

Hostelworld Guide for Berlin

Getting There

- By plane:** Berlin is served by two airports - Tegel and Schönefeld. From Tegel, buses #109, #128 and #X9 will bring you to the city centre. From Schönefeld the easiest way is via train.
- By train:** Trains travelling to Berlin from other European cities either arrive at Zoo Station (West Berlin) or Lichtenberg Station (East Berlin).
- By bus:** Travelling to Berlin by bus, you will end up in the city's main bus terminal on Messedamm in Charlottenburg, West Berlin.

Getting Around

- On foot:** Berlin is one of Europe's largest cities but most of its main sights (particularly in East Berlin) are within walking distance. You will probably need to use public transport at some stage though.
- By U-Bahn/S-Bahn:** Berlin's underground system (U-Bahn) is quick, efficient and serves most of the city. The S-Bahn (overground) connects all the city centre's main stations.
- By bus/tram:** Buses also serve most part of the German capital. Buses #100 and #200 are very useful for tourists (see 'Budget Tips'). A tram network is still in operation in East Berlin.

Useful phrases

Hello: Hallo
Goodbye: Tschüss
Please: Bitte
Thank you: Vielen Dank
You're welcome: Gern geschehen
Yes: Ja
No: Nein
Of course: Natürlich
Excuse me: Entschuldigung
How are you?: Wie geht es dir?
Open: Geöffnet
Closed: Geschlossen
What is your name?: Wie heisst du?
My name is...: Ich heisse...
How much?: Wie teuer ist es?
May I have the bill?: Kann ich die rechnung haben?

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Climate

Berlin is a city that enjoys warm, sunny summers, that rarely get unbearably warm during months like July and August. You could find yourself wearing only a t-shirt up until mid-October but it is then that temperatures begin to drop. Winters are cold but not extreme. Spring and autumn are very pleasant times to visit.

Useful Information

Language: German
Currency: Euro
Electricity: 220 Volts, AC/50Hz
Area Code: +49 (Germany) 030 (Berlin)
Emergency Codes: Ambulance/Fire 112, Police 110
Time Zone: Central European Time (GMT +1)
Central Post Office: Joachimstaler Str. 7
Main Tourist Office: Brandenburg Gate, Pariser Platz

Embassies

USA: +49 (0)30 238 5174
UK: +49 (0)30 204 570
Canada: +49 (0)30 203 120
Australia: +49 (0)30 880 0880
South Africa: +49 (0)30 220 730
Ireland: +49 (0)30 220 720
Spain: +49 (0)30 254 0070
Italy: +49 (0)30 254 400
New Zealand: +49 (0)30 206 210
France: +49 (0)30 5900 39000

Cheap Eats

Schlitzsky's Deli, Friedrich Str. 200, Mitte Blatantly cashing in on its proximity to Checkpoint Charlie, Schlitzsky's Deli deals in hunger-busting sandwiches rammed with ingredients you'd expect to find in any American deli. Choose from a wide range of sandwiches for between €3 and €5 or save a few euros by getting one of the combo-meals which start at €4. *Open daily from 9am-6.30pm.*

Bagels & Bialys, Rosenthaler Str. 46-48, Mitte Located just opposite busy Hackesche Höfe, this is the perfect place to fill up morning, noon or night. Here you can choose from a wide range of American-style bagels while more Arabian-type delicacies such as 'shouarmas' are also to be sampled. *Open daily from 8am-5am.*

Trattoria La Scala, Rosenthaler Str. 13, Mitte Also found on Rosenthaler Str., what this restaurant lacks in atmosphere it makes up for in value. Until 5pm Monday to Friday you can take your pick from a wide range of oven-baked pizzas and a drink to wash it down with for a mere €6. Pastas in the same promotion cost €5.50. Worth checking out. *Open daily from 11am-midnight.*

A Berlin Institution

Currywurst Imbiss Stands, various locations Scattered all over the German capital are Imbiss stands - stands that sell currywurst, a chopped up sausage, doused in ketchup and sprinkled with a touch of curry powder. The most famous one is under Eberswalder Str. U-Bahn station.

Oranium, Oranienburger Str. 33/34, Mitte Of all the restaurants that line this busy street, Oranium is the most vibrant. Popular with young people, you can get everything from a grilled sandwich from €4 to a main course for no more than €10. For the best value get one of the tapas deals where €12 will get you (and somebody else) four portions. *Open daily from 11am-1am (until 3am Sat & Sun).*

After Dark

Café Zapata, Oranienburger Str. 54-55, Mitte If somebody was to tell you this unique venue was originally a part of 'The Matrix' set you'd tend to believe them - old tins, barbed wire, metal and other materials decorate this large bar. The building itself was meant to be destructed before squatters took over and saved from its ill-timed fate. *Open daily from 10am-open end.*

Wohnzimmer, Lette Str. 6, Prenzlauer Berg This cosy bar is one of the most intimate places in the city. Within five minutes of sitting down with a beer and a friend you'll feel as if you're relaxing in your own sitting room. Funnily enough, its name translated into English means 'living room'. *Open daily from 10am-4am.*

Gay / Lesbian Berlin

Berlin is by far Germany's most liberal city meaning it is also where Germany's most active gay and lesbian scene can be found. Most gay bars and clubs are in the city's Schöneberg district in West Berlin, particularly around Nollendorfplatz and Fugger Str. **Eldorado**, (corner of Motz Str. & Kalckreuth Str.) was Berlin's first openly gay bar, thus making it one of the most famous. **Café So+So** (Fugger Str. 35) is another of the districts popular gay bars. If it's a club you're after **Die Busche** (Mühlen Str. 12) is a favourite.

Aufsturz, Oranienburger Str. 67, Mitte While most bars on Oranienburger Str try to fall into some type of category, Aufsturz doesn't. This is a typical German bar that attracts hundreds of Berliners every weekend. There are many types of beers to choose from and, if you're peckish, various German dishes to tank up on also. *Open daily from 12pm-2am.*

OstZone, Monbijoupark, Mitte The words 'underground' and 'bar' will either draw someone to a bar or deter them. If are one of the ones who likes underground bars take the time out to visit this one beneath an S-Bahn railtrack. At the weekends it bar gets extremely lively with live music entertaining those who find it. *Open daily from 12pm-3am.*

Silberfisch, Oranienburger Str. 36, Mitte Silberfisch is an 'after dark' venue in every sense. Make your way down the bar's steps to discover a small bar that entertains those who are there from the early hours or who have just crawled in from one of the city's clubs. *Open Sun-Thurs 9pm-6am, Fri & Sat 8pm-8am.*

Don't Miss

Brandenburg Gate, Pariser Platz, Mitte Remarkably untouched during both World Wars, the Brandenburg Gate was originally commissioned by Friedrich Wilhelm II to represent peace. Ironically, it was later incorporated in the Berlin Wall. Today Berlin's most instantly recognisable landmark is a symbol of the reunification of East and West.

A Culture Vulture's Dream Come True

Museumsinsel, Mitte Museumsinsel (Museum Island) is where you will find some of Berlin's top museums. **Altes Museum** houses one of the world's most important ancient Egyptian collections, **Alte Nationalgalerie** is a must for art lovers and the **Pergamonmuseum** contains a collection of classical antiquities. *Museums open daily from 10am-6pm (until 10pm on Thurs); admission €8.*

Reichstag, Platz der Republik 1, Mitte Crowned by a glass cupola making it easily distinctive among the rest of East Berlin's buildings, the Reichstag has been home to the Bundestag (German Parliament) since 1999. Visitors can visit the roof terrace of the building which boasts amazing views of the city as well as the aforementioned cupola which documents the building's colourful history. *Open daily from 8am-midnight; admission free.*

East Side Gallery, Mühlen Str., Friedrichshain Of all the remaining sections of the Berlin Wall, the East Side Gallery is by far the best preserved. Stretching a total of 1.3km, it is decorated with 106 paintings by artists from all over the world.

Potsdamer Platz, Mitte If you're one who likes your bright lights in a big city and need a break from buildings steeped in history, get down to Potsdamer Platz. Berlin's answer to Times Square has lights blinking all night long and the square's most intriguing building by far is the Sony Center.

Mark Your Calendar

January - Lange Nacht Der Museen Every January over 150,000 culture vultures take to the Berlin streets to visit the city's museums after dark. Taking place on the last Saturday, one ticket covers all museums. There is street entertainment too.

February - Berlin International Film Festival Germany's largest film festival attracts movie makers from both home and abroad, some of whom compete for the coveted 'Golden Bear' award.

March - Spandau Spring Festival You may have to travel to the suburb of Spandau for this festival deep in West Berlin, but do and you'll be treated to funfairs, parades and more.

April - Britspotting Film Festival Showcasing the best in independent British cinema, 'Britspotting' has become an extremely popular festival among film buffs in Berlin.

May - Carnival of Cultures Lasting four days, this street festival in the city's Kreuzberg district is one of the most colourful festivals of the year. Street parades and parties are just part of the festivities.

June - Christopher Street Day Berlin's biggest gay celebration commemorates the Stonewall riots which took place in New York in 1969. The highlight of the day is Berlin's most outlandish gay parade.

July - Fuckparade Founded in 1997 as a counter-demonstration against the commercialisation of the Love Parade, this is more a demonstration than anything else.

July - Loveparade Arguably the world's most famous parade, Berlin's infamous techno event attracts millions to the streets each year.

August - Hemp Parade Yes, that's right - another parade! This one is dedicated to everything hemp. Don't be surprised if you see one or two people floating rather than walking.

October - Festival of Lights Visit Berlin during this week-long festival when all its main sites are illuminated and you will never see the city look as beautiful after dark again.

December - New Year's Eve Celebrations If Berlin is your chosen capital to ring in the New Year pick your spot early down at the Brandenburg Gate where hundreds of thousands congregate for the year's biggest fireworks display.

Get Connected

Global Callcenter, Budapester Str. 45, Charlottenburg This cybershop is in the busy Europa Center in West Berlin. It's a quiet place, but it's right in the middle of things in the west side. *Open from 9am-midnight; €2 per hour.*

easyEverything, Kurfürstendamm 224, Charlottenburg You could easily miss this easyEverythingcafé as it is white and not bright orange like so many of its counterparts. Here you will find PCs with flatscreens and speedy internet access in the heart of the West. *Open daily from 6.30am-2am; rates vary.*

Surf & Sushi, Oranienburger Str. 17, Mitte This small eatery/internet café is a good place to stop and send a few mails. You can also get lunch (Mon-Fri) where a generous bowl of soup and a healthy portion of sushi will cost you just €5. *Open Mon-Sat 12pm-open end, Sun 1pm-open end.*

Plan@t Group, Niederbarnim Str. 4, Friedrichshain If you don't like sharing other people's smoke, or you enjoy blowing up other people in cyberworld, this internet café is perfect for you thanks to its non-smoking room and game centre. *Open Mon-Sat 9.30am-3am, Sun 1pm-3am; 40c for 15 mins.*

Netz Galaxie, Joachimstaler Str. 19, Charlottenburg Is it a net café? Yes! Is it a casino? Yes again! Is it a pool hall? Why, yes again! That's right, this place to connect yourself to the world wide web is all three! *Open daily from 10am-2am.*

www.

www.berlin-tourist-information.de
www.eastsidegallery.com
www.bundestag.de
www.berlinatnight.de