

An FC Fan's guide to Hamburg

On the 15th May 2010, FC United of Manchester will play an all star FC St Pauli side on the Hamburg club's official birthday. Many reds will no doubt travel for the chance to watch FC, play against a wonderful club, in a beautiful city. Should you be travelling, the following guide should give you the basics you need for your stay.

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FC St Pauli <http://www.fcstpauli.com/index.php?lang=en>

We'll skip the history of the city of Hamburg (you can look that up easily enough!) and cut straight to the chase. St Pauli (pronounced "Sankt Powl-ee") are a team that play in the rather unusual colours of brown and white and play at the "Millerntor" ground in the St Pauli district of Hamburg. Their history up until the late 80s was relatively mixed and in amongst the larger clubs in Germany, they could arguably have been regarded as average. However in the late 80s, the clubs fanbase began to change dramatically. The area of St Pauli, which includes the famous Reeperbahn or "Kiez", at one stage was very run down and the uninhabited housing or low rent attracted many punks, students, immigrants and squatters to the area. No one appears sure quite how it happened, but these residents began to take more and more of an interest in the local football side. Furthermore the significant problems cross town rivals Hamburger SV were having with neo-nazis and hooliganism, meant that many one time HSVers gave up on their old team and started watching St Pauli instead. With a preference for left wing politics within the fanbase and a desire to experience football without facists or thugs, St Pauli fans used the terraces to promote progressive politics and inclusion. Not only has this created a club with a famous atmosphere and a real sense of closeness between club and fans, but it also created a football ground where racism, sexism and homophobia are not tolerated. This fan movement propelled St Pauli into the limelight and provided inspiration for fans at many other clubs throughout Germany and beyond.

- ☒ St Pauli currently play in the German second division and (at the time of writing) are currently pushing for promotion.
- ☒ It is likely that with the rebuilding of the mainstand, only three stands will be in place at the time of our friendly match; Nordkurve (the northstand), Gegengerade (the oldest stand at the Millerntor, which runs along the side of the pitch) and the Sudkurve (southstand).
- ☒ Although not completely cut and dry, in terms of supporter culture in the stands, the Nordkurve tends to house any Kutten (the fans who wear those denim jackets covered in patches, and 6 scarves on each arm), as well as the supporter group "Nord Support" who can be easily spotted by their giant flag on a pole with simply a white heart on a brown background on it.
- ☒ The Gegengerade was for many years, the loudest part of the ground. With the Ultra' Sankt Pauli decamping to the Sudkurve, much of the noise went with them. Nowadays the Gegengerade tends to be a more chilled out place to watch the match, often populated by time served fans who've stood in the same spot for decades. This doesn't mean it cant be loud when it wants to be though! The supporter group "Alte Schule" (translates as Old School) often support the team visually too with banners, confetti and sparklers.
- ☒ The Sudkurve (where your humble author stands) is split into two. The upper section is seated, for a more gentrified supporter, the lower is terraced and

home to the Ultra' Sankt Pauli and Ultra orientated fans. The lower section is aimed only at fans who want to visually and vocally support their team for the full 90 minutes. There are no automatic season ticket renewals in this section, you have to come out and queue once a year like everyone else to prove your passion. The section is directed generally by three capos (people standing on the fence leading the singing with megaphones and urging people on to greater volume), meanwhile everyone takes part in choreos, throws confetti, swings flags, twirls scarves, sings, shouts, claps and bounces all in the aid of their team. Too cool for school, colourless 80s Casuals, your time is up, Ultra rules apply now.

- ☒ Should there be segregation at the match, the general away end is in the far corner of the Nordkurve. It offers a fine view of the pitch and is split about 50:50 between seats and terrace.

Getting there: (www.skycanner.net)

Hamburg

Easyjet, German Wings, FlyBE and Air Berlin all offer low price flights from the UK to Hamburg. The airport lies in the north of Hamburg and has its own s-bahn stop (like an underground) which can take you in to the main city centre. More on the s-bahn and u-bahn travel through the company HVV later.

Luebeck

Ryanair offer flights from the UK to Luebeck. Luebeck lies more than an hour away from Hamburg, but there is a coach service that runs directly from the airport to Hamburg main trainstation. The coach costs approximately 8 Euros and can be caught from directly outside the small airport. As so few flights go to and from Luebeck, the coach will be waiting outside when your flight arrives.

Bremen

Bremen Airport also has cheap flights arriving from the UK. You can catch the train up to Hamburg in around an hour from Bremen. More details on the best ticket prices can be found on the English part of the website diebahn (<http://www.bahn.de/i/view/GBR/en/index.shtml>)

Hannover

Flybe offer cheapish flights from Manchester to Hannover. A "Niedersachsen" ticket will take a group of 5 for about 30 Euros up to Hamburg, but you'll need to take the slower trains (marked S or RE, not IC or ICE) so it'll take you a while. Again the Diebahn website will offer the best advice on which ticket suits your group/situation.

Public Transport (<http://www.hvv.de/en/index.php>)

Whilst I would recommend hiring a bike to fully experience the beauty of Hamburg, most people will find the services offered by HVV more to their liking, namely s-bahns, u-bahns, buses and the odd ferry! You can get a three day ticket for the "Grossbereich" when you get to Hamburg. It costs around €15 and should easily cover the areas of Hamburg you want to see. If you are going to be regularly travelling around in a group, you may also find one of the Schoenes Wochenende/Happy Weekend (5 people travel all day Saturday and Sunday for €35) or Gruppenkarte day tickets (one day after gam for €9.20) is best value.

The s-bahns and u-bahns run pretty much throughout the night on the weekends and failing that there are plenty of nightbuses available too.

For all you jibbers out there, like in most cities, you run the risk of a fine if you get caught. St Pauli and the main train station "Hauptbahnhof" are where the inspectors tend to haunt the most.

Hotels:

A rundown of digs available, all kindly provided by the Fanladen in St Pauli. Hotels for the rich, couchsurfing for the outgoing!

Hotels, Hostels etc in or near to St. Pauli

- <http://www.alt-hamburg.com/>
- <http://www.altan-hotel.de/>
- <http://www.aohostels.com/en/hamburg/> A&O Hostel
- <http://www.auto-parkhotel-hamburg.de/>
- <http://www.backpackers-stpauli.de/preise.html>
- <http://www.buch-ein-bett.de/>
- <http://www.das-feuerschiff.de/pages/accommodation>
- <http://www.east-hamburg.de/> Location
- <http://www.etaphotel.com/de/hotel-5251-etap-hotel-etap-hotel-hamburg-st-pauli/index.shtml>
- <http://www.hafentor.de/>
- <http://www.hamburg-hotel66.de/>
- <http://www.hansehof.com/>
- <http://www.hotel-aabenraa.de/>
- <http://www.hotel-cafe-keese.de/>
- <http://www.hotel-hanseport.de/>
- <http://www.hotel-pacific.de/>
- <http://www.hotel-village.de/>
- <http://www.hotelaustria-hamburg.de/index2.html>
- <http://www.hotelbudapesterhof.de/>
- <http://www.hotelfigaro.de/beddet.htm>
- <http://www.hotelhanseathamburg.de/>

- <http://www.instantsleep.de/deutsch/raeume.php>
- <http://www.kastanienhotel.de/>
- <http://www.kogge-hamburg.com/>
- <http://www.lindenzimmer.de/>
- <http://www.monopol-hamburg.de/>
- <http://www.motelone.de/>
- <http://www.pension-flehmg.de/>
- <http://www.pjs-hamburg.de/index.php?id=8> PJ's Hotel
- <http://www.sankt-pauli-lodge.de/de/home.html>
- <http://www.schanzenstern.de/> Altona und Schanzenviertel
- <http://www.st.joseph-hotels.de/deu/data/index.php>
- <http://www.stern-hamburg.de/> A&O Hotel Stern
- <http://www.superbude.de/>
- <http://www.thaden88.de/>
- http://www.zleep.dk/deutsch/hotel_hamborg.php?id=6

Complete flats or private guestrooms

- http://www.agentur-fischmarkt.de/ferienwohnung_hamburg/de_zimmer.htm
- <http://www.hamburg-lodge.de/>
- <http://www.host-a-fan.de>
- http://www.pauli-tourist.de/front_content.php?idcat=97
- <http://www.stpauli-apartment.de/>

Bed and Breakfast search engine

- <http://www.bed-and-breakfast.de/hamburg/index.asp>

Youth hostels and guest houses

- <http://www.djh-nordmark.de/jh/hamburg-stintfang/jugendherberge/>

Couchsurfing

- <http://deutsch.hospitalityclub.org/indexdeu.htm>
- <http://www.couchsurfing.com>
- <http://www.globalfreeloaders.com>

Bars:

This is Hamburg we are talking about, bars are everywhere! Its very difficult to go wrong with your drinking venue, so although there are a few tips here, there are hundreds of other places that are also excellent. As a rule of thumb, avoid anything with glass facades, polished steel or bouncers in posh coats. If you do this you'll be guaranteed unpretentious drinking friends for the evening and good value beer. Oh and in my opinion don't bother with drinking in Hans Albers Platz. Ok its got a square to congregate in and the odd pub that serves Guinness (but you are in Germany, try a pilsner!), but whilst many away fans from abroad will head for Hans Albers Platz (I witnessed city fans there before their pre-season friendly with HSV, only for them to take the bait when a few United ex-pats started waving a Champions of Europe flag), with the exception of the rockabilly bar Queen Calavera and the Cobra bar, the bars are a little pricey and the crowd more touristy. The other side of the Reeperbahn is recommended!

Hamburger Berg

The Berg is a street of bars on the west side of the Reeperbahn offering everything from punk to Northern Soul. Dont be put off by the slightly run down nature of some of them, the inhabitants are always friendly and the drinks are generally cheap. Of particularly fine quality are Blauer Peter (cheap beer and on the corner so a good place to simply stand outside, enjoy the summers air and people watch), Rosies (cheap beer, table football and often found to be playing northern soul and funk), the Lucky Star (friendly crowd and very cheap Mexicana shots).

Sternschanze e.g. Frankenfrei

For a more laid back night out, the area of town known as Sternschanze may provide just what you want. Try the Frankenfrei or Oma's Apotheke (both on the corner of Juliusstrasse and Schanzenstrasse) for good conversation, wooden interiors and table service. Even if you change your mind and decide afterwards that you want to dance and drink like loons, you can always pop around to the Rote Flora squat http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rote_Flora where dub, techno, punk etc parties are often held.

Jolly Roger

Gets a whole section for itself! The Jolly Roger is very close to the ground, is a very popular pre and post match venue for fans and is generally open to the early hours. On the Kiez you will always bump into St Pauli fans, but if you want to chat the night away with match going fans, this is the place to be. There is generally a decent selection of tunes playing too.

Places to eat:

Like with the bars, there are stacks of places to eat and they are not hard to find, but you may find these places of interest...

The Portuguese Quarter:

As featured in the Film "Mostly Martha", the area around Ditmar Kohl Strasse (nearest U Bahn stop "Landungsbrücken") offers a wealth of good value Portuguese restaurants, often serving dishes featuring the kind of fresh fish you would expect when in Europe's largest sea port

Hin und Veg (Schulterblatt 16, Sternschanze)

Airy cafe in Sternschanze and popular with everyone from young families to straightedgers. It offers cheap vegan and vegetarian food. Not a lentil in sight, its all fake gyros, burgers and curry sausages here – recommended, even to meatloving sceptics!

Jim Burrito (Schulterblatt 12, Sternschanze)

Somewhat smaller capacity burrito restaurant next to Hin und Veg. Offers good value, fine tasting burritos, quesadillas and tacos with a choice of meat, veggie or vegan fillings.

Kleine Pause (Wohlwillstrasse 37, St Pauli)

Handy place to grab a bite to eat as it lies within less than a minute from the Fanladen, the Jolly Roger and is about two minutes from the ground. Offers a good mix of unpretentious grub with the odd vegetarian option too.

Drink:

Astra

Astra has always been popular in St Pauli, but fell on hard times and the brewing licence nearly got moved elsewhere. On a swell of public emotion, it was saved by the local council and then bought by Holsten, so whilst its not brewed in St Pauli anymore, it is at least produced in Hamburg. After being saved, its image through a new logo (incorporating the popular maritime tattoo theme of "belief, love and hope") and some pretty witty promotional posters have made it even more popular, to the extent that it is now sold in quite a few pubs outside of Hamburg. Despite its success, its not all image. It does taste lovely and has that very desirable characteristic of being very easy to drink. A 6% version is also widely available and goes by the name of Rotlicht (translates as redlight, a nod to St Pauli's famous industry)

Flensburger Pilsner

Brewed up in the northern reaches of Germany, Flensburger Pilsner is generally available in Grolsch style bottles and is a fine beer. The other variations of the brand e.g. weissbier are not worth bothering with.

Jever

Brewed down in Ostfriesland but available in a lot of bars in Hamburg, this is a real beer lovers beer. Strong and bitter in taste, it'll give you ridiculous beer breath but its worth it!

Mexicanas

Ive no idea whats in this but its good. Kind of like a bloody mary but in a shot, the things go down very easily and the large vitamin content *may* somehow prevent a hangover. *May*.

Fritz Cola

Locally produced cola, with large amounts of caffeine, served in glass bottles. The perfect accompaniment to a burger and chips. Dont give it to the kids, it'll send them loopy for hours. The version with the brown label and a light coffee taste is also thoroughly recommended.

Places to See:

The Elbe

A mighty river that helped make Hamburg (an inland city) the port it is today. Head down to Landungsbrücken for the perfect place to watch the ships come in, laze in the sun with bottle of beer or take the kids for a walk. Harbour tours by boat can also be booked from here.

Alternatively for a slightly longer trip, take the s-bahn out to Klein Flottbeck. From there you can wander down through the Jenisch park to Teufelsbrücke (a ferry point on the Elbe). There you can catch the ferry to the other side of the river, change once and then be taken all the way down the Elbe to Landungsbrücken again. If you've got a day or weekend ticket, you should be able to make this trip using just that.

The Alster

A large lake split in two by the Kennedy Bridge. If you are feeling energetic, you can walk around the whole thing, if not you can also go on a boat tour from here. Jungfernstieg is the best stop to get to the Alster from.

The Rathaus

Very impressive, 19th century town hall. Have a nose around for about €3!

Harrys Hamburger Hafen Bizar (Erichstrasse 56, St Pauli)

Very odd museum in St Pauli. It was originally a place where sailors would bring back artefacts from other lands and sell for cash. It boasts everything from a shrunken head to wierd wooden masks. You can even buy anything on display for the right price

Shopping

Moenkebergstrasse /Spitalerstrasse– the main shopping streets. They can be reached from trainstations Hauptbahnhof, Moenkebergstrasse or Rathaus.

Fanladen

Not to be confused with the official shop, the Fanladen is a bar, drop in centre and small scale seller of fine unofficial merchandise. Pop in for Ultra' Sankt Pauli gear such as the reversible jacket, silk scarves, tshirts supporting the Fanraume project (a project where the good work of the Fanladen could instead be run from a room inside the soon to be redeveloped Gegengerade) and antifacist wear. <http://www.stpauli-fanladen.de/english/>

Fanshop

The official store, once a megacabin like our own, and now a swish shop within the Sudkurve. Due to financial troubles in the past, St Pauli had to sell part of their merchandising rights to a third party. Therefore expect cool designs, and fans as staff, but don't forget to bring your credit card!

Hotdog

(Marktstrasse 38, St Pauli) ok so the guy who runs it is a HSV fan, but fans of classic sportswear must pay this place a visit. A small shop featuring second hand and deadstock clothing from the like of Adidas, Hummel etc, it also occasionally runs reductions based on themes. I wandered in there one Tuesday to be told that there was 10% off everything beginning with the letter "t". Get yourself an original, then go home and laugh at the nuts magazine reading, Nick Love film watching wannabe football casuals decked out in the gawdy Adicolor gear from Selfridges.

Hanseplatte

(Neue Kamp 32) right so if I say German music, you'll say "Kraftwerk, Falco, Hasselhoff" like the chap from High Fidelity, but Hanseplatte is the ultimate indie record store. Its stock is music and craft with a Hamburg theme, therefore they stock the Beatles, as despite Liverpool slowly turning itself into some kind of John Lennon amusement park, this is where they started, they stock anything on the Hotel Van Cleef label (as its based here) and they stock music from anyone born in Hamburg. All in all it provides an interesting twist and a great place to browse. <http://www.hanseplatte.de/>

Bizarre Boutique

(Reeperbahn, St Pauli) – this is Hamburg and until now Ive not even mentioned smut. It wouldn't be a complete trip without visiting a sex shop. Still rather than barging into some crumby store filled with dirty men in macks and sex toys with dubious 80s packaging, give this one a go instead. Its bright, its clean, well stocked and its full of

couples having better sex than anyone who is giggling like a little school boy whilst reading this <http://www.boutique-bizarre.de/>

Do's and Don'ts:

Ok more don'ts than do's, but that's because pretty much everything else is allowed!

Crossing the road

In Germany, you are not supposed to cross the road if the pedestrian crossing is on red. At the very least, make sure you check for police before doing so (they can fine you).

Wearing of LOK stuff

Ok so not every Lokomotiv Leipzig is a complete nazi bellend. Nevertheless, LOK are famous in Germany for their problems with neo-nazis and wearing a LOK scarf will often prompt an angry or at least suspicious reaction from the residents of Hamburg, who have been hassled and attacked in East German cities by fascist hooligans once too often.

Wearing of brand new HSV Ruud Vannistlerooy stuff

HSV and St Pauli share a slightly complicated relationship. Some St Pauli fans don't mind HSV, the odd older fan has a sympathy for both teams and then the majority hate them. Ruud was great when he played for United, the new HSV shirt he wears is horrible and the reaction from locals to you wearing your newly purchased RVN/HSV shirt in St Pauli will be even worse!

Wearing of St Pauli stuff in the Tankstelle

There is a bar just off Hans Albers Platz called the Tankstelle. It's a small enclave of HSVism in St Pauli. A bit like the Manchester city Stretford Supporters Branch. Kind of an unwanted blemish, more wart than beauty spot. It's not recommended to drink there. It's even less recommended to wander in there wearing your new St Pauli scarf, although it might get you the odd pat on the back for bravery....once you've got out of hospital.

Drinking out of bottles on the Reeperbahn

Whilst having a beer on the go whilst wandering around town is not a taboo in Hamburg, on a weekend, there is a ban on drinking from bottles in the area surrounding the Reeperbahn. If you are caught, the police can fine you. The area is marked by signs as you enter it.

Prostitution

Not necessarily high on everyone's agenda for the weekend, but St Pauli is famous for it, so it deserves a mention. If you are outside Burger King on the Reeperbahn and a woman comes up to you wearing a bumbag and a jumpsuit, she won't just be after your chips. The Herbertstrasse is the famous closed off street that anyone who has ever been on a "lads" or stag weekend to Hamburg will have been down. The ladies there aren't that fussed with chips either. The prostitution is legal in Hamburg, so the worse

you risk is an infection if you're not careful. Well that and perhaps a justified feeling of intense guilt and self-contempt. ;-)

Bengalos/Smoke Bombs

Look brilliant and seem to be gaining popularity at FC. Despite Millerntor security being very liberal in comparison to other grounds in Germany, bengalos and smoke bombs are banned and will sour the atmosphere (not just because of the smell). Dont be a div, save it for outside.

Photos and filming on the Sudkurve

For various reasons, fans on the Sudkurve at the Millerntor don't like to have their photo taken. You'll all be too busy singing anyway, so i doubt this advice will be needed!

And thats it. If youve got specific questions, post them in and I'll have a go at answering. Other than that, I'll see you all in Hamburg!