Swimming in the Elbe

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Don’t try this at home. It’s not prohibited, but it could come with it’s own death penalty. Nonetheless, I swam in the Elbe, near the ÃˇvelgÃ¶nne beach. Not the popular part with the bars, but the part downstream of Zur Elbkate, opposite the Lotsen tower. I prefer that part because it has nice trees and their shadow, so I don’t have to cover myself under a thick layer of sand to prevent sunburn.

So how was the water? Pretty cool. I didn’t expect it to be so refreshing on such a summer’s day. Mainly because I didn’t remember swimming in such a cold river. But the Elbe is no ordinary river. It’s big, it’s bad, two 300 meter long ships with 12 meter draught can pass each other, and that’s also why it is not recommended to go swimming with them. There are waves. The ferries of line 62 pass frequently, making quite some waves. It’s sweet.

And how was the ground? Pretty nasty. The reason you go swimming is because that’s easier than walking. Instead of sand there’s a lot of pebbles and rocks and you can’t see the ground so as soon as the water is deep enough to swim you try to get your feet of the ground. And standing on one leg while trying to feel with your other foot where it’s safe to put it down again with waves rolling in isn’t very comfortable. There are also some bigger rocks you could accidentally swim into, so it’s recommended to analyze the area when the tide is low and swim when the tide is high.

Concluding? When the weather is getting really hot the Elbe is a nice place to cool down.

by Roland van Ipenburg http://www.xs4all.nl/~ipenburg/blog/posts/play/2009/07/16/swimming−in−the−elbe/