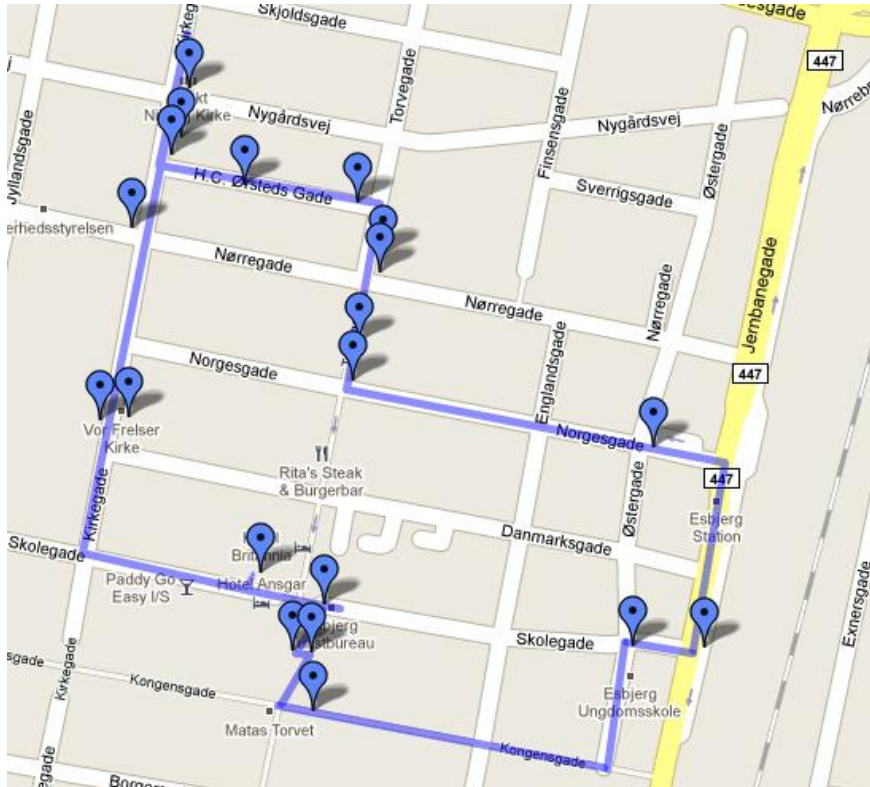


City walk

The chessboard town



The route is approximately 1.5 km

Enjoy your time in Esbjerg!



Esbjerg Tourist Office
Skolegade 33, 6700 Esbjerg
www.visitesbjerg.dk

ON FOOT IN ESBJERG

The chessboard town

A 1.5 km long town walk made by the Esbjerg Tourist Office taking you on a historic tour through the central part of Esbjerg. On the back of this folder you will find a map showing the route.

Have a nice time in Esbjerg!

Today, the **Market Square** is the heart of Esbjerg. However, as a young town that was meant to be a harbour, the square lay on the outskirts. There was not a single house on the square when it was first built. H. Wilkens, chartered surveyor, who, in 1870, made the first town plan of Esbjerg, simply located the Market Square at the intersection between two of the town's main hubs – the Harbour and the Railway Station. This town plan that was created like a chessboard according to classical examples (referred to as "the grid plan") marked the beginning of Esbjerg's parallel streets and square precincts.

Note the different architectural styles of the buildings, e.g. C.H. Clausen's bank building at No. 18, which dates from 1896. It was a somewhat unusual bank building at the time it was built – an imitation of North Italian tiled Gothic. The town numbered 400 souls, most of whom lived in the two streets Havnegade and Smedegade. In 1875, apart from two two-storey houses, there were only single-storey houses in Esbjerg.



The displayed photograph has been lent by the Archive of Urban History. It shows the Market Square around the year 1900.

1. The Old Courthouse and County Gaol

Esbjerg's former Courthouse and County Gaol was built in 1891 by the architect H.C. Amberg and officially opened in August 1892. Today, it houses the tourist office and local police station. On the first floor, there is a wedding room and the former town council chamber can be used for receptions etc. The building originally consisted of two sections: a courthouse and town hall in the front part, and a police and a county gaol in the rear section. The cells were used until 1956 when the new police station became operational. The Courthouse was used until 1970. During the Second World War, the Germans controlled the building, and many people in the Resistance have frequented its cells.

2. The equestrian statue of Christian IX

From his high horse, the founder of Esbjerg, King Christian IX, gazes out across the square. After having lost the war against Germany in 1864, the Danish Parliament passed a bill in 1868 on the establishment of Esbjerg Harbour. The statue was raised in 1899 by the citizens of Esbjerg in connection with the town gaining its municipal borough status. It was not unveiled, however, until the following year because of a strike, so the plinth stood empty for a whole year. The inscription reads: 'In Honour of the Founder of the Town, the Citizens of Esbjerg raised this Monument'. There is also the Danish national coat of arms in bronze with the king's motto 'With God for Honour and Justice'. Christian IX was also called the father-in-law of Europe, as he succeeded in getting several of his children married into European royal and princely houses. Two of his daughters became Tsarina of Russia and Queen of England respectively, and one of his sons was elected king of Greece.

3. Queen Louise

The beautifully restored structure at Torvet 19 was built as a hotel and hostelry in 1890, with a restaurant facing the Square and, for the initiated, a speakeasy in the back yard – popularly known as The Bloody Arsehole. Since then, the house has had a chequered career with both offices and shops, although it has mostly served as a pub and, later on, a discotheque. In 1994, comprehensive restoration restored the facade to its original appearance, the building gaining an award from Esbjerg Town Foundation. Today, it is a modern restaurant and a charming bar with a traditional pub atmosphere.

4. Kongensgade – to the left

Kongensgade is the longest pedestrian street of Denmark. We suggest that you lean your head well back to get a total impression of the beautiful edifices.

5. Østergade

Østergade also bears the mark of Architect C.H. Clausen's work: No. 4 – Florentine Renaissance-style – built in 1899 and in the two buildings comprising Østre Skole (School), a Neo-Gothic building from 1896 and a Neo-Baroque example from 1918.

6. The Railway Station

The main railway station building is one of Esbjerg's most important architectural monuments. It was erected during 1902-04, in accordance with plans drawn by Professor H. Wenck (who also draw the plan for the Main Railway Station of Copenhagen). In 2002, the building gained an award from Esbjerg Town Foundation.

7. Norgesgade

There are numerous attractive residences in Norgesgade, for example Nos 21, 24 and 31 – all typical examples from the period around 1910 when the architectural style changed from "skønvirke" (Art Nouveau) to Neo-Baroque.

An beautiful example is the Temperance Lodge for the I.O.G.T. order at No. 23 which dates from 1912. In 1914, there were 21 temperance societies in Esbjerg with a total membership of approximately 2,500.

8. Torvegade

Esbjerg's first town plan from 1870 was extended on a number of occasions. The first buildings in the town's history were small unpretentious houses built in the local architectural style, both as private and business premises. The street corners are marked by tower structures, a natural way to emphasize any of the many right-angled corners to be found in a gridplan town.

9. Torvegade 37-39

The building from 1912 was designed by C.H. Clausen. The strongly featuring bays would seem to indicate that the architect has found his models in German architectural trade journals.

10. Torvegade 45

The building is the former library, built in 1926 and designed by the architects C.H. Clausen and Harald Peters. With its characteristic mansard roof, the building now



houses Esbjerg Museum, which, among other things, features an Esbjerg exhibition on interiors and flats from the 1890s to the 1930s.

11. Torvegade 47

Today, the building houses the Local City Archives, but it was originally built in 1904 as the Technical School of Esbjerg and enlarged in 1926. Note the symbol of learning, the owl, in the arch of the entrance portal, as well as the renovated front door. The earliest facade section was designed by the architect C.H. Clausen. Inside, the stairwell has been restored to its former appearance, with an arresting colour scheme.

12. H.C. Ørstedsgade

H.C. Ørstedsgade is a museum street, pure and simple – a highly successful example of the Centre of Esbjerg Project that started in 1993. The first two houses built in the street, in 1889, are Nos 9 and 11. At that time, they were two-family houses with a flat on the ground floor and one on the first floor – and, it should be noted, these were for families with children. The houses subsequently built were also small, unpretentious workmen's houses. Only No. 13 is slightly larger and architect-designed. It was built in 1909 – and in it lived a family with 12 children. The proximity to the electricity works was something that could be heard and felt. Recorded reminiscences mention that when the turbines were in action, they made the tile stove dance ... and the china fall off the shelves. The houses of the present-day street have been renovated and are well-maintained. The street lighting and paving have been restored to the original style.

13. 'The Clock'

The West Jutland Academy of Music's cobbled yard is graced with Thorbjørn Lausten's huge sculpture "The Clock". This work consists of a modern sundial in steel and neon, satellite-controlled and a sandstone block from which water gushes out – the whole process accompanied by soft music beamed out through a set of loudspeakers.

14. The West Jutland Academy of Music – from electricity works to conservatoire

The new address of the West Jutland Academy of Music, The Old Electricity Works from 1907, is a fine example of cultural innovation in former industrial premises. Per Wohlert is the architect behind the conversion of the electricity works, which was originally designed by C.H. Clausen. The former turbine hall



has been transformed into a unique concert hall, with a large concert organ with 44 stops. The hall has been

decorated by the artist Hans Tyrrestrup.

15. Skt. Nikolai Kirke

In 1965, a new Catholic church, Skt. Nikolai Kirke (St. Nicholas' Church), was built, designed by the architect Johan Otto von Spreckelsen, world-famous for such structures as La Grande Arche in Paris.

16. Kirkegade 61

At the corner of Kirkegade The small chapel was built as a chapel and a school for the Ansgar Foundation in Esbjerg in 1923.

17. Nørregade

In Nørregade lies the beautiful St. Joseph's Hospital, built in 1903, and originally run by St. Joseph sisters. The nuns have left the city a long time ago, and the hospital has recently been renovated and now houses The Danish Safety Technology Authority. Right next to St. Joseph's Hospital lies the first Catholic church from 1923. The building is now part of the private St. Nicholas' School.

18. The Cemetery of The Church of Our Saviour

Esbjerg had a cemetery before it had a church. It was laid out in 1880 for private means. One of the city's cattle exporters laid out the money; on the understanding he would get his money back as burials took place. The cemetery is no longer in use and has been converted into an open area that functions as an oasis in the heart of the city. The gravestones that have been preserved are of well-known figures from the pioneer days of the city.

19. The Church of Our Saviour (Vor Frelzers Kirke)

Vor Frelzers Kirke is the city's first church – before then, the citizens of Esbjerg had to go to Jerne Church. It is a Neo-Romanesque building, typical of its time, built in 1887 and enlarged in 1896. The church has murals by Ole Søndergaard, from 1928, which feature many local inhabitants as models. In 2001, the church was restored, and a new organ with 43 stops was inaugurated.

20. Kirkegade 25 – The Bethania Mission House

The Home Mission was strongly represented in Esbjerg during its first years. The present-day chapel is from 1906, designed by C.H. Clausen, and replaced a previous building. The Home Mission (Evangelic branch of the Church of Denmark) wanted to underscore the importance of the mission house by having it built in a style that was also used when building national churches, basically Gothic, but with an Italian inspiration. It features a rosette window between two spires, best seen from the chapel square.

21. Heerups Have

At the Market Square lies the garden of Heerups Have with small granite sculptures by the artist Henry Heerup.