

Helgoland 2025

100 Years of Quantum Mechanics

Helgoland, Germany
9.–14. June 2025

11 April 2025

Dear Participants:

We are very much looking forward to the Helgoland Workshop in June, and to seeing all of you there.

A number of people have written with questions and concerns about what Helgoland is like, and what kind of services are available there. We recently made two trips to the island to see for ourselves, and wanted to share our impressions.

The good news is that despite its small size and distance from the mainland, Helgoland is very used to hosting lots of visitors, and it is full of comfortable amenities.

Here is a summary of some important points.

Regarding Helgoland:

The island:

- On a typical summer day, Helgoland hosts more than 5,000 off-islanders. About half of them spend the night, while half are there just for the day. As a result, our group (300 participants + companions) will be a fairly small perturbation.
- The village of Helgoland occupies only the island's southernmost tip. It actually straddles the tall cliffs there, so the town has installed a public elevator (you can also walk between "unterland" and "oberland").
- The famous red cliffs completely encircle the island. Geologically, Helgoland seems a bit like a smaller version of Uluru in Australia.

Food:

- There are no large restaurants, but there are many small restaurants. Some are just counters for fish & chips or wurst, some are fine dining, and there seem to be options for everything in between.
- A number of the hotels also have their own restaurants.
- There are a few pubs.
- There is a small but well-stocked grocery store.

Helgoland 2025

100 Years of Quantum Mechanics

Helgoland, Germany
9.–14. June 2025

Shops:

- There are clothing stores with quite a wide selection (i.e., you will probably be fine if you forget to pack something!).
- There are antique shops, a couple of art galleries, and many places to buy souvenirs.
- Helgoland is a duty-free zone, so there are also several shops selling high-end liquor, cigars, and perfume.

Medical:

- There is a medical clinic: <https://www.paracelsus-kliniken.de/akut/helgoland/>
- There is a drug store and a pharmacy (apotek).

Other facilities:

- The Alfred Wegener Institute maintains a marine science facility there: <https://www.awi.de/en/about-us/sites/helgoland.html>
- There is a small military base.

Activities:

- There are nice paths for walking around the island.
- There are guided nature walks and bird-watching walks every day.
- There are tours around the island in a small trolley.
- There are boat tours around the island.
- There is a mini-golf course.
- There are a number of playgrounds.
- There is a church.
- There is a museum.
- There seems to be live music most nights.
- There are beaches (though the nicer ones are on Düne; see below).

Düne:

- Helgoland has a companion island called Düne.
- Düne and Helgoland are separated by a few hundred meters.
- Every half-hour there is a ferry between the islands (it is a 5-minute ride).
- Düne has almost the same area as Helgoland, but is completely flat and sandy.
- It has nice beaches.
- Düne has cabins for rent, a small restaurant, and a convenience store.
- It also has an airport, which is serviced by this airline: <https://www.fliegofd.de/>

Helgoland 2025

100 Years of Quantum Mechanics

Helgoland, Germany
9.–14. June 2025

Flights:

- Düne has an airport, which is serviced by this airline: <https://www.fliegofd.de/>
- **There are no flights to/from Hamburg.**
- There are only flights to/from Cuxhaven and Busum, which are both about 2 hours from Hamburg by train.
- The planes are very small (perhaps 10 seats).
- If someone is very averse to the ferry (but not to a tiny airplane!) this could be an option for them.
- If you choose to fly rather than take the ferry on Tuesday morning, please inform the organizers.

In short, Helgoland comfortably accommodates both its year-round residents (of which there are 1,400) as well as the 2,500 overnight visitors (some of whom are there for extended stays).

In terms of amenities, it is roughly similar to the town of Benasque (if you have been to conferences there). It is much more comfortably equipped than Les Houches, for example.

Sincerely Yours,

Časlav Brukner, Steven Girvin, Jack Harris, Florian Marquardt

Organizers, Helgoland 2025