



BERLIN:



an outsiders guide

Berlin from 1237-1900

Berlin is a name which conjures many images: a city at the centre of war, a conflicted and divided city. A city, if you will, on the extremes.

Having been the axis of so much of the world's recent history, it might be easy to assume that this was all that Berlin had to offer in terms of historical interest. But this is not so.

It has been said of Berlin that it is the centre of Germany just as Germany is the centre of Europe.

In tracing back a few hundred years, it is possible to see how this came to be. Geographically speaking, Berlin came into existence as an insignificant trade town situated in between the two older towns of Spandau and Cölln. This central position worked to Berlin's favour as it continued to grow and enveloped both other towns within its own boundaries.

Though Berlin can only date its own foundation from the first extant mention of Cölln in 1237, it was Berlin



that, by the mid-fourteenth century, had become the most important trading town in Brandenburg, with its own City Council and Stadtbuch.

By the time of the Reformation, Berlin had become an important German town in its own right, particularly special to many being one of the first cities in Europe to embrace Lutheranism. Because of this, many French Huguenots fled to Berlin bringing with them their intellectual and industrial talents.

Even today, though the name "Huguenot" has become largely insignificant in modern-day Europe, this relationship between French Protestants and Berlin is still celebrated in Mitte's *Gendarmenmarkt*.

Here the *Französischer Dom* and the *Deutscher Dom*, mirroring each other in design, are monuments to the great respect these two groups had for each other. Despite the years between Napoleon's invasion of Brandenburg and the Cold War, when Franco-German relations were at a very low ebb, it is nice to see these two rivals still facing each other in friendship in the *Gendarmenmarkt*.

Not only a trend-setter in religion, Berlin became a leader in the

Enlightenment. Prussia's third king, Friedrich the Great, transformed Prussia - with Berlin as its capital - into an enlightened, politically and economically strong and religiously tolerant state.



Even defeats in the Thirty Years War failed to completely destroy Prussia's supremacy. This in time transformed the Hohenzollern dynasty into one of the greatest in Europe, related by marriage to most of the great houses on the continent.

This strength, nobility and stature were, along with the talents of

Otto von Bismarck, one of the main reasons why Berlin and its monarchy became the head of the newly unified Germany.

Despite the later failures of this system in the early years of the 20th century, this age of a strong and enlightened German Empire, led from Berlin, remained in the European psyche for many years.

Jewish History of Berlin

The history of the Jewish community is plagued by episodic persecution, Jews often being used as a scapegoat for economic and social woes.

By 1295 Jewish people in Berlin were barred from many professions and effectively forbidden to become members of the artisan guilds.

Throughout the 14th to 16th centuries Jews were expelled from Berlin and let back in time and again, accused of acts such as the rampant plague in Berlin and Brandenburg, which had been sweeping across Europe; and host desecration; which meant that Berlin had virtually no Jewish community for a century.

Between expulsions and being banned from most other trades, the

Jewish people of Berlin successfully engaged in money lending and petty trade. They were confined to living in a ghetto in the *Grosser Judenhof* (Jew's Court) area, and on *Judenstrasse* (Jew Street).

Following the devastation of the Thirty Years' War and in an attempt to achieve an economic upswing by increasing population, the Great Elector Friedrich Wilhelm allowed 50 prosperous Jewish families that were expelled from Vienna to settle in the Brandenburg region in 1671. They were permitted to stay under the condition that they pay an annual protection fee, engage in only certain businesses and worship only in their own homes. Finally, a Jewish community of Berlin was officially founded.

Despite suffering restrictions on religion, residence and family size as well as extra taxes, the Jewish population of Berlin grew and by 1700 the city's Jewish slums had approximately 1,000 residents. In 1714 the first synagogue of Berlin was dedicated. As excellent merchants and bankers, by halfway through the 18th century the Jewish community totaled close to 2,000 and they had become among the richest people in Berlin.

Philosopher and scholar Moses Mendelssohn arrived in Berlin in 1743, and urged Jews to integrate into secular society and by 1778 these enlightened ideas found expression in the *Jüdische Freischule* (Jewish Free School) that combined religious learning with general education.

Though the 1812 Emancipation Edict that declared Jewish people equal citizens was in the most part quickly retracted, there was a general loosening on Prussia's restrictions and growing equality for its Jewish population. By 1869 the new North German Confederation passed a law on the equal rights of religious confession and declared the emancipation of Jewish people within its territory and by 1871 German Jews had equal rights. Within a few years members of the Jewish community rose to



prominence in government, many as close advisors to the Kaiser. By the turn of the century, there were more than 110,000 Jews in Berlin, comprising more than 5% of the total population.

In the Weimer years (1919-1933) Jewish citizens of Germany and Berlin enjoyed unprecedented levels of freedom, with plays by Max Reinhardt taking the stage, Jewish composers including Arnold Schoenberg's works being performed, Max Liebermann and Lesser Ury creating beautiful paintings and musicians such as the Comedian Harmonists at the height of popularity. The Jewish population continued to grow and by 1933 160,000 Jews called Berlin home.

At the same time anti-Semitism was on the rise and the years leading up to the ascendance of Nazi power saw increasing attacks on members of the Jewish community. State-backed persecution ensued after the Nazis took power in 1933, and with the 1935 *Nüremberger Gesetze* (Nuremberg Laws) the Jewish citizens of Germany were effectively deprived of social and

economic rights via the introduction of apartheid-like classifications of "racial purity".

Between 1933 and 1939 Jewish community life increased as Jewish citizens were forced to send their

The puzzle of the Berlin Wall

An anti-capitalistic protective barrier with concrete pads, barbed wire and watchtowers held the East German population from running away.

“A wall is a hell of a lot better than war,” declared John F. Kennedy upon hearing about the construction of the Berlin Wall.

Nevertheless, for about 28 years the 160km long wall encased a whole nation.

Between 1949 and 1961, 2.5 million people escaped from the German

Democratic Republic (DDR) by trying to get over the wall, or hiding in traffic that was allowed to go through the barriers. The accurate number of people who were shot down when they tried to escape varies according to different sources. Many memorials give an account of the GDR fugitives’ tragic destiny: bleeding to death after being shot by border patrol soldiers. Escape from the German republic was classified as treason,



punishable by death. There was nothing the Western Berlin police could do to stop this.

A sad chapter in German history was put to an end when the Wall was torn down in 1989, and as a result the unification of Germany ensued. Of over 100 watchtowers three are kept. Even some of the former border crossings are still clearly recognizable, with the most well-known transition at Checkpoint Charlie.

The wall was broken up and the remaining sections becoming memorials and museums for the fallen. The *Todesstreifen* (death zone) can still be seen in many places. Some have been left as large areas of brown, uncultivated land, while other parts have been turned into parks. The pieces of wall that were torn down and demolished were sent to museums and universities across the world, and made into souvenirs for tourists.

Wall sections decorate, for example,

the historic port in Cape Town, South Africa; the entrance of the Basilica Fatima Sanctuary in Portugal; the Vatican garden; the 6km long green stream Cheonggyecheon in South Korean city of Seoul; the EU Parliament in Belgium; as well as places in Strasbourg, Riga, London, Canberra and Montréal. The biggest Wall piece outside of Germany is located in “Freedom Park” near Arlington, Virginia.

The well-known East Side Gallery was painted in 1990 by 118 artists from



21 different countries; previously it was only allowed for West Germans. The Gallery is not just for the artistic exploration of the Wall’s demise, but for the memory of the dead refugees. During the Wall’s 20th anniversary former artists were brought to the capital city to remove the traces of the last 18 years. The graffiti has suffered extensive damage due to visitors and attacks from *Mauerspechten* (wall woodpeckers). A €2.5 million renovation is underway and should be ready by Autumn

Survival Guide

Airports

Tegel Airport

Tel: +49 1 805 000 186

Tegel is 8km from the city centre, which is easy and cheap to reach by bus. The number 109 stops at Zoologischer Station, or you can catch the U-Bahn.

Schönefeld

Tel: +49 1 805 000 186

South of the city centre, Bus 171 can take you from the airport to Flughafen Berlin Schönefeld railway station. From there you can catch the S-Bahn or the fast regional trains into the city, 20kms away.

Accommodation Information

Berlin has a number of hostels that provide all the necessary facilities: bed linen; lockers; internet/WIFI; laundry facilities; plus added bonuses like leisure and entertainment facilities - bar; games room; TV room; and cheap breakfasts. Sometimes these are free or you may have to pay a small fee. It's a good idea to go through these offers and decide what is important to you and what you can do without.

Booking a bed is easy and can be

done in a number of ways: online; telephone; or the olde traditional way...visit the hostel and book a bed there and then. Booking online however is quick, simple and often cheaper. You could book via the hostel's website, but we recommend using hostel search engines such as HostelWorld.com. It is one of the easiest search engines to use, even for technophobes. Search by area, price or browse the customer ratings to find the best hostel for you. Keep an eye out for discounts when booking online.

How to pay: Most hostels prefer cash on arrival but each is different so keep that in mind when browsing. A small deposit is required when booking over the internet to ensure your bed is held, and is especially worth doing during busy holiday periods (May to September).



Useful words/phrases

English	German
Yes, No	Ja, Nein
Please	Bitte
You're welcome	Bitte
Thank you	Danke
Good Morning	Guten Morgen
Good Day	Guten Tag
Good Evening	Guten Abend
Goodbye (informal)	Tschüss
Goodbye (formal)	Auf Wiedersehen
How are you? (formal)	Wie geht es Ihnen?
How are you? (informal)	Wie geht's?
Today	Heute
Tomorrow	Morgen
Yesterday	Gestern
Excuse me	Entschuldigung
Where is...?	Wo ist...?
How, When, Why?	Wie, Wann, Warum?
Women's toilets	Damen/Frauen
Men's toilets	Herren/Männer

Survival Guide



Entrance	Eingang
Exit	Ausgang
I would like...	Ich möchte...
Do you speak English?	Sprechen Sie Englisch?
1	eins
2	zwei
3	drei
4	vier
5	fünf
6	sechs
7	sieben
8	acht
9	neun
10	zehn
20	zwanzig
50	fünfzig
100	ein hundert

Freibad Müggelsee

Fürstenwalder Damm 838, Rahnsdorf. Tel: +49 0 306 487 777. S-Bahn: Friedrichshagen, Tram 61: Strandbad Müggelsee. May-Sept 9am-6pm. Cost: €4; €2 reductions.

Though not Berlin's most central swimming area, this is a perfectly pleasant sunny day outing. With volleyball and basketball courts, snacks and drinks for sale, and a restaurant close by, this inland beach on the north shore of East Berlin's biggest lake boasts a large sun-bathing and swimming area.

Although a sandy forefront, the

water is natural and flat. It's great for throwing a ball around and playing horse with your friends. As the beach does get quite crowded, especially on sunny weekends, getting there early to claim a prime sun-bathing spot is recommended. From Alexanderplatz, the trip takes about 45 minutes.

The *Freikörperkultur* (nudist) section of the beach is separated from the *Freibad* (open-air bathing area) by 200m of forest. If you're interested in experiencing some of Germany's nudist culture get off the tram at Fürstenwalder Damm/Müggelseedamm for the FKK section of the beach. Tourists who are just



there to gawk will be treated with some hostility, so make sure you're ready to fully participate in this aspect of German culture if you choose to visit the nudist area.

Krumme Lanke

S-Bahn: Schlachtensee. Lake: Open all day, every day; free.

Allied Museum: www.alliiertenmuseum.de. U-Bahn: Oskar-Helena-Helm. Mon-Tue, Thu-Sun 10am-6pm.

Wannsee Villa at Am Grossex Wannsee 56-58. Haus der Wannsee Konferenz: www.ghwk.de. Mon-Sun 10am-6pm; free. To get there, catch Bus 114 from Wannsee, get off at stop "Haus der Wannsee-Konferenz".

If you're looking for a change from the busy and hectic city centre, a short trip to Schlachtensee Station is a great way to spend a relaxing (and free!) day out. Only a 100 metre walk from the station, Krumme Lanke is surrounded by the trees of the Grunewald Forest and can provide the tranquillity and rest your feet so much desire. It's possible to swim, row and walk around in the area, and you can grab lunch from a cheap but cheerful café next to the station. Currywurst, bratwurst and more go

for €2-5. On a sunny day it can get quite busy, so head there early to claim a spot.

If you can't beat your sightseeing addiction, nearby is the Allied museum, good for a visual understanding of the Berlin Airlift and American presence in the city during much of the 20th century. Also close by is the Wannsee Villa, where the Nazis mapped out the fate of Europe's Jews in the 1930s. All in all an enjoyable day out worth having if just to see another side to the multifaceted city.





Strand Bar Mitte

www.strandbar.de. *Monbijoustraße 1-3. U-Bahn/S-Bahn: Alexanderplatz. Mon-Sun 10am-late.*

Strand Bar Mitte is well known for having started the urban beach bar trend, for which Berlin is now famous. This unique bar sits alongside the River Spree, overlooking Museum Island. Connected to the theatre next door, it is a fantastic place to sit and enjoy a cold beer at reasonable prices. Lounge in the comfy deck

chairs by the river and watch the world go by, or try your hand at salsa on the dance floor.

Be it day or night, the Strand Bar is a delightfully relaxed environment which is frequented by all ages. Watch out for the setting sun tinting the façade of the Bodemuseum across the river; it is particularly beautiful. The fairy lights, urban beach and deck-chairs all add to the holiday atmosphere, while the pizzeria by the bar makes for great

mid-evening snacks. If you want a low-key alfresco evening, then look no further.

Bang Bang

www.bangbang-club.de. *Neue Promenade 10. S-Bahn: Hackescher Markt. Tel: +49 3 060 405 310. Price: €5-10.*

Her fangs tore into the body of a raw whole pineapple, the juice causing red lipstick to drip down her chin and pool onto the stage. Dressed in burlesque, she reared her head back and spit the tropical pulp into faces of a screaming crowd pumping fists of devil horns.

Bleeding eardrums pressed against speakers as the tongue of this rock goddess slipped pieces of the luscious fruit between audience members' drooling lips.

If you've been searching for an intense nightlife scene of live music, tight DJ mixes, and kisses for sale, then the hunt ends at the Bang Bang Club in Mitte. Under the thunderous

tracks of the Hackescher Markt S-Bahn, this dimly lit hole in the wall is a hotspot for colourful characters that will guarantee an interesting and usually entertaining night.

The dress code varies from drag and burlesque to teenagers sporting a casual attire of shorts and T-shirts. The music as well is diverse with

DJs spinning 60s pop hits, indie tracks, and even the heavy riffs of Black Sabbath and Rage Against the Machine. The bar unfortunately is not cheap, beer runs €3 for .33L and cocktails are €6-7.

Berlin's nightlife typically begins quite late, in fact

most clubs are not in full swing until well after midnight. So if you decide to show up at the Bang Bang around 11pm, make sure that you have the energy to exercise your dance skills and head-banging fury to the early hours of the morning. Visit the website to see the event lineup and choose the night that best suits your interests.



Freidrichshain



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Information

An up and coming neighbourhood in East Berlin, Friedrichshain offers travellers a look into Berlin's vibrant bar, café, club, and restaurant culture.

The neighbourhood boasts an extensive nightlife where travellers can bar-hop on Simon-Dach-Strasse, enjoy the laid back atmosphere of the beach bars on the Spree, experience the underground punk scene, or have a sleepless weekend gyrating on a dance floor until Sunday afternoon. Friedrichshain is unmistakably a neighbourhood of the East with Socialist architecture and its grand boulevard aptly named Karl-Marx-Allee, formerly Stalinallee.

The East Side Gallery is the star tourist attraction of this district. It is the longest intact part of the Berlin Wall, with many murals created by known and unknown artists alike.

Gentrification is quickly closing in on this eccentric neighbourhood. The O2 World Arena recently opened and there are plans to continue developing and do away with many of the quirks like its famed beach bars, which make this neighbourhood tick. Hopefully, the area will survive this demolition and continue to flourish under Berlin's counter culture.



Freidrichshain

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Qrazy:Ling's

www.qrazylings.com. Tram: M13 Wuhlischstrasse. Tel: +49 3 029 493 157. Mon-Thu 4pm-12am, Fri 4pm-late, Sat-Sun 1pm-late. Cost: €5 to €9.

The strikingly colourful graffiti façade of Qrazy:Ling's may not scream out authentic Vietnamese cuisine, but on entrance you'll find an intricate hand-made décor and an impressive menu of mouth-watering delights.

Vietnamese food is all about fresh ingredients and fragrant aromas and Qrazy:Ling's food certainly embraces this tradition.

Whether you go for the traditional simple-yet-tasty noodle soup Pho or the rice noodles with deliciously marinated beef Bun Bo Hue, you will be surprised at how much flavour one mouthful can deliver. The main meals are generously portioned with affordable prices so you won't go home feeling hungry at the slightest.



Qrazy:Ling's is actually connected via an arch to art store Quality Lovers which explains why this traditional Vietnamese restaurant has such a quirky modern feel and a relaxed atmosphere to match.

Service can be slow with big groups, but for Ling's utterly delectable food, it is definitely worth the wait.

Cayetanom Mediterranean Restaurant

Simon-Dach-Strasse 14. U-Bahn: Frankfurter Tor. Tel: +49 3 054 730 042. Price: €5-10.

Settled in amongst trendy shops, ice-cream parlors and cobblestone pathways, Cayetano is perfectly located for a mid-day sustenance break. A number of outdoor tables provide a cool, shaded atmosphere for eating, drinking and people-watching and the servers are courteous and hospitable. The portions are generous and come with a fresh side salad as well as soft, white bread.

The diner can choose between a number of items, ranging from American-style burgers, Italian pasta dishes and typical German

fare. Intimidating in size and lavishly doused with tangy feta and balsamic, the salads are perfect for lunch and not to be missed in the evening is the filling spätzle dishes: small potato dumplings smothered with fresh herbs and dotted with mushrooms, carrots and chicken. Vegetarian options are also available. Whether it's for a fueling breakfast, a quick lunch break or a relaxing dinner, Cayetano offers it all in the way of a smiling staff, filling food and a soothing setting.

If you're in the area on Sunday, Cayetano also offers an all-you-can-eat brunch on Sundays from 10am-3pm.



Max und Moritz

www.maxundmoritzberlin.de.
Oranienstraße 162. Tel: +49 3 069 515 911. Open daily from 6pm.
Price: €10-15.

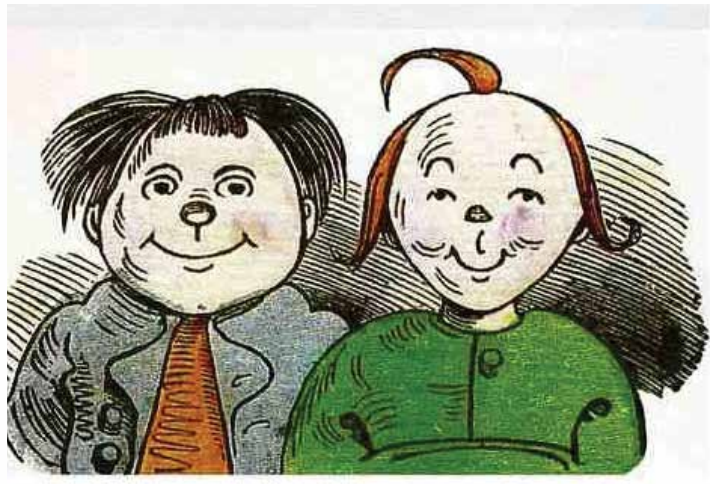
A welcome break from the predominantly Turkish food found in this part of the city, Max und Moritz provides traditional German cuisine. It is famous for cooking up Berliner dishes in an authentic and relaxing setting.

There is an impressive range of these satisfying and hearty dishes. From the traditional, time-honoured *Berliner Eisbein*, a pickled pig foot with Sauerkraut and potatoes, to *Kutscher Gulasch*, a richly spiced beef stew served with salad and dumpling noodles. The menu certainly leans more towards the carnivorous in nature however there are also a few vegetarian dishes on offer.

Whatever your taste, you will find something

to your liking here. Its generous portions, welcoming atmosphere and wonderful food make this Berlin institution a must. The prices may be a little high for the more budget-conscious traveller with the more expensive dishes running up to €14. However there are less expensive meals of offer from around €8.50 and the setting and atmosphere is worth the little extra.

The restaurant can get quite busy at times, a testament to the quality of the food, so phone ahead to reserve a table or go earlier in the evening to avoid disappointment or a lengthy wait.



Badeschiff

www.arena-berlin.de. Eichenstraße 4. U-Bahn: Schlesisches Tor. S-Bahn: Treptower Park. Bus 265/N65. Tel: +49 305 332 030. Open from 8am. Admission €3. Drinks: €3-10.

Badeschiff is Berlin's riverside beach and pool where you can hang out in the sand; swim; tan; and wind down some lazy summer days.

Located in Eastern Kreuzberg, it is perhaps the most famous of the area's river venues and also one of the most imaginative. Rather than swimming in the river itself, an option probably both undesirable and dangerous, you can swim and horse-around in a floating pool docked on the river.

Badeschiff has a fully stocked bar serving up whatever summer refreshment takes your fancy. Located right next door is a food bar serving up Wursts of various description for when the beers have given you some tipsy munchies.

Badeschiff is a must for any summer Berlin trip. Even if you're just around for a long weekends, this a perfect place to hang out after hitting the museums and before hitting the nightlife...that in-between afternoon time when Berliners take it easy before the nightlife really gets its pace up. Beware, however, spots on this mini piece of Caribbean beach can fill up fast so either get there early or go on a weekday to avoid disappointment.



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