

Despite that fact that Frankfurt is best known as the financial capital of continental Europe, it's anything but dull. Carole French goes exploring

36 hours in Frankfurt



Frankfurt combines a strong sense of history with contemporary sensibilities. The stark modernity of its business district – Germany's financial centre – stands in striking contrast to the half-timbered charm of the Römerberg. The city's cultural life is in rude health, with excellent ballet and opera, and it's packed with bars and clubs. And when it comes to German museums, Frankfurt is second only to Berlin; its Städel Museum is one of the oldest and most important centres of art in Germany. Among its 100,000 exhibits are works by Rembrandt, Renoir and Degas, along with Vermeer, Matisse, Monet and Picasso.

Day one

09:00 Start the day by having a hearty breakfast of pastries and coffee at the cosy **Metropol Café am Dom** (13-15 Weckmarkt, tel. (0)69 288287). It will set you

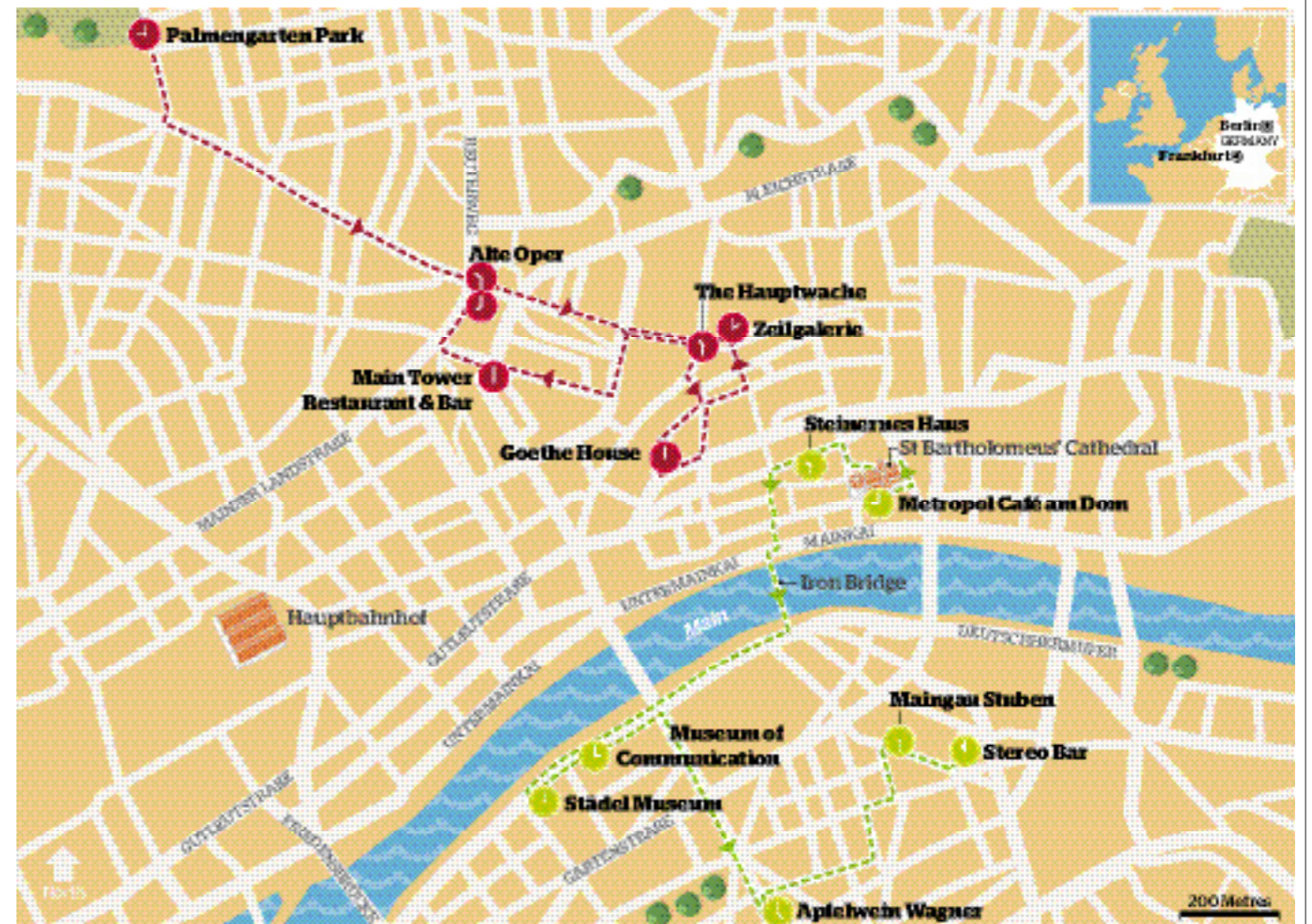
up for the climb to the top of the tower in the majestic Kaiserdom, otherwise known as **St Bartholomeus' Cathedral** (14 Domplatz). The view of the city from the top is fabulous. It is said that 10 kings were crowned here.

10:30 Take a stroll round the **Römerberg**. Lined by tall, timber-framed buildings, it's probably the most photographed square in Germany. Look out for the town hall, the **Römer**, on the west side – a gothic building with stepped gables – and the **Steinernes Haus** The Stone House (42-44 Markt) – a gothic house – both reconstructed after World War II.

12:00 Make your way towards the river along the Mainkai. You'll pass the Eiserner Steg (the Iron Bridge), a landmark structure that shows how high the River Main's water level once was. Cross the river to the Sachsenhausen district when you reach the

pedestrian bridge, the Holbeinsteg. Straight ahead as you cross you will see the **Städel Museum** (63 Schaumainkai., staedelmuseum.de). Founded as a result of wealthy banker Johann Friedrich Städel's wish to create an art institute that would also display his huge collection of paintings by Rembrandt, Monet and Picasso, the Städel has become one of the most respected public art centres in Germany.

15:00 Schaumainkai, which runs along the south side of the River Main, is often referred to as *Museumsufer* (Museum Embankment) as it houses so many museums. As well as the Städel, look out for the **Museum of Communication** (53 Schaumainkai, museumsstiftung.de), which also has a great café, and the **Museum of Applied Art** (17 Schaumainkai, angewandte-kunst-frankfurt.de). Outside, take a photo of the Frankfurt skyline across the river before the sun goes down. **▶**





Left The Römerberg is extremely photogenic; Right Kings were crowned in St Bartholomeus' Cathedral; Below Sip apple wine at Apfelwein Wagner



17:00 No visit to Frankfurt would be complete without a sip or two of *apfelwein*, the local apple wine that has been brewed here for centuries. One of the best places to try it is at **Apfelwein Wagner** (71 Schweizer Straße, tel. (0)69 612565) a traditional apple wine tavern.

18:30 Take the WalterKolbStraße to Schifferstraße and grab a bite to eat at **Maingau Stuben** (Hotel Maingau, 38-40 Schifferstraße, tel. (0)69 610752). Try one of its excellent fish dishes, such as the tagliatelle with lobster and saffron. Chase it down with their champagne orange crème dessert. A stroll after your meal could take you to the beautiful **Old Bridge** (Alte Brücke), location of many impromptu events, including skating some evenings.

21:00 Head to the elegant **Samedi Lounge** (22 Wallstraße, Sachsenhausen) for cocktails. Try the Paradise – Bombay Sapphire gin, apricot brandy and orange.

23:00 Take a short walk to the brightly decorated, neon-lit **Stereo Bar** (7 Abtsgässchen, Sachsenhausen) to dance the night away to hip-hop and soul sounds. It's a favourite on the Frankfurt nightclub scene.

Day two

09:00 Start your day with a stroll in the Westend district. The **Palmenhaus** houses plants from around the world. Stop for breakfast at the park's own restaurant, then

take a bus (the 36) or train (the U6 or U7) to the Alte Oper station.

10:30 Step inside the foyer of the opulent old opera house, the **Alte Oper** (1 Opernplatz) and be captivated by its opulence. You can join a tour, although it is advisable to book in advance. Before you leave, stop for a cappuccino in its elegant **Café Rosso**. Next, head off along the Große Bockenheimer Straße towards Hauptwache.

11:30 The **Hauptwache** (15 An der Hauptwache) is a fabulous baroque-style building which was once Frankfurt's most important police station. It makes a great photo opportunity. Look out for the high watchtower,



the Eschenheim Tower. From here, it's a pleasant walk to Goethe House.

12:00 **Goethe House** (23-25 Großer Hirschgraben) is the home of the 18th-century writer Johann Wolfgang Goethe. There are beautifully presented rooms over four floors, including Goethe's library. Then head back via Katharinenpforte towards the Zeil, passing by the elegant **St Catherine's Church** (1 An der Hauptwache), where Goethe was baptised and confirmed.

14:00 The **Zeil** is a shopper's paradise. Along with the designer labels in the Kaufhof, look out for the **Zeilgalerie** (112-114 Zeil) and **Karstadt** (90 Zeil) department stores.

18:00 Take a cab to the **Main Tower Restaurant & Bar** (52-58 Neue Mainzer - Straße, tel. (0)69 36 504777) for pre-dinner drinks and a gourmet meal. Located on the 53rd floor, it offers a panoramic view of the city. The carpaccio of beef is a delight.

20:00 The perfect way to round off a memorable visit to Frankfurt is to see a performance at the old opera house, the **Alte Oper**. You'll have had a brief stop there earlier today, and now you can return in your finery and watch anything from chamber concerts to rock or pop concerts (see alteoper.de for a full programme of performances). You should stay for a drink in its elegant bar, the Da Capo, on level 3, afterwards.

Clockwise from top The Alte Oper is worth a visit – and not just for the performances; Famed writer Goethe was born in Frankfurt; The paintings in the Stadel Museum should definitely be seen

36 heures à Francfort
Mieux connue comme la capitale européenne de la finance, Francfort n'en demeure pas moins une ville ouverte et accueillante, loin d'être ennuyeuse. Carole French a exploré ses nombreuses facettes

Jour 1
10.30 h Déambulez autour du Römerberg, le coeur de la vieille ville. Entourée d'imposantes demeures médiévales, cette place est de nos jours la plus photographiée en Allemagne.

12 h Prenez la direction du **Musée Stadel** (63 Schaumainkai, staedelmuseum.de) qui recèle une collection renommée de peintures de Rembrandt, Monet et Picasso.

15 h Faites un tour au **Musée de la Communication** (53 Schaumainkai, museums-stiftung.de), agréable aussi pour son café, et au **Musée des Arts Appliqués** (17 Schaumainkai). À l'extérieur, prenez la meilleure vue du 'skyline' de Francfort, de l'autre côté du fleuve, avant le coucher du soleil.

17 h Impossible de visiter Francfort sans savourer une gorgée d'*apfelwein*. Goûtez ce cidre dans la taverne traditionnelle **Apfelwein Wagner** (71 Schweizer Straße).

18.30 h Mangez un petit morceau au **Maingau Stuben** (Hotel Maingau, 38-40 Schifferstraße). Commandez l'un des délicieux plats à base de poisson comme les tagliatelles au homard et au safran.

21 h Rejoignez l'élégant bar à cocktails **Samedi Lounge** (22 Wallstraße, Sachsenhausen).

Jour 2
9 h Démarrez la journée par une promenade dans le **Parc Palmengarten** (61 Siesmayerstraße), du côté 'Westend' de la ville.

11.30 h La **Hauptwache** (15 An der Hauptwache) est un fabuleux bâtiment de style baroque, autrefois la station de police la plus importante de la ville de Francfort.

12 h La **Maison de Goethe** (23-25 Großer Hirschgraben) est la maison natale de l'auteur du XVIIIe siècle Johann Wolfgang Goethe.

14 h Le **Zeil** est un paradis pour les fans de shopping. À côté des marques de designers du grand magasin Kaufhof, la **galerie Zeil** offre un choix incomparable (112-114 Zeil), ainsi que les boutiques de la grande surface **Karstadt** (90 Zeil).

18 h Prenez un taxi jusqu'au **Bar-Restaurant Main Tower** (52-58 Neue Mainzer Straße) pour un apéritif et un repas de gourmet.

20 h Assistez à un spectacle à l'ancien opéra, l'**Alte Oper** (1 Opernplatz).



Where to stay

» **City centre** The **City Hotel Frankfurt** (30 Allerheiligenstraße, tel. (0)69 710 42800, cityhotelfrankfurt.de, rooms from €50) is located in a quiet street just off a major thoroughfare, near the Zeil, Frankfurt's main shopping street. Close to the city's attractions, but you'll get a good night's sleep, too.

» **Business district** Family-run, the **Hotel Münchner Hof** (46 Münchener Straße, tel. (0)69 230066, hotel-muenchner-hof.de, rooms from €30) is elegant and welcoming. Plus, it's only minutes away from Frankfurt's trade fairground and commercial area.

» **Westend** The **Hotel An der Messe** (104 Westendstraße, tel. (0)69 747979, hotel-an-der-messe.de, rooms from €70) is well-equipped, with themed décor. Choose from a Regency, African, Thai or Indian room.

» **Sachsenhausen** A stay at the **Lindner Hotel and Residence Main Plaza** (1 Walther von Cronberg Platz, tel. (0)69 664010, lindner.de, rooms from €99) is a luxurious experience. The hotel looks just like a '30s New York skyscraper and has a wonderful spa.

Clockwise from top Lindner Hotel and Residence Main Plaza looks like a '30s New York skyscraper; It has a large spa; Stay in a themed room at the Hotel An der Messe

b.there! 

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NL 36 uren in Frankfurt
Ondanks het feit dat Frankfurt in de eerste plaats gekend is als financiële hoofdstad van het Europese vasteland, is het er allesbehalve een saai boel. Carole French gaat op ontdekking

Dag 1

10.30 uur Maak een wandelingje rond the **Römerberg** (Römerberg). Geflankeerd door hoge gebouwen met houten frames, is het waarschijnlijk het meest gefotografeerde plein van Duitsland.

12.00 uur Wandel door naar het **Städel Museum** (63 Schaumainkai, staedelmuseum.de) waar een enorme verzameling schilderijen van Rembrandt, Monet en Picasso wordt tentoongesteld.

15.00 uur Loop eens binnen in het **Museum voor Communicatie** (53 Schaumainkai, museumsstiftung.de), waar tevens een leuk café aan verbonden is, en het **Museum of Applied Art** (17 Schaumainkai). Neem buiten een prachtige foto van de skyline van Frankfurt tegen de achtergrond van de rivier, net voor zonsopgang.

17.00 uur Een bezoek aan Frankfurt is pas compleet na een lekker glas (of twee) *apfelwein*. Ga proeven bij **Apfelwein Wagner** (71 Schweizer Straße), een traditionele taverne die cider serveert.

18.30 uur Een lekker hapje eten kan in **Maingau Stuben** (Hotel Maingau, 38-40 Schifferstraße). Bestel er een van de verrukkelijke visbereidingen, zoals de tagliatelle met kreeft en saffraan.

21.00 uur Zet koers naar de stijlvolle **Samedi Lounge** (22 Wallstraße, Sachsenhausen) voor een heerlijke cocktail.

Dag 2

09.00 uur Start de dag goed met een flinke wandeling in het **Palmengarten Park** (61 Siesmayerstraße) in het Westend district.

11.30 uur De **Hauptwache** (15 An der Hauptwache) is een prachtig gebouw in barokstijl dat ooit dienste deed als het voornaamste politiebureau van Frankfurt.

12.00 uur **Goethe House** (23-25 Großer Hirschgraben) is de thuis van de 18e eeuwse schrijver Johann Wolfgang Goethe.

14.00 uur De **Zeil** is het walhalla voor shoppingfanaten. Net als de designer labels in het Kaufhof, zijn ook de warenhuizen **Zeigalerie** (112-114 Zeil) en **Karstadt** (90 Zeil) niet te missen.

18.00 uur Neem een taxi tot aan het **Main Tower Restaurant & Bar** (52-58 Neue Mainzer Straße) voor een goed glas aperitief en een heerlijk Bourgondische maaltijd.

20.00 uur Pik een voorstelling mee in het oude operahuis, de **Alte Oper** (1 Opernplatz).