

Berlin

Love it on a Budget



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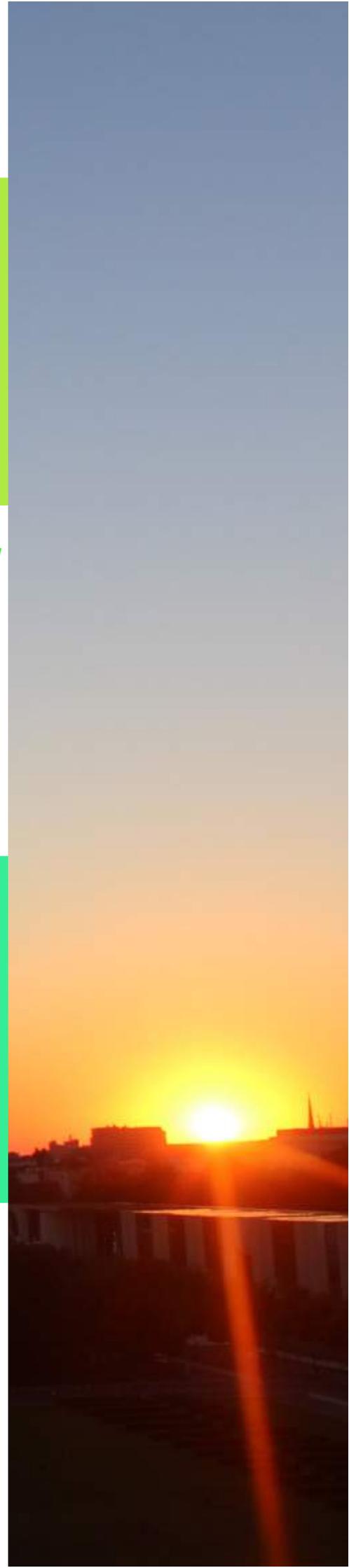
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Introduction

Welcome to Budget Berlin, a short and easy-to-read guide on one of the best, busiest and brightest capital cities in Europe. This book will help you save money when visiting the tourist staples and economise in the alternative areas of this quirky city. Budget Berlin is a young, hip guide to the city, written by and for a young people who know where's unmissable. Start with our 'Arts and Culture' section if you're interested in museums and galleries, 'Tours, Streets and Monuments' is for the culture vultures, 'Outdoors' if you're the nature type. Don't miss out on our 'Entertainment' section if you're interested in nightlife, music or partying, 'Food and Drink' if you're a mammal who needs nourishment and 'shopping' for those who can't resist a bargain.

The contributors each have their own unique style so get ready for a melting pot of opinions. Have a read and see what suits your personal taste, then go out and experience this wonderful, vibrant city for yourself.

History In Berlin

“History is boring”. Ask anyone who has studied it, at university, A-Level, or even GCSE - this phrase will have almost certainly been heard.

It can't be denied that History can be as dull as watching a slug try to complete a 100 meter sprint. Very few people would enjoy seeing a list of dates with descriptions of events that happened a long time ago, so you shan't here (although if that is what floats your boat, Google's a great place to start...).

Joking aside, there is a lot to take from the way history is dealt with here in Berlin. You don't need any books or academic jargon, in fact you can learn a lot without even visiting a single museum (but please, still do)! All that need be done, is to look at the attitude that Berlin has towards its furrowed past. And ask; how has Germany come to terms with its sometimes vicious history?

In case you haven't worked it out yet, Berlin is the capital city of Germany. A simple enough statement, until you come to comprehend the host of responsibilities that comes with. In a way, this city symbolises an entire nation. Simply look at any map showing how Germany was divided following WWII (there are plenty online), then look at the divisions in Berlin, and you will find it is almost identical! With this in mind then, it's perhaps not so surprising that Berlin has taken a leading role in pushing forward an attitude of

remembrance, reconciliation, and above all openness.

Walking through the city, it's hard to shake the feeling that you're walking through a ginormous open air museum. It could be the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe (see page 48), an impressive and chilling reminder of the atrocities committed during the holocaust. Or instead, an understated row of ground level bricks marking the path of a wall that not so long ago defined the split between east and west. Nearly everything in Berlin, down to the cobbles on the pavement, sheds light on something.

Yes, it provides an insight to the disturbing and distressing history of the twentieth century. But perhaps more importantly still, it accentuates Germany's progressiveness. Berlin gives the impression of a city that has come to terms with its past. Even if no one can go back in time to change the course of events, Berlin proves that there is still room for acceptance, forgiveness, and reconciliation.

There is a lesson to be learnt here for every nation. As we move farther into the 21st century, and come to terms with the horrors it brings. The example set by Germany, may become more and more vital. Countries change, often quickly and drastically. Berlin's attitude, of openness towards its history provides hope that the world will continue to evolve for the better.

Matt Calow



SURVIVAL GUIDE



Things to Know

Language: German

Currency: €

Central European time zone

Police: 110

Fire Brigade and Ambulance: 112

Electricity: 2 pin plug

Citizens of the EU (excluding the UK and Ireland) can access Germany with a national identity card. Visitors from the UK, Ireland, America, Canada, Australia and New Zealand require a full passport to enter Germany.

German Numbers

1: Eins

2: Zwei

3: Drei

4: Vier

5: Fünf

6: Sechs

7: Sieben

8: Acht

9: Neun

10: Zehn

Basic German Words

Hello: **Hallo**

Good Morning: **Guten Morgen**

Good Day: **Guten Tag**

Good Evening: **Guten Abend**

Good Night: **Gute Nacht**

Bye: **Tchüss**

See you again: **Auf Wiedersehen**

Yes: **Ja**

No: **Nein**

Excuse me: **Entschuldigung**

Please: **Bitte**

Thank You: **Danke**

You're welcome: **Bitte**

I Would Like: **Ich möchte**

I Want: **Ich will**

I Need: **Ich brauche**

Safety in Berlin

Berlin is a safe European capital. However, as it is a major city, there are some areas to avoid and there are a few scams to be aware of.

The Mitte district is the main district in Berlin. This is the area where many of the main sights are located. Please ensure you look after your belongings as many of the city's petty crimes, such as pickpocketing, take place in this area.

Due to the higher level of unemployment, the eastern parts of Berlin are often less safe than the western parts of the city. In parts of Lichtenberg, Kreuzberg and Prenzlauer Berg, the crime rates are higher than other areas of Berlin. Please note that there are very few tourist attractions in these areas so they are easily avoided.

Scams

On some occasions, you may get stopped to sign for a cause. No matter how legitimate the cause may seem, it is best not to sign as they are not genuine. If you sign it, you will be expected to make a donation, which goes straight into the back pocket of the scammer.

Sadly, for many, the shell game is still alive and well in Berlin. In this game, the main player has three shells. The shells are swapped around and a competitor then has to decide which shell the ball is in. You may notice that some people guess the right shell. These people are a part of the scam. If you do play, you will lose your money.

Nevertheless, Berlin is a safe place with very little crime in comparison to other major cities. Remember to stay street wise as you enjoy one of the most fascinating European capitals.

Wi-Fi

During your stay in Berlin, you may want to post your pictures online. But what are the top places in Berlin in order to get free Wi-Fi? Many hostels have free Wi-Fi. But for when you are out and about Various shopping centres offer this perk, such as the Mall of Berlin and Alexa Centre, as do branches of the electronics shop Saturn. If you want to surf the net with a soothing coffee there are numerous Starbucks located around the city as well as internet cafés. Lastly, if you need a quiet place to work there are also numerous libraries located around every little town giving you a bonus six hours of Wi-Fi.

Recycling

Recycling is a major topic in Berlin and it is very important to put your rubbish the correct bins. Plastic, glass and paper are all recycled in order to keep Berlin green and reduce waste. But be warned, if you are caught by authorities putting litter in the wrong bins then you could be faced with a heavy fine. To save time it helps to separate your recycling into different rubbish bags within your home and simply throw it in the allocated bin.

Pfand Flaschen

Major supermarkets often charge you 20-30 cent extra on your drinks in plastic/glass bottles. This is called a Pfand. If you return the empty bottle to the self-scanning machine in the shop you receive a receipt. Take this to the till and get money off your next shop or even your cash back!

Joel Baker & David Opoku



Public Transport

Berlin's impressive public transport network enables travellers to move around the city easily and in comfort. Made up of the S-Bahn (overground), U-Bahn (underground), Tram lines and buses, you will always find yourself with transport nearby. Running regularly and efficiently, you'll find yourself well acquainted with the transport system by the time you leave, but allow us to provide some tips and tricks for you before your arrival.

First, be aware of the range of ticket options for the different zones (AB, BC, ABC) and what passes are available to you (see chart). Zone tickets cover all public transport and if you are staying in Berlin for a long period time, buying a pass to cover you for your stay is usually the cheapest option, check the BVG website for the current prices. Make sure you are carrying a validated ticket at all times when travelling, there are often plain clothes officers on the train to check your ticket and you don't want to be hit with a hefty fine! There are machines for validating your ticket on most platforms, and you can purchase your ticket from ticket offices, machines on the platforms or inside the trams. Trams run every 10, 20 or 30 minutes, Metro Trams usually

being the most regular. Metro Trams and some buses run at night, worth noting if you want to experience Berlin's nightlife (see page 106). Be aware that some routes may change overnight, and might terminate sooner than during daytime operations. Keep an eye out for buses marked with 'N' as these are the night services. The S Bahn and U Bahn start running at 4.30 and 4.00 am respectively, finishing at 1.30 and 1.00 am. The U-Bahn, trams and busses are run by BVG, Berlin's main transport operators, so visit their website or download their app for more information or to plan your journey.

Taxis are also an option, but they are more expensive so aren't so good if you are trying to watch the pennies. If you fancy a bit of exercise, there are also plenty of bike rentals throughout the city. Most bike rentals cost around €12-€14 a day, however, at Rent a Bike 44 in Neukölln (near Templehof Feld) you can rent a bike for €4 a day.

There are so many options for travel in Berlin you'll never be stuck in one place too long.

Jennifer Atkinson



Accommodation

Berlin is the ideal city to stay in if you're on a budget as there are so many low cost options available. Due to its popularity among backpackers and being a firm favourite on many inter-railing journeys, the city has so many hostels and cheap hotels that you're almost spoilt for choice.

With prices starting from as little as €11 per person, per night, staying in Berlin certainly won't break the bank. The majority of hostels are conveniently based in and around the city centre, making sightseeing and bar crawling easier than ever.

There are a few hostel chains with big names located in Berlin, such as Generator and Wombat's. These are always a safe and reliable option as they're well-known, reputable brands and are based in cities all over the world. However, because of this you often pay a slightly higher price to stay there, but it's usually only a difference of €5-10.

If you'd rather stay at a cheaper alternative, there are plenty of great independent hostels that have excellent facilities. St Christopher's is a fantastic option with 10-bed dorms starting from only €13.90 per person, per night. For that you get free Wi-Fi, free breakfast and a 25% discount on food at Belushi's bar, located on the ground floor. It's very

clean, with a friendly atmosphere and everything you could possibly want from a hostel, with the addition of free walking tours. It's located on Rosa-Luxemburg-Straße which is very central and has great transport links.

Supposing that your budget is a little more flexible, there are a fair few Ibis hotels located in Berlin that start at just €49 per night, with complimentary breakfast and Wi-Fi. Again, this is a widely known hotel chain, which gives you a little peace of mind when booking. Though don't let that put you off exploring other hotels. For instance, the Arte Luise Kunsthôtel is a boutique hotel in the heart of the city, just minutes from the Brandenburg Gate. It is very quirky in style, boasting Art Deco designs and modern furniture pieces in each bedroom. Positioned in one of the best spots in Berlin, complete with views of the Reichstag building, it's extremely good value for money at €79 per night for a single room.

In most other cities you might consider Airbnb (renting from local hosts), but unfortunately this is no longer legal in Berlin due to a recent change in the law. Nevertheless, with such a wide choice of inexpensive accommodation there is something to suit every budget.

Fay Hurley