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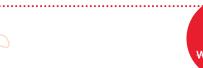
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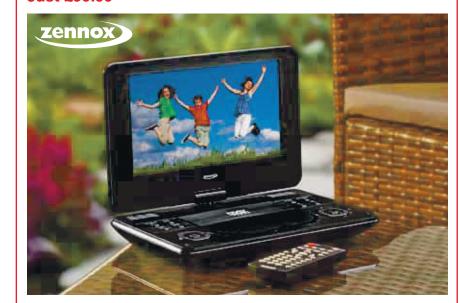
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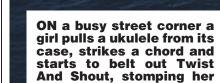


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feet to the rhythm. It is, of course, the Beatles song that swept to the top of the charts in the UK and USA in 1963. But the years have moved on since then. We are in Hamburg, Germany, in

immer 2015 and I'm one of a parof tourists grouped around uke-player-cum-tour-guide Beatles' hits.

Reeperbahn, the red-light district where the Liver-pool band played for wo years before hey became famous. And Stefanie took us back to those days on a

tour of the clubs where the band learned their rade the hard way John Lennon once said

grew up in Liverpool ut I came of age in So we twisted and

shouted our way to the Indra club where the Fab

■ by ALEC STUTTARD

Kaiserkeller and the Star club - the

only one still open.

Hamburg was just one of five northern European cities we Magellan, the flagship operated
by Cruise & Maritime
Voyages out of Tilbury in

> It is the ship's maiden season with CMV and, although the vessel is 30 years old, it has had a major refit to bring it into the 21st Century

She carries 1,250

I have to admit, I declined the invitation. We discovered people live on the canals as well as travel down them. Their houseboats have their own class system too, from palatial ves sels filled with luxury furnishings to more down-at-heel tubs that need a lick of paint.

After an overnight sail up the Elbe River we arrived in Hamburg. It

may be a surprise to some that this huge city actually has 2,300 bridges – more than Venice and Amsterdam combined. Wonderful Copenhagen was next and a short walk takes you to the Lit-

CMV describes the vessel as having

an intimate feel compared with today's "mega" resort-style ships. So

there are no climbing walls or ice

Our first port of call was Amster

dam, famed for its canals, art

galleries and museums. There is only

one way to see what this city has to offer and that's by canal boat.

Our guide was anxious to tell us the

quality of the canal water was so

good you could drink it. He promptly

filled a bottle, held it up to prove that

it was indeed very clear, and offered

rinks - and no kids!

tle Mermaid statue, sitting on a rock a few yards from the shore. Then is was into the city where you can visit Amalienborg Pal

and the Tivoli Gardens, a legendary

amusement park.
There are even more canals to sail on here and at Nyhavn (New Harbour in English) you can see the house where Hans Christian Andersen wrote some of his famous fairvtales.

Here too are restaurants and bars where you can taste the local delicacy - raw herring pickled in a variety of flavours. I tried three of them, one of which had been given the curry sauce treatment. Delicious.

The delightful city of Helsingborg in Sweden is just across the water from Denmark and has a history of wars with its neighbour.

But they are at peace now and there are many great reasons for visiting the city. It has beautiful beaches

stretching for miles and a castle called Sofiero with gardens reputed to be the best in Europe.

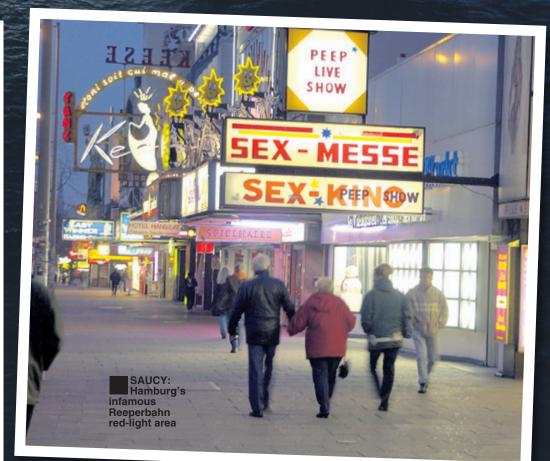
The city is dominated by the imposing Karnan Tower, formerly a watchtower to keep an eye on invading Vikings.

Finally, we dealed at Aslborg in

Finally we docked at Aalborg in Denmark, where we were greeted by a ten-gun salute and a band on the quay. It turned out Magellan was built at the local shipyard 30 years ago and civic leaders decided to push the boat out, so to speak. Hundreds of locals turned out to say hello to the vessel which they hadn't seen

since it left in 1985.

It was a fitting finale to a cruise that had been, to quote a phrase synonymous with the Beatles, a truly Magical Mystery Tour









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