Celle  Baroque meets Bauhaus
If you want to experience Germany and typical German traditions, all you need is Celle!
Europe’s largest ensemble of half-timbered houses in the romantic Old Town

Exciting boutique shopping and delicious culinary delights

Ducal palace with Germany’s only Baroque theatre with royal connections to the UK and Denmark

Modern 24-hour art-museum, next door to the Bomann and residence museum

Hotspot of medieval, baroque and Bauhaus architecture at its best

A wonderful landscape with the river Aller and the gate to the Lüneburg heath

Picturesque events such as our famous Christmas market

… and all within walking distance, located next to Hanover and close to Hamburg.
Celle’s Old Town

Is a typical example of a town which has been systematically laid out from the very beginning.

Following the foundation of Celle in 1292 by the Guelphic duke Otto the Strict, the town was initially restricted to an area which covers the following streets now known as Kanzleistraße and Schuhstraße in the north and Stechbahn and Zöllnerstraße in the south. Both road axes ran towards the castle whereas the main dividing streets Poststraße and Markt ran from the south to the River Aller in the north. The Markt formed the original town centre with the town hall and the church. The town was surrounded by a fortified wall and a moat that both offered protection.

Under the reign of Duke Ernest the Confessor Celle was extended around 1530 southwards to what is nowadays Südwall (Southern Wall). The town could be entered by three gates: from the south-west through Westceller Tor (West Celle Gate), from the east through Alten- celler Tor (Old Celle Gate) and from the north through Hehlentor (Hehlen Gate). Zöllnerstraße, once the approach street to the castle and at that time an usually wide thoroughfare, has now become a favourable pedestrian shopping zone with many small shops, cafes and ice-cream parlours.
Celle’s half-timbered architecture

Half-timbered buildings dominate the Old Town. The oldest houses with street-facing gables date from the late 15th century. Houses with street-facing eaves of the 17th and 18th centuries blend in but they often have transverse gables. Older houses with passages leading to a courtyard suggest the residents were once farming families.

From 1600 onwards, either projecting oriels were added to some of the houses (such as the town hall) or bay windows which reached the ground. Often the storeys protrude. More or less rich carving as well as inscriptions can be especially seen on the storey beams whereby the type of ornamentation reveals the age of the house.

In recent years however the half-timbered houses have been renovated to return them to their original appearance. Coloured paint has been applied which enables the wooden construction and the carvings to be more visible.
Kalandgasse and Old Latin School

A glimpse in the Kalandgasse reveals a romantic alleyway. It is named after the Kaland Brotherhood, a medieval, half religious and half secular order whose meeting house was to be found here. On its site now stands the old Latin school.

The buildings were erected between 1601 and 1603 and the beams were decorated with elaborate carvings as well as with numerous Bible verses in German and in Latin in gold-plated characters which suggest the function of the houses.

Stechbahn

The Kalandgasse runs into the Stechbahn with its former court pharmacy. In front of the latter is a horseshoe embedded in the pavement. According to the legend, Duke Otto II fell off his horse during a tournament held at the Stechbahn and was killed. The horseshoe with the year 1471 etched in stone is a reminder of the duke’s death. This memorial site was mentioned as early as in 1763.

The “Old Town Hall”

Celle’s traditional town hall, one of the oldest buildings in the town, consists of two sections. The older part rises above the council cellar hall with its Gothic cross vaults. A bend in the front facade marks the masonry seam of the extension added in 1580–81.
Lichtart Celle – Talking lamps

Five „talented“ lamps have „congregated“ in the Old Town in order to tell visitors fascinating, funny and informative tales about life in Celle. Visitors and local residents alike can listen to stories about the former ducal residence and its aristocratic occupants.

„Celle to touch“

can be found at the entrance to the Tourist Information.
At Postraße, corner Rundestraße stands the Hoppener Haus from 1532, certainly the most splendid of all half-timbered houses in the Old Town. Six storeys project out above each other in the gable. Girts and studs above the two lower storeys display elaborate figure ornaments which include persons of rank, planet gods, diabolical or foolish figures, mythical creatures and reptiles, but also portraits which allegedly characterise the different social ranks. In the gable itself, however, only the joists have bold carvings.
It was founded by King George II of Great Britain and Elector of Hanover. The Hanoverian stallions on the farm are the fathers of many internationally renowned horses.

An outstanding event are the annual stallion parades which take place during one weekend in August.
The oldest building in Celle is the palace. First mentioned in 1318 as a “castrum”, its oldest section dates from the second half of the 13th century. During the following centuries this originally plain and simple castle has been altered and extended to a magnificent four-wing building in which Renaissance and Baroque harmonise.

From the 14th century until 1705, Celle was the permanent residence of the Guelphic dukes of the House of Brunswick-Lüneburg. The father of King Georg I of Great Britain and elector of Hanover has lived here, as well as his wife Sophie Dorothea, which was born here as the daughter of the last duke.

In 1714 George I ascended the British throne and the Guelphs became the sovereigns of both empires for five generations and are still the oldest existing royal line in Europe. Later in the 19th century the castle served as the summer residence of the Hanoverian kings.

The palace which is integrated in the historical “Old Town”, reflects in its construction phases the development from a castle to a ducal palace. From all periods of use building structures remain: the medieval castle, the knights’ hall, the baroque state chambers, the baroque theatre and the eastern wing, redesigned by the court architect Georg Friedrich Laves (1788–1864) from Hanover. The palace chapel with its early Protestant fittings is important evidence for Renaissance art in northern Germany.
Residence Museum in the Celle Palace

During a visit to the Residence Museum, learn more about the history of the Palace and its inhabitants in an up-to-date presentation and find out more about Europe’s oldest surviving dynasty, that of the Guelphs. Celle is an example of the development of a typical ducal residence.

The Celle Palace Chapel

One of the most important examples of Renaissance art in northern Germany.
Hanover's Rulers on Great Britain's Throne 1714–1837

**Stuarts**

**James I**
Son of Mary Stuart
King of England 1603–1625

- **Charles I**
  1625–1649

- **Elizabeth**
  † 1662

- **Mary**
  † 1695
  ○ Wilhelm III.
  of Orange
  King of England
  1689–1702

- **James II**
  † 1701
  1685–1688
  Deposed in 1688

- **Anne**
  1665–1714
  1702 Queen

- **James III**
  † 1766
  „The Old Pretender“

- **Charles Edward**
  † 1788
  „The Young Pretender“

- **George III**
  1738–1820
  1810 Regent
  1820 King
  ○ Caroline of Mecklenburg-Strelitz

- **George IV**
  1762–1830
  1810 Regent
  1820 King
  ○ Caroline of Brunswick

**Palatinate**

- **Frederick V**
  † 1632
  1619–20 King of Bohemia
  (the “Winter King”)

- **James II**
  † 1701
  1685–1688
  Deposed in 1688

- **Sophia**
  1630–1714

- **Charles Edward**
  † 1788
  „The Young Pretender“

- **George II**
  1683–1760
  1760 King
  ○ Caroline of Brandenburg-Ansbach

- **Frederick Louis**
  1707–1751 „Prince of Wales"
  ○ Augusta of Saxe-Gotha

- **George III**
  1738–1820
  1760 King
  ○ Charlotte of Mecklenburg-Strelitz

- **Victoria**
  1819–1901
  1837 Queen of Great Britain
  ○ Albert of Saxe-Coburg

- **Edward**
  † 1820
  Duke of Kent
  ○ Louise Victoria of Saxe-Coburg

- **Ernest Augustus**
  1771–1851
  Duke of Cumberland
  1837–1851
  King of Hanover
  ○ Friederike of Mecklenburg-Strelitz

- **George V**
  1819–1878
  1851–1866
  King of Hanover
  ○ Mary of Saxe-Altenburg

- **George William**
  1624–1705
  1648 Duke of Calenberg
  1665 Duke of Lüneburg

- **Ernest Augustus**
  1629–1698
  Bishop of Osnabrück
  1679 Duke of Calenberg
  1692 Elector

- **Sophie Dorothea**
  1666–1726
  Divorced in 1694
  “Princess of Ahlden”

**Hanover**

- **George**
  1582–1641
  1636 Duke of Calenberg

- **Edward**
  † 1820
  Duke of Kent
  ○ Adelheid of Saxe-Meiningen

- **Frederick V**
  † 1632
  1619–20 King of Bohemia
  (the “Winter King”)

- **George (Louis) I**
  1660–1727
  1698 Elector
  1714 King of Great Britain

- **George II**
  1683–1760
  King 1727

- **Frederick William**
  1624–1705
  1648 Duke of Calenberg
  1665 Duke of Lüneburg

- **James I**
  Son of Mary Stuart
  King of England 1603–1625

- **James II**
  1660–1685

- **Mary**
  † 1695
  ○ Wilhelm III.
  of Orange
  King of England
  1689–1702

- **Frederick**
  † 1827
  Duke of York
  1764–1801 Bishop of Osnabrück
  ○ Friederike of Prussia

- **William IV**
  1765–1837
  1830 King
  ○ Adelheid of Saxe-Meiningen

- **Edward**
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  Duke of Kent
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  King of Hanover
  ○ Friederike of Mecklenburg-Strelitz

- **George V**
  1819–1878
  1851–1866
  King of Hanover
  ○ Mary of Saxe-Altenburg

- **Adolphus Frederick**
  † 1850
  Duke of Cambridge
  1816 Gouvernor-General of Hanover
  1831–1837 Viceroy of Hanover
  ○ Augusta of Hesse-Kassel
A brief historical overview

First documented as “Kellu” (today Altencelle) in a boundary document issued by order of Emperor Otto III

Celle (today Altencelle) is referred to as a town for the first time

The Guelphic duke Otto the Strict of Brunswick-Luneburg relocates the town to its present site

Celle becomes the residence of the dukes of Luneburg

The Reformation is adopted in the duchy by Duke Ernest the Confessor, Celle is extended

A Renaissance gable is added to the town hall

The ducal castle is converted into a baroque palace and a theatre is installed (1674)

Death of the last duke of Celle. The town ceases to be a ducal residence

A prison, workhouse and mental asylum is established (today a penal institution)

Celle becomes the seat of the Supreme Court of Appeals, the highest court in the Electorate of Hanover (today the Regional Court of Appeals)

The Hanoverian Stud Farm is established in Celle

Celle’s Jewish community builds a synagogue in the suburb of Blumlage

The Danish queen Caroline Mathilde is exiled to the Celle Palace following the famous “Struensee Affair”

The railway line from Lehrte to Celle is opened by King Ernest Augustus of Hanover and Duke William of Brunswick

Following the defeat at the battle of Langensalza, the Kingdom of Hanover is annexed by the Prussians. Celle becomes a Prussian provincial town

The four suburbs of Blumlage, Hehlentor, Neuenhäusern and Neustadt are incorporated into the town of Celle

A large infantry barracks next to the former ducal game park is completed. It now houses the New Town Hall

Celle becomes an urban district town

The municipal hall “Union” is opened, nowadays a congress centre (“Congress Union”)

On 12 April the town surrenders peacefully to the Allied forces

The State Social Welfare Tribunal is established in Celle

The Mobil Oil company (now Exxon) erects Celle’s first high-rise building

Nine surrounding villages are incorporated into Celle. Celle loses its status as an urban district town

Celle becomes a “large independent town”
Celle is effectively the birthplace of ‘Neues Bauen’ (‘New Objectivity’ – modern functional building design) and with regards to Bauhaus architecture ranks in the same league as the towns of Weimar and Dessau, not only in terms of the quantity of the beautifully preserved buildings which are still partially used for their original purpose, but also in terms of quality, such as the ‘Altstädter Schule’ which in the 1920s came to international fame as the ‘Glass School’, attracting visitors from all over the world.

The number of visitors was so great that the school management was forced to restrict visiting hours to Thursday afternoons and Saturday midmornings and to charge 50 pfennigs entry fee which was used to buy milk for the pupils. The ‘Glass School’ which is used to this day as an elementary school is recognized as one of the most important Bauhaus buildings worldwide and is a UNESCO-worthy object.
Celle owes its global architectural significance regarding Bauhaus architecture to the architect Otto Haesler who during the Weimar Republic through the use of innovative and technically constructive elements combined with a consequent commitment to socially compatible functionality, and at a time of enormous financial pressure, seized on the post-war spirit which was characterized by a housing shortage and perfected social housing.

Through his clear design language, the use of primary colours as well as the incorporation of steel-tube furniture which was produced in Celle, Haesler belongs, alongside Walter Gropius and Hannes Meyer, to the pioneers and forerunners of ‘Neues Bauen’ or Bauhaus architecture.

Many of these building projects such as the colourful, impressive red and blue houses in the ‘Italienischer Garten’ estate as well as other Haesler buildings like the ‘Director’s House’ and the Haesler Museum where attention to detail has been placed, are open to the public.

For the Bauhaus anniversary year in 2019 under the motto ‘Baroque meets Bauhaus’ many events, exhibitions and activities are planned.
Situated directly opposite the Palace, the Bomann Museum displays its collection depicting the everyday culture of eastern Lower Saxony, Celle’s history as well as regional history. The museum is noted for its impressive display of completely furnished historical rooms. The museum also houses the miniature collection of the Tansey Foundation as well as the Eberhard Schlotter Foundation.
Celle Art Museum with Robert Simon Collection

The world’s first 24-hour art museum, this museum exhibits modern and contemporary art from the Robert Simon Collection.
The Town Church

Situated in the heart of the Old Town, in the ‘Stechbahn’, the Town Church is as old as the town itself. It contains the Princes’ Burial Crypt and the epitaphs of the Guelph dukes of the 16th and 17th centuries. Apart from the dukes and princes of the Guelphs, the well-known Duchess Eleonore, her daughter Sophia Dorothea as well as the banished Queen of Denmark, Caroline Mathilda, are entombed here. A guided tour of the church including the ducal crypt is possible by prior arrangement.

Martin Luther Church

Constructed around 1933, the Martin Luther Church with its noticeable style is a monument of Nordic architecture and, like St. Ludwig’s Church, forms a part of the ‘Celler Architekturmeile’ (‘Architectural Mile’).

Evangelical Reformed Church

The Evangelical Reformed Church in Celle is the only Huguenot church in Northwest Germany which was built by French religious refugees.
Celle’s churches

Celle’s churches in their combination are unique, each of them providing our guests with breathtaking and even surprising moments. There is, for example, the crypt of the Guelphs containing to this day the remains of the former rulers, or North Germany’s only new building in neoclassical style to marvel at. All five churches and houses of worship in Celle are well worth a visit, not least from an architectonical point of view. Those who want to see even more should venture out into nearby surroundings and visit the Convent in Wienhausen. The former Cistercian monastery is not only a charming venue for dream weddings, but also within its walls a witness to times long-gone.

Wienhausen Convent 15

Founded in the early 13th century as a Cistercian monastery, it contains art treasures from the 13th to the 16th centuries which are unique in North Germany as well as precious tapestries from the 14th and 15th centuries.

St. Ludwig’s Church 16

This is the main Catholic church in Celle, the only neoclassical church building in northern Germany.

Synagoge 17

The synagogue, located at Im Kreise No. 24, was built around 1740 and is the oldest surviving Jewish place of worship in northern Germany.
French Garden

The French Garden can probably attribute its name to the French gardener Perronet (from 1676) and later René Dahuron (1690–1701) who were in the service of Duke George William of Celle. Dahuron was responsible for creating the first complete layout of a kitchen and leisure garden following the tradition of the courtly baroque gardens of the early 17th century. In 1705 Celle ceased to be a ducal residence. The garden fell into neglect, but was for a short period revived under the court gardener Krantz while the Danish queen Caroline Mathilde was exiled in Celle. He built, among others, a summer house for her by the pond and in 1784 after her death had a memorial erected.

Medicinal Plant Garden Celle

The Medicinal Plant Garden offers a wealth of differing medicinal plants. The grounds, covering some 7,000 square metres, invites visitors to stroll amongst the fragrant plants and to rest by a bubbling spring. Information boards and individual references inform the visitor about the plants and how among many others, the famous clergyman Kneipp or the female mystic Hildegard von Bingen made use of them.
**The Palace Park**

Popular meeting place for everybody. The origins of the Palace Park begin in the late 18th century, up to then the castle’s fortification had remained intact.

Demolition began in 1784 at the western bastions and continued until 1827. The rubble was mostly filled in the palace moat which once was very wide reducing it to an average width of 6.7 metres. The newly gained ground between the Palace and the moat was then planted with trees and later used as a circular promenade with an avenue of poplars.

When it was decided in 1839 to convert the Palace into the summer residence of the Hanoverian royal house, the lease of the grounds beyond the Palace moat were purchased.

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**LAVES – Institute of Apiculture**

In 1927, the Institute of Apiculture was established in order to improve bee-keeping which was in decline due to the reduction of heathland. Today the institute, renamed LAVES – Institute of Apiculture Celle, is responsible for the training and professional development of beekeepers, provides a regional advice and consulting service as well as carrying out varied scientific research (chemical and biological honey research, bee pathology, honey flow research, the ecological importance of honey and wild bees and beekeeping). A storage building dating from 1607 and some parts of the historical orangery from 1677 now house a permanent exhibition with interesting facts about beekeeping. The exhibition can only be accessed during a guided tour.
Travelling with family and children

There’s lots on offer for families in Celle – both indoors and outdoors.

Whether you arrive in a group of four or a dozen: Celle has a warm welcome for families with children. Whether it’s accommodation with a connecting door to the offspring’s room or joint leisure ventures in the town or in the nature: families will certainly find Celle the right holiday place!

Above all the focus lies on a joint experience, when families go on holiday or simply venture out on an excursion. Celle offers a range of activities which will be enjoyed by the entire family and which they will remember for a long time to come. Regardless of the weather, families will always find something to do in Celle. There are special guided town tours and tours of the Ducal Palace especially for kids as well as canoe trips on the River Aller or bicycle tours in the nature.

Whether outdoors or indoors, there is no chance of being bored in Celle. Fun and games in Celle’s outdoor and indoor swimming pool ‘Bade-land’, a visit to the children’s driving school or a bicycle tour on the Aller Cycle Path. The choice is yours. Celle combines town life with nature experiences hand in hand. How about a canoe trip on the River Aller? There is no better way to explore local flora and fauna.

Those who would like to stay longer will most certainly find a suitable offer amongst our accommodation and holiday flats. Just see for yourself what Celle has to offer for you and your family. And if something is missing, just ask us, we are waiting to help.
River Aller cruise

Regular boat trips starting from the Celle harbour (Hafenstraße), route: Celle – Boye – Stedden – Winsen (Aller) – Bannetze and return. Boarding and deboarding from all landing stages. Bicycles transported by prior registration.
Performance venues

Competent and qualified Guided tours

Guided town tours
Guided tours in the Celle Palace

Theatre, cabaret & entertainment

From the classical period to cabaret – Celle’s stages offer something for everyone!

Leisure activities

Passenger cruising on the river Aller
Bicycle hire
Canoe hire
Stallion Show

Concerts & sportevents

Conferences & congresses

You can obtain advice and information about current offers.

For further information and tailor-made itineraries please contact us:

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