



nileGUIDE

ALL YOU NEED TO PLAN YOUR PERFECT TRIP



Berlin city limits

Berlin, 4 Days

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Guide Description



AUTHOR NOTE: This trip will take you to the more off beat tourist attractions on the outskirts of this beautiful city. Enjoy the lakes and forests of the outer districts, discover a mountain of rubble left over from WWII, visit stunning Imperial palaces and see tropical plants at the Botanical gardens.

Itinerary Overview

things to do
restaurants
hotels
nightlife

Day 1 - Berlin



Bierhimmel

Lovely cafe in Kreuzberg



Oberbaumbrücke

Double-Decker Bridge



East Side Gallery

Art on the Berlin Wall



Großer Wasserspeicher

Art in the Catacombs



Bagels & Bialys

Schawarma and bagels?



Freilichtkino Hasenheide

Open-air cult classics



Park Inn Hotel Berlin-Alexanderplatz

Large City Hotel

Day 2 - Berlin



Barist

Hearty breakfasts and exquisite dinners



Grunewald

Beautiful city forest



Teufelsberg

Rising from the rubble



Luftschutzbunker Gesundbrunnen

Tours Through a Wartime Bunker



Chalet Suisse

Classic country cuisine



Park Inn Hotel Berlin-Alexanderplatz

Large City Hotel

Day 3 - Berlin



Schloss Friedrichsfelde

Aristocratic residence in the zoo



Strandbad Müggelsee

Nostalgic lakeside atmosphere



Müggelsee Terrassen Rübzahl

Dine by the water



Spindler Klatt

Lounge with a view



Park Inn Hotel Berlin-Alexanderplatz

Large City Hotel

Day 4 - Berlin



Weltbühne Berlin

Live jazz music for Sunday lunch



Galerie im Körnerpark

Green oasis of the arts



Café Rix

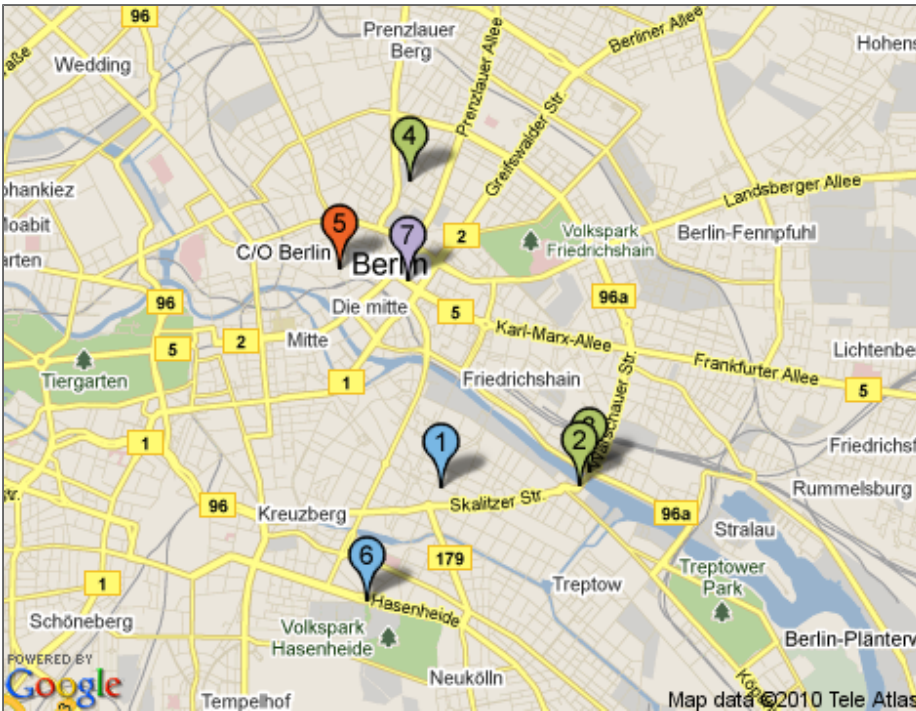
Golden nugget in the ghetto



Botanischer Garten und Botanisches Museum

Botanical gardens

Day 1 - Berlin



QUICK NOTE

contact:
tel: 49 30 615 3122

1 Bierhimmel

location:
Oranienstraße 183
Berlin 10997

hours:
Daily 1p-1a

DESCRIPTION: For many residents of Berlin's Kreuzberg district, the Bierhimmel is the place to be. During the day this is a comfortable café with great service, lovely coffee and nice cakes, where many magazines and newspapers are available for you to peruse at your leisure. In the evenings, however, the place is transformed into a popular gay-lesbian meeting place. There is also a small and cosy bar at the back of this establishment where lots of lovely exotic cocktails are mixed. © wcities.com

contact:
tel: +49 (0)30 25 0025
(Touristen Information)
fax: +49 (0)30 2500 2424
(Touristen Information)
<http://www.berlin.de/mauer/gr enzuebergaenge/oberbaumbr uecke/index.de.php>

2 Oberbaumbrücke

location:
Am Oberbaum
Berlin Berlin 10243

hours:
24 hrs

DESCRIPTION: The buses are not the only double-deckers in Berlin. There is also a double-decker bridge, the Oberbaumbrücke, which spans the River Spree between Friedrichshain and Kreuzberg. Traffic speeds along the lower part of the bridge while trains steam over the upper section. Built a hundred years ago in the red-brick gothic style popular at the time, the Oberbaumbrücke is crowned by two towers. The bridge got its name from the tree-trunks which were used to shut down the river to traffic at night. © wcities.com



contact:

tel: +49 (0)30 251 7159
fax: +49 (0)30 2529 9831
<http://www.eastsidegallery.com>

location:

Mühlenstrasse
Berlin Berlin 10243

hours:

Call for details

3 East Side Gallery

DESCRIPTION: The biggest outdoor gallery in the world, the East Side Gallery runs along the largest remaining section of the Berlin Wall, constructed by the Soviets in 1961 to divide East from West Berlin. When the Iron Curtain fell in 1989 many parts of the wall were destroyed as the city of Berlin was reunited following the end of the Cold War. 160 international artists were invited to paint giant murals along the wall that runs along the River Spree in the eastern district of Freidrichshain. The East Side Gallery has remained untouched for the last 20 years, however its future is uncertain. Restoration is planned however regeneration of the area may threaten this political landmark. © NileGuide



contact:

tel: +49 (0)30 2859 9737
fax: +49 (0)30 2859 9739
<http://www.berlin.de/ba-panko-w/presse/archiv/20060719.1330.44434.html>

location:

Eingang Belforter Straße
Berlin Berlin 10405

hours:

Tu-Su 3p-9p

4 Großer Wasserspeicher

DESCRIPTION: The catacombs of the disused water storage complex in Prenzlauer Berg have been used for several years as a venue for contemporary art exhibitions. The labyrinth of brick tunnels provides a unique backdrop for some of Germany's most innovative artists. The construction has never been properly renovated (due to lack of funds), and the complex often seemed on the verge of collapse. But fortunately, there have always been sufficient funds to fix the site at least provisionally. Exhibitions take place here during the summer months, when architecture and art unite to create a unique atmosphere enhanced by sound and light. © wcities.com

contact:

tel: 49 30 283 10 19

location:

Rosenthaler Straße 46
Berlin 10178

5 Bagels & Bialys

DESCRIPTION: Arabian Schawarma and Jewish bagels seem a quite outrageous mixture, which demonstrates, however, how bagels by now have become totally acclimatized to the new German capital. And so the snack-bar opposite of Hackeschen Höfe doesn't even pretend to be a folkloristic bagel shop, presenting some great philosophy of ancient times, it is only a snack-bar: offering foods made of fresh ingredients and a panorama of Rosenthaler Straße. Muffins and various beverages are also available. © wcities.com

contact:

tel: 49 30 6270 5885

location:

Hasenheide
Berlin 12049

6 Freilichtkino Hasenheide

DESCRIPTION: Surrounded by trees and with the stars shining on a clear night, you get the feeling that you could be anywhere but in the center of a major city at this lovely theater. The programme consists of cult classics, meaning that each film attracts its own particular audience. Do not forget to bring along your jacket though, as it can get quite chilly later on in the evening, even at the height of summer. Also bring a cushion or blanket for the seats. © wcities.com

contact:

tel: +1-800 780 5733
fax: +49 30 2389 4305
<http://www.forum-hotel-berlin.com/index.html>

location:

Alexanderplatz 7
Berlin Berlin 10178

7 Park Inn Hotel Berlin-Alexanderplatz

DESCRIPTION: The Park Inn is the largest city hotel in Berlin, and offers First Class accommodations with friendly service and a central location. The Park Inn Hotel is the ideal location for business and leisure traveling because of its situation on the famous Alexanderplatz in the heart of Berlin, minutes from dining, shopping and sightseeing. The spacious rooms feature modern amenities and décor, and the casino on the 37th floor boasts stunning panoramic views of Berlin. The hotel also features two popular restaurants and a deli on-site. © wcities.com



[more photos on Hotels.com](#)

Day 2 - Berlin



QUICK NOTE

contact:

tel: 49 30 2472 2613

fax: 49 30 2472 2614

<http://www.barist.de/>

location:

Am Zwirngraben 13/14
Berlin 10178

hours:

M-Th & Su 10a-2a, Sa & Su
10a-3a

1 Barist

DESCRIPTION: The Barist is situated in the archways beneath Hackescher Markt S-Bahn station. It is simply and elegantly decorated, with a distinctively Italian flavour and a touch of Austrian charm. Set off from the restaurant is the bar area, where you can sip your cocktail to the accompaniment of a piano. The clientele is a colourful mix of styles and generations. The Barist offers great breakfasts, hearty sandwiches, a cheap midday menu and delicious Franco-Italian cuisine in the evening. The menu is constantly revised, meaning that you can return time and again and still be surprised by tasty new dishes. © wcities.com



contact:

tel: +49 (0)30 25 0025

(Touristen Information)

<http://www.berlin.de/stadt/en/grunewald.html>

location:

Koenigsallee
Berlin Berlin 14193

hours:

Call for timings

2 Grunewald

DESCRIPTION: As well as being the largest forest within city limits, Grunewald is also an up-market residential area full of beautiful villas built by merchants, scientists and artists who flocked to this leafy district in the mid 19th century. Exclusive Koenigsallee, for example, is home to numerous plush lodgings, including the home of Walther Rathenau, the Weimar Republic's Minister of Foreign Affairs who was assassinated by right-wing radicals in 1922. Nowadays, Berliners flock to Grunewald to escape the hustle and bustle of the city centre. Perfect for a long, relaxing walk or an energetic bike ride, the forest is rich in wildlife, home to wild boar, deer,



foxes and a stunning variety of birdlife. In the summertime, thousands of Berliners head for the water at Wannsee or the beach at Strandbad Wannsee. Quieter and equally beautiful, Krumme Lanke and Schlachtensee lakes are more low-key getaways, good for those looking for something more peaceful. Grunewald is also great for winter activities—skiing through the forest, ice-skating on the lakes, or sledging down the slopes at Teufelsberg. Architectural highlights tucked away in the forest include the 15th century Jagdschloß Grunewald, the 55 metre-high Grunewaldturm and the castle and landscape gardens at Pfaueninsel. © wcities.com

contact:

tel: +49 (0)30 25 0025

fax: +49 (0)30 2500 2424

location:

Teufelsseechaussee
Berlin Berlin 14193

hours:

Call for details

3 Teufelsberg

DESCRIPTION: Rising 115 metres over Grunewald forest, Teufelsberg offers wonderful panoramic views over Berlin and the surrounding region. Created from the debris which lay all over the city after the Second World War, the hill is topped by a futuristic white building which used to be the US army radar base during the Cold War. Teufelsberg has now become a popular destination for adults and children out flying their kites or model aircraft. As it is extremely steep in places, Teufelsberg is also fantastic for sledging down in the winter. There is a car park in nearby Teufelsseechaussee. © wcities.com



contact:

tel: +49 (0)30 392 4744

fax: +49 (0)30 753 9817

<http://www.berliner-unterwelte.n.de>

location:

Brunnenstraße 108
Berlin Berlin 13355

hours:

Jun-Aug Sa 2p-4p; Sep-May
1st Sa of the month

4 Luftschutzbunker Gesundbrunnen

DESCRIPTION: The huge bunker which you'll see sticking out of a mountain of rubble in Humboldthain Park isn't open to the public. Yet close by, there is another system of World War II bunkers and shelters which visitors can take a guided tour around. When the danger of Allied air raids became imminent in 1942, the storage rooms attached to the U-Bahn tunnels were transformed into bunkers. As this U-Bahn line (U8) is exceptionally deep, the bunkers survived the War completely intact. Even the signs painted on the walls seem as fresh as ever. The Berliner Unterwelten association offers regular guided tours, starting on the corner of Badstrasse and Hochstrasse. There is also a small exhibition in the entrance hall of Gesundbrunnen U-Bahn station. © wcities.com

contact:

tel: 49 30 832 6362

fax: 49 30 8322 1955

http://www.j-diekmann.de/res-restaurant_gruenewald/index3.html

location:

Clayallee 99
Berlin 14195

hours:

Daily Noon-1a

5 Chalet Suisse

DESCRIPTION: Since April 2001, the Chalet Suisse has provided fine dining and entertainment in a rural Swiss atmosphere in Berlin's Grunewald area. This beautiful, elegant country restaurant is cozy on cold winter evenings, while the beer garden lures summer visitors into the open air for live jazz concerts. Featuring "New German" cuisine as well as traditional Swiss dishes, the Chalet Suisse uses only the finest seasonal ingredients. The restaurant's country feel provides a safe, child and family-friendly environment while maintaining simplicity and elegance. © wcities.com



Photo courtesy of Chalet Suisse.

contact:

tel: +1-800 780 5733
fax: +49 30 2389 4305
<http://www.forum-hotel-berlin.com/index.html>

location:

Alexanderplatz 7
Berlin Berlin 10178

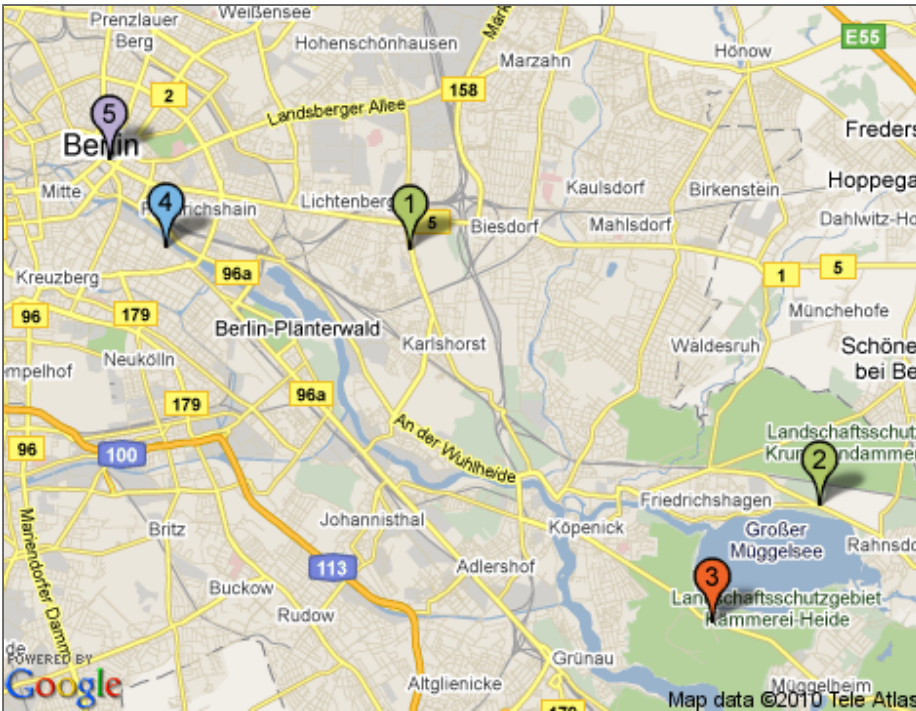
6 **Park Inn Hotel Berlin-Alexanderplatz**

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[more photos on Hotels.com](#)

Day 3 - Berlin



QUICK NOTE

contact:
tel: +49 (0)30 2400 2162
<http://www.stadtmuseum.de/index3.php>

location:
Am Tierpark 125
Berlin Berlin 10319

hours:
Di-So 11a, noon, 1p & 2p

1 Schloss Friedrichsfelde

DESCRIPTION: This isn't one of Berlin's famous royal castles, but a splendid sight and well worthy of a visit in its own right. Built by a Dutch aristocrat in 1695, the ownership of the castle changed hands countless times over the centuries, as aristocratic families fell in and then out of favour with the ruling Prussian princes. Each time it changed hands, the palace was remodelled according to the fashion of the day. The last change was made by East German architects. Inside the palace, guests can admire the ornately decorated rooms graced with paintings from the 18th and 19th centuries. Lush and undulating gardens surround the palace. © wcities.com



Photo courtesy of Schloss Friedrichsfelde

contact:
tel: +49 30 9 0120
<http://www.berlin.de/badegewassers/detail/mueggelstrand.html>

location:
Fürstenwalder Damm 838
Berlin Berlin 12589

hours:
Call for details

2 Strandbad Müggelsee

DESCRIPTION: Built in the early '30s near Rahnsdorf, this is not Berlin's most central swimming pool, but an excursion to Müggelsee, the largest lake in the close vicinity of the German capital, is very worthwhile. Lean back in wicker beach chairs and watch the distant boats pass by, while children build their sandcastles and youngsters play volleyball. © wcities.com

contact:

tel: 49 030 65661688 11
fax: 49 030 65661688 14
<http://www.mueggelseeterrassen.de/>

location:

Müggelheimer Damm 143
Berlin 12559

hours:

Sep-Apr: M-Su 11:30a-6p;
May-Aug: M-Sa 11:30a-10p,
Su 11:30a-8p

3 Müggelsee Terrassen Rübzahl

DESCRIPTION: Located on the scenic Grosser Müggelsee, this restaurant and beer garden is a great place to rest your feet after a walk around the lake. On warm days, you can drink and dine outside on the deck and enjoy the view of the water; and when the weather is inclement, you can warm up in the elegant indoor dining room. The fare is mainly comprised of traditional German dishes, with a wide selection of starters and entrees to choose from. And you can't forget about the wine and beer selection -- a perfect accompaniment to any schnitzel or wurst! © wcities.com

contact:

tel: 49 30 695 66 775
fax: 49 30 695 182 75
<http://www.spindlerklatt.com>

location:

Köpenicker Strasse 16/17
Berlin 10997

hours:

Lounge: Daily from 6p;
Restaurant: Daily from 8p

4 Spindler Klatt

DESCRIPTION: Modern lines and expansive lounge space make this restaurant and bar one of the most popular party spots in the area. The restaurant is decorated in muted black and white, with large sofa cushions bordering the eating area, allowing guests a place to relax with friends before and after a meal. The event space is open and wide with dim lighting, creating a great ambiance for live performances. If the weather is good, there is an outdoor deck area filled with even more lounge chairs -- not to mention a great view over the water. © wcities.com

contact:

tel: +1-800 780 5733
fax: +49 30 2389 4305
<http://www.forum-hotel-berlin.com/index.html>

location:

Alexanderplatz 7
Berlin Berlin 10178

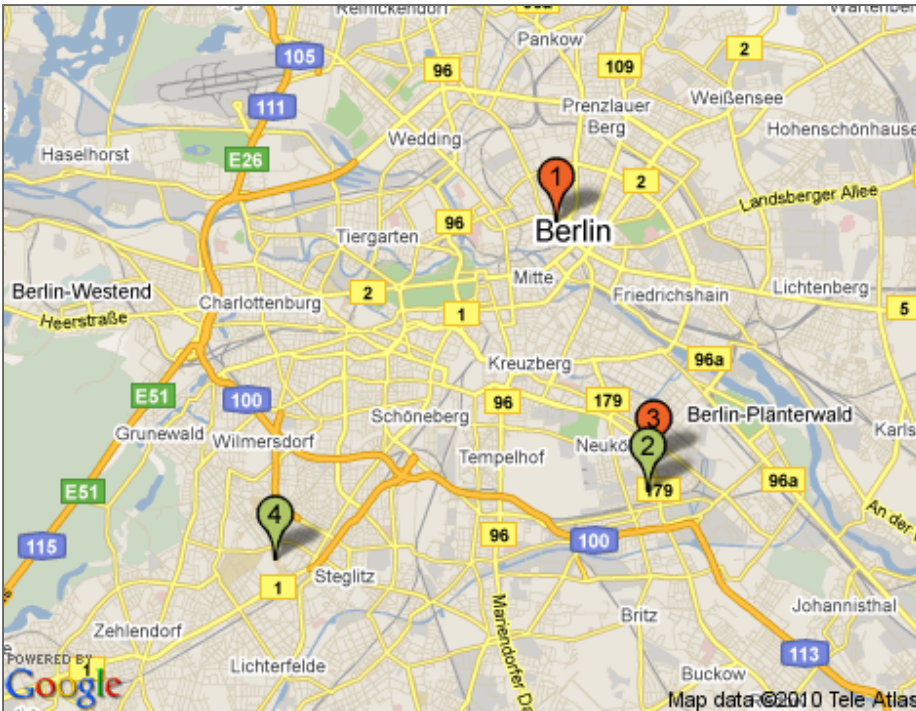
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more photos on Hotels.com

Day 4 - Berlin



QUICK NOTE

contact:
tel: 49 30 2838 8061

1 Weltbühne Berlin

location:
Gormannstraße 14
Berlin 10119

DESCRIPTION: This new establishment in Berlin's historic centre is a unique mixture of restaurant, café and bar. The furniture is made of fine wood, the lights from exquisite murano glass. The café has a good selection of international newspapers and the long bar serves fantastic cocktails. The local radio station, Jazz Radio, presents fabulous live jazz music here every Sunday at midday. Meals are excellent, wines are good and breakfast is served all day! © wcities.com

contact:
tel: +49 (0)30 6809 2876
<http://kultur-neukoelln.de/galkoern.html>

2 Galerie im Körnerpark

location:
Schierker Straße 8
Berlin Berlin 12051

DESCRIPTION: When this green oasis in built-up Neukölln was created 100 years ago, no one could guess that it would one day be ruined by the noise of aircrafts overhead. The building of Tempelhof Airport in the 1930's threatened to be the end of the idyllic park. Officials wanted to remove it, but the park was eventually saved thanks to protests by locals. Fortunate, because Tempelhof Airport now has little air traffic and Körnerpark has returned to its original peaceful state. The neo-classical Orangerie has a small café and an art gallery—the Galerie im Körnerpark—one of Berlin's most atmospheric exhibition centres. © wcities.com

hours:
Tu-Su 11a-5p

3 Café Rix

contact:
tel: 49 30 686 9020
<http://www.caferix.de/>

location:
Karl-Marx-Straße 141

DESCRIPTION: Districts like Mitte and Prenzlauer Berg are host to numerous ornate and historic cafés which serve to remind you of Berlin's glamorous past. One of the last places you would expect to find such an exquisite establishment is on Karl-Marx-Straße, working-class Neukölln's shabby shopping street. Here, hidden away in a courtyard behind the main road, is a glorious

Berlin 12043

hours:

Daily 10a-1a

hall decorated with golden stucco, marble statues and large, gilt-edged mirrors. Built in the 19th century, this former dance hall was rescued from demolition in the 1980s and transformed into a café. A meeting place for coffee-lovers and art enthusiasts, Café Rix is also popular with visitors to the next-door Saalbau. © wcities.com

contact:

tel: +49 (0)30 8385 0100

fax: +49 (0)30 8385 0186

<http://www.bgbm.org/>

location:

Königin-Luise-Straße 6-8
Berlin Berlin 14191

hours:

Call for details

4 **Botanischer Garten und
Botanisches Museum**

DESCRIPTION: This large, sedate park in the south-west of Berlin provides the perfect respite to a hard day's slog through the hectic inner-city. One can admire the English gardens and a collection of flora from all over Europe, Asia, Africa and the Americas. It is also worth taking a look inside one or two of the huge tropical greenhouses. Visitors shouldn't miss the unique Botanical Museum at the entrance. © wcities.com



Berlin Snapshot

Local Info

Berlin is a city of contrasts and contradictions, full of excitement and forever evolving. Perhaps the latter point is the most poignant. The old and new German capital is in a constant state of flux, always "becoming" something without having ever "been." This phenomenon has accelerated since the fall of the Wall, and efforts are now concentrated on turning Berlin into an international metropolis.

For the past few decades, Berlin has been undergoing major rebuilding and planning efforts, which are visible in the new cityscape around Potsdamer Platz and the eastern city center. But there is also a rebuilding process taking place less visibly in the hearts and minds of Berliners.

The city is made up of 23 different districts, each with its own unique character. The following summary will help to give you an overview of this fascinating city and provide you with a guide to what you can do in each particular district and what you can expect to find there.

Mitte

Let's begin in Mitte, Berlin's most central district which literally means the center. The site of the first settlement in the Middle Ages, Mitte contains some of the city's oldest buildings such as Marienkirche and Nikolaikirche in the Nikolaiviertel, as well as many of Berlin's grandest buildings, strung out like pearls along the magnificent boulevard Unter den Linden. Stretching from Museum Island (Museuminsel with the Alte Nationalgalerie and the Pergamon Museum) past the imposing Berliner Dom and the lovely fountains and evergreens of the Lustgarten, past the splendid Crown Prince's Palace, Humboldt University and the State Opera House, the historic boulevard is crowned by the emblem of the old and new capital - the Brandenburg Gate.

Although it contains many of Berlin's architectural showpieces, Mitte is also an urban mishmash full of holes, imperfections and blemishes. The site of the former Royal Palace (pulled down in the 1950s) is now a rather open space, dominated by one of Germany's most controversial buildings, the Palast der Republik (to be torn down completely in Spring 2009). Along with the TV Tower on Alexanderplatz, the former East German parliament is one of the city

center's few remaining symbols of the GDR era. Just a decade ago, Mitte was scattered with drab socialist high-rises. Many of these have now been replaced by capitalist temples of consumerism, such as the postmodern Volkswagen Showroom on Unter den Linden and the futuristic glass department store Galeries Lafayette on Friedrichstraße. Other buildings, such as Hotel Adlon on Pariser Platz, have been rebuilt in the classic style of the early 1900s.

A stone's throw north of the River Spree, the face of Mitte changes once again. This is the Mitte of bars, restaurants, cafés and clubs - the heart of Berlin's buzzing nightlife scene. It is also the district of alternative galleries and artistic experimentation. In the years after the fall of the Wall, a unique subculture sprang up in the area around Hackescher Markt and Oranienburger Straße. Art collectives and squatters moved into the empty, run-down buildings and brought new, alternative impulses to the area, symbolized today by the Tacheles cultural center or the Acud theater. This spontaneous, makeshift charm is gradually disappearing, but that's another story.

Prenzlauer Berg

Let's stay east of the former border, although nowadays it's almost impossible to see where the Wall used to be, due to the major construction work taking place on both sides. The district to the north-east of Mitte, Prenzlauer Berg, used to be the center of alternative culture and political resistance in the GDR. But it has since been flooded by wealthy West Germans, eager to settle in the charming turn-of-the-century houses around Kollwitzplatz. As in Mitte, alternative culture is now becoming more and more established (for example, in the Kulturbrauerei, which is now home to a multi-screen cinema complex). Prenzlauer Berg is no longer an insider tip, but still has some of Berlin's best bars, restaurants and clubs.

Friedrichshain

Friedrichshain, the district to the south of Prenzlauer Berg, has now taken over the mantle as the last outpost of indigenous, alternative Berlin culture. A bit run down in places, this was the last area to be cleared of squatters and is still the focal point for Berlin's left-wing anarchist scene.

Architecturally speaking, Friedrichshain is an intriguing mixture of concrete socialist high-rises, monumental Stalin-era mammoths (along Karl-Marx-Allee) and stylish, late-nineteenth century town houses. The area around Simon-Dach-Straße is heaving with alternative bars, cafés and clubs and is a popular spot with students.

Kreuzberg

Crossing the River Spree on the Oberbaumbrücke, we reach the legendary Kreuzberg district. Situated next to the Wall in former West Berlin, Kreuzberg became infamous during the 1960s and 1970s as the center of West Germany's anarchist scene - a haven for squatters, hippies, punks and left-wing intellectuals. Although any remaining anarchists have long since fled to neighboring Friedrichshain, Kreuzberg is still the venue for violent demonstrations every 1st of May - inevitably accompanied by pitched battles with the police. A safer bet is to visit the annual Carnival of Cultures, Germany's biggest multicultural street festival, which takes place here every summer. Kreuzberg is home to many immigrants, including some 200,000 Turks. Some of this Oriental flair can be experienced in the area around Kottbusser Tor and Oranienstraße, which also has numerous alternative bars and cafés.

Potsdamer Platz

Heading up Friedrichstraße, past the ruins of Anhalter Bahnhof (an old train station) and the Martin Gropius Building, we leave Kreuzberg and enter the Tiergarten district at Potsdamer Platz. For many years a huge construction site, Potsdamer Platz is now complete. Boasting an enormous shopping center - the Arkaden - entertainment complexes such as the Cinemaxx and the Sony-Center, a casino and a musical theater venue, Potsdamer Platz is a magnet for tourists and locals alike.

Tiergarten

The real highlight of the district, however, is the sublime Tiergarten park, a refuge for nature-lovers, joggers and sunbathers. Full of ponds, grottoes and dotted with sculptures, Tiergarten park is crowned in the middle by the golden Siegestsäule victory monument. Until 2006, millions of young people descended on Tiergarten

Berlin Snapshot continued

once a year, for the Love Parade, a hedonistic feast of music and dance for techno fans from all over the world. However, this highly popular institution had to be re-located to the Rhineland for organizational reasons.

The north side of the park is the nerve center of political power. Lined up one after the other are the newly-constructed ministries, the monumental Reichstag parliamentary building and the equally monumental Chancellor's Office, all in close range to the controversial Jewish Memorial consisting of numerous concrete blocks. Only the palatial Schloss Bellevue, seat of the German President, exudes some of the calm of the surrounding park.

Schöneberg

Schöneberg, a scenic nineteenth century bourgeois quarter, is a popular place to go for an afternoon coffee, an evening cocktail or a bit of night-time partying. The cafés and bars around Winterfeldtplatz are always full, particularly after the market on Saturday afternoons. On the other hand, the streets around Nollendorfplatz and Motzstraße- home to Berlin's gay scene- are at their busiest (and most colorful) in the early morning hours.

Charlottenburg

It's high time to discover Berlin's "second" city center, the triangle between Ernst-Reuter-Platz, Wittenbergplatz and Adenauerplatz which makes up the center of western Berlin. Most of this area, which celebrated its heyday back in the Golden Twenties, lies in the Charlottenburg district. Its main artery is Kurfürstendamm, affectionately known by Berliners as "Ku'damm." This used to be one of Europe's finest and most elegant boulevards until it was reduced to rubble during the Second World War. It regained some of its flair in the seventies and eighties and is still a good place to see and be seen, but it seems to be losing out in the popularity stakes to Unter den Linden and Friedrichstraße in eastern Berlin, which now attract more attention and more investment.

The Memorial Church on Breitscheidplatz, however, is still brimming with camera-wielding tourists. Ku'damm's side-streets still bristle with theaters and hotels, such as the Kempinski, Savoy or Steigenberger- with boutiques, sushi bars and art galleries. The area around Savignyplatz is a great

place to go for a bite to eat or for a late-night cocktail, while the food hall on the top floor of KaDeWe department store is a feast for the senses.

Charlottenburg's crowning glory is the magnificent Schloss Charlottenburg royal palace, featuring dozens of opulently decorated rooms and chambers, as well as the lush Royal Gardens, the perfect place for a relaxing Sunday afternoon stroll. Several world-class museums- the Egyptian Museum, Bröhan Museum and the Berggruen Collection- are located close to the palace. Further south, the Funkturm, a smaller copy of the Eiffel Tower, towers over the Exhibition Center and the International Congress Center, offering great views over western Berlin. Well, we've now covered the inner city, so what do the remaining districts have to offer?

Wilmerdorf

The southwest of the city is the place where wealthy Berliners live. Largely spared during the War, there are hundreds of beautiful villas in Grunewald, part of the Wilmerdorf district and around Dahlem in Zehlendorf, which is also home to Berlin's Free University. The area around Lake Wannsee is a particularly popular spot with Berlin's high-society- perfect for mooring the yacht at the bottom of the garden!

Steglitz

Steglitz is friendly, green and clean and has two major attractions: the spectacular Botanical Gardens and some wonderful shopping facilities around Schloßstraße.

Wedding and Neukölln

More down-to-earth are the working-class districts of Wedding in the north and Neukölln in the south, which is sometimes referred to as the "Berlin Bronx." Although they both have a reputation of being ghettos for the poor, unemployed and other down-and-outs, they are not as bad as they are made out to be. In fact, they are lively places with an earthy proletarian flair, a place to meet "real" Berliners.

Eastern Districts

The eastern districts, on the other hand, can't escape from the shadow of Communist East Germany, even though much has changed here since the fall of the Wall. Most of the gray

concrete towers in places like Lichtenberg, Weißensee, Treptow, Hohenschönhausen or Marzahn have been repainted in friendly pastel colors and now boast the largest entertainment complexes and the most modern shopping malls in the region. There's plenty to discover here, such as the world's second biggest Jewish Cemetery in Weißensee or the monumental Soviet War Memorial in Treptower Park.

Parks, Forests & Lakes

Berlin is a city full of green oases, like Volkspark Friedrichshain and Volkspark Humboldtthain, Hasenheide and Jungfernheide, Rehberge and Britzer Gardens. Berlin's many rivers and canals- such as the beautiful Landwehrkanal are flanked on both sides by broad, leafy parks and meander through the city like ribbons of green and blue.

The icing on the cake is the wonderful variety of lakes and forests in the suburbs. Joggers and horseback-riders share places like the Grunewald Forest, Lake Schlachtensee, and the Krumme Lanke. Also very popular are Tegeler Forest, Tegeler See (Lake Tegeler) and the Müggelsee (Lake Müggel) with wild boar, foxes and deer. Indeed, you would hardly ever need to leave the city limits- if it weren't for even more idyllic lakes and forests in the surrounding region of Brandenburg.

©

History

Berlin is in good shape- and that's despite, not because, of its 800-year long history.

Back in 1300, the two neighboring trading towns of Berlin and Coelln joined forces centering in the district now called Mitte (meaning "center"). All but destroyed by the Thirty Years War, the young city soon invited in its first batch of immigrants to make up for the loss in population: French Protestants, persecuted in their home country and looking for religious freedom were a welcome addition to Berlin's workforce. Their influence can be seen today in the area around the Französischer Dom (French Cathedral) or in the Berlin dialect, speakers of which still call a sidewalk *atrottoir*.

It then fell on the Prussian "Soldier King," Frederick William I, to develop the city. In

Berlin Snapshot continued

1709, he made Berlin the capital, and his son, Frederick the Great, strengthened Prussia's role as a major player in Europe. At this time, the Prussian court was a cradle of enlightenment, frequently visited by the philosopher Voltaire. The King's appreciation of the humanities paved the way for a new era of classicist architecture, and fantastic buildings such as the ornate Konzerthaus and the imposing Altes Museum were erected. Berlin's love affair with the arts is reflected in the fact that the city still boasts three opera houses- the Deutsche Oper, Staatsoper, and Komische Oper.

The Napoleonic occupation of Berlin in 1806 was met with fervent patriotism and produced a powerful liberal reform movement. However, the bourgeois revolution of 1848 was short-lived, and William I became emperor of the Second German Reich in 1871, with Berlin as its capital.

Berlin boomed during the Founding Years at the end of the 19th century. Industrial giant Siemens built a modern underground system capable of transporting hundreds of thousands of people every day. Scientists such as Robert Koch led the world in research and development, while artists like Gerhard Hauptmann and Wassily Kandinsky paved new ground in the arts.

All this was cut short by the First World War. After the war, Berlin became the focus of the failed 1918/19 revolution and went on to become the capital of Germany's first fragile democracy, the Weimar Republic, in the 1920s. The city assumed the status of a glamorous arts and entertainment center, while at the same time being an industrial powerhouse. At the time, artists such as Brecht, Gropius and Feininger forged a legacy that left a lasting impression throughout Europe.

Berlin remained the capital of Germany during the Nazi era. Hitler even envisioned the city as "Germania," the capital of a global empire, and began to leave his megalomaniac mark on the architecture and the infrastructure of the city. Berliners suffered under Nazi rule, especially the persecuted left-wing movements and, of course, the large Jewish community. More than 60,000 Berlin Jews, nearly half of the city's population, died in the Holocaust. Thousands more fled the country. Jewish

cultural life has only recently known a revival (in the Scheuenviertel).

At the end of World War II, Berlin was reduced to little more than a pile of rubble, its population halved. The Potsdam Agreement divided the city into four sectors, each of which was ruled by one of the Allies- the USA, the USSR, Britain and France. All too soon Berlin became the focus and symbol of Cold War animosities (and the preferred location for spy movies). While the German Democratic Republic proclaimed East Berlin its capital, the three western sectors remained under Allied supervision until 1990. On both sides of the Wall — erected in 1961 to stop East Berliners from fleeing, Berlin continued to spearhead reform movements, such as the peace movement in the West and opposition to the one-party regime in the East. Thirty five years later, during his 1998 visit to Berlin, US President Clinton would make a point of echoing John F. Kennedy's famous words, "Ich bin ein Berliner" ("I am a Berliner").

The fall of the Wall in 1989 wasn't entirely unexpected. Level-headed politicians on both sides of the Iron Curtain had been working towards a cautious reconciliation since the early 1970s, but few expected the Wall to fall overnight. An entire generation had grown up knowing Berlin only as a divided city.

Nowadays, Berlin is once again the capital of a democratic state, yet unification is very much a work in progress.

©

Hotel Insights

Whatever your budget and whatever your taste, the choice of places to stay in Berlin is vast. From astronomically expensive establishments boasting every conceivable luxury to basic backpackers' hostels; from mammoth international hotel chains to small, family-run boarding houses, this city has it all.

Changing Appeal

Much has changed in the decade since reunification. Many of Berlin's major hotels are now situated in the eastern part of the city, such as the legendary Hotel Adlon next to the Brandenburg Gate or the wonderful Four Seasons on Gendarmenmarkt. Many of West Berlin's traditional flagships such

as the Kempinski or InterContinental are now struggling to hold their own against the young upstarts from the east. In fact, it isn't just the hotels that are suffering. The whole of the western part of town seems to have lost its attraction in recent years. Both tourists and locals now tend to head east for shopping, wining and dining, or sightseeing.

At the opposite end of the price scale, another kind of a revolution has taken place. Since Berlin's first backpackers' hostel, Fabrik in Kreuzberg, opened in 1995, similar establishments have mushroomed all over the city. Backpackers now flood to places like Circus. Berlin's traditional youth hostels, such as the extremely central Jugendgästehaus Berlin, are equally inexpensive but have a slightly moth-eaten image in comparison to the trendy new backpackers places.

Berlin is a city of two centers, and this is reflected in the concentration of accommodation around Kurfürstendamm in the western city center and Unter den Linden in the eastern center.

Charlottenburg Most hotels in the western city center are located on Kurfürstendamm itself or in the quieter side-streets just off the main strip. Many of the major hotels can be found on the upper end of "Ku'damm" between Uhlandstraße and the Memorial Church, such as Kempinski and Steigenberger on Los-Angeles-Platz, or the Savoy on Fasanenstraße. Cheaper accommodation can be found in a number of modern, medium-sized establishments such as Hollywood Media or the Concept Hotel. If you're looking for something slightly smaller yet equally extravagant, try Bleibtreu or Hecker's. Other more intimate and inexpensive alternatives in the western center are Hotel California and Hotel Augusta.

The area between Breitscheidplatz and Lützowplatz is home to several deluxe hotels: The Palace and the InterContinental, as well as the Schweizerhof, the Grand Hotel Esplanade and Hotel Berlin, one of the largest hotels in town.

Mitte

On the other side of the Brandenburg Gate- in Berlin's historic eastern city center there are several more deluxe establishments vying for potential clients:

Berlin Snapshot continued

The Westin Grand Berlin, the Hilton Berlin Hotel, the Four Seasons and the Maritim proArte Hotel Berlin. With the exception of the Hotel Adlon, none are situated directly on Unter den Linden, but in the atmospheric Friedrichstadt quarter near Gendarmenmarkt. Another place worthy of mention is the Hotel Agon on Alexanderplatz.

In all the above-mentioned areas, you'll find that you have to pay a bit extra for the privilege of being so centrally located. But if you don't need your lodgings to be totally central, there are plenty of places that offer great value for the money that are slightly out of the city center. Public transport in Berlin is very reliable and runs throughout the night, so it's generally no problem if you're staying in a hotel slightly further afield. In fact, it can often be a relief to get away from the hustle and bustle of the tourist areas and immerse yourself in the real Berlin. Located next to the Exhibition Center are a couple of more affordable options. For example, the D:O:M:I:C:I:L:, the Kanthotel or the Ibis as well as family-run pensions host guests during major trade shows at the Messe. That means that prices can increase dramatically at certain times of the year. **Schöneberg, Kreuzberg, Wilmersdorf & Tiergarten**

The Western residential districts of Schöneberg, Kreuzberg, Wilmersdorf and Tiergarten all have a wide range of places to stay, catering to all tastes and all budgets. And it's not always the case that the classy neighborhoods are full of luxurious lodgings and that less well-off districts are full of dingy dives. Thus you'll come across the moderately priced Hotel St. Michaels-Heim in the heart of exclusive Grunewald, the pricey Park Consul (with private golf facilities) in working-class Moabit and the elegant turn-of-the-century Hotel Riehmers Hofgarten in multicultural Kreuzberg.

Prenzlauer Berg & Friedrichshain

On the other hand, the Eastern residential districts still only have a limited choice of medium-sized hotels, with the Park Inn in Prenzlauer Berg and Upstalsboom in Friedrichshain being two rare examples. There are however, plenty of smaller hotels and guesthouses to choose from, such as Hotel Greifswald near Kollwitzplatz.

Lodging Near the Airports

Last but not least, a large number of hotels are congregated around Berlin's three airports. The Dorint Budget Hotel Tegel, Mercure Tempelhof Airport and the enormous Estrel (1,125 rooms) not far from Schönefeld airport in Neukölln, are the most prominent examples.

©

Restaurants Insights

Before the fall of the Wall, eating in Berlin was regarded as a minor sideline to the more important matter of drinking. Guests wanting to sample a "typical Berlin dish" could easily be dissuaded by the mere mention of such alleged delicacies as pig's ear with yellow peas. A liquid diet was definitely the safer option.

Fortunately, Berlin's gastronomic landscape has since changed beyond recognition. Gourmets are now spoiled for choice as more and more first class restaurants open their doors to the public. Great food can also be found in many cafés, which offer a selection of national and international dishes at reasonable prices. Budget travelers are well catered to by hundreds of Imbiss fast food restaurants- once the realm of the greasy sausage- but now brimming with Asian and Middle Eastern delights for just a few Euros.

Charlottenburg

Chic and up-market. The best restaurants and cafés in the western city center are found in the side-streets between Kurfürstendamm and Kantstraße as well as in the area around leafy Savignyplatz.

Gourmets with a deep wallet should pay a visit to Ana e Bruno for exquisite Italian, while those on a normal budget could try the legendary pizzas at XXII Apostel. Otherwise head to Tai Ji for some great Chinese, to Le Canard for fantastic French or to Hilit for Turkish delights with an Oriental flair. Celebrity spotters will be in their element at Paris Bar, a French bistro better known for its well-heeled clientèle and late-night cocktails than for its food.

Fans of the traditional Berlin Currywurst sausage couldn't do any better than at the Imbiss stand at Amtsgerichtplatz in Kantstraße. The queues are always long, but it's well worth the wait! Good bets for a lazy Sunday brunch are Restaurant 31 and Pasticceria e Rosticceria Italiana. And, if

you're looking for a bit of pre-Wall flair, pop into Zwiebelfisch, Diener or Dicke Wirtin- traditional Berlin pubs that haven't changed in years.

Friedrichshain

A popular hang-out for students and young Berliners. Friedrichshain is the last bastion of Berlin's "alternative" subculture and is the best district to explore if you're looking for hip bars, cool cafés and underground clubs. Most are centered around Simon-Dach-Straße, Boxhagener Platz and Schreinerstraße. But at the rate that new places are opening up, it won't be long before Friedrichshain loses its insider feel.

Check out the spacey Astro Bar, the cocktail lounge next door to Dachkammer, and finish off the evening in Tagung, a popular bar-cum-club intriguingly decorated with East German political memorabilia. If you can still handle breakfast after a long night on the town, Leander and Apotheke have a good selection at knock-down prices.

Kreuzberg

For conservative radicals. Once a haven for punks and anarchists, Kreuzberg has certainly evolved since the fall of the Wall. While you can still savor some of that old revolutionary flavor in a number of bars around Oranienstraße and Wiener Straße, southern Kreuzberg (around Bergmannstraße) is now dominated by chic cafés and exclusive restaurants.

Riehmers Hofgarten, Altes Zollhaus and Medici serve up some of the best "neue deutsche Küche" in town, while places like Austria and Jolesh are good bets for more traditional fare. Francophiles should head for Le Cochon Bourgeois, while lovers of Mediterranean cuisine should pay a visit to Sale e Tabacchi. Kreuzberg is also home to thousands of Turkish immigrants. So when in Rome... the Imbiss stand next to Schlesisches Tor U-Bahn station is widely reputed to have the best döner kebabs this side of Istanbul.

Many of Berlin's most scenic cafés are situated on the banks of the canal at Paul-Lincke-Ufer, the perfect place for a lazy Sunday afternoon brunch. Sit down, relax and watch the world go by from the gardens of Café am Ufer or Café Übersee, or wait until night falls and mingle with Kreuzberg's young generation in Ankerklause.

Berlin Snapshot continued

If you're looking for a taste of legendary hard-core Kreuzberg, check out the likes of Madonna or Intertank. Roses is a popular spot among the gay crowd. Slightly softer, but still very "Kreuzberg" are Morena and Wiener Blut, both of which are highly recommended. If you're the more traditional type, pay a visit to Yorckschlösschen, a rustic pub with hearty local fare and live jazz on Sundays. And when it comes to tradition, there's nothing like Golgatha's beer garden on a warm summer evening.

Mitte

The undisputed center of Berlin nightlife, packed with bars, cafés, restaurants and clubs. While tourists now outnumber locals in many of the establishments around Oranienburger Straße, at least you won't have to search for long until you find a place that you like. From the sleek Café Orange to the wacky Café Zapata in Stachelschweine Kabarett Theater, the Oranienburger Straße strip has something for everyone. But if you want to avoid the masses and fancy a bit of local flair, try Café Ici or Hackbarth's in nearby Auguststraße. Alternatively, head for Mittendrin in Sophienstraße.

The area around Hackesche Höfe is equally busy. Popular lunchtime venues are Café Hackescher Hof and Yosoy tapas bar, evening favorites include the South American restaurant-bar Brazil, while night-owls flock to Cocktailbar Baal or Sage Club. Gourmets can savor the finest new international cuisine at Borchardt and Vau while fans of hearty German food will be in their element at Stäv, Volksgaststätte or Zur Letzten Instanz, said to be Berlin's oldest restaurant.

Prenzlauer Berg

The fashionable, up-and-coming district. Particularly during the warm summer months, beautiful, tree-lined Kollwitzplatz acts as a magnet for tourists who descend in droves on the atmospheric cafés and restaurants that adorn the quaint nineteenth century square.

Locals, on the other hand, prefer to meet at cafés such Anita Wronski and Sowohl Als Auch, or at late-night bars like Luxus Bar. If you wish to drink in a smoke-free atmosphere, check out Cafe Mia. Prater is also a popular destination with a fantastic beer garden.

There's good food aplenty to be had in Prenzlauer Berg: check out the breakfast buffet at Li(bi)do or Schall& Rauch, the great antipasti at Il Pane e le Rose, the spicy curries at Mao Thai, the hearty Russian dishes and live folk music at Pasternak or the Kurdish specialties consumed on traditional floor cushions at Miro. For those looking for a quick snack: Zarskes Gaststätte.

Schöneberg

Plenty to do here. Many of the cafés and bars near Winterfeldtplatz and Goltzstraße sprung up in the 1980s, when Schöneberg was the place to go out in West Berlin. Check out cult favorites such as Café M and Mutter; try one of the superb cocktails at Green Door.

Schöneberg is also the focal point of Berlin's vibrant gay community, with countless gay bars and clubs located around Motzstraße and Fuggerstraße. Lenz die Bar is popular in the early evening, Tom's Bar, Hafen, Connection or Begine later on.

When it comes to eating in Schöneberg, you're spoiled for choice. Many Berliners come from far afield to breakfast in style at places such as Tomasa, April and Montevideo. Gourmets should head straight to Bamberger Reiter or Fischer's Restaurant for classic and modern German dishes and an enormous selection of wines. Otherwise, try Cheban for great Lebanese, Storch for traditional Alsace cuisine and Baharat or Habibi if you're in the mood for a quick falafel.

Tiergarten

Pricey and not particularly exciting, the southern part of Tiergarten is a popular haunt for businessmen, politicians and visitors staying in the hotels around Lützowplatz. Hotel bars and restaurants naturally dominate the gastronomic scene, the highlight being Harry's New York Bar in the Grand Hotel Esplanade. Guests looking to venture out of the hotel in the evening could try the wonderful Mediterranean cuisine on offer at Am Karlsbad. Alternatively, wine and dine with Berlin's high-society in Paris-Moskau, a first class restaurant with a sumptuous summer terrace, and finish off the evening with a cocktail in the Bar am Lützowplatz, Berlin's high temple of drinking.

If you're here on a warm summer evening, take a stroll through the idyllic Tiergarten park to Café am Neuen See- one of Berlin's most attractive beer gardens- or to the popular Schleusen Krug on the Landwehrkanal. A real Berlin institution is Café Einstein, an exquisite coffee house with original 1920s flair- perfect for a relaxing brunch or an afternoon coffee break.

Wilmerdorf

This area caters to a young and affluent crowd. The cafés and restaurants around Ludwigkirchplatz heave with students during weekends. See and be seen in places like Café Solo or Manzinis, head to Jimmy's Diner for dinner and finish off the evening with a cocktail in the earthy Berlin Bar. If you're just looking for somewhere to relax during the day, try the glorious Café im Literaturhaus, a peaceful oasis just a stone's throw from Ku'damm. ©

Nightlife Insights

Famous throughout the world as a Mecca for culture and entertainment, many people would claim that Berlin is itself little more than one big entertainment complex. Yet, there are some special places in this entertainment nirvana, the best of which we shall list here.

Cinema

Berlin boasts over 100 cinemas, from ultra-modern multi-screen complexes to traditional film theaters such as the UFA Palast. A particularly atmospheric establishment is the Soviet-style International on Karl-Marx-Allee. For more obscure films try the Acud, where you won't be disturbed by hundreds of popcorn-junkies. And don't worry if your German isn't up to par, as places like the Odeon and Babylon Kino feature the latest flicks for English speakers, whereas the Cinéma Paris features movies for the French crowd.

Comedy

Well, if you can take some heavy satire, Berlin Mitte is the place to be. From the legendary Distel to the Chamäleon's late night shows in the Hackesches Hof Theater. Charlottenburg also has plenty to offer, with its traditional

Berlin Snapshot continued

Wühlmäuse, Stachelschweine and the more comedy-oriented Bar jeder Vernunft.

Theater

Theater in Berlin can mean a lot of different things, such as controversial contemporary Anglo-American drama at the Baracke or a light comedy with mass appeal on Ku'damm (Komödie & Theater am Kurfürstendamm). While director Frank Castorf heckles the audience at the Volksbühne am Rosa Luxemburg Platz, veteran Claus Peymann reinterprets Brecht at the Berliner Ensemble. International avant-garde dance troupes step it up at the Hebbel Theater, acrobats and magicians put a spell on the Wintergarten, while the Grips-Theater interacts with its young audience. Anglophiles should check out the English Theater Berlin (not opera, but fringe theater).

Music

Berlin is also a great place for music lovers. Even though David Bowie and Iggy Pop are long gone, Marilyn Manson is still supposed to enjoy some absinth around the corner. Top addresses include Kreuzberg's Junction Bar or BeBop for jazz, the Sage Club for Afro-beats and hip-hop and the SO 36 for alternative/punk/rock. Big gigs take place at the Arena and Columbiahalle. Classical aficionados have to make the painful choice between three opera houses- or simply head straight to the Philharmonie to listen to the world-famous Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra.

Alternative Culture

All of the above too middle-of-the-road for you? Check out the innumerable centers of alternative culture that Berlin is famous for. The UFA-Fabrik, for example, is the place to be in summer, while the Kulturbrauerei is good for alternative theater, art and concerts. A kaleidoscope of modern Chinese art, salsa parties or readings by writers from developing countries are on the agenda at the Haus der Kulturen der Welt, while the Pfefferberg concentrates on the younger, hipper, multi-cultural clientele of reggae and rai concerts.

Clubs

It's getting late and you want to move your dancing feet? The clubs around Rosenthaler Platz have the remedy! Some are tucked away in backyards and have irregular opening hours, others are hard to

find for lack of a name over the door, but all are open until dawn. The Sophienclub quenches the pop, soul and Latin thirst; for techno, head to Friedrichshain's Berghain or to Tresor's new location on Köpenicker Straße. Berlin counts numerous nightclubs. Further options include the Watergate Club or the Pulp Mansion.

Other Options

Confused or undecided? The Potsdamer Platz offers- after shopping in the US-style Arkaden- many entertainment options, including a casino, a 3D IMAX Movie Theater, a musical theater, the Theater am Potsdamer Platz and a multi-screen cinema, the Cinemaxx. But if you're looking for something more typical, you'll always find plenty to do in the two streets that even Berliners love to confuse, Oranienstraße in Kreuzberg and Oranienburger Straße in Mitte, each with a mix of restaurants, shops, bars, cafés, movie theaters and music venues that will guarantee a great evening out.

©

Things to Do Insights

Most cities only have one center, but Berlin has two. Although East and West Berlin have successfully interwoven to form a more-or-less homogeneous city, city planners are still trying to cope with the "problem" of two centers.

Brandenburg Gate

For those in Berlin for the first time, a stroll down Unter den Linden, Berlin's most prestigious boulevard, is a must. Begin at the Brandenburg Gate, situated on Pariser Platz, which was once the border of East and West Berlin. Today Brandenburg Gate is a symbol of German reunification. This broad, tree-lined avenue contains many of Berlin's historic landmarks, including the Max Liebermann Haus. Near the Reichstag, home of the German government, and the Brandenburg Gate, lies a huge field of concrete blocks. The Holocaust Memorial, formally known as the Monument to the Murdered Jews in Europe, provides information about the Jews who were under the wrath of Nazi forces. For an in-depth look into 2000 years of Jewish history, pay a visit to the Jewish Museum. Also, nearby on niederkirchnerstraße is the Topographie des Terrors, which features an exhibition recounting the history of Nazi crimes.

Restaurants are mostly located inside the hotels in this area, yet plenty of food stands provide visitors with refreshments and snacks.

Friedrichstraße

Friedrichstraße was the focal point of Berlin's thriving nightlife during the "Golden Twenties," but now has become filled with ritzy shopping malls like Galeries Lafayette. Behind the Friedrichstadt-Passagen is Gendarmenmarkt, one of Berlin's most beautiful squares, featuring the graceful Deutscher Dom and Französischer Dom. Visit the popular Haus am Checkpoint Charlie to learn about the history of the Cold War. In addition, nearby is the site of the Berliner Mauer (Berlin Wall), the former symbol of a divided Europe that endured four decades of uncompromising and unrelenting politics of the Cold War era. Beginning at the former border-crossing on Friedrichstraße, the Tränenpalast (Palace of Tears) conjures up memories of tearful goodbyes as Berlin's divided families bode farewell after an all-too-brief visit. Along Ebertstraße, red stripes on the road mark the route of the Wall that many would prefer to forget. To see the longest and most famous stretch of Wall, you'll need to take the S-Bahn to Ostbahnhof. This 1.3-kilometer (3/4 mile) long stretch of Wall was painted by artists from all over the world in 1990 and has now been turned into an open-air exhibition known as the East Side Gallery.

Museumsinsel

The beautiful Schlossbrücke, which spans the River Spree, brings you to Museumsinsel (Museum Island), the northern part of the island in which several renowned museums occupy. The Altes Museum, Alte Nationalgalerie, Pergamon Museum and Bodemuseum make up one of Europe's most impressive art collections. After years of reconstruction, the Neues Museum will reopen in 2009 to the public. Next, walk back towards the main street through the lovely Lustgarten, the former royal gardens once used by the Nazis and East Germans for military marches, you can't miss the enormous Berliner Dom which rears up on your left. Built in 1905 and modeled on St. Peter's Cathedral in Rome, Berliner Dom was destroyed during the war and then painstakingly rebuilt over the ensuing decades. Across the road from the cathedral, you can still see the

Berlin Snapshot continued

gloomy Palast der Republik, the former East German parliamentary chamber. It is supposed to be deconstructed by February 2009. It was built on the site of the glorious 15th-century Berliner Schloß, the royal palace that was deemed unworthy of restoration and was demolished by East German authorities in the 1950s. The only remnant of the original palace is the triumphal arch-portal, which has been incorporated into the State Council Building on the south side of Schlossplatz.

Nikolaiviertel & Alexanderplatz

Near the State Council Building you will reach the Nikolaiviertel, the historic birthplace of the city. Within this square you can tour around the Red City Hall, Alexanderplatz, an important railway station, and the famous Fernsehturm (TV Tower). Tastefully revamped by East German authorities for Berlin's 750th anniversary celebrations in 1987, the centerpiece of this historic city quarter is the 13th-century Nikolai Church. Nearby you can also visit the Knoblauchhaus, an 18th century house, turned museum.

Kurfürstendamm

Starting from Berlin's oldest underground station at Wittenberg Platz, head down Tauentzienstraße, past the legendary KaDeWe department store until you reach Breitscheidplatz, dominated by the ruins of the Kaiser Wilhelm Memorial Church. You might enjoy a visit to Berlin Zoo, situated behind the Memorial Church. Continue down Joachimstaler Straße and take a right onto Ku'damm, the smart shopping boulevard that runs through the heart of the western center. If you're feeling hungry, turn right into Knesebeckstraße and follow the road until you hit Savignyplatz. The Dicke Wirtin offers typical Berlin cuisine, and Bohemian-types will like Zwiebfisch café.

Whether you travel by land or sea, you will experience the city's historical significance while you venture through the modern landscape of Berlin. Guided and boat tours offers insider information, or you can always pick up a tour book, hop on a bus and see for yourself.

Guided Tours

Insiders Walking and Bike Tours Berlin(+49 30 692 3149/ <http://www.insidertour.com/tours.php/>) Unwrapping History(<http://www.unwrapping-history.de/>) Tour-the-

East(+49 30 4703 4747/ <http://www.tour-the-east.com/>)

Bus Tours

Berlin City Tour(+49 30 68 30 26 41/ <http://www.berlin-city-tour.de/>) Berlin Sightseeing(+49 30 79 74 56 00/ <http://www.berlin-stadtrundfahrt-web.de/>) Oldtimer Berlin(+ 49 30 21 90 21 88/ <http://www.oldtimer-berlin.com/>) BBS(http://www.bbsberlin.de/sightseeing_english_berlin_hotel_incoming_index.htm/)

A cheap alternative to an organized tour is a trip on the no. 100 bus departing from the bus station at Zoologischer Garten. The bus passes many famous sights along the way, including the Memorial Church on Ku'damm, the Victory Column and Bellevue Palace in the Tiergarten, the Reichstag and Brandenburg Gate, the State Opera on Unter den Linden and the TV Tower at Alexanderplatz. Buses run every ten minutes.

Boat Tours

Reederei Winkler(+49 30 349 95 95/ <http://www.reedereiwinkler.de/>) Berliner Seegler-Verband(<http://www.segeln-in-koepenick.de/>) Berliner Wassertaxi(+49 30 65 88 02 03/ <http://www.berlinerwassertaxi.de/>) ©

Travel Tips

Getting There

Air

Currently three major airports service Berlin: The northwestern Airport Berlin-Tegel(TXL)(+49 1805 00 0186/ <http://www.berlin-airport.de/>); the southeastern Airport Berlin-Schönefeld(+49 1805 00 0186/ <http://www.berlin-airport.de/>); and the central Airport Berlin-Tempelhof(+49 1805 00 0186/ <http://www.berlin-airport.de/>). The former Central Airport of the GDR(Schönefeld) is being expanded to become the Berlin Brandenburg International Airport. After it opens in 2011, the downtown airports in Tegel and Tempelhof will be closed.

Airport Berlin-Tegel

Air Berlin(+49 1805 737 800/ <http://www.airberlin.com/>) Air France(+49 1805 830 830/ <http://www.airfrance.com/>)

Air Italy(+356 2364 5300/ <http://www.airitaly.eu/>) British Airways(+49 180 5 26 65 22/ <http://www.ba.com/>) Condor(+49 180 5 767 757/ <http://www11.condor.com/>) Continental Airlines(+49 180 3 21 26 10/ <http://www.continental.com/>) Delta Airlines(+49 180 333 7880/ <http://www.delta.com/>) Eurowings(<http://www.eurowings.de/>) Finnair(+49 180 3 34 66 24/ <http://www.finnair.com/>) Germania(+49 1805 737 100/ <http://www.germania.aero/>) Iberia(+49 1805 44 29 00/ <http://www.iberia.com/de/>) LTU International Airways(+49 30 4101 3601/ <http://www.ltu.de/>) Lufthansa(+49 180 3 80 38 03/ <http://www.lufthansa.com/>) SAS(+49 1805 117 002/ <http://www.flysas.com/>) Swiss International Air Lines(+49 30 4101 2764/ <http://www.swiss.com/>) TUifly.com(+49 900 109 95 95/ <http://www.tuifly.com/>)

Airport Berlin-Schönefeld:

Aer Lingus(+49 89 552 533 53/ <http://www.aerlingus.com/>) Condor(+49 180 5 767 757/ <http://www.condor.com/>) Easyjet(+49 900 1100 161/ <http://www.easyjet.com/>) Germanwings(+49 900 19 19 100/ <http://www.germanwings.com/>) Icelandair(+49 69 29 99 78/ <http://www.icelandair.de/>) LTU International Airways(+49 30 6091 3898/ <http://www.ltu.de/>) Norwegian(+47 815 21 815/ <http://www.norwegian.no/>) Ryanair(+49 900 116 0500/ <http://www.ryanair.com/>) Sky Airlines(+90 242 3108500/ <http://www.skyairlines.net/>) Transavia(+49 695 09 85 446/ <http://www.transavia.com/>)

Airport Berlin-Tempelhof

Brussels Airlines(+49 30 6951 3850/ <http://www.brusselsairlines.com/>) InterSky(+49 30 6951 2686/ <http://www.intersky.biz/>) LGW Luffahrt-Gesellschaft Walter(+49 30 6951 2681/ <http://www.lgw.de/>)

From the Airport

Airport Berlin-Tegel

Public Transport: It's easy to find public transportation connections from Tegel to the heart of the city: The buses 109 or express X9 will take you to Zoologischer Garten. From here you can connect by bus, U-Bahn(subway) or S-Bahn(tram) to anywhere in the city. Tickets are valid for two hours for all public transport. Stops are located outside of the terminal. For visitors from Dresden, Leipzig, and Magdeburg, the airport offers a special shuttle service that

Berlin Snapshot continued

will take you to your destination and back. However, you have to book in advance under <http://www.berlin-airport.de/>.

Taxi: Taxis can be found at ground level outside of Terminal A and Terminal C. Companies include: Taxi-Ruf Würfelfunk"0800-Cabcall" AG:+49 800 222 22 55 Quality Taxi:+49 800 26 300 00 Funk Taxi Berlin:+49 30 26 10 26 TaxiFunk Berlin GmbH:+49 30 44 33 22 Even though most taxi drivers speak English, it shouldn't be expected

Car Rental: The car rental counter is located near parking space P2. Avis(+49 30 4101-3148/ <http://www.avis.de/>) Budget(+49 30 4101-3364/<http://www.budget.de/>) Europcar(+49 30 418520/ <http://www.europcar.de/>) Hertz(+49 30 4704674/ <http://www.hertz.de/>) Nationalcar(+49 30 4101-3383/ <http://www.nationalcar.de/>) SIXT(+49 1805 252525/ <http://www.sixt.de/>)

Airport Berlin-Schönefeld

Public Transport: From the airport's train station(located 400 meters/0.2 miles north), you have easy access to the subway(S9) that will take you to many of the downtown locations, such as Ostkreuz, Ostbahnhof, Alexanderplatz, Hackescher Markt, Hauptbahnhof, and Zoologischer Garten. If you want to reach Schöneberg, Charlottenburg, or the Westkreuz, S45 will take you to these destinations. A wide range of buses depart from the airport(some of them even directly in front of the terminals): X7, 162, 163, 171, 734, 736, N60, N71

Taxi: Taxis are located either directly outside of the terminals or outside of the train station. For a list of companies and phone numbers, see above.

Train: At the train station, you have access to the Deutsche Bahn(DB), which will take you to other German cities. However the Intercity Express(ICE) does not service this station, only the slower, regional train. Trains serving this station are RE7, RB22, and RB14. To reach other major German or European cities by train, the nearest stop is Ostbahnhof.

Car Rental: Avis(+49 30 6091-5710/ <http://www.avis.de/>) Budget(+49 30 6091-5700/ <http://www.budget.de/>) Europcar(+49 30 6349160/ <http://www.europcar.de/>) Hertz(+49 30 6091-5730/ <http://www.hertz.de/>) E-Sixt(+49 1805 252525/ <http://www.e-sixt.de/>)

Airport Berlin-Tempelhof

Public Transport: Airport Berlin-Tempelhof is the most central airport of the city with easy access to the subway U6 at the Platz der Luftbrücke. From there it will take you about 15 minutes to reach the city center at Friedrichstraße from where you have access to subway lines serving Zoologischer Garten, Alexanderplatz, Ostbahnhof, Ostkreuz, and Westkreuz. Various bus stops are located outside of the airport where you have access to the 104 and the 248.

Taxi: Taxis are located in front of the airport at the Platz der Luftbrücke. For a list of companies, see above.

Car Rental: Avis(+49 30 6951 2444 or +49 30 6581 2340/ <http://www.avis.de/>) Europcar(+49 30 6904 700/ <http://www.europcar.de/>) Hertz(+49 30 6981 9892/ <http://www.hertz.de/>) SIXT(+49 1805 252525/ <http://www.sixt.de/>)

Since May 2006, the central station Berlin Hauptbahnhof is located in Berlin Mitte. From there, travelers are able to reach their final destination in Berlin by using public transport for free if they have a valid Deutsche Bahn(DB) train ticket. Deutsche Bahn(<http://www.bahn.de/>) is Germany's national railway, offering a comprehensive service to German and other European destinations. Tickets are expensive if you pay full fare, but the DB does have a range of specials which make train travel more economical. Schedules can be found on their website. Special fares to watch out for include: Schönes Wochenende Ticket(Happy Week-end Ticket): EUR33/35. On Saturdays or Sundays, unlimited travel for up to five adults on any regional train in Germany. Brandenburg Ticket: EUR27/29. One day unlimited travel within Berlin and Brandenburg for up to five adults. Brandenburg-Berlin Guten Abend Ticket(Brandenburg-Berlin-Ticket Night): EUR21. It is valid from Monday to Sunday for one day of your choice from 9a until 3a of the following day.

Bus The Central Bus Station(Zentraler Omnibusbahnhof(ZOB)), from which all intercity services depart, is located in the west of city. From here you catch the U2 at Messe Nord/ICC(direction Vinetastraße/Pankow) to get to the city center. The following bus companies have regular departures from the

ZOB to all major German& European cities: Berlinien Bus(+49 30 302 5361/ <http://www.berlinienbus.de/>) Gullivers Reisen GmbH(+49 30 89 0660/ <http://www.gullivers.de/>)

Car Berlin can be accessed by the Autobahn, Straße des 17. Juni, Bismarckstraße, Tauentzienstraße, Potsdamer Straße and Brandenburgische Straße.

Getting Around

Public Transport Berliner Verkehrsbetriebe(<http://www.bvg.de/>) operates nine underground lines(U-Bahn), 28 tram lines(S-Bahn), 163 bus lines and six ferries. Single Tickets start at EUR2.10, Day Passes at EUR6.10 and 7-Day Cards at EUR25.40. See the website for details. For information on public transportation visit:(<http://www.berliner-verkehr.de/traffic.htm/>) Berlin Linien Bus(<http://www.berlinlinienbus.de/>)

Bike In comparison to other German cities, locals find the motorist/cyclist relationship in Berlin rather hostile. For some, however, Berlin is bicycle heaven- wide streets, reserved(and respected) bike lanes. Bicycle Station provides bike rentals and tours of Berlin. For more information visit: Pedal Power(<http://pedalpower.de/>).

©

Fun Facts

Berlin State: Berlin **Country:** Germany

Berlin By The Numbers:

Population: 3.4 million(city), 4.9 million(metropolitan) Average Winter Temperature:-6° C/ 31° F Average Summer Temperature: 18° C/ 65° F Most Precipitation: 100 mm/ 4 in Annual amount of taxes to be paid to own a dog: EUR150.

Quick Facts:

Time Zone: GMT+1(GMT+2 daylight savings time); Central European Time(CET) Electricity: 230 volts AC, 50Hz, German 2-pin-plug Country Dialing Code:+49 Area Code: 30

Did You Know?

Musician David Bowie and Iggy Pop lived in Berlin during the 1970s. He once reportedly described they city as"the greatest cultural extravaganza that one could imagine."

Berlin Snapshot continued

Imported coffee was banned by Friedrich II in order to encourage sales of the local beverage: beer! ©

Weather

Statistics	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Temperature C												
Average High	3	4	8	14	19	22	24	24	19	14	7	3
Average Mean	1	1	5	9	14	17	19	19	15	10	5	1
Average Low	-1	-1	2	5	10	13	15	14	11	7	3	0
Temperature F												
Average High	37	39	47	56	66	71	75	75	66	57	44	38
Average Mean	33	34	41	48	57	63	66	66	59	51	40	35
Average Low	30	30	35	41	49	55	58	58	52	45	37	32
Rainy Days	10	8	9	10	8	9	10	10	8	7	8	11
Rain Fall (cm)	3.3	3.1	3.1	2.3	3.6	13.0	15.0	14.0	11.0	7.0	3.0	0.0
Rain Fall (in)	1.3	1.2	1.2	0.9	1.4	1.9	1.9	1.6	1.4	1.1	1.3	1.4

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