

Brandenburg Seacamper Tour 2013

In July 2013 we set out for an adventurous cruise on the inland water ways of " Untere Havel" and "Elbe" in the north eastern part of Germany, called "Brandenburg". A region little known to yachtsmen outside Germany, but certainly worth a closer look.

We drove to Plaue, just west of the city of Brandenburg where our boat, a Seacamper 810, lay ready and waiting. It took a few hours to get all our provisions stowed away, to refuel and check all the technical installations.

At 1800 hrs we were ready to go and set of down stream along the river "Havel" crossing the "Wendsee", where we stopped for a soothing swim in the warm (25°C) and clear water. At 2100 hrs the sun was still up and we were already several kilometres into the "Elbe-Havel-Kanal" towards the west and the river "Elbe". It was the plan to find a quite place somewhere in the lovely pine-woods which surround a larger part of the channel.



Summer evening over the "Elbe-Havel-Kanal".

As we went along, the evening turned more and more beautiful every minute.

The area west of Brandenburg is sparsely populated and pine-woods and cropland dominate. Dragonflies caress the surface of the mirror-like water and now and then a couple of storks cross the channel as silent silhouettes against the light summer sky. It is still 26°C outside and our Seacamper is humming it's way into the night.

As it gets dark, we tie the boat to a tree in the small "Altkanal" in the middle of the woods just before Genthin and enjoy one of the most calm nights I have ever spent on a boat.

The following morning we continue after breakfast and are through the lock at "Elbe-Parey" before noon. We are now entering the river "Elbe".



Lunch break just after the lock at Elbe-Parey.



Approaching the city of "Tangermünde"

After a couple of hour's easy and calm drive down the Elbe, we reach the old middle age city of Tangermünde. In those days, a city of residence of the Emperor of the "Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation", and one of the few German towns that survived the 2nd World war. That makes the place very special and charming. The big cathedral is kept in good shape and treasure one of the most valuable early-baroque organs in Europe. You can listen to it every afternoon.



"Scherer-Orgel" in the cathedral of Tangermünde.



The entrance to the old castle.



A fine restaurant has been established inside the ramparts-



- and from here, you have a fabulous view over the Elbe-landscape.



Tangermünde has a small, but well equipped marina with good facilities.



We continue down the Elbe the next day, heading for "Havelberg" - another old city with an impressive Cathedral and a charming "old town". Before we reach Havelberg, we decide to take a lunch break and simply put the boat up on one of the sandbars along the river. The Seacamper 810 is equipped with stern-drive, so you can tilt the propeller out of the water in order to avoid damage.

The weather is hot summer weather and it is a relief to get a swim and cool off in the river.



Lunchbreak in the sand.



The Seacamper 810 is the ideal explorer for a journey like this.

Later in the afternoon, we haul in the anchor and sail on down river, heading for the old "Hansestadt" Havelberg.



Sheep grassing on the banks of the waiting area before the Havelberg Lock.



Middle-age cathedral of "Havelberg"



The impressive Havelberger Dom St. Marien from AD.1170

Also here, you will find a large, old and well preserved Organ from 1777.

I Hauptwerk C–

1. Prinzipal 16' S
2. Octava 8' S
3. Spitzflöt 8' S, Sk
4. Gedact 8' S, Sk
5. Octave 4' Sk
6. Gedact 4' Sk
7. Quinta 3' M
8. Octave 2' M
9. Waldflöt 2' Sk
10. Mixtur V Sk
11. Cornet III D S, Sk
12. Trompet 8' Sk

II Oberwerk C–

13. Quintathön 16'
14. Principal 8'
15. Rohrflöte 8' alt
16. Salicional 8'
17. Octava 4' alt
18. Rohrflöte 4' alt
19. Nasat $2\frac{2}{3}'$ alt
20. Octava 2'
21. Terz $1\frac{3}{5}'$
22. Quinta $1\frac{1}{3}'$
23. Siffflöt 1'
24. Mixtur IV
25. Crumhorn 8'

Pedal C–

26. Principal 16' S
 27. Sub Baß 16' S
 28. Octave 8' S
 29. Baßflöte 8' M
 30. Quinta 6' M
 31. Octave 4' S
 32. Mixtur V S, Sk
 33. Posaun 16' Sk
 34. Trompet 8' Sk
- Tremolant*

he weather is changing, and after a rainy night, we continue our tour. Now in the river "Havel" again, going up-stream towards the south-east and the city of Brandenburg.



Leaving Havelberg.

The weather is changing continuously between grey with a shower now and then, and nice and sunny. But it's summer, and temperatures are not below 25°C at any time. We stop several times to take a swim in the warm and clean water in the middle of this huge nature reserve of "West Havelland".



Nature as far as the eye can see! White-tailed sea eagle, storks, cranes and dragonflies accompany us on our way. Simply amazing!



And with a ship like this, we can stop any time, put out the anchor and live here, in full comfort, in the middle of it all.



A heavy, almost tropical rain shower on the river Havel.

As soon as the impressive, but short rain shower has passed, the sky clears up again and the beautiful colours come out.



The crew need to get on land and stretch the legs, so we sail slowly up the narrow and shallow side channel to the small village of Garz, on the west side of the river.

Once an important fishing harbour, Garz today seems to be populated only by some 50 people who live mainly of tourism visiting the nice and cosy pension installed in a former farm house.



The crew in Garz.



The pension in Garz, installed in a thoroughly renovated Farm house.

We are not in a hurry, so after Graz and another hour of driving, we stop in Molkenberg, a few miles further up the river. There is no marina, and no facilities, only a small sidearm of the river.

But we have everything we need with us onboard. Large comfortable saloon, Comfortable beds, big bath room with separate shower, ample provisions and a "kitchen" where the cook manages to prepare a delicious dinner this evening.



Stopover in Molkenberg.

After a good night's sleep, the journey goes on up the river.



Now and then a glimpse of civilisation.

At noon we pass the city of "Rathenow" with it's 2 locks and continue direction Brandenburg.



Through the lock at Rathenow



Glittering Havel

Some 10 kilometers north west of Brandenburg we approach the Kahn Schleuse at "Bahnitz", a lock for smaller boats. Our chart informs us, that the lock is 2,4 m wide - the Seacamper 810 is 2,5m, but even so, we decide to take a look at it. Just for the fun of it!
As we get closer, at first it seems there is no lock at all.



The weir at Bahnitz.

But then, within the last 50 meter, it is clear: The lock is there! - and it is very small indeed. Never the less we try to enter and,



Voila! - we fit in. Who should have thought that?! This must be the smallest lock I have ever passed through.



On the other side of the lock, the water way widens and an occasional farm building show up. Slowly more buildings, and even small towns join and we realise that we are getting closer to the City of Brandenburg.



Briest in the warm evening light

Before we end the journey, we decide to stay the last night for anchor, just north of Plaue, south west of "Kalten-Hausen". A beautiful sunset over the bay lends the evening swim an enchanting atmosphere !

The next morning, the last day of our trip, we arrive at our point of departure, the well equipped marina at Plaue.



We will be dreaming of the beautiful sceneries of the "West-Havelland" for a long time. So much nature, so much water, and very little people. A perfect region to relax in and spend time with the family. This is certainly the closest you get to the Amazonas in this corner of the world!