

• If you fancy a browse and quiet cup of coffee, **HUGENDUBEL's** English Bookstore and coffee shop is a great place to spend some time. Truly, the calmest café in town; the only noise is the coffee machine as everyone is reading! (Steinweg 12; hugendubel.de)



• The **CHINESE GARDEN** is an oasis of calm in a walled garden of the Bethmann Park at the bottom of Bergerstrasse (great for shopping locally in Bornheim) - it's hard to believe one is in the city. Even the rubbish bins have Chinese calligraphy.

An Insider's Guide to **FRANKFURT**

It may be the financial capital of Europe, but Frankfurt has much more to offer the visitor than commerce. Irishwoman-turned-native **Elizabeth Walsh** reveals her favourite spots. Photographs by **Kate Miller**.

• The **KLEINMARKTHALLE** - wonderful for fresh exotic vegetables, spices and sweets. Take the time to savour a refreshing glass of German wine from Rollander Hof on the balcony upstairs. (Hasengasse 7; kleinmarkthalle.com)



• The spirit of Christmas starts early in Frankfurt with the **CHRISTMAS MARKET** at the Roemer. Try out the **Feuerzangenbowle** (fire tongue punch) as an alternative to **Glühwein** and enjoy Christmas carol concerts by local school groups. For a personalised souvenir or great gift for your tree back home, order your name in sugar piping on a traditional gingerbread loveheart and collect it the next day for approx €5.



• **ECB** and the **BULL & BEAR** outside the Chamber of Commerce - symbols of Frankfurt as Europe's financial capital.



• Right by the Eschersheimer Tower, the luxurious **FLEMINGS DELUXE HOTEL FRANKFURT-CITY** houses the city centre's only publicly accessible paternoster lift. Fine dining and cocktails with a view of the skyline are available in the rooftop restaurant. Rooms from €220 per night. (0049 694 272 320; flemings-hotels.com)

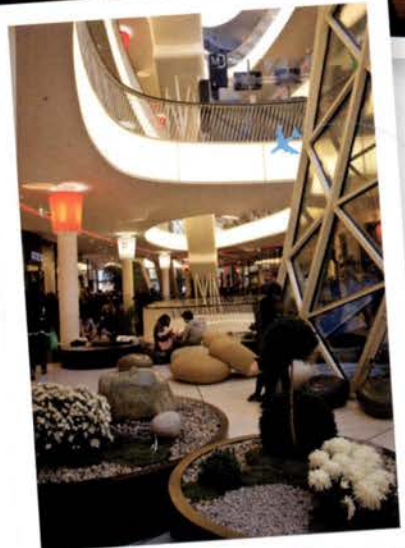
• The beautifully renovated **ALTE OPER**, the opera house at the end of the Fressgasse, has a great cultural programme. (alteoper.de)



• Catch the exhibition of Icelandic artist Erró's portraits and landscapes at the **SCHIRN KUNSTHALLE** gallery in Roemer. (ends January 8; 0049 692 998 820; schirn.de)



• My favourite see and be seen lunchtime spot with healthy food and fancy, non-alcoholic (good for the middle of the day!) cocktails is **WALDEN**. For partygoers, there is a disco upstairs on Friday and Saturday nights. (Kleiner Hirschgraben 7; walden-frankfurt.com)



• In Frankfurt's latest and greatest shopping centre on the Zeil (a pedestrian zone with the highest turnover in Germany), **MYZEIL** has everything from a Lego flagship store to gourmet sushi, high street and designer brands, and a play centre for little visitors. (myzeil.de)



• **DAUTH SCHNEIDER** is one of Old Sachsenhausen's many traditional Apfelwein (apple wine) pubs (the benches are shiny from years of being sat on) with a delicious menu of local specialities prepared by chef and proprietor Paul O'Sullivan from Co Waterford. (Neuer Wall 5-7; 0049 6961 3533; dauth-schneider.de)

• This tiny street – **BRUECKENSTRASSE** in Sachsenhausen – is home to boutiques showcasing avant-garde designer wear. Check out **VENEZ-Y-VOIR** for trendy shoes you won't get at home.



• Steeped in tradition, cosy and bijou inside, **CAFÉ WACKER** allows you to pick up a packet of freshly ground, roasted special or sit down with a creamy latte macchiato and a thick wedge of Kuchen. The scent of coffee and chocolate is overpowering. (Mittelweg 47; wackers-kaffee.de)

MORE ABOUT ELIZABETH

Elizabeth Walsh, originally from Dublin, has lived in Frankfurt for over 20 years. She is a former president of the Frankfurt Ski Club (fscev.org) where she met her Irish husband who shares her passion for skiing. She thinks Frankfurt is a great city to live in and raise a family. "Despite its big name, Frankfurt is actually a fabulous small city with an international population and great leisure and relaxation opportunities, no more than 20 bicycle minutes away." Her friend **Kate Miller**, who photographed her wedding, also did the photos for this article and enjoys taking portraits of her little boy, Conor (katemillerphoto.com).



Aer Lingus flies from Dublin to Frankfurt daily.