



#Berlin





Introduction ●●●●

Once described by its mayor, Klaus Wowereit, as “poor but sexy”, Berlin is a city in a constant state of evolution. Following the end of over half a century of totalitarian rule in 1989, it has spent the last 24 years developing a character completely its own.

A hub for artists and musicians, tech start-ups and hippies; it is a place where ‘unorthodox’ lifestyles are so common they might as well be orthodox. Whatever your interests, Berlin has something for you. A plethora of galleries and museums, a history unique and curated so as to be part of the fabric of the city, delicious restaurants, high quality cheap eats and never-ending nights out.

In this guide, we have pulled together some of the city’s highlights, to help get your Berlin adventure underway. We hope, with our help, you might be poor but sexy too.

Afra Morris

History

Afra Morris

1237

Berlin dates its official founding to 1237, the year of the first recorded mention of Cölln. The first documentary reference to Berlin followed in 1244. At the end of the 12th century, the city emerged from the two merchant settlements Berlin and Cölln, located on both sides of the Spree river in what is now the Mitte borough.

1432-1443

The elector Friedrich II puts an end to Berlin and Cölln’s joint administration to form a single municipality and expand his own powers. The foundation stone of what will become Berlin’s City Palace is laid on the “Spree island” in Cölln. Construction and reconstruction continue until 1716, when the building takes its final form.

1701-1709

On 18 January 1701 in Königsberg, the elector Friedrich III has himself crowned Friedrich I, King in Prussia. Berlin becomes the royal residence. King Friedrich I decrees the unification of the five towns of Berlin, Cölln, Friedrichswerder, Dorotheenstadt, and Friedrichstadt to form the capital and royal residence of Berlin. The unified city has a population of 55,000.

1871

Berlin becomes the capital of the German Reich. This boost in political status, industrialization, and the economic boom of the next few decades give rise to many new businesses in the city. Berlin becomes the empire’s political, economic, and scientific capital.

1914-1918

1914 saw the outbreak of WWI and the beginning of a tumultuous four years in German history. The country’s defeat in 1918 brings the threat of civil war to the streets of Berlin. Eventually the Treaty of Versailles is signed and Social Democratic politician Philipp Scheidemann proclaims the “German Republic” from a window of the Reichstag on 9 November 1918. Berlin now enters the Roaring Twenties, a boom in terms of architecture, film, literature and nightclubs on the legendary Kurfürstendamm.

1933

Following fourteen years of political instability, economic disaster and mass impoverishment, democracy hits a stumbling block and Adolf Hitler is elected Chancellor of Germany. For the next twelve years Germany is plunged into an era of horror and devastation that is to scar the city of Berlin forever.

1961

WWII has now ended but the Battle of Berlin rages on and leaves the city politically and ideologically divided between the Allied Powers of Britain, France, the USA and the USSR. The division manifests itself physically on 13 August with the construction of the Berlin Wall, dividing the communist East and capitalist West, a division, which, to this day, has left an indelible mark on the city.

1989

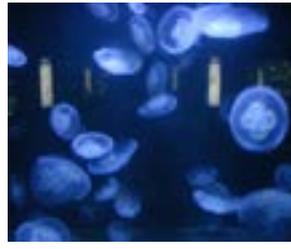
The government of East Germany (GDR) collapses, and with the world looking on, the Wall is pulled down and the borders opened once more amid great celebration. Germany is officially reunited in 1990, signaling a new dawn. The future for Berlin once again, looks hopeful.

2013

Economic prosperity and political stability, under the conservative guidance of recently re-elected, Chancellor Angela Merkel, has seen Germany establish itself as the economic powerhouse of Europe.

Emerging from the shadows of the twentieth century, Berlin is very much a teenager, just 23 years old. Walking around the city one can feel the vibrancy and youth that make it one of the hippest cities in Europe. A place where creativity comes to grow, start-ups come to flourish, intellectuals come to study and tourists come to soak it all in and experience a holiday unlike any other.





Sights.

It would be an understatement to say Berlin has “plenty to see and do”; this city rewards even the casual wanderer with a plethora of incredible buildings and monuments. Facing the iconic Brandenburg Gate with the Victory Column behind you, you only have to turn right to see Lord Norman Foster’s magnificent glass-dome atop the Reichstag, whilst further along lies the sobering and haunting Holocaust memorial. Turning around takes you down historical Unter den Linden and if you walk the other way you can get lost in the leafy green acres of Tiergarten. Head-spinning yet? Thought so. The best sightseeing in Berlin is well planned. Book your tickets for the Reichstag in advance, plan your walk around Checkpoint Charlie in advance and make a list of ‘must sees’ and opening hours to really maximise your time and take it all in. Don’t worry if you don’t have the time to see everything. Berlin isn’t going anywhere, and with a history as diverse as this spanning over ten centuries, it is well worth a second, or even third visit.

Vicky Fryer and Afra Morris



Brandenburger Tor (Brandenburg Gate)

Libby Harris

Arguably both Berlin and Germany's greatest landmark, Carl Gotthard Langhans' Brandenburg Gate is an obvious stop off for any Berlin newcomer.

The gate, which was commissioned by Fredrich II and featured heavily throughout Germany's history, dates back to 1791. It served as Berlin's main entrance for 30 years



and has since provided the setting for many historic speeches, such as that of Ronald Reagan and more

recently Barack Obama. Its design of six ornate sandstone columns is thought to have been inspired by the Greek Acropolis. The Quadriga, an addition placed atop in 1793, features the Greek goddess Victoria in a horse drawn chariot and was famously captured by a victorious Napoleon in 1806. The gate was one of the few structures in Berlin to survive WW2, but the damage it obtained lead to its restoration by the governments of both East and West Berlin. Despite representing Germany's division during the years of the Berlin Wall, the Brandenburg Gate is now considered a symbol of Germany's unity.

As with so many of Europe's iconic landmarks, expect to duck and weave between a fair few snap-happy tourists, but don't miss out on your own photo opportunity from Pariser Platz, using the gate to frame the Victory Column ●

Pariser Platz, 10117
U & S-Bahn Brandenburger Tor

Berliner Dom (Berlin Cathedral)

Bethany Whymark

Considered as the "entryway to Museum Island", the Berliner Dom is one of Berlin's most recognisable



historic monuments. Designed by renowned German architect Julius Carl Raschdorff in the mid-nineteenth century and beset with construction problems from the outset, the cathedral that stands today was finally completed in 1905.

The lavishly gilded altar dominates the chancel's southern alcove. The ceiling of the famed dome, standing 70 metres above the chancel floor, is not the original. It was destroyed by fire in 1944 and the reconstruction was not fully completed until 2002. German artist Anton von Werner's original designs for the dome's eight mosaics, which depict the beatitudes of the Sermon on the

Mount, survived the destruction and were recreated exactly. Each design is 39m2 and contains over 500,000 tiles.

The Berliner Dom museum explains the historical, architectural and democratic significance of



the cathedral and includes model replicas of some of its original plasterwork adornments. For a fantastic 360° view of the city, head up to the dome walkway. The view is not as elevated as that from the Victory Column or the TV Tower, but is easily as breath-taking. While the audio guide is very informative, let yourself to be absorbed and guided by the cathedral's majesty and historical echoes ●

Am Lustgarten 1
U & S-Bahn Alexanderplatz,
Mon-Sat 9.00-19.00;
Sun 12.00-19.00
Adult: 7€; Student: 4€ (includes cathedral, dome walkway, museum and Hohenzollern Crypt)

Berlin Wall Memorial

Laurie Kitson

Around the world, the Brandenburg Gate is associated with Germany's division and reunification. However, for many Berliners, the city's Bernauer Straße is the first place to come to mind.

The Berlin Wall Memorial tells the story of the role played by this iconic street and its inhabitants between 1961 and 1989. The Memorial is a series of outdoor exhibits dotted along the length of



the street, which allow visitors to learn about the Wall itself, but also about its impact on some of the

families living on Bernauer Straße.

The few remains of the houses torn down by the GDR to make way for the Wall and the accompanying personal accounts are emotionally imposing, and offer a unique perspective on the Berlin Wall. Also featuring heavily in the memorial is the Church of Reconciliation. Positioned in the strip between East and West and for many a symbol akin to the Brandenburg Gate, it was destroyed by East German authorities in 1986.

Many of the information posts feature video screens and audio material. Overall, the Berlin Wall Memorial is thought-provoking and highly interesting, and a must-see for those interested in Berlin's tumultuous history ●

Bernauer Straße, 13355 Berlin
U-Bahn - Bernauer Straße
Apr - Oct. 9.30 - 19.00;
Nov. - Mar. 9.30 - 16.00
Free entry
www.berliner-mauer-gedenks-taette.de

Checkpoint Charlie

Pip Ripley

It's unfortunate, but what once was a world famous symbol of the Cold War has become a tacky tourist trap. Uniformed actors playing



American guards pull cheesy poses for photos all day long, inviting tourists to grin with them in front of the sandbags that line a replica guardhouse. An American flag flies proudly above, and a large sign announces that "you are leaving the American Sector".

This Berlin landmark sits in the middle of Friedrichstraße, where the traffic converges and groups of people mill around. Souvenir shops and cafés surround the crossroads where Checkpoint Charlie sits, and con-artists try to tempt unsuspecting visitors to part with their cash by pushing street games. With all this congestion, it can be easy to forget the potent and emotive history of this well-known

sight.

Checkpoint Charlie was the main point at which Allies could move between the two Berlins from 1961 to 1990. Over the years the crossing transformed from a simple checkpoint into a dangerous, full-



blown border control facility. If you're struggling to put all this into context, there's a useful open-air exhibit alongside, complete with stories of both successful and failed escape attempts by East German citizens ●

Friedrichstraße 43-45, 10117
Berlin
U-Bahn: Kochstraße
Always accessible
Website: www.berlin.de

Teufelsberg Abandoned Listening Station

Naomi Linn

It's hard to imagine how the abandoned Teufelsberg spy station once appeared. The now tree-covered hill it rests upon was created post-WWII using rubble from a devastated Berlin. There's no trace of the short-lived ski resort. Instead, after an uphill climb, you see vast radar domes and a heavily graffitied tower left



from a Cold War-era American listening station. A tough-looking guard collects 7€ from every visitor. He, or one of his

equally gruff colleagues, proceeds to usher you along using gestures and monosyllabic words. A more comprehensive historical tour is available on weekends for an extra cost, though you must e-mail ahead of time.

The spy station itself is magnificent. Installation pieces are scattered throughout the many floors. A bathtub, dripping in red paint, sits randomly yet purposefully in the centre of a radar dome. Plastic spoons dangle from strings, spinning in the wind. Every inch of the crumbling walls have been painted, scribbled, and spray painted on: couples' names, words of wisdom, beautifully realistic portraits, and a nude devil. The top floor is the most haunting. Two eerie paintings of men loom over you and every scuffle or whisper echoes in the darkness ●

Mon - Wed: 8.00 am - 2.00 pm
Thu: 11.30 am - 5.30 pm
Fri: closed
<http://www.hedwigs-kathedrale.de/en/domgemeinde/welcome>

Neue Wache (New Guardhouse) Vicky Fryer

Externally yet another striking example of the nineteenth-century neoclassical architecture which



defines Unter den Linden, revered Prussian architect Karl Friedrich Schinkel's first Berlin-based design stands proudly between the similarly grand German Historical Museum and Humboldt University. However, Neue Wache now houses something far more sobering than the Prussian Royal Guard. In 1919 (a century after its completion) the results of WWI rendered it obsolete, and in 1931 it became a memorial for those killed in action. The GDR restored the bomb-damaged building after WW2 into a monument to victims of fascism and militarism in 1960, later interring there the remains of both an unknown soldier and an unknown concentration camp victim alongside earth from WW2

battlefields and the camps. 1993 brought its final rededication, as a reunified Germany's official Federal memorial for "the Victims of War and Tyranny" throughout history.

Today, visitors are confronted by a subdued echoing expanse in which



a reproduction of Käthe Kollwitz's sombre bronze sculpture Mother with Her Dead Son stands alone beneath a single skylight. Tour parties often pass through, yet grow disconcertingly hushed, and it is equally possible to find yourself accompanied by only a few respectful visitors ●

4 Unter den Linden, 10117
Berlin
U-Bahn: Friedrichstraße/
Fransösische Straße
Mon-Sun 10.00-18.00

Panoramapunkt

Vicky Fryer

Berlin hardly lacks opportunities for stunning views, and one of the finest can be seen from the classic redbrick Kollhoff-Tower. The building itself is instantly recognisable, its ode to 1930s New York a pleasing oddity amidst the gleaming modernity of Potsdamer Platz. Once inside, enter Europe's fastest lift to be whisked up an ear-popping twenty-four floors in twenty seconds, and emerge 100m overhead. A small flight of stairs



leads you to the full magnificent 360° view, sight after sight unveiled as you walk the circumference:

the Reichstag, the Brandenburg Gate, the TV Tower, the Kaiser Wilhelm Memorial Church, to name but a few. It's less crowded than more famous viewpoints: a venue for dates, attempted artistic photography, and those determined to capture that one special shot of a gathering.

A small yet satisfying exhibition on Potsdamer Platz's fascinating history, including its roles as a Weimar nightlife hotspot and as Death Strip wasteland, features absorbing tidbits and photographs, a visual comparison with modern Berlin always just a glance away. Even a segment of the Berlin Wall lies tucked ignominiously away amongst the columns. Should the view prove too absorbing to leave lightly, especially with the prospect of sunset over Tiergarten, seating is available outside on benches or inside the classily-designed café ●

1 Potsdamer Platz, 10785 Berlin

U-Bahn: Potsdamer Platz

S-Bahn: Potsdamer Platz

Bus: Potsdamer Platz

April-October: Mon-Sun, 10.00-20.00 (last entry 19.30); No-

vember-March: Mon-Sun 10.00-18.00 (last entry 17.30)

5.50€/4€ concessions

Unter den Linden

Vicky Fryer

Over four centuries of history have transformed this 16th-century bridleway into Berlin's most famous boulevard. A walk from the Schloßbrücke, demonstrating some



of Berlin's finest architecture, is instantly satisfying.

The street's oldest building is the baroque German Historical Museum, a former armoury completed in the early 18th century. Next door is the neoclassical Neue Wache, architect Karl Friedrich Schinkel's first Berlin-based design, which is now the Federal monument to the Victims of War and Tyranny. Daily book sales occur at grand Humboldt Universität, and its Alte Bibliothek overlooks the haunting "Empty Library" book-burning memorial.

"Alte Fritz", the equestrian statue of Friedrich II, guards

an alternative central pathway lined with the eponymous linden trees, first planted in 1647. Further along, highlights include the Staatsbibliothek, one of Europe's largest libraries, and the Russian Embassy, window frames still boasting the hammer-



and-sickle symbol. The uniform buildings introduced under Soviet rule dominate the boulevard's Western half, although now they contain upmarket businesses, car showrooms, tourist shops and expensive cafés.

The boulevard terminates in tourist-packed Pariser Platz. Take a moment for the magnificent foreign embassies and Berlin's most expensive hotel, the Adlon, before inevitably turning to the iconic Brandenburg Gate. The neoclassical Gate, framed between the linden

10117

U & S-Bahn: Brandenburger Tor

Sankt Hedwigs- Kathedrale

Afra Morris

Swap the hectic pace of Mitte for a moment of quiet contemplation by popping into Sankt-Hedwigs-Kathedrale, located between Französische Straße and Unter den Linden. The Cathedral was first built between 1747 and 1773 under Protestant ruler Frederick II, for the city's small Catholic community. Following its destruction in WWII it was



reconstructed between 1952 and 1963. It is both the oldest Roman Catholic house of worship in Berlin

and serves as the seat of the bishop of Friedrichstadt, and bears the honorary title of 'Papal Basilica'.

Modelled on the Pantheon in Rome it has an impressive dome made of 84 reinforced concrete segments, housing a modern interior complete with a split-level double altar - the upper one being reserved for Sundays and special occasions, whilst the lower is used throughout the week. Descend the wide central staircase to discover eight small chapels, each with its own function and dedication, along with an abstract set of charcoal Stations of the Cross by German artist, Josef Hegenbarth.

Arrive shortly before three on a Wednesday to enjoy a free thirty-minute organ recital, showcasing the Cathedral's grandiose 68 register Klais organ - by the end you should feel sufficiently refreshed to venture once more to the busy streets outside ●

Hinter der Katholischen Kirche
3, 10117
Mon - Wed: 8.00 am - 2.00 pm
Thu: 11.30 am - 5.30 pm
Fri: closed
<http://www.hedwigs-kathedrale.de/en/domgemeinde/welcome>

Soviet War Memorial Vicky Fryer

This proudly independent complex within Treptower Park may not have been the first of the Soviet memorial cemeteries constructed after WW2, but until 1967 it was



Europe's largest. It honours Soviet soldiers lost in WW2's "Berlin Operation", and more than 7 000 are buried in these imposing surroundings.

Don't let yourself be underwhelmed when the looming triumphal arches reveal only the solitary figure of a mourning Mother Russia. The real spectacle lies at the end of a broad boulevard overlooked by gargantuan twin red granite triangles (the stone originally imported for predicted Nazi victory monuments). Passing between two kneeling statues, in Stalinist Russia's favoured classical style, the immensity of 100 000m² of symmetrical geometrical

patterns is laid out before you. Sixteen marble blocks mirror engravings of scenes from the Great Patriotic War, one side carrying quotes from Stalin in Russian, the other with them translated into German.



A proudly patriotic statue of a Soviet soldier, standing on a shattered swastika with a lowered sword and rescued child in hand, dominates the memorial from the top of a mount modelled on a traditional warrior's grave. At his feet lies a solemn dark echoing shrine, watched over by painted mothers and soldiers. Commemorative ceremonies still occur here today ●

Am Treptower Park, 12435
Admission Free

Das Denkmal für die Ermordeten Juden Europas (The Holocaust Memorial)

Pip Ripley

On a grey day, visiting a set of grey concrete blocks might seem like a drab idea. The opposite is true however, as the overcast nature of sky and surroundings only add to the sombre atmosphere. If you are blessed with good weather,



the blunt edges of this evocative memorial will be brought into sharp contrast.

The Holocaust Memorial, located a

short walk from the Brandenburg Gate, has an eerie quality which lends it a beauty that sits in juxtaposition with the ugliness it commemorates.

In the expanse of the Field of Stelae, 2711 tall, solid boxes loom out of undulating ground. They are best experienced by a pensive stroll through the imposing maze. The long rows and columns of guard-like intensity are reminiscent of prison and perhaps symbolic of the cruelty the Jews experienced. The thundering urban noise enveloping the memorial and the screams of teenagers swallowed up by the monstrous labyrinth create chilling sound effects.

Whatever your take on the memorial, it would be rare for someone to leave and not be affected in some way. For those wanting to learn more there is an information centre that accompanies the memorial, which tells stories from families affected by the genocide and houses exhibits such as the thought-provoking Room of Dimensions ●

Cora-Berliner-Strasse 1, 10117
U-Bahn: Brandenburg Gate
Memorial: accessible 24 hours
Info Centre times check website
Price: Free
www.stiftung-denkmal.de

Gendarmen

Linn Sydvik

You will realise the worth of climbing the 29 stairs of the magnificent Concert House when you reach the platform



and are struck by the greatness and beauty of Gendarmenmarkt. The white Romanesque French Cathedral stands quietly in its own magnificence on your left side, not at all disturbed by the tourists strolling around the square or eating in one of the many restaurants by its sides, nor by the beautiful sound of the tuba.

Opposite the French Cathedral is its splitting image the German Cathedral, which now features the exhibition "Milestones, Setbacks, Sidetracks", a look at Germany's path to parliamentary democracy. This historical place, as well as the others connected to the square, were badly damaged during WW2

but were completely reconstructed in 1984, when the theatre became the home of the Concert House Orchestra. Descend the stairs of the Concert House and meet the guardsman of Gendarmenmarkt; a white marble statue of Friedrich Schiller (1759 – 1805), one of



Germany's most adored poets, guarding and gazing three epic buildings which together create one of the most stunning architectural ensembles in Berlin, and probably in the world ●

Gendarmenmarkt, 10117
"Milestones - Setbacks - Sidetracks"
The German Bundestag's Historical Exhibition
Tue – Sun: 10.00-18.00
Bus: 100 Unter den Linden/
Friedrichstr.
U-Bahn: U2 Hausvogteiplatz,
U6 Französische Straße