

# The Gateway to Romance.

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Cathedral, the Stock Exchange, the Schütting, the Cotton Exchange and the tastefully decorated Ratstuben Café. The Old Town Hall may well be termed Northern Germany's most complete monument of the Renaissance. It incorporates two styles, incidentally, the Gothic style of 1405, and, in its beautiful front, the Renaissance architecture of the Town Hall's reconstruction in 1609. In vast caverns beneath this edifice lies the world renowned Ratskeller (Wine Cellar), famous for its fresco decorations of Bacchus and his henchmen, and for its ancient barrels containing age-old Rhine wines, some of which date from the 17th century. Opposite the Town Hall rises the Schütting, headquarters of the Chamber of Commerce, proudly bearing the inscription *Anno 1594*. Between them stands the Roland Statue, the symbol of Hanseatic stolidity and enterprise gazing over the changes wrought by the passing centuries. The Romanesque Cathedral is not the most beautiful, but nevertheless one of the most interesting edifices in all Bremen. Originally it was erected around 1043, but wrecked by fire and lightning it was rebuilt and enlarged during the Middle Ages, and once more reconstructed in 1888. To-day, the double spires point toward the heavens as proud as ever. Below the Cathedral the mysterious Bleikeller (Lead Vault), shelters a number of century-old, mummified corpses. The Stock Exchange and the Cotton Exchange testify to Bremen's commercial preminence.

In the vicinity of the Market Square lies the Böttcherstrasse, colorful, narrow and crooked, a monument to art, and a servant to struggling artists. Its exhibition chambers belong to the unique features of Bremen, along with its charming architecture.

Walk west, past the bent spire of the 11th-century Liebfrauen Church, through the main artery of the City and past the lofty old Church of St. Ansgarius to the towering North German Lloyd Building which stands like a tremendous fanfare to the enterprise and the invincibility of Bremen.

A tang of adventure hovers about the den senet of picturesque old sidestreets in the district adjoining the river. Here, among quaint and crumbling dwellings drowns the Amtsfischerhaus, the Council House of the Fishermen's Guild, a little building which has played a latent roll in the forging of Bremen. Bremen lived and lives by the sea. Fishing developed into far-flung commerce, but still large fleets of fishing craft clear the Weser ports every year. In bygone times the headmen of the fishing fleets assembled in the Amtsfischerhaus for their councils. The men have died. Their edifice has remained. To-day it is a restaurant by the wayside, fascinating in an unassuming way. Just opposite, where the tangle of narrow streets ends, stands the Focke Museum, which shelters a large collection of Bremen antiquities. Of outstanding interest is its Shipping Hall, where numerous pictures and models of old and new ships tell an illustrious tale of Ocean Imperialism. The living counterpiece to this Hall is Haus Seefahrt, but a few minutes' walk from the Museum. Haus Seefahrt (Seafarer's House) was established in 1655 as a snug harbor for retired master mariners and their wives or widows. Until the present day it has remained the stage of the historical "Schaffermahlzeit", a yearly banquet of merchants and mariners in the Festival Hall.

Embracing the old city with peaceful water courses lies The Wall, once a system of fortifications, now a garden ring of exceptional beauty. Wander along its pleasant lanes, through solitude in the heart of the seafaring metropolis, past silent waters, gnarled old trees, monuments, and the Municipal Theatre until you arrive at the Art Gallery. Here a wealth of supreme beauty lures the visitor to enchanting hours, to appreciate and enjoy paintings by Dürer, Cranach, van Leyden, Altdorfer, Masolino, Rembrandt, Largilliere, Böcklin, Feuerbach, Schuch and many others. Leaving the Art Gallery you are confronted with the sweep of the Weser River, the green Osterdeich Promenade, and the garden lands on the farther shore, while the nearby gloom of narrow old streets entices you to explore the haunting corners of Marterburg and Schnoor.

In the West End of the City spread the vast harbor basins, bubbling with activity, noisy and cosmopolitan. Once the Weser threatened to defy all shipping with barricades of treacherous sand. The river course was corrected, magnificent harbor facilities were created, and to-day tramp steamers and ocean giants flying the colors of all the world nose upriver to moor at the wharves of Bremen. The pounding of riveters in the shipyards, the insistent rumbling of a multitude of cargo winches, the yells of toiling stevedores, travellers thronging ashore over the gangplanks, droning sirens, green and red lights, ships inbound from the ends of the world, ships outbound to places whose names have a distant ring—all that combines in an irresistible melody of adventure and glamorous tradition of inland and coast, a melody with wings that carry Bremen's title as the Gateway to Romance to all the corners of the Earth!