

A street scene in Berlin at sunset. The sky is a mix of blue and orange. In the foreground, tram tracks run down the center of the street. A pedestrian bridge crosses the street in the middle ground. Buildings line the street, including one with a sign that says 'RATHHAUS'. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a strong glow and long shadows.

Berlin Between the Lines

An In-Depth Guide

Welcome to Berlin

"There's Germany, and then there's Berlin."

This sentence couldn't describe the city of Berlin better if it tried. The city of Berlin is famous for the Berlin Wall, but it is so much more than that.

For those who are new to the city, what makes it so special is its unique vibe. Here you will find that creatives and artists of all kind flock to the city to show it what they've got. A city that never sleeps and bursts at the seams with things to do, it's original and like no other. Step away from the clichés for a moment and open your mind up to Germany like you've never known it before.

Welcome to our guide - **Berlin Between the Lines.**

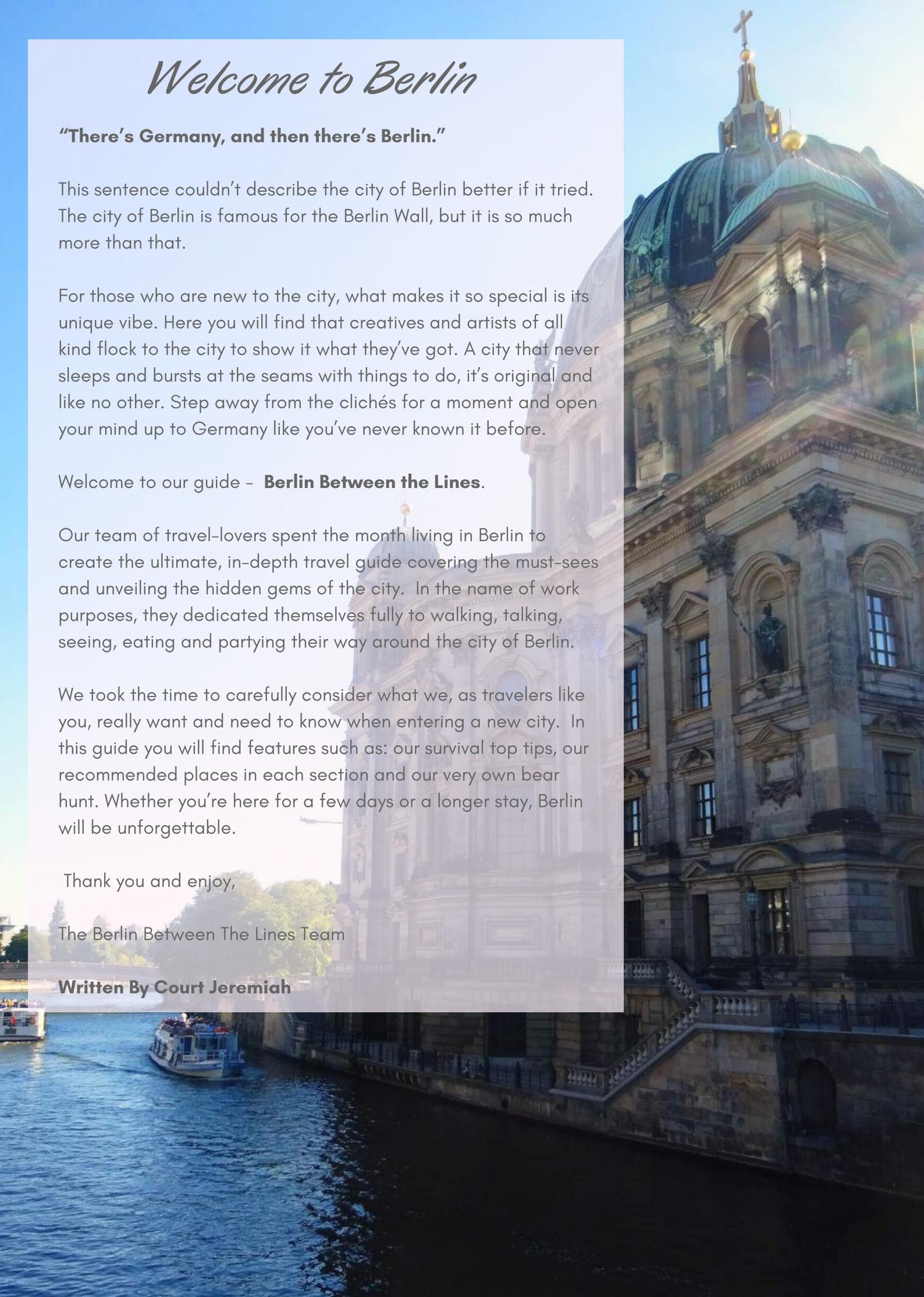
Our team of travel-lovers spent the month living in Berlin to create the ultimate, in-depth travel guide covering the must-sees and unveiling the hidden gems of the city. In the name of work purposes, they dedicated themselves fully to walking, talking, seeing, eating and partying their way around the city of Berlin.

We took the time to carefully consider what we, as travelers like you, really want and need to know when entering a new city. In this guide you will find features such as: our survival top tips, our recommended places in each section and our very own bear hunt. Whether you're here for a few days or a longer stay, Berlin will be unforgettable.

Thank you and enjoy,

The Berlin Between The Lines Team

Written By Court Jeremiah



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A Swift History

Opulence, Devastation and Reunification

The Beginnings

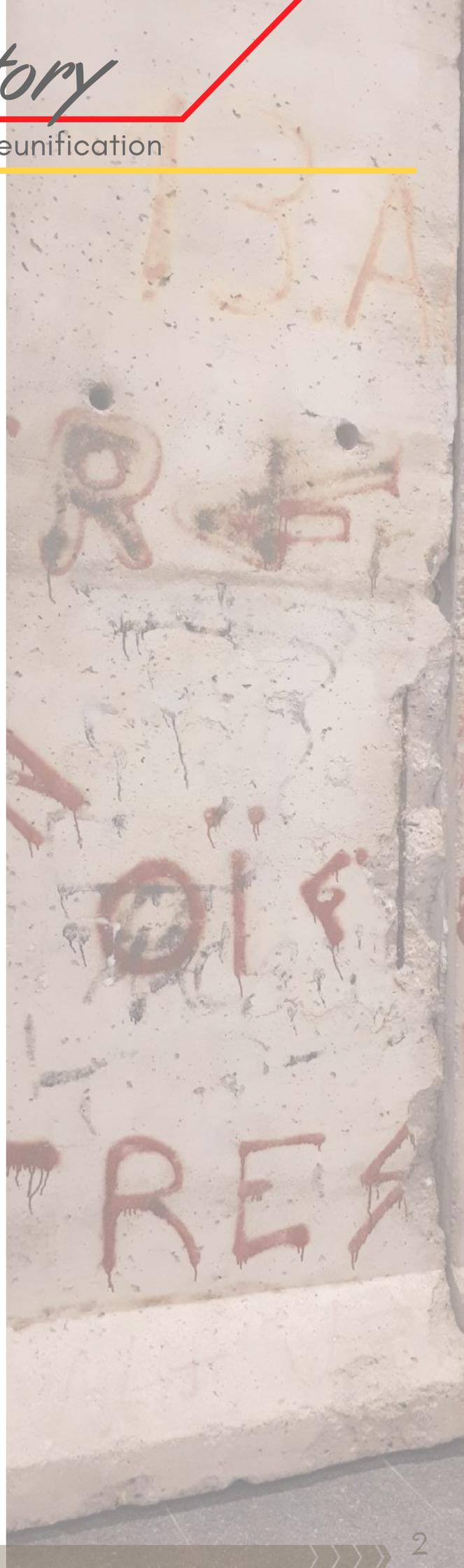
The earliest evidence of settlement dates back to the 11th century. It was from 1415 onwards that the Hohenzollern family ruled over the region - first as the electors, then subsequently as kings of Prussia and eventually German emperors.

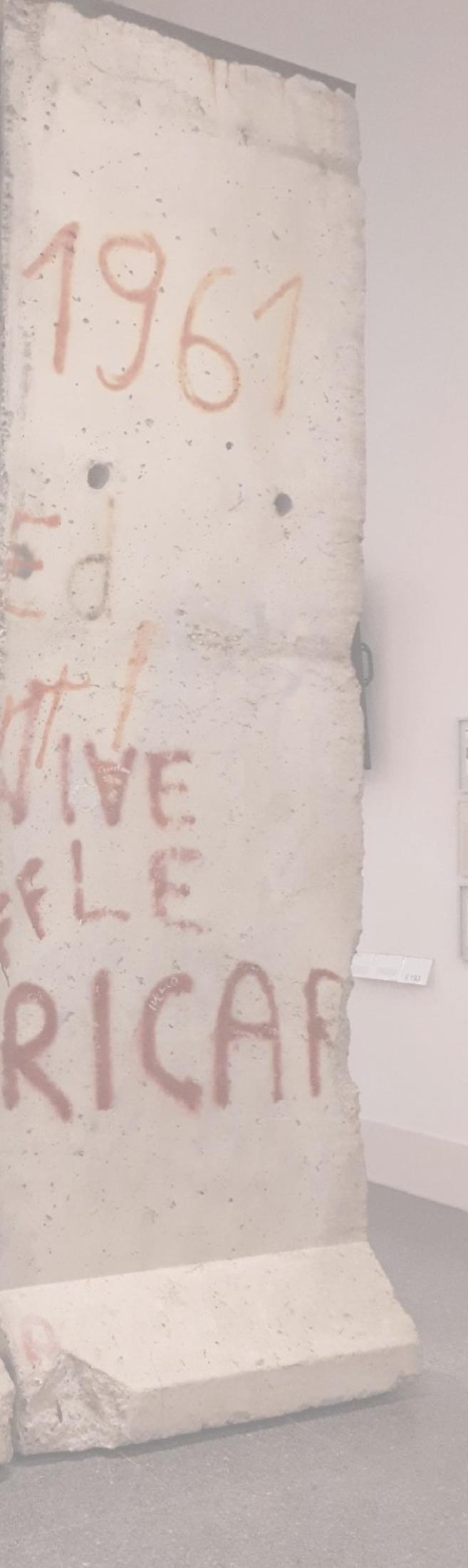
The Thirty Years War (1618-1648) ravaged Berlin, with one third of the houses damaged or destroyed and the city's population halved. The elector at the time Frederick William - the 'Great Elector' - sought to rebuild the city. He promoted immigration and religious tolerance and offered asylum to French Huguenots. By 1700 c.30% of residents were French.

The Prussian Powerhouse 1701 - 1918

The Kingdom of Prussia was formed in 1701 and Berlin was named its capital, causing the city to grow rapidly. Frederick II created Berlin as a centre of enlightenment during his reign (1740-1786). He ordered the construction of the one of Germany's most famous landmarks, the Brandenburger Tor (Brandenburg Gate) which was built to represent peace.

The industrial revolution transformed Berlin, and the innovations in manufacturing and transportation allowed the city to thrive. Many suburbs developed around the city causing the population to soar. By 1871, Berlin became the capital of the new German Empire and had grown in size so significantly that by 1881 it became a separate district from Brandenburg.





The Weimar Republic 1919 - 1933

The end of WWI saw Germany become a Republic, named Weimar after the city where the constitution was signed. Berlin again became a heaven for culture, art, music and cinema in the 1920s. The society was open and inclusive, for instance, Jewish scholars, including Albert Einstein, were able to join faculties at German universities.

Berlin gained a reputation for decadence and the influx of wealth and creativity created a thrill-seeking society. At the same time, the lines between cabaret and prostitution were blurring. The city's underground culture propagated a rise in criminal gangs, drug dealing and the black market.

In 1929, the Great Depression sent the German economy into turmoil and by 1932 unemployment rates had reached 30%. Desperation bolstered the appeal of the Nazi party which had been steadily growing support since the early 1920s. They were democratically elected in 1933 and began the process of turning the Weimar Republic into Nazi Germany.

The Nazis and The Cold War 1933 - 1989

The Nazi rule saw the escalation of Anti-Semitic violence, resulting in the Jewish population dropping from 160,000 to just 80,000 in Berlin. WW2 also crippled the city itself as over one fifth of the buildings were destroyed and Allied bombs killed c.125,000 civilians.

After the war, the victorious Allied forces split Germany and Berlin into four occupied sectors. West Germany consisted of the US, French and British sectors and the Soviet sector formed the East. The clashes in political systems and rising Cold War tensions inevitably resulted in the erection of the Berlin wall in 1961. The wall dissected the city, splitting up families and neighbourhoods. It stood for 28 years until the unrest in many Soviet Bloc countries put mounting pressure on the East German government. In 1989 they opened up new border crossings and allowed Berliners to travel across the city, paving the way for German reunification in 1990. Berlin became Germany's capital once again.

Written by Lucy Kay

Survival Guide

The Important Basics

Language

Most Germans speak perfect English and are more than happy to use it with tourists. However, if you want to make that extra effort and try some German, we've compiled a list of handy phrases to help you get around auf Deutsch.

Hello = Hallo [*Hal-oh*]

Bye = Tschüss [*choo-s*]

Please = Bitte [*bitter*]

Thank you = Danke [*dank-uh*]

One = Ein [*eye-n*]

Two = Zwei [*ts-v-eye*]

Three = Drei [*dry*]

Four = Vier [*fear*]

Five = Fünf [*foo-nf*]

Six = Sechs [*zex*]

Seven = Sieben [*zee-ben*]

Eight = Acht [*act*]

Nine = Neun [*noy-n*]

Ten = Zehn [*ts-ayn*]

Eleven = Elf [*elf*]

Twelve = Zwölf [*ts-vol-f*]

I Would like (a beer) = Ich hätte gern (ein bier) [*ish het-tuh g-urn eye-n beer*]

Would you like a bag? = Möchten Sie eine Tüte? [*mer-sh-ten zee eye-n-e too-tuh*]

Table for (four) please = Ein Tisch für (vier) bitte [*eye-n tish foo-er fear bitter*]

I'd like the bill, please = Ich hätte gern die Rechnung [*ish het-tuh g-urn dee wreck-nung*]

Do you speak English? = Sprechen Sie English? [*sh-pr-ecken zee English*]

Sorry, I don't speak German = Entschuldung, ich spreche kein Deutsch [*ent-shull-dee-gung, ish sh-pr-ecke k-eye-n doy-t-sh*]

Budget

Berlin is one of the cheapest capital cities in Europe so it has something to suit every budget. In this guide we've used a scale to show you the prices of food, accommodation and fun things to do in the city. Where you have to buy tickets, the actual price is given plus any student discounts. For everything else we've used a legend:

€ is up to 10€,

€€ is up to 20€,

€€€ is up to 30€,

...and so on.



Important Contacts

Police: 110

Fire/Ambulance: 112

Schönefeld/Tegel Airport Info: +49 30 60911150

British Embassy: +49 30 204570

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Wilhelmstraße 70/71, 10117 Berlin.



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Our Top 10 Pieces of Advice



Glass Deposit: When you buy a drink, most bars will ask for a small deposit to ensure you don't steal their glass. It's usually only 1€ or 2€ and you'll get it back as soon as you return your glass to the bar.

Cash: Germany is still a cash-based country and most restaurants don't offer card readers. Keep a bit of cash on you at all times just in case.



Wi-Fi: Berlin has a lot of internet cafes and regular cafes with really good Wi-Fi. This might not always be advertised so ask the staff and check; you don't want to miss out.

Heels: Berlin is the clubbing capital of Europe but if you want to get in, leave your heels at home. It might sound strange but you're actually more likely to get in if you're not wearing heels.



Jaywalking: If you're tempted to cross the street when the light is red but there's nothing coming... don't. It's genuinely illegal here and if you're spotted by the police then you're looking at a fine.

Student Discount: All of the museums and a few shops have a student discount. If in doubt, flash them your card and hope for the best.



Bike Lanes: Red paths are for bikes and any pedestrians who wander into them risk being mowed down by angry Germans.

FKK: If you're ever at a beach and you see the initials 'FKK', put your camera away because that's the nudist area.



Pfand: You have to pay an extra 25 cents for plastic bottles - I'm looking at you Coca-Cola. Take them to a supermarket and put them into a recycling machine to get your money back. Otherwise, help someone out by leaving them beside a bin for them to collect.

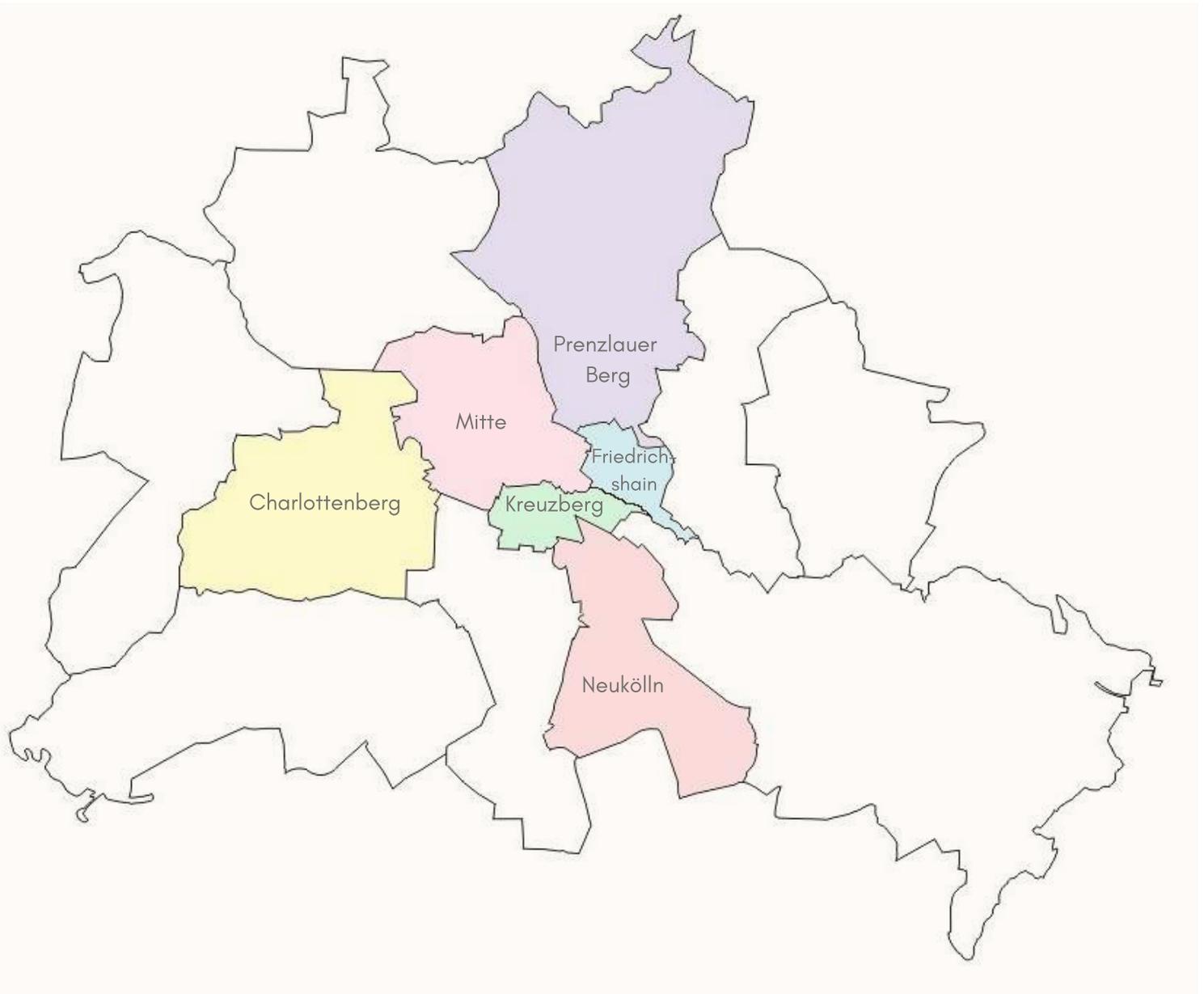
Pharmacies: In Germany you can't buy medication in supermarkets but the pharmacists in the 'Apotheke' are medically trained and can offer advice. Be aware though, basic medication is really expensive here so stock up on ibuprofen and Lemsip.



Survival Guide

An overview of Berlin's main districts

Berlin is split into twelve boroughs, each with their own distinct characteristics. We have written a brief overview of the main districts that are covered within this guide. Any places mentioned within the descriptions can be found in the relevant review sections



Survival Guide

An overview of Berlin's main districts

Mitte: *Ideal for main historical sights*

Mitte is one of the most visited districts, largely due to the major landmarks and monuments that it holds. With Museum Island, the Berliner Dom, the TV Tower and the Brandenburg gate spanning its length, it is a great place to start any visit to the city. Alexanderplatz, situated in former East Berlin, is an easy way to access Mitte, with a high number of S and U Bahn links stopping there.

Kreuzberg: *Ideal for street art*

This borough is a must for those seeking the bohemian feel of Berlin. Street art covers the walls and independent cafés and clothes shops line the streets. With its higher than average percentage of non-German inhabitants, it is a truly multi-cultural area and the high proportion of Turkish residents in particular makes exceptional falafel easy to find. As the area that founded the 'donor kebab' - Kreuzberg is not to be missed.

Friedrichshain: *Ideal for nightlife*

Whilst technically combined with Kreuzberg, Friedrichshain has its own personality. It sits in former East Berlin and stretches to the banks of the River Spree. It has become a stage for creativity and visitors flock to the riverside to hear up and coming musicians showcase their work by the East Side Gallery. It also appeals to those looking to find Berlin's nightlife with Urban Spree and Yaam being found here, as well as most of the city's major clubs.

Charlottenberg: *Ideal for upmarket shops*

This area lies to the West of Mitte and is one of the more up market areas of Berlin. Here you can find Charlottenberg Palace, the Olympic Stadium and part of Tiergarten as well as the chic shopping street of Kurfurstendamm. Perched in former West Berlin is also the commune of Teufelsberg - the old American listening station - which offers an alternative view of Charlottenberg.

Prenzlauer Berg: *Ideal for architecture*

Prenzlauer Berg sits just above Mitte and was once the home of the creatives flocking to Berlin at the end of the cold war. Gentrification has made the area more upmarket in recent years but snippets of its former artistic life can still be found at the Sunday flea market in Mauer Park and the Culture Brewery. In this district you can also find a huge array of multi national dining, although German staples are few and far between.

Neukölln: *Ideal for something new*

Neukölln epitomises Berlin's ever changing and developing scenery and there is always something new to be found here. Once again, a high influx of differing nationalities has helped to create and shape the vibe of this district and it is worth heading here on a day where exploration is on the agenda. Whilst here, a visit to Klunkerkranch rooftop bar is a great way to scan the horizon of Berlin.

Survival Guide

Everything you need to know to get around Berlin

Berlin's network of buses, trams, undergrounds and overgrounds can get confusing – but we've got you covered.

First things first, download the BVG app. This is the official transport app for the state of Berlin and has an excellent route planner to help you find your way around. It's also in English which makes it really user-friendly if you don't speak German.

You can buy tickets on the app so you don't need to have change for paper tickets. If you do buy a paper ticket, either from a machine or a shop in the station, it's essential that you validate it. Basically, this just means stamping it with the date and time and there are machines at all of the stations and on trams to do this. If it's not stamped, then it's not valid and you may be charged.

Berlin's public transport runs on an honesty system – you won't need to swipe your ticket on the way in or out of stations, but you may be asked to show your ticket by officials on the trains. These officials wear plain clothes but can be spotted easily by the large ticket machine they carry and the menacing looks on their faces.

S-Bahn: These are the fastest methods of transport around the city – they cover large distances and stop infrequently. If you want to cover a lot of ground quickly, look for an S line.

U-Bahn: The underground is the most common method of transport in the city and almost all major tourist attractions can be reached on the U-Bahn alone.

Tram: Trams are mainly seen in the East of the city and seem to stop at every lamppost. They usually need to be used in combination with another mode of transport or it could take hours to reach your destination.

Bus: Berlin has an extensive bus network but it's usually not necessary to use it unless you're going to Tegel airport. You don't need to show your pass to the driver in Germany and the buses have several doors, all of which can be used provided you have a valid ticket ready.

Written by Rachel Gale