of friends and family: "Can you make something like that for me too?". The business idea was born. Although: if you see Kristin Wolf working you probably wouldn't think "business idea" at all. Over and over, she turns and twists her treasures in her hand, putting them together, testing the harmony of colour and form.

Her motifs represent moments of happiness. Births, marriages, declarations of love – unique and unforgettable for her clients, combined with the hope for a little bit of eternity. Kristin Wolf's works are clear and minimalist. The stones are the stars. They alone tell the story that you cannot put into words.

www.stone-emotions.de

(Information in German)

ACTIVE NORTHERNERS:

EVERYTHING IN FLUX - YOGA BLISS WITH VIEWS OF THE TRAVE

We all know. Sometimes you carry an idea in your head for years, tossing it back and forth and yet not finding the courage to put it into practice.

Stefanie Kinter dared to do it. Five years ago, she moved with her family from North Rhine-Westphalia to Travemünde, turning her very personal dream into reality. While still working as a senior manager for a large DAX concern, the passionate yogi rented a small room in a private house in Travemünde and began to offer yoga courses there. That was in August 2012. Breathe in, breathe out, let go. And then sometimes everything falls into place by itself.

Today Stefanie Kinter is the owner of the Travemünde Yoga Centre, employs several people, offers the full spectrum of the various forms of yoga and is also training the next generation of yogi. Happily, in Travemünde that daily freshness boost is included and it's just a few metres from the sea to her yoga studio on Möwengasse. The family used to come to the seaside every year; now they live where other people come on holiday. She meets these holidaymakers in summer at her "Yoga on the Beach" classes. And even if the sun's not shining, she puts people in a good mood with bad weather packages and laughter yoga. Since 2014, she has been taking to the sea in the "Yoga Ship" for Travemünde Sailing Week. "There is a very special atmosphere. The movements of the ship are both a challenge and a source of strength", she says, starting to dream and then adding with a wink: "You can even manage a headstand when there's a dead calm". The participants are always enthralled in any case and the 25 places on deck are highly coveted. "When we come back from our sailing trip and enter the Trave estuary with all the people watching on land, I always feel a little bit like a queen", she laughs.

There are moments in life when you truly feel that you have made the right decision. Listening to Stefanie Kinter talk like that may perhaps be one of them. With that in mind: "Namaste".

www.yogazentrum-travemuende.de

www.yogaschiff.de

(Information in German)

3RD ROCK FROM THE SUN

NATURE ADVENTURE CLOSE TO THE CITY – THE DUMMERSDORFER UFER

When Matthias Braun looks out of his office window, the first thing he sees: nothing. Well, nothing isn't quite the right word. Broad grasslands, farmland and yes, when he leaves the building, perhaps even a couple of playing children from the on-site nature kindergarten. On the horizon, hidden, the Trave, which continues its path to the Baltic Sea undisturbed here.

Matthias Braun is the director of the "Dummersdorfer Ufer" conservation association. A quiet man, who has to smile when he sees the old pictures of how it all began in 1977. The then 17-year-old stood with a handful of people in the wild coastal landscape of the Dummersdorfer Ufer and decided: this natural oasis close to the city must be preserved exactly as it is.

After long years of dedicated work, and following on from pockets of protected land, the coastal strips, the Dummersdorfer Feld, woods and small lakes have been a fully protected nature reserve since 1991. This not only benefits the many highly specialised species of animals and plants, but also the visitors searching for and finding a respite from their everyday lives. "One of the prettiest places has to be the Stülper Huk", reports Matthias Braun. There is an incredible view of undisturbed nature from the tip of a little promontory 15 metres up. Visitors can choose from five hiking trails in all to get a closer look. "Every season offers something special": from February, the mating season of the whooper swan triggers the start of spring fever, while hundreds of lambs cavort along the banks from March and, from May, the Dummersdorfer Feld is in full bloom. Then we have lots of special activities going on for young and old nature lovers.

"Getting local people and visitors actively involved is very important to us. We want to show people and vividly explain to them why nature conservation is so particularly worthwhile here".
Well, if that's not an invitation!

www.dummersdorfer-ufer.de

(Information in German)