

My adventure Inland waterway boat trip in the north of Germany in early 2018.

Actually we had planned this boat tour with 4 people. Unfortunately a friend of mine had cancelled the tour shortly before the tour started. According to that we booked the boat for 3 people. So the costs per person increased slightly. The advantage was that I had the double bed for myself. I arrived in Berlin Airport (Tegel) on the 30th of March at 9.50 p.m. Two hours too late whatever happened to German time keeping? My train connection had already departed, as had my hopes of meeting up with my friends that evening, as it was the last train. The next connection was at around a quarter to seven the next morning. I could have booked in at a hotel, but after going to two hotels and finding out they were full (and very expensive) I decided to do a walking tour of Berlin by night. I had actually done one (by day) a few years before, and it was not as bad as it might sound. Around quarter past nine I caught up with my German friends at the marina in Eldenburg near Waren an der Müritz. It was nice to see them again. After a cup of coffee and a bit of catching up we set off southwards to Mirow.

Initially I would like to introduce the boat (the yacht) with that me and my two German friends were on tour for the next 14 days.

It is named "Le Clou" and has the beneath listed dimensions:

Length: 35,5 ft

Width: 12 ft

Height above water level: 12,5 ft

Draft: 3,3 ft



our Boat the "Le Clou"



the living room



the kitchen room



my own bed room (only for myself ☺)



Captain "Burki's" bed room



The dining room



exit to the quarterdeck

31st March

Day 1

Eldenburg - Mirow

1 lock

36,95 km (c. 23 miles)

The calendar said it was spring but it was still very cold and uncomfortable. The snow was lying on the ground, and when I look back I could really have been forgiven for wondering what on earth I was doing here on holiday. But it didn't even occur to me!

We went shopping in Mirow and stocked up on goodies including German beer. I slept well that night due to the total lack of sleep the previous night. Zzzz Zzzz Zzzz Zzzz!!!!!!



Captain "Burki" at work "leash off"



arrival in Mirow

1st April

Day 2

Mirow - Stadtmarina Mildeberg

9 locks

75,73 km (c. 48 miles)

The ice age continued! Snow was falling and there were patches of ice on the water! Just as well the windscreen wipers were working. Still, it was warm enough on board, and this cold snap couldn't last forever surely. After the lock at Strasen we went along the upper Havel (river). We spent the night in the Mildeberg Marina.



snow and cold weather



more snow and more cold weather



okay the lights are green



and always a clear view☺



snow and low temperatures



it stopped snowing???

2nd April

Day 3 part a

Mildenberg Marina - Schönwalde lock

5 locks

64,31 km (c. 40 miles)

Our plan had been to go to the Mildenberg Brick Work Park. But as this is an open air museum and was probably going to be exposed, snowy / icy and muddy we thought we would give this a miss and push on to Berlin. From noon the sun we had almost forgotten about appeared and it heated up to a balmy 20°C degrees. Some jump from a minimum of minus 5°C (brrrrrrr). We could not make it to the marina (at Brieselang) and so the crew of the "Le Clou" spent the night at the lock at Schönwalde. We'd be able to get through the lock the next day.



sun comes out, sky getting blue, temperatures increasing, we are waiting for a green traffic light



we are not alone on the waterways. The first bungalow boat meets us



[Lock Schönwalde](#) with passenger ship [Belverde](#)

3rd April

Day 4 part a

Lock Schönwalde - Brieselang Boat Club

9,76 km (c. 6 miles)

The boat trip to Brieselang went smoothly. "No special occurrences"

3rd April

Day 4 part b

*After mooring we switched to public transport to go into Berlin. So the Brieselang (or "Briese - short" as Captain "Burki" rechristened it) Marina became our sort of base for the next three days. We got ourselves 48-hour tickets for buses and trains and made our plan for the next three days (going round town, museums, open top bus tour, river cruise etc.). On our way back to the boat we topped up our supplies. My German comrades had done some recordings for our evening entertainment, so I could watch some programmes in English (!) or in German and French. Great stuff! This is where boats really come into their own - you can do so much without the hassle of checking in and out of hotels, packing and unpacking. Our boat was our floating hotel! We had everything we needed - plenty of space, a bijou kitchen, storage space for food, shower, central heating etc. Also wifi connections were always good so we had music and videos too and I had to pay only 85€ per day** all inclusive. Who needs the Hilton???*



Brieselang boat club view from our boat.

Many thanks to the members of the [water sports friends Brieselang](#), for their friendly support

*** That evening, we sat together in the living room of our yacht and talked about all sorts of things. Then we came up with the idea to do such a boat tour again. Only it should take much longer and be further away. The destination of this tour was quickly found. It was Paris !! ** Okay from Berlin to Paris (and back again) is the slogan of our next boat trip. Captain "Burki" has already calculated how long such a trip takes and how much each one will pay. More about this trip and the trip to Paris can be found on the last page of this report.*

4th and 5th of April
Day 5 and 6

With our boat safely tied up in the marina, we were free to spend time in Germany's capital. It looked quite different by day, I must say.

The weather continued to be better, and it even got very hot! I had to protect myself from sunburn. In Berlin we did various tours, ate out and generally soaked up the atmosphere. Probably the most impressive was the tour on the river Spree. This might sound like a busman's holiday, but it was not at all boring - far from it.



impressions on the way to the station Brieselang



here is the seat of the Federal Government



I already knew the Brandenburg Gate from my nightly city walk some days before



(The two Berliner traffic light men.)



here the Potsdamer conference took place



river cruise on the Spree



Check Point Charlie today an open air museum



Berlin has a lot of castles



and museums

6th April

Day 7

Brieselang - Burg (near Magdeburg)

3 locks

101,38 km (c. 60 miles)

We set off at 8 a.m., on the Havel Canal heading towards Brandenburg. We hadn't decided how far we were going as we had to stop for fuel at the marina in Brandenburg. We had filled up (fuel, food and drink) by 2.27 and left the marina around 3 p.m. Going along the Havel we got as far as Burg (near Magdeburg). As we tied up at an open mooring, our stay was free (n.b. you have to pay a nominal fee at marinas)



a short stop for fuel and a small talk in the City marina Brandenburg

7th April

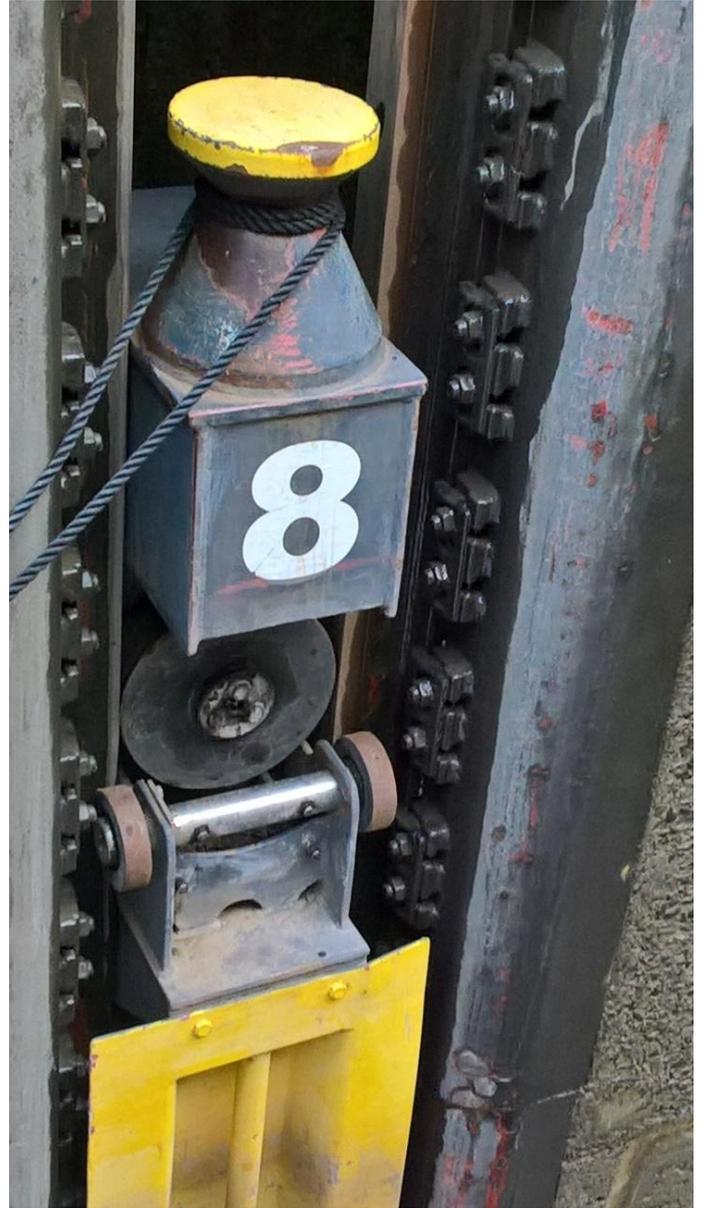
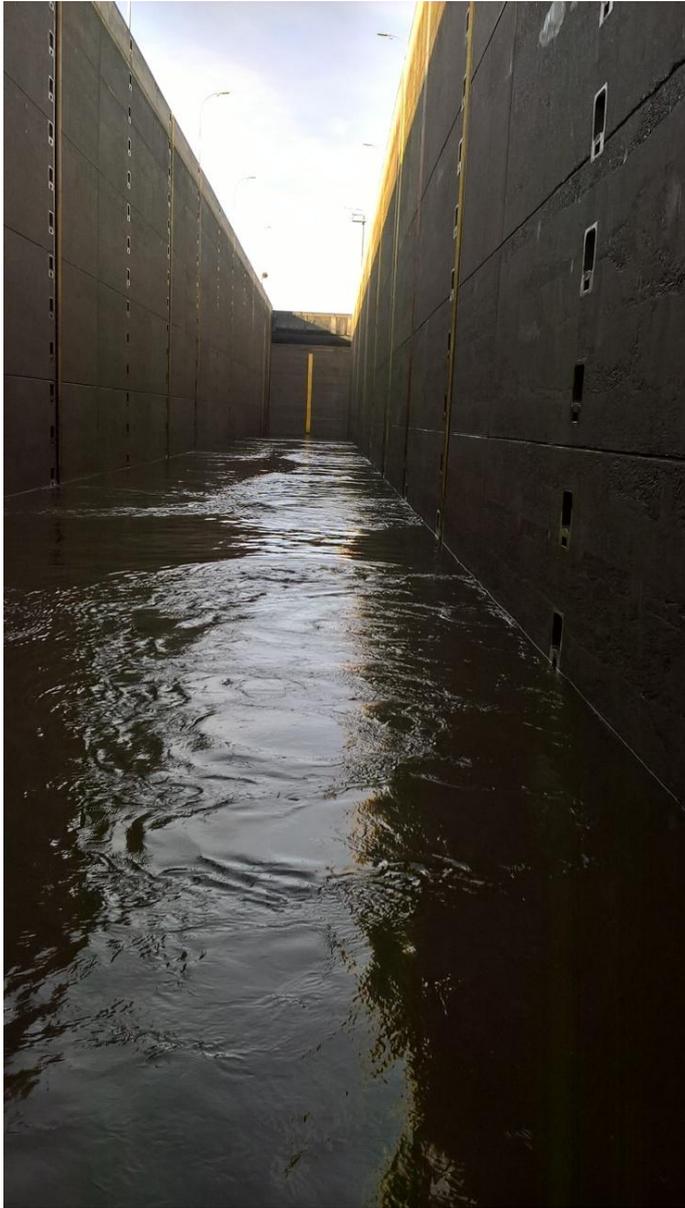
Day 8

Burg (bei Magdeburg) - Wittingen Sports-boat harbour

2 locks

141,13 km (c. 85 miles)

We were up with the larks and left our mooring to sail westwards. We made good progress and so Captain Haddock (!) decided to keep going. Our route took us via the [Mittellandkanal](#) to Wolfsburg. Afterwards we used the [Elbe-Seitenkanal](#). We still had a few locks and bridges ([Troglücke Magdeburg/Hohenwarthe](#)), to negotiate. It is really impressive when you travel long kilometers / miles along man made waterways like these. "Le Clou" (our yacht) proved up to the challenge and took us all the way to the harbour at [Wittingen](#). Here the harbour master was looking out for us. We were shown our mooring. Part of the fees gave us access to toilets and washrooms. That evening we dined out at the harbour restaurant ("Guten Appetit!")



we have to manage 2 locks. The locks are built for commercial shipping. The dimensions of the lock chambers are therefore very gigantic. We are lucky to use swim bollards.

8th April

Day 9

Wittingen Sports-boat harbour - Lauenburg Marina

2 locks

81,74 km (c. 50 miles)

Next destination was Lauenburg on the Elbe. On route we had to tackle the lock Uelzen and the Scharnebeck Ship lift. Getting there was no problem. The lift was to say the least, amazing! We entered the lock as the only boat. I don't know how many barges can go into the lift at one time but we were really dwarfed in the huge chamber. The lift is some feat of engineering. It can raise or lower enormous barges (i.e. a number at the same time) by over 25 metres. It looked even bigger as we were the only passengers. We arrived at our destination in the evening. We had a look around the town (Lauenburg) which was very picturesque. It has some impressive architecture, and lots of plaques / signs explaining the historic significance of particular buildings. It is also built on a slope, so there were nice views both at the Elbe shore and the town. After all that trudging around we had built up a nice appetite and enjoyed our meal in a restaurant in town. Later on we could plonk ourselves down in front of the telly to watch some English telly - Thanks to Captain Birdseye! ;-)



at lift [Scharnebeck](#)



view from the upper platform



the lift is starting

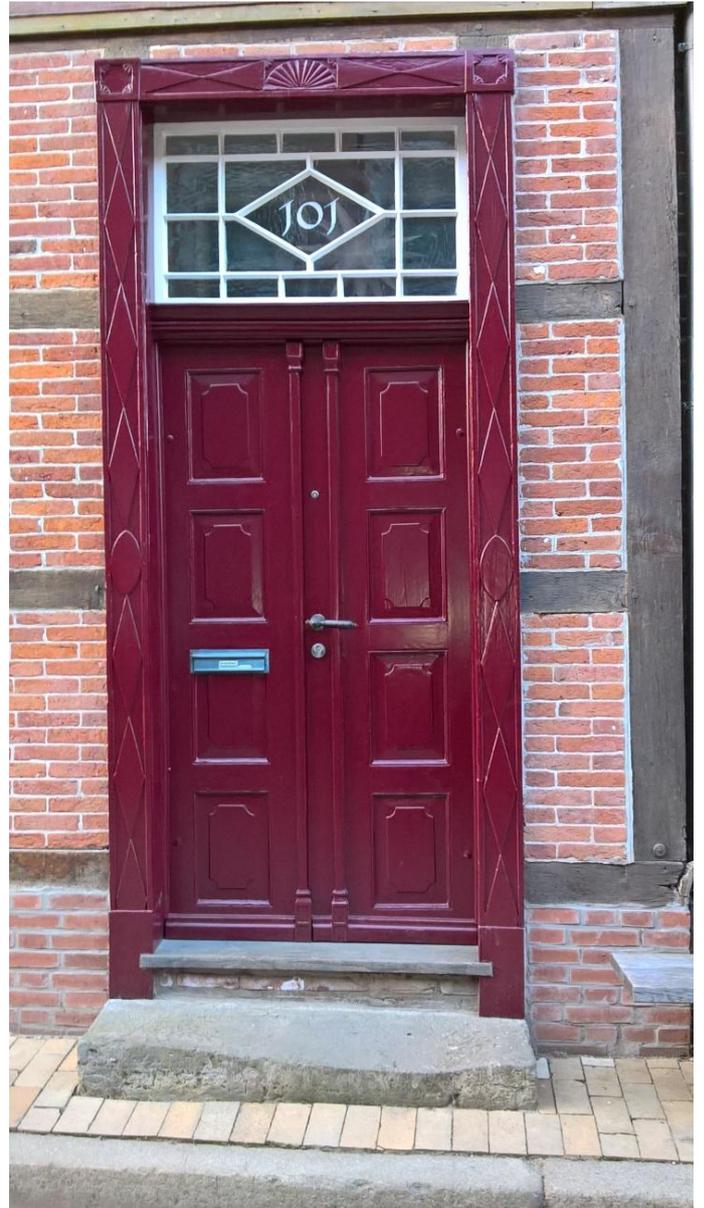


and now we are down



and now we go to Lauenburg (Elbe)

(left)to the station (right) to the steam boat



a lot of historic buildings and front



front doors



church doors

and

*9th April
Day 10*

Miniatur Wunderland, Hamburg

Another great feature of this holiday was the mixture of time on the boat and time in the city. From Lauenburg it was a hop, skip and a jump to Hamburg. We had a little bad luck as there were engineering works on the local rail network, but that didn't stop us having an interesting visit. And, because we were going by bus, the route from Lauenburg to Lüneburg took us past the enormous ship lift we had experienced the day before. So that was a nice surprise!

In Hamburg we went to an enormous display / exhibition, called Miniatur Wunderland. Here you could see all sorts of places reproduced in model form - railways from different parts of the world (including Alpine Switzerland), an airport with aircraft taking off and landing, Las Vegas, the Vatican etc. etc. So much was represented here in (working) model form and everything had been done with great attention to detail. There was so much to see there that you would need more than one day to see everything. As my German friends had thought ahead and pre-booked the tickets, we didn't have to wait in queues. We also had a talk (and guided tour) on the history of the display (behind the scene). This provided a lot of fascinating background information. This was quite a highlight! We headed back to our mooring after a fascinating day and got there around 5 p.m.



the Peters Place of Rome



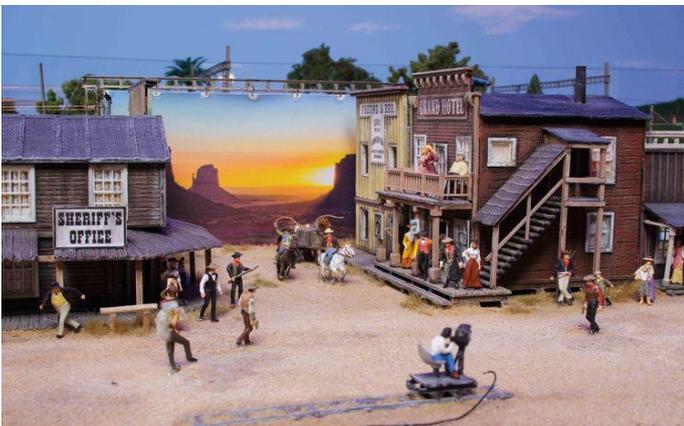
railway station Kiruna (Sweden) by night



castle Neuschwanstein in Germany (Bayern)



American railway bridge over a river



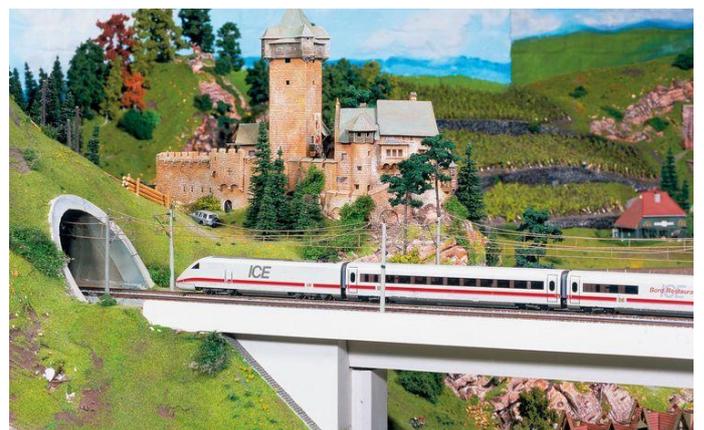
a western city



a railway station in the Switzerland



railway bridges in the Switzerland



German high speed train at Schwarzburg tunnel

9th April

Day 10

Lauenburg - Bleckede

22,14 km (c. 13 miles)

As we set off on the same evening it means leash off, because we had to go against the current. This evening we got as far as Bleckede and filled up with diesel and water. We slept in the harbour there and watched English videos. Thanks again to Captain Birdseye! ☺

10th April

Day 11

Bleckede - Grabow

6 locks

77,69 km (c. 48 miles)

Off at 7. We had to get to Dömitz and then turn into the Elde. We got to Dömitz around 1 p.m. What a day for problems! First the lock at Neu Kaliß was kaputt (as they say in English!) and we had to wait around 2 hours till it was back on track. Then we had a sudden cold snap and we had to put on the central heating (full power). After that there was the swing bridge at Grabow, that wasn't swinging. So how were we to get through? Due to lack of food and fluids on board we decided to stay in Grabow for the night and see what would happen the next day.



Dömitz [Railway Bridge](#)



the Dömitz lock



lock Neu Kaliß



lock Findenwirunshier (Letusfindeachotherhere)



downtown of Grabow



houses on the defective swing bridge

11th April

Day 12

Grabow - Parchim

5 locks

44,06 km (c. 26 miles)

So, no-one came to fix the swing bridge today. We had to limbo dance our way under the so-called swing bridge, and made this easier by disassembling any- and everything that was sticking up in the cockpit. A few prayers helped, I'm sure. Then on the other side we had to re-assemble everything, so that everything that was meant to stick up was now sticking up again. It had been quite an interesting exercise altogether. Then we had to get to Parchim with the intention of sleeping the other side of the lock. Everything was fine until we got to the lock. The locks have set times you can use them, and if you get there too late, then too bad. We got there ok, but the lock was being repaired, so we couldn't get through! Through the intercom at the lock we found out that everything should be up and running by the next day from 9.30. am.



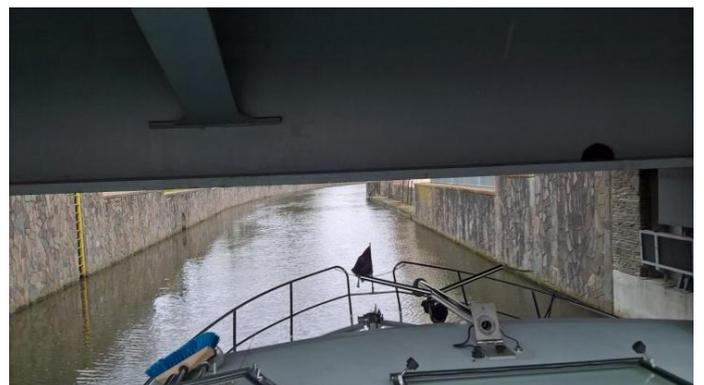
next morning: The bridge is still out of order



Captain "Burki" and I have removed the roof



"Le Clou" is fit for the limbo-dance action



please no further drop of water beneath the keel



and now we can remove the removed roof ☺



we reached Parchim lock at red "lights!"

12th April

Day 13

Parchim - Malchow

6 locks

62,65 km (c.37 miles)

We got off at 10. We headed eastwards on the Elde waterway. Nothing to report on route apart from a long wait at the lock at Bobzin. Our last lock for the day was Plau am See. We had not only to negotiate the lock in Plau but also ask for the passage under the historic lifting bridge. And then finally we were back again on the highest point of our tour on Lake Plau. Now we only had to get to Malchow by 7 p.m. to get under the bridge and avoid a possible wait at the swing bridge in Malchow until the next morning. The plan was thwarted and we had to sleep at Malchow. This wasn't too bad as Malchow was quite a lovely place to get "stuck in". That evening we moored in the marina in Malchow, had a look round the historic town and had a delicious dinner in a restaurant.



at 09:30 a.m. the lock is already closed



at 10 o'clock we can use the lock, green lights" ☺



lock Bobzin we have to wait



we arrived at the historical lift bridge [Plau am See](#)



The crazy German language. The instructions on the left picture are clear. The green handle to the left is the start position. The red handle to the right is the stop position. Okay, very easy to understand. But the right picture could be confusing for not German speaking people.

In German:

"NOT" in that case means "EMERGENCY" (like emergency brake)

"HALT" means "STOP"

Both together: This sign doesn't want to prevent you from stopping close to the sign but to stop the negotiation in case of emergency. Grrrrr..grrrrr

13th April

Day 14

Malchow Waren- Eldenburg

32,12 km (c. 20 miles)

After a good night's sleep we were first in the queue at the [bridge](#). From here it was only 30 km to Waren an der Müritz (our start and finish point). We got there at 11.45. The yacht had to be filled up with fuel and water, the toilet emptied etc. We had to the harbour service pay for doing all that. I got my train ticket for Waren to Berlin from the captain. We handed over the yacht (boo, hoo). Then back to blighty. Not a moment's boredom. Somehow I had the bad luck on arrival and departure. Until the airport Berlin Tegel everything went well, but then my plane was delayed again. I was back home at around 24:00 o'clock .@



back in our home marina Eldenburg

Here as already announced a list about the costs of our tour. It should be noted that we had initially planned the tour for 6 people with a larger ship. If we had been 6 people, we would have had to pay a bit more for chartering. For that we would have divided the total amount by 6. Which of course would have been much cheaper. We chartered a smaller boat for 4 people. But then, as already mentioned, we were only three, which again had a less favorable effect.

Here are the costs for all 3 people together

<i>charter fees</i>	<i>2162€</i>
<i>port fees</i>	<i>45€</i>
<i>fuel</i>	<i>1050€</i>
<i>additional costs (gas bottle, bed linen)</i>	<i>45€</i>
<i>food and drinking on board</i>	<i>90€</i>
<i>food and drinking extern</i>	<i>160€</i>
<i>museums and sightseeing</i>	<i>135€</i>
<i>public transport</i>	<i>66€</i>
<i>total</i>	<i>3753€</i>
<i>for each person</i>	<i>1251€</i>

Here is an approximate timetable for our Berlin - Paris - Berlin Tour

The start is due to the costs in the fall of 2019 or 2020-21

We will be travelling about 9 to 10 weeks plus X

The distance is about 3274 km appx. 2034 ml.

We have 380! locks to manage

33 harbor visits are planned (Marina)

Planned stay in Paris 5 to 7 days

There are 13 buffer days including Paris

We will land each evening (exceptions are possible)

A plan which cities or towns are visited is not known yet

This results on the way depending on where we are when

Currently, the costs are about 24,000 € for 6 people 4000 € for each person

That sounds like a lot, but lasts up to 10 weeks. (70 days) about 57 € per day (65 \$ per day)

Not included are costs for museums, eating out, local traffic for cities we visit

Greetings from Europe from the "Crew of Le Clou"