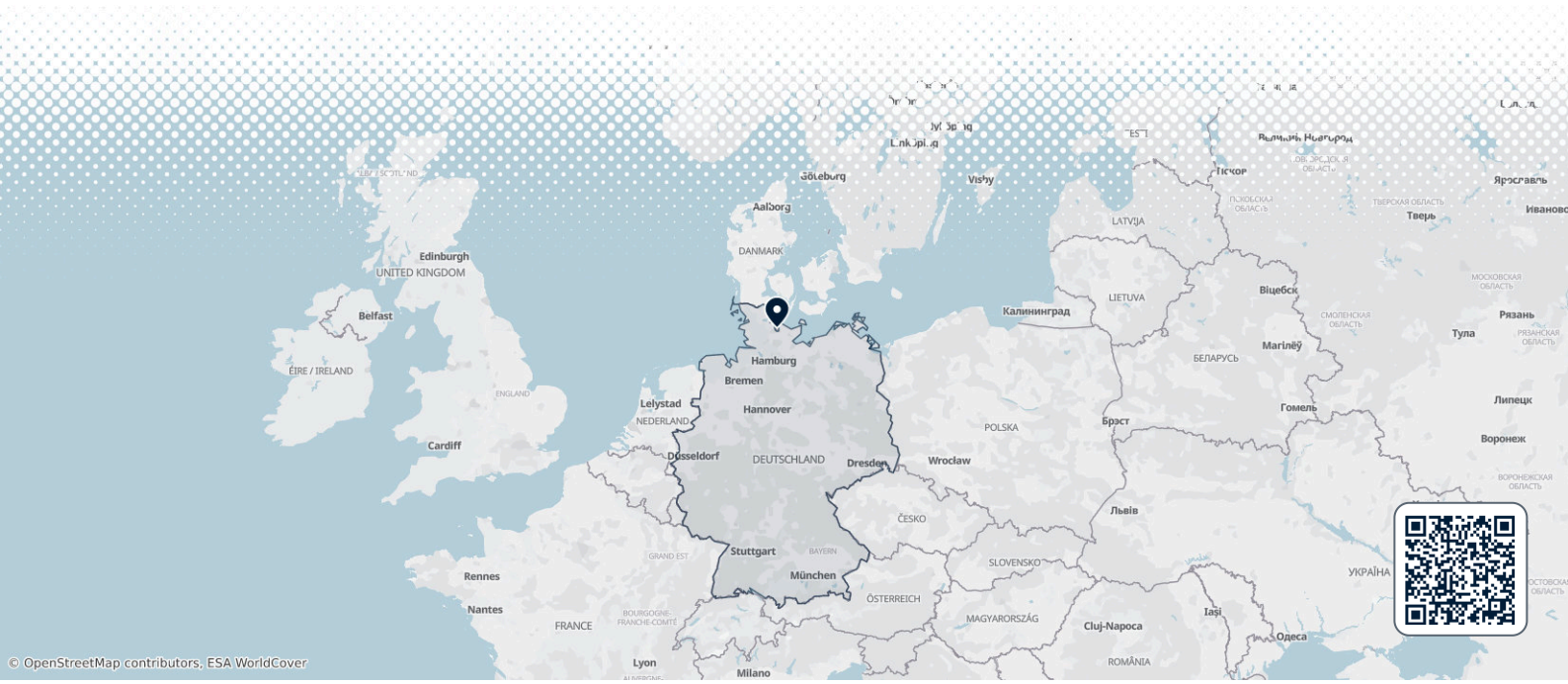


Kiel

Schleswig-Holstein State · Germany

TRAVEL GUIDE

Tripomatic



Overview

Kiel is the capital of Schleswig-Holstein and a port city on the Baltic Sea. The Kiel Fjord runs into the city, and ships and ferries are part of everyday life. It suits a short trip focused on water, sailing and maritime history.

Max Planck, the physicist, was born here. Beaches, harbour walks and sailing events make the city a good summer base.

When to visit

Late spring to early autumn is the best time. Summer is mild, with the sunniest days between May and August. Winters are cold, grey and windy.

Kiel Week is a large sailing event and street festival. It takes place in the last full week of June. Book a room early if you plan to come then.

MONTH	CONDITIONS	DAY °C avg / max	NIGHT °C avg / min	
January	Poor Poor for sightseeing	3° / 8° Feels like -3°	0° / -7°	14 rainy days · Dry air
February	Poor Poor for sightseeing	4° / 9° Feels like -3°	0° / -7°	12 rainy days · Dry air
March	Poor Poor for sightseeing	6° / 12° Feels like 1°	1° / -4°	Dry air
April	Poor Poor for sightseeing	11° / 16° Feels like 6°	4° / -1°	Dry air
May	Good Good for sightseeing	15° / 20° Feels like 11°	8° / 4°	Dry air
June	Good Good for sightseeing	19° / 24°	12° / 9°	12 rainy days · Dry air
July	Good Good for sightseeing	21° / 25°	14° / 11°	15 rainy days
August	Great Great for sightseeing	21° / 25°	15° / 12°	14 rainy days
September	Good Good for sightseeing	18° / 22° Feels like 15°	12° / 9°	13 rainy days · Dry air
October	Poor Poor for sightseeing	13° / 17° Feels like 9°	8° / 4°	15 rainy days · Dry air
November	Poor Poor for sightseeing	8° / 12° Feels like 2°	4° / -1°	15 rainy days · Dry air
December	Poor Poor for sightseeing	4° / 9° Feels like -2°	1° / -6°	15 rainy days · Dry air

Best months: August

Climate data: NASA POWER (MERRA-2) · 1996–2025

Top sights



- **A** Rathaus Kiel is the city's landmark. Hermann Billing designed it in the early 1900s, and the tower rises above the centre.
- **B** Kieler Schloss stands on the fjord. The old castle burned down in the Second World War and a new building replaced it.
- **C** Sankt Nikolai zu Kiel is the oldest building in the city. It stands at the Alter Markt and was rebuilt after the war. Inside are a bronze font from 1340 and an altar from 1460.
- **D** Schifffahrtsmuseum fills the old fish-auction hall on the harbour. It tells the maritime story of Kiel. Museum ships lie moored just outside.
- **E** Kunsthalle Kiel is an art museum north of the centre on Düsternbrooker Weg. It has a sculpture garden and a small café.
- **F** Alter Botanischer Garten is a quiet park on the fjord.
- **G** Festung Friedrichsort is a fort on the fjord's western shore. The Danish king *Christian IV* began it in the 1630s.
- **H** Laboe Naval Memorial is in Laboe on the east side of the fjord, outside the city. A 72 m tower has an observation deck. The U-boat U-995 lies near its foot.

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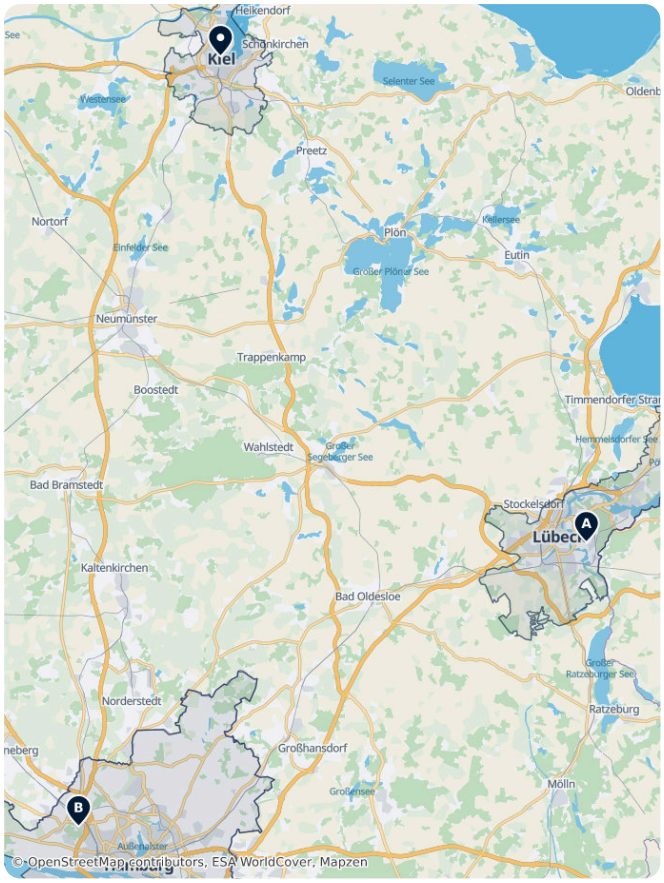
What to experience

- Take a ferry or boat trip on the fjord. You see the harbour, shipyards and the coast.
- Watch large ships pass through the locks at Holtenau, where the Nord-Ostsee-Kanal begins.
- Walk the Kiellinie, the promenade along the fjord.
- Swim or relax at Schilkseer Strand in the north. The Olympic sailing harbour is close by.

Day trips

Kiel has good day trips along the coast and to the big Hanseatic cities.

- Eckernförde is a small Baltic town with a harbour and a beach.
- Schleswig lies on a long inlet called the Schlei. Haithabu, a Viking trading town nearby, is a UNESCO World Heritage site. It is about 1 hour by train.
- A Lübeck has a famous brick old town. It takes 1 to 1.5 hours by train.
- B Hamburg is the large port city to the south. It takes about 1.5 hours by train.



Where to explore

More places in Schleswig-Holstein for a longer trip:

- North: Flensburg lies on the Danish border.
- West coast: Sankt Peter-Ording has a wide beach.

Getting there

- By air: Hamburg Airport is the main gateway. Continue by train via Hamburg Hauptbahnhof.
- By train: Kiel Hauptbahnhof is the main station. Trains run from Hamburg and Lübeck. Check times and book tickets at Deutsche Bahn.
- By ferry: Stena Line sails to Gothenburg in Sweden. Color Line sails to Oslo in Norway. The ferry terminals are on the fjord.

Getting around

- Public transit: KVG runs the city buses. Passenger ferries also cross the fjord. See tickets and routes at KVG Kiel.
- On foot: The centre, the harbour and the fjord promenade are close together. Holtenau and Friedrichsort are farther north and need a bus or bike.
- Tourist information: Visit Kiel-Sailing-City for events and tours.

Getting around on foot & by bike

WALKABILITY

Moderate

The centre and fjord promenade are walkable. Holtenau and Friedrichsort are farther out.

CYCLING INFRASTRUCTURE

Moderate

Bikes help for the northern fjord districts.

Food & drink

Kiel is a fish town. Try a Fischbrötchen, a fish sandwich, with herring or smoked fish. Kieler Sprotten, smoked sprats, are the local speciality.

The harbour front has fish stands and simple cafés. Holtenauer Straße and the streets near the university have many cafés and restaurants.

What to eat & drink

LUNCH

Doner Kebab · Döner Kebab
A sandwich of roasted meat, salad, and sauce in flatbread, invented by Turkish immigrants in Berlin and now a national staple.

DINNER

Schnitzel
A thin, breaded and fried cutlet, usually pork, served with potatoes or fries and a lemon wedge.

Sauerbraten
A pot roast marinated for days in vinegar and spices before slow cooking, served with red cabbage and dumplings.

SNACKS & STREET FOOD

Bratwurst
A grilled or fried pork sausage, often served in a bread roll with mustard, sold at stands nationwide.

Currywurst
Sliced sausage topped with curry-spiced ketchup, a Berlin invention now popular across the country.

Pretzel · Brezel
A large, chewy salted bread pretzel, especially common in Bavaria, often eaten with butter or cheese.

SWEETS & DESSERTS

Black Forest Cake · Schwarzwälder Kirschtorte
A layered chocolate sponge cake with cherries, cherry liqueur, and whipped cream.

DRINKS

Beer · Bier
Germany brews hundreds of regional styles, from Bavarian Weissbier to Cologne's Kölsch, each tied to its home city.

Gluhwein · Glühwein
Mulled, spiced red wine served hot, a staple of winter and Christmas markets.

Apfelschorle
Apple juice mixed with sparkling water, the everyday non-alcoholic drink of choice.

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Safety & health

Petty theft is the main risk, mostly at crowded events such as Kiel Week.

History

Kiel was founded in the 13th century. It joined the Hanseatic League in 1284. Sankt Nikolai zu Kiel still stands from the early town.

The university was founded in 1665. Later Kiel became a major naval base. The Second World War brought heavy bombing, and most of the old town was destroyed.

In 1918 sailors in Kiel refused orders to sail out for a last battle. This helped start the German Revolution. Kiel also hosted the sailing events of the 1936 and 1972 Olympic Games. Schifffahrtsmuseum shows more of this maritime past.

Country facts

Quick practical facts for Germany at a glance:

CURRENCY
EUR €

EMERGENCY
112

ELECTRICITY



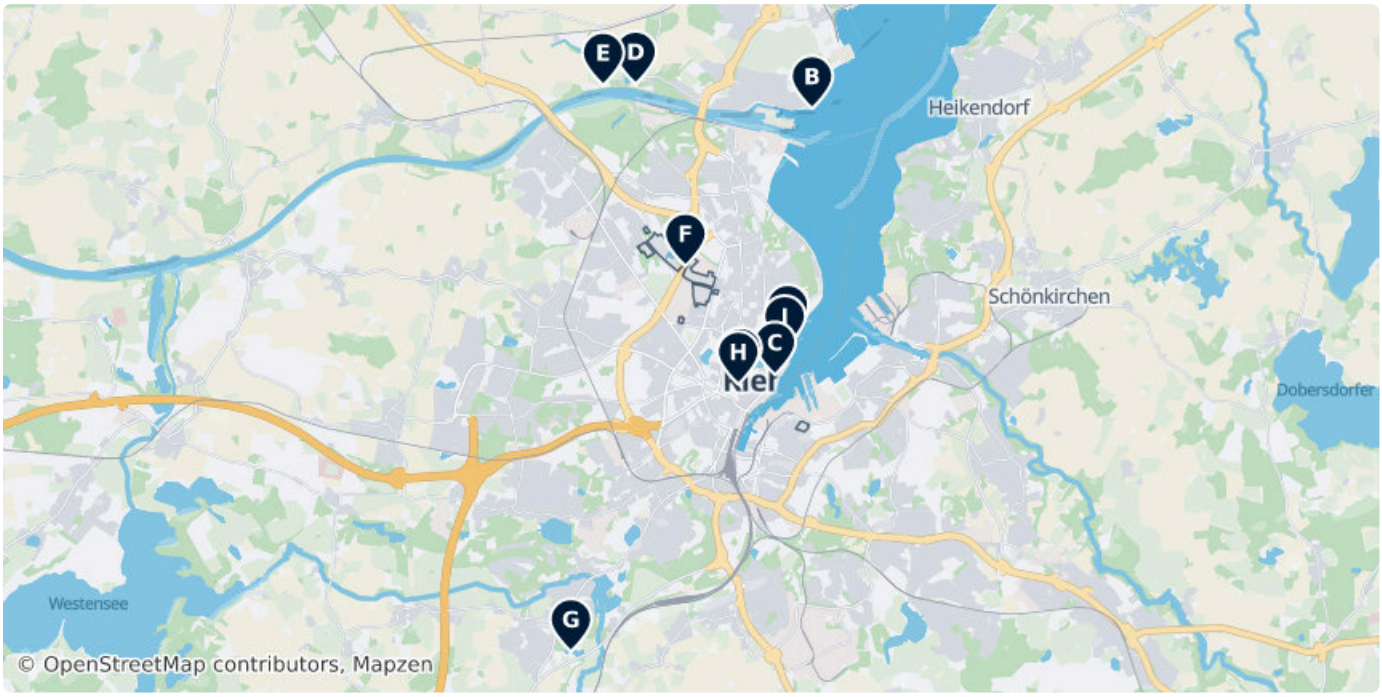
Type C / Type F
230 V · 50 Hz

LANGUAGES
German

TAP WATER
Safe to drink

Kiel Essentials

Kiel's maritime identity is defined by the Kiel Canal and its historic fjord-side landmarks. This selection features the 106-meter Rathausturm, modeled after Venice's Campanile, and the Holtenau lighthouse marking the canal's entrance. Cultural highlights include the Kunsthalle's extensive art collection and the Molfsee Open-Air Museum, which preserves over 70 historic rural buildings. The list also covers the city's academic heritage at Kiel University and the architectural legacy of regional manor houses like Gut Knoop and Gut Projensdorf.





A Old Botanical Garden, Kiel

The Old Botanical Garden in Kiel, also known as the Old Botanical Garden on the Fjord, is a former botanical garden and arboretum located...

Kiel 24105, Germany (54.33038, 10.14687)



B Kiel Holtenau

Historic 1895 lighthouse located at the entrance of the Kiel Canal. The site offers views of the massive canal locks and the Tiessenkai quay, a traditional mooring spot for vintage sailing ships.

Holtenauer Reede, 24159 Kiel, Germany (54.36924, 10.15394)



C Kiel Castle

Kiel Castle in Kiel in the north German state of Schleswig-Holstein was one of the secondary residences of the Gottorf dukes.

5 Burgstraße, Kiel 24103, Germany (54.32405, 10.14315)



D Herrenhaus Gut Knoop

A Classicist manor house designed by architect Axel Bundsen around 1795. Located near the old Eider Canal, the estate is known for its landscape park and historical role in Schleswig-Holstein's landed nobility.

Knoop 24161, Germany (54.37343, 10.10252)

E Herrenhaus Gut Projensdorf

Historic manor house and estate situated near the Kiel Canal, featuring traditional architecture and expansive grounds typical of the region's agricultural heritage.

Achtstückenberg, Projensdorf 24161, Germany (54.37323, 10.09302)

gut-projensdorf.de



F Kiel University

Kiel University, officially the Christian-Albrecht University of Kiel, is a university in the city of Kiel, Germany.

Olof-Palme-Damm, Kiel 24118, Germany (54.34250, 10.11700)

uni-kiel.de



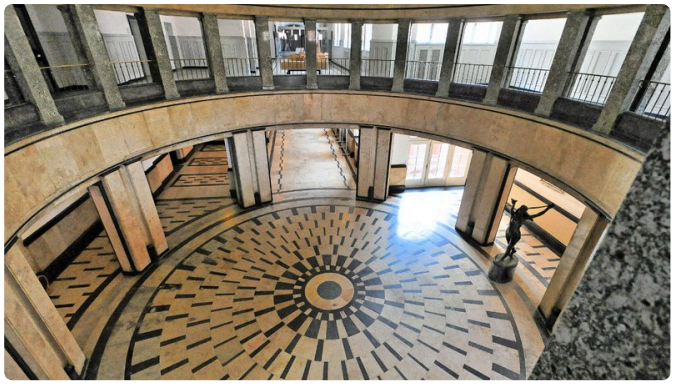
G Freilichtmuseum Molfsee

The largest open-air museum in northern Germany, featuring over 70 historical buildings relocated from across Schleswig-Holstein. The 40-hectare site includes farmhouses, mills, and workshops showcasing regional rural life.

(54.27694, 10.08365)

Mo–Su 09:00–18:00

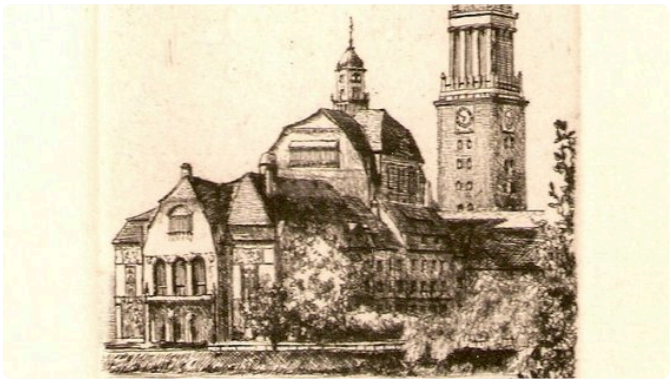
freilichtmuseum-sh.de



H Rathausturm

A 106-meter-high tower at Kiel's City Hall, built between 1907 and 1911. Modeled after the St Mark's Campanile in Venice, it features an observation deck providing panoramic views of the city and the fjord.

9 Fleethörn, Kiel 24103, Germany (54.32244, 10.13244)



I Opernhaus Kiel

Opernhaus Kiel is the major venue for opera, ballet, and orchestral performances in Kiel, and home to Theater Kiel.

Rathausplatz 4, 24103 Kiel (54.32307, 10.13318)

theater-kiel.de/service/spielstaetten/name/opernhaus



J Kunsthalle Kiel

The Kunsthalle zu Kiel is an art museum in the German city of Kiel. With 2.000 m² of display space, it is the largest museum in the city.

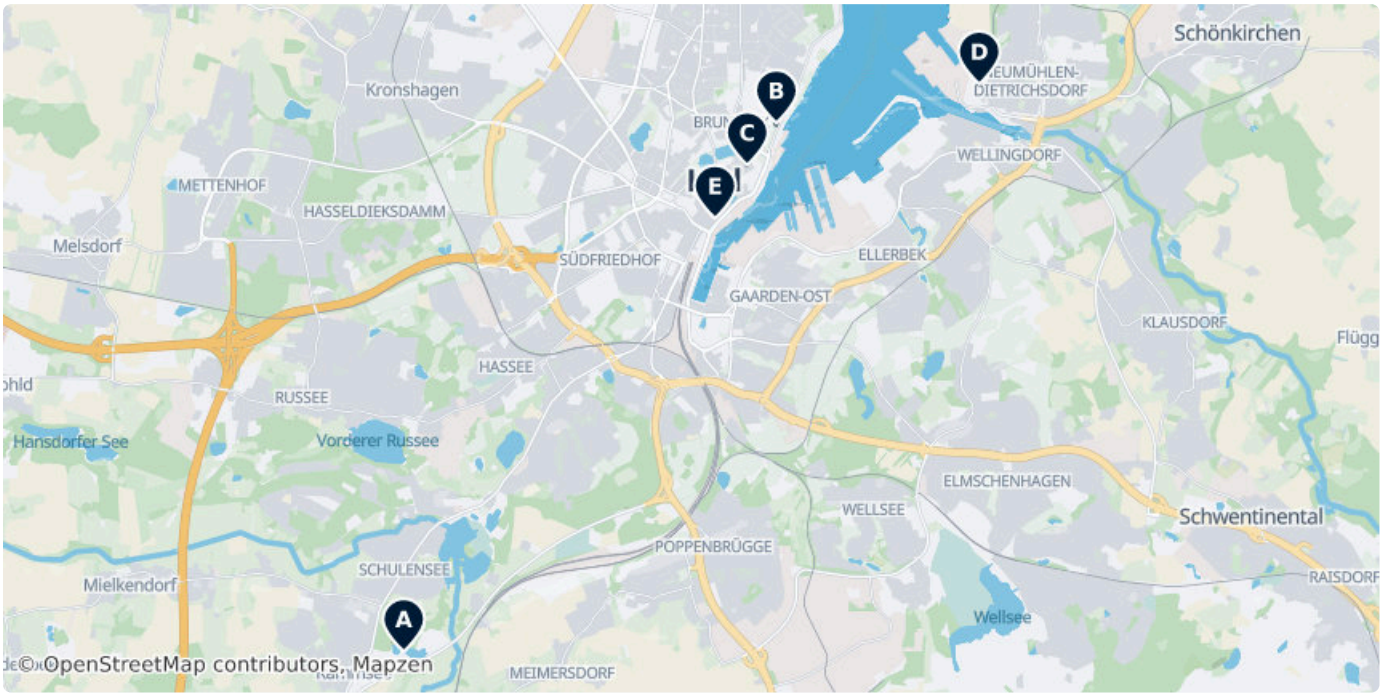
Düsternbrooker Weg 1, 24105 Kiel, DE (54.32850, 10.14600)

Tu–Su 10:00–18:00, 10:00–20:00

kunsthalle-kiel.de, +49 431 8805756

Museums & Art Galleries

Kiel's cultural landscape features diverse institutions ranging from the expansive Freilichtmuseum Molfsee, which showcases regional rural history across 40 hectares, to specialized venues like the Computermuseum. The city's art scene is anchored by the Kunsthalle and the contemporary-focused Stadtgalerie. Historical insights are preserved at the Warleberger Hof, the oldest aristocratic townhouse in the city, providing a comprehensive look at the region's folklore, technological evolution, and artistic development.





A Freilichtmuseum Molfsee

Schleswig-Holstein's state museum for folklore featuring over 70 historic buildings transported from across the region.
The site showcases rural life, traditional crafts, and agricultural history.

(54.27694, 10.08365)

Mo–Su 09:00–18:00

freilichtmuseum-sh.de



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(54.32850, 10.14600)

Tu–Su 10:00–18:00, 10:00–20:00

kunsthalle-kiel.de, +49 431 8805756



C Warleberger Hof

The city museum is housed in the oldest surviving aristocratic townhouse in Kiel, dating back to 1616. It features permanent exhibitions on urban history and historic vaulted cellars.

Dänische Straße 19, 24103 Kiel, DE (54.32440, 10.14112)

Apr 15-Oct 14 Mo–Su	10:00–18:00
Oct 15-Apr 14 Tu–Su	10:00–17:00

kiel.de/de/kultur_freizeit/museum/stad... , +49 431 9013425



D Computermuseum - HAW Kiel (C21)

Located at the Kiel University of Applied Sciences, this museum documents the evolution of computing technology through functional hardware, mainframe systems, and interactive exhibits.

Eichenbergskamp 8, 24149 Kiel, DE (54.33229, 10.17995)

Sa–Su	14:00–18:00

fh-kiel.de/kultur/computermuseum/

E Stadtgalerie

A 1,000-square-meter gallery dedicated to international contemporary art. The museum emphasizes works from the Baltic Sea region and hosts changing exhibitions of modern painting, sculpture, and media.

Andreas-Gayk-Straße 31, 24103 Kiel, DE (54.31921, 10.13572)

Mo	Closed
Tu–We	10:00–17:00
Th	10:00–19:00
Fr	10:00–17:00
Sa–Su	11:00–17:00

stadtgalerie-kiel.de, +49 431 901-3400

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