

instant

# BERLIN

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Summer 2007



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and a whole host of other useful information

Berlin is four times the size of Paris, and even though the city consolidated its 23 districts into 12 in 2001, you're still left with 23 self contained areas (Kieze) in which Berliners often find everything they need.

### Mitte (MI)

Since reunification, Mitte has rightly snatched back the title of most-visited district from Charlottenburg. On and off the boulevard Unter den Linden, whose trees Marlene Dietrich once extolled in song, are baroque and classical monuments to Prussian culture. The proximity of state libraries, the State Opera, Humboldt University, the old Arsenal (now the German History Museum), Gendarmenmarkt, Museum Island, Berliner Dom, and the abandoned East German Parliament building make for more talk, less walk tours. The architecturally humbler area of Mitte is the Scheunenviertel, whose layout looks as if 17th-century planners got interrupted during a game of pick-up sticks. It's on these streets that the casually chic saunter from courtyard gallery to sidewalk café, pointing out directions to tourists seeking out the latest hotspots or traces of the Jewish community that lived here from the late 17th-century until the mass deportations of the Nazi era.

### Charlottenburg (CB)

If downtown to you means wide, traffic-filled streets, crowds of shoppers, five-star hotels and tall buildings, then Charlottenburg comes closest to fitting the bill in Berlin. Much of what was here was bombed in the war and built anew in the 1950s. The nexus of activity is the knot where Kurfürstendamm, Joachimsthaler Str, Bahnhof Zoo and Taentzienstr. come together. Follow what becomes an increasingly silken ribbon down Kurfürstendamm (Ku'damm) and the setting becomes more genteel where you can't see the buildings for the trees. Nearby but isolated from the hoi polloi is Schloss Charlottenburg, the residence of King Friedrich I.

### Tiergarten (TG)

Tiergarten is both a district and the name of the 255 hectare park that began as the Great Elector's hunting grounds in the 1600s and became increasingly more civilised with landscaping in the 1800s. Traffic passes through it, doing a dosey-doe around the Siegessäule (Victory Column). Slicing

### Berlin: The facts

**Area** Germany covers an area of 357,021 km<sup>2</sup>, of which almost a third is woodland. Berlin lies in the flat north eastern part of the country, close to the border with Poland. The highest points in Berlin are the rubble hills remaining from World War II.

**Local time** Germany is in the Central European Time Zone: GMT + 1 hour. When it is 12:00 in Berlin it is: 06:00 in New York, 11:00 in London, 12:00 in Rome, 14:00 in Moscow and 20:00 in Sydney.

**Population** Germany: 82,438,000 (2006), Berlin: 3,397,000 (2005)

**Temperature** The average January temperature in Berlin is a chilly -0.5°C (31°F) while in July average temperatures soar to a positively terrace-crowding 18°C (68°F).

though the park's length is Str. des 17. Juni, which leads to the Brandenburg Gate at the eastern end. Just south of it are the museums of the Kulturforum and Potsdamer Pl.

### Kreuzberg (KB)

Thanks to a large Turkish community and more hippies, anarchists and alternative folks than you can shake a didgeridoo at, Kreuzberg feels neither East nor West. It was the black sheep of West Berlin, left alone in its far-off room to play loud music and draw on the walls (literally, it was parked in a dead-end, cornered by The Wall). In 1987 social and economic frustration exploded into violence and vandalism during the traditionally political demonstrations of May Day. Every year since, the city prepares for a long night of stone-throwing and burning automobiles. May 1st is essentially Kreuzberg's way of reliving its 15 minutes of fame. The rest of the days are marked by backgammon at the men's clubs, café-sitting on the Landwehrkanal, and ambling down the popular drags Oranienstr. and Bergmannstr. Two major museums, the House at Checkpoint Charlie and the Jewish Museum, are planted in the staid parts of the district.

### Prenzlauer Berg (PB)

On a low hill northeast of Mitte, 'Prenzl' Berg' is an old working-class district in the former East Berlin that came through the war relatively unscathed. The best places to soak up the atmosphere are Kollwitzpl, Helmholzpl. and along Kastanienallee (all near U-Bahn Eberswalderstr.). Prenzlauer Berg's few attractions include the Vitra Design museum and a 19th-century brewery complex that is now the Kulturbrauerei culture centre. A good time to visit is Saturday when the eco-market is open on Kollwitzplatz, or Sunday when everyone sits outside being cool and eating breakfast all day.

# inyourpocket

ESSENTIAL CITY GUIDES

### Instant Berlin

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Berlin may be slap in the middle of Germany's north-eastern emptiness, but it is well connected, and once you are in Berlin, you'll wish your town had such good public transport.

## Public transport

Berlin's integrated network of S-Bahn (Schnellbahn), U-Bahn (Unterirdische Bahn, underground), bus, and Straßenbahn (tram, in eastern Berlin only) is run by the BVG (tel. 194 49, www.bvg.de) and the system runs quite smoothly. If you remember the number (or colour) and end station of the line you want to use, you'll soon be navigating the labyrinth-like stations like a local. Signs display the destination of the train, and at U-Bahn stations, display when the next train will arrive. The same tickets serve all BVG services. Vending machines at stations and on trams have instructions in English and accept coins (and on platforms, banknotes too). At larger stations there are S-Bahn information and sales counters. On buses, the driver can sell you a ticket. With a €2.10 Einzelticket (single ticket) you can travel one-way, with transfers, within the AB zone. Buy a €1.20 Kurzstrecke (short distance) ticket if you want to travel up to three S/U-Bahn stops, or up to six stops by bus or tram. If you anticipate a lot of travelling, consider either the Tageskarte (day card, valid until 03:00 the next morning; €5.80) or seven-day pass (€25.40). If you're in a group of up to five people, you can buy a Kleingruppenkarte (group day ticket, €14). The BVG, the tourist office, and some hotels sell a variety of multiday cards including the €21 Welcome Card, which grants one adult and three children three days of travel and the City Tour Card is good for unlimited travel in the AB zone for 48 hours (€14.90) or 72 hours (€19.90), plus you get various discounts. If you're arriving in or leaving Berlin by train and your ticket says Berlin Stadtbahn, you can travel free on the main S-Bahn line between Charlottenburg and Ostbahnhof on the day of arrival/departure. Before boarding the S-Bahn or U-Bahn, always validate your ticket by punching it in the machine near the end of the platform. On buses and trams, the machines are on board. Public transport uses the honour system, and there are regular checks by plainclothes inspectors. If you are caught without a ticket (or with an unvalidated one) you'll be fined €40 on the spot. You can fund this by denouncing your friend as a vandal, which may earn you up to €600. The major drawback to playing the night owl in Berlin is that most U-Bahn lines stop by 01:00; most S-Bahn lines

## Train stations reshuffled

Berlin is a new place since the opening of the huge, glass-sheathed **Hauptbahnhof** main station. All regional and intercity trains now stop here, some arriving via the new north-south tunnel, others on the elevated track. The station has all the essentials; shopping mall, post office, toilets and showers and the **Infostore** tourist information centre. Zoo Bahnhof (**Zoologischer Garten**) has been reduced to a regional train stop, much to the chagrin of the surrounding businesses, as has **Ostbahnhof** station (in Friedrichshain and 20 minutes away by S-Bahn from Zoo Bahnhof). All these train stations are connected to the main S-Bahn line, and some to the U-Bahn. Regional (**RE**) trains along the elevated east-west track stop at Mitte's **Alexanderplatz** and **Friedrichstraße** stations as well. If your train ticket mentions **Berlin Stadtbahn** you can use it to travel further on the elevated S-Bahn track between Charlottenburg and Ostbahnhof stations.

stop roughly between 01:30 and 04:00 during the week. From Friday to Sunday, U-Bahn lines N°2, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 and 15 run every 15 minutes the night through, as does the S-Bahn. All week, night buses (designated with N) begin service around midnight and usually run at half-hour intervals, often connecting with other night buses.

## Planes

Berlin has three airports (online at www.berlin-airport.de). **Tegel** (TXL), the main airport, is 7km northwest of the city centre. Behind the airport information desk in the main hall are the BVG public transport ticket office and the luggage office. Nearby are a post office and ATMs. Tegel is well-connected to the city centre by bus; the TXL JetExpressBus runs every 15-20 minutes between 05:30 and 23:00, and is the quickest connection to Hauptbahnhof station, Unter den Linden and Alexanderplatz. Bus X9 (every 5-10 minutes from 04:50 to 23:30) gets you to Zoo Bahnhof in 20 minutes. Bus N°109 heads to S-Bahn station Charlottenburg and N°128 to U-Bahn station Osloer Straße. Single €2 tickets can be bought from machines outside or from the driver, and are valid for two hours. A taxi to the city centre will cost about €15. **Schönefeld** airport (SXF) is 20km southeast of the city centre and mostly serves budget flights and holiday charters. A shuttle brings you to the nearby S-Bahn/railway station. An Airport Express train from here reaches the city centre in 30 minutes; the S-Bahn take about 40 minutes. Take bus X7 to U-Bahn station Rudow for Kreuzberg. **Tempelhof** (THF) is the city-centre airport; from the main hall it's a short walk to the Platz der Luftbrücke U-Bahn station where trains to Friedrichstraße run 24hrs per day.

## Trains

**DB** (*Deutsche Bahn*, German railways) runs ICE trains (high speed), EC (EuroCity) and IC (InterCity). Seat reservations are sometimes obligatory; check before boarding. **Tickets** can be purchased at the DB Centre and travel agency (open 06:00 - 22:30) in the main hall. **Book online** in advance at DB's fabulous online train timetable at [www.bahn.de](http://www.bahn.de).

## Taxis

The special €3.50 *Kurzstrecke* is a set fare for short trips (3km or 5 minutes) can only be used in hailed cabs and if you mention it as soon as you board. Calling a taxi is an option as well; mention to the operator if you want to pay by credit card, as not all taxis have card-reading equipment.

**City Funk** tel. 21 02 02  
**Funk Taxi Berlin** tel. 26 10 26  
**Spree Funk** tel. 44 33 22  
**Würfel-Funk** tel. 0800 222 22 55 (tollfree)



Expense account diners could probably eat their way through the city's best restaurants on a two-week stay. The best places to rub elbows with opposite-handed Berliners is at neighbourhood restaurants and cafés, which often serve three meals a day and meld into bars in the later hours.

## Asian

**Mango G-1, Mulackstr. 29, MI, Weinmeisterstr., tel. 28 04 05 58, www.mango.de.** Recently expanded and still packing them in is Mango, the deliciously enticing Vietnamese with a small but perfectly formed menu. Curry, satay, spring rolls and soups for €5 a plate, while fresh juices and Saigon beer also up the ante. Friendly staff, authentic cuisine and low prices - a match made in culinary heaven. ▶ Open 12:00 - 24:00, Sat 16:00 - 24:00. Closed Sun. (€5.50). ☎☎☎☎☎

**Pagode F-4, Bergmannstr. 88, KB, tel. 691 26 40.** Simply one of the best Thai restaurants in town, and awarded by the Thai embassy in Berlin as one of the best in Germany. It feels crowded, steamy and noisy, but that's just part of the authentic self-service atmosphere; wait till you sink your teeth in the fantastic food. All the Thai classics are present, as are some other Asian dishes. If you like it hot, just ask and they'll make it hot. ▶ Open 12:00 - 24:00. (€2-9). ☎

**Suksan D-3, Ansbacher Str. 4, SB, Wittenbergplatz, tel. 21 01 86 73, www.suksan.de.** A short stroll from west Berlin's shops and sights, Suksan is a cosy Thai restaurant decorated with ample bamboo poles and palmleaf roofs. Drop by for the lunch specials, or dine on spicy Thai dishes accompanied by wine or fresh coconut milk, perhaps followed by a cocktail. ▶ Open 12:00 - 23:00, Fri, Sat 12:00 - 24:00, Sun 17:00 - 23:00.

## Austrian

**Riehmer's F-4, Hagelbergerstr. 9, KB, Mehringdamm, tel. 78 89 19 80.** Riehmer's brings together the cuisines of the far-reaching Austro-Hungarian empire. Standards on the changing menu are Wienerschnitzel, beef consommé (Tafelspitz Suppe) and beef goulash. The cream-coloured rooms are bare of ornamentation save for a portrait of Kaiser Franz Joseph and linen napkins folded into crowns. The coveted simpler seating is on the cedar chips of the garden that faces an historic apartment complex for Prussian officers. ▶ Open 18:00 - 01:00. Closed Mon. (€7-16). ☎

## Cafés

**Café im Literaturhaus C-3, Fasanenstr. 23, CB, Uhlandstr., tel. 882 54 14.** Some guests may be sporting three-piece suits, straw hats, polished canes and freshly fluffed pups, but you don't have to be all that precious about eating at this literary hangout. Food (served until 24:00) runs from cheap sandwiches for aspiring writers and critics, to lamb. The 19th-century building has airy rooms that are pleasant to dine in on a sunny day. Adjacent is a well-stocked bookstore. ▶ Open 09:30 - 01:00. (€5-17). ☎☎

## Fast food

**Curry 36 F-4, Mehringdamm 36, KB, Mehringdamm.** If you want to eat Currywurst the proper Berlin way, you'll order yours here boiled and naked. It looks a little pale in comparison to the ones with their pink skins on, but you might earn an iota of respect from the hard-boiled Frau who work the stand. Other proletarian Berlin specialties you can take to the stand-up outdoor tables are the fried burgers, Boulette. ▶ Open 09:00 - 04:00, Sat 10:00 - 04:00, Sun 11:00 - 04:00. (€2-4).

## Fine dining

**Fischers Fritz F-2, Charlottenstr. 49 (Regent Hotel), MI, Französische Str., tel. 20 33 63 63.** The restaurant's name comes from a tongue-twister and the light, fish-focused menu is for a very refined palate. Chef Christian Lohse has won several of the Michelin stars that appear none too oft in Germany. The German chef first trained in Dijon and has since pleased gourmands such as those at The Dorchester in London and the Sultan of Brunei (as a private chef). The dining room has light woods, deep carpets and a fireplace. ▶ Open 12:00 - 14:00; 18:30 - 23:00. ☎☎☎☎☎

**VAU F-2, Jägerstr. 54/55, MI, Französische Str., tel. 202 97 30, www.vau-berlin.de.** It's easy to spell and rhymes with wow, and the latter is the word-of-mouth that has kept chef Kolja Kleeberg's restaurant fully booked for the past four years. Using many products from the Berlin area, Michelin-starred Kleeberg follows his mentor Josef Viehhauser's rule: never more than three products on a plate. ▶ Open 12:00 - 14:30, 19:00 - 22:30. Closed Sunday. (€35-38). ☎☎☎☎☎ ★

## French

**Café de France F-2, Unter den Linden 62-68, MI (Peugeot Avenue Berlin), Unter den Linden, tel. 20 64 13 91.** For stylishness, airiness and privacy, this red brasserie above the Peugeot car showroom is a smart choice for a small business meeting. Designed by Yves Talaron and Philippe Starck, the bistro hosts the Avenue Lounge after-work party on the last Thursday of the month from 18:30-23:00. ▶ Open 10:00 - 22:00, Sun & holidays 10:00 - 18:00, on World Cup match days 10:00 - 23:00. (€8-13). ☎

## German

**Markthalle H-3, Pücklerstr. 34, KB, Görlitzer Bahnhof, tel. 617 55 02, www.weltrestaurant-markthalle.de.** Within a historic market hall building, the Markthalle restaurant only 10 years old, yet already has such a rustic atmosphere. The room is long and tall, with wainscoting, simple wooden furniture and a bar that locals belly up to. It's a restaurant that doesn't let its looks carry it: the kitchen takes pride in its nouvelle takes on German and Austrian standards. The menu changes weekly, but count on Spätzel, Schweinebraten (braised pork), and apple strudel. Breakfasts run from Russian to American-style, and as late as 17:00. After dinner, check if anything is going down in the Privatclub, the club in the cellar. ▶ Open 10:00 - 24:00. (€8-13, weekday lunch menu €7.50). ☎☎☎

## Breakfast

Possibly the very best thing about Berlin is its Sunday all-day breakfast culture. While many places offer excellent set breakfasts during the week, dozens of cafés, bars and restaurants switch to overdrive on Sunday between about 10:00 and 16:00, when you can tuck into huge buffet breakfasts, and basically stuff yourself all day long. Expect to pay €5-9 for unlimited food; drinks are paid for separately. Not only is the selection of food usually good, it's the atmosphere that makes it special - join ageing Kreuzberg squatters scoffing tofu, Prenzlauer Berg yuppies with their prams washing down their tomato/mozarella salad with café latte, or Friedrichshain students munching on cheap Schrippen (rolls) with cheese. You'll never want to leave.

**Metzer Eck F-1, Metzger Str. 33, PB, M Senefelder Pl., tel. 442 76 56, www.metzer-eck.de.** Card players in their 30s settle into the oldest tavern in Prenzlauer Berg to alternate hands with inexpensive Berlin dishes - sausages, Boulette (hamburger), Bratkartoffel (fried potatoes). Hanging on the back wall is a letter from artist Heinrich Zille to the early 20th century tavern owner, as well as a savings box that regulars once contributed to. You'll find the pool table in a separate room. ▶ Open 16:00 - 01:00; Sat 18:00 - 01:00. Closed Sun. (€5-9).

**Mittmann's H-2, Rungestr. 11, MI, tel. 279 35 02, www.mittmanns.de.** Old German advertising covers the brick walls of this old-style Berlin restaurant that's been here since before the fall of the Wall. Now there's American license plates lining a ceiling beam. The wait staff can make suggestions based on what you're in the mood for, and the kitchen does well with its Kalb (veal) and fish dishes. The restaurant is on the small side, so consider making a reservation. ▶ Open 11:30 - 23:00, Sat 17:00 - 23:00. Closed Sun. (€8-16). ☞

**Mutter Hoppe G-2, Rathausstr. 21, MI, M Alexanderpl., tel. 241 56 25, www.prostmalzeit.de/mutterhoppe.** Head down the winding staircase into this restaurant in the Nikolaiviertel district. You'll find the space divided into cosy, low-ceilinged nooks with upholstered banquettes and historic photos and drawings on the painted walls. Heavy meat dishes are the meals to order here. The kitchen offers sides not served at other German restaurants, including green beans wrapped in bacon. Make reservations; or try their sister restaurant Julchen Hoppe, a few doors further towards the Spree. ▶ Open 11:30 - 23:30. (€9-15). ☞

**Schwarzwaldstuben F-1, Tucholskystr. 48, MI, M Oranienburger Str., tel. 28 09 80 84.** Bambi meets Berlin chic at the trendy Black Forest themed Schwarzwaldstuben, which has a friendly atmosphere, bedraggled animal heads mounted on the walls and heavy mix-matched furniture. Regional treats include Mautaschen (ravioli-like pockets in broth) and Jägerschnitzel, plus Eichbaum beer on tap. ▶ Open 10:00 - 23:00, Sat, Sun 10:00 - 24:00. (€5-13). ☞

## Beer houses

**Georgbräu G-2, Spreeufer 4, MI, M Klosterstr., tel. 242 42 44, www.georgbraeu.de.** With a terrace overlooking the river and flanked by a dramatic statue of St. George slaying a dragon (for no apparent reason), the Georgbräu is a merry, tourist-orientated brewery serving great beer. The menu lists wonderful local food, with things like Big Berlin Balls, which we're sure to try... next time. ▶ Open 10:00 - 24:00. (€5-11). ☞

**Luisen-Bräu B-2, Luisenpl. 1, CB, M Richard-Wagner-Pl., tel. 341 93 88, www.luisenbraeu.com.** At the edge of the sightseeing cluster that includes Schloss Charlottenburg and the Egyptian, Bröhan and Sammlung Berggruen museums, this microbrewery is just the place to collapse after a run on culture. Close your eyes and you can barely taste the difference between the dark and light beers, but they're decent, and so is the menu of German standards. You can start the day with a cheap breakfast, and keep drinking hours after the kitchen closes at 23:00. ▶ Open 09:00 - 01:00, Fri, Sat 09:00 - 02:00.

**Weihenstephaner G-2, Neue Promenade 5, MI, M Hackescher Markt, tel. 25 76 28 71.** This is the one eatery on the sunny square next to the Hackescher Markt train station that delivers a "hey, this is Germany!" experience. Part of the Weihenstephaner brewery, the restaurant has dirndl-clad waitresses who serve simple and satisfying Bavarian specialities (like white sausages). The outdoor tables have typical blue-and-white checked tablecloths; inside, the rooms are rustic but elegant. A singing zither musician sits in the front room and jazz takes place in the back courtyard on Monday. ▶ Open 11:00 - 23:00. (€6-14). ☞ ☞

**Zum Nussbaum G-2, Am Nussbaum 3, MI, M Klostertstr., tel. 242 30 95.** What seems a charming old German restaurant is in fact a charming new German restaurant. The legendary Under the Nut Tree Inn used to stand on a street on the island 200m to the southwest. When the war ravaged area was rebuilt in the 1980s, the inn was reconstructed here. Most patrons don't care an Ampelmann for authenticity, and tuck into the well-priced Berlin specialities with curious translations, such as 'brown rolls with dripping.' ▶ Open 12:00 - 23:00. (€7-10). ☞ ☞

## Indian

**Amrit H-3, Oranienstr. 202, KB, M Görlitzer Bhf, tel. 28 88 48 40, www.amrit.de.** Kreuzbergers love this restaurant, and Amrit loves 'em back with huge portions and free spiked mango juice shots at the end of the meal. Make reservations for weekend nights and be ready for tight seating. This might be the one Indian restaurant that doesn't serve Chana Saag (chickpeas with spinach), but vegetarians can find other combinations. ▶ Open 12:00 - 01:00, Fri, Sat 12:00 - 02:00. Also at F-1, Oranienburger Str. 45, MI, and E-3, Winterfeldstr. 40, SB. (€7-14). ☞ ☞ ☞

**Mirchi F-1/2, Oranienburgerstr. 50, MI, M Oranienburger Tor, tel. 28 44 44 82.** Mirchi offers Indian and Singaporean fusion cuisine, tamed down to suit the German palette, but nevertheless pleasing. The Tageskarte lunch menu (until 17:00) is especially attractive, with vegetarian, chicken and lamb options priced €4-7; in the evenings the selection gets wider and dearer. ▶ Open 12:00 - 24:00. Also at (H-3) Oranienstr. 204, KB, tel. 61 62 99 93. (€4-20). ☞ ☞

## International

**Gugelhof H-1, Knaackstr. 37, PB, M Eberswalder Str., tel. 442 92 29, www.gugelhof.com.** During the early bloom of Kollwitzplatz's gentrification, the success of little Gugelhof was sealed by heads of state: Gerhard Schröder, Joschka Fischer, Madeleine Albright, and that voracious eater Bill Clinton made a surprise visit to this former working-class district in May 2000. German, French, and Swiss dishes share the menu; this is where to try flammekuchen, a thin-crust Alsatian-style pizza. The atmosphere is lively and service is friendly. ▶ Open 16:00 - 24:00, Sat, Sun 10:00 - 24:00. (€7-17). ☞

**Oranium F-1/2, Oranienburger Str. 33-34, M Oranienburger Str., tel. 30 88 29 67, www.orianium.de.** Just down the street from the Neue Synagoge, Oranium is a pleasant all-day café/restaurant/bar with plenty of dark wood, a long bar and pretty lights. There are great breakfasts (served until 16:00), lunches and good-value dinner options. The menu is as international as it can get; for something special try the German Wrap - wrapped around two kinds of sausage - or the chicken with strawberry/chili sauce. Wash it all down with a cocktail or two. ▶ Open 09:00 - 01:00, Fri, Sat 09:00 - 03:00. (€3-15).

## Italian

**Francucci's B-3, Kurfurstendamm 90, CB, M Adenauer Platz, tel. 323 33 18, www.francucci.com.** Fabulous food served in a popular Charlottenburg restaurant - once nominated as one of the best Italian restaurants outside Italy by their president. Elegant flagstone floors and subdued lighting set the scene, while the kitchen churns out fresh, fresh food, with home-made pasta and bread and plenty of regional ingredients found back in dishes like the veal scallop with herbs, potatoes and black truffles. ▶ Open 12:00 - 23:00, Sun 14:00 - 23:00.

**Osteria N°1 F-4, Kreuzbergerstr. 71, KB, M Mehringdamm, tel. 786 91 62, www.osteria-uno.de.** Next to Viktoriapark, this osteria has a large tiled terrace bordered by lemon, cherry and olive trees. Classic regional cuisine is prepared by cooks from four different parts of Italy, and everything is made fresh to order. Order a pasta with rabbit ragout or taglierini with black summer truffles. A neighbourhood fixture that hasn't let up with the quality of its cuisine. ▶ Open 12:00 - 24:00. (€7-17). ☞ ☞

**Pizza Point C-3, Grolmanstr. 15, CB, M Ernst-Reuter-Pl., tel. 31 50 65 60.** The men flipping the pizza dough have a gurgling grotto fountain to one side of them and the hot stone-oven to the other. The place has such a casual feel - not unlike that of a pizza joint - that you might not think to read beyond the pizzas on the menu. However, the fresh fish dishes, like dorade and salmon, are good too. Pork medallions and rumpsteak round out the restaurant's offerings. **Special offer** of €5 pizza available Mon - Fri 12:00 - 17:00. ▶ Open 12:00 - 24:00. (€6-10). ☞ ☞

## Schwarzenaben

**G-2, Neue Schönhauser Str. 13, MI, M Weinmeisterstr., tel. 28 39 16 98, www.schwarzenaben.de.** Large halfround windows let light flood in to this elegant café-restaurant. Take your place in the long, arched room and order excellent Italian specialities from the regularly changing menu or sip one of the over 100 Italian wines. An excellent place for breakfast, to read the paper by day or to dine the night away. ▶ Open 12:00 - 15:30, 18:30 - 24:00. (€19-25).

**Zwölf Apostel C-3, Bleibtreustr. 49, CB, M Uhlandstr., tel. 312 14 33/20 16 69 82, www.12-apostel.de.** A worn, classic interior with a vague Tuscan/angel-theme and an open kitchen hide in the alley next to the S-Bahn tracks. The best thing about this place, after the great Italian food, is the fact that they never close. The regular kitchen closes at 05:00, switching straight to breakfast-mode, so that your Last Supper can simply go on forever. The business lunch is good value, but if you're more than peckish choose a discounted pizza. ▶ Open 24hrs. Also on Georgenstr. 2, MI. (€8-18). ☞ ☞ ☞

## Japanese

**Sumo F-4, Bergmannstr. 89, KB, tel. 69 00 49 63, www.s-u-m-o.com.** Sumo is a cunningly designed Asian restaurant on three levels serving much more than sushi; there are soups and a wide range of asian meat and fish dishes, all with crackling fresh ingredients. Sushi is also as fresh as it can and should be. Photos on the menu make it easy to choose what to have. A good place to sample a mix of fusion food and DJ music. ▶ Open 12:00 - 24:00. (€2-9).

## Food with a view

**Bezirksamt Kreuzberg F-4, Yorckstr. 4-11, KB, M Mehringdamm, tel. 90 29 80.** So you want to mix with the locals? After you've closed the bars down on Bergmannstraße, here is the most unlikely place for breakfast and a 180°, 10th-floor view: the cafeteria of Kreuzberg's administrative offices. Service is cafeteria-style, the salad bar is fresh and everything on the lunch menu, which ranges from gazpacho to oriental chicken curry, is cheap. Best deals: a beer or a big cup of coffee for €1. ▶ Open 07:00 - 15:00. Closed Sat, Sun. (€2-4). ☺

**Funkturm-Restaurant A-3, Messedamm 22, CB, M Messe Nord/ICC, tel. 30 38 29 00.** Berlin's Eiffel Tower is the shorter of the city's two TV/radio towers. Its restaurant, sitting pretty at 55 metres has an a la carte menu during the day and a hot and cold themed buffets in the evening. Dishes like rib eye with honey sauce and baked, stuffed olives or leg of lamb with rosemary and maple syrup dressing have the nouvelle twist the restaurant is known for. A viewing platform at 126 meters (€1.90) is the perfect starter. ▶ Lunch 11:30 - 17:00 (€11.50-14.50); dinner buffet 18:00 - 23:00 (€19.75). ☞

**Käfer Dachgarten F-2, Linden der Republik 1 (Reichstag), TG, M Unter den Linden, tel. 22 62 99 33, www.feinkost-kaefer.de.** When time is money, you may as well spend it on a good meal while visiting the Reichstag dome. The line to get into the building can mean an hour-long wait, but those with a restaurant reservation can use the side entrance and be whisked to their meal and a 180-degree view of eastern Berlin. The restaurant is run by Käfer, a gourmet-foods specialist from Munich. German specialities are highlighted and a regional name appears in most main course listings. The last orders are taken at 21:30. ▶ Open 09:30 - 24:00. (€7-26). ☞ ☞

**Lindenbräu E-3, Bellevuestr. 3-5, TG, M Potsdamer Pl., tel. 25 75 12 80, www.lindenbraeu-berlin.de.** Berlin's most postmodern brewery house overlooks the impressive Sony Center atrium; come in the evening to watch the colours of the roof slowly shift from pink to blue. Wash down traditional Berliner, Austrian and German dishes with the good Weizen beer on tap. ▶ Open 11:00 - 01:30, Fri, Sat 11:00 - 02:30. (€5-16). ☞

**Telecafé (TV Tower) G-2, Panorama Str., MI, M Alexanderpl., tel. 242 33 33, www.berlinerfernsichturm.de.** This rotating restaurant at 207 metres gives you a spin around the city in 30 minutes. It's a relaxed Tower of Babel, where the menu makes foreign visitors feel at home with Chinese, Italian, Indian, and Mexican dishes among the German listings. Daily specials are the best prepared; the soups and the red cabbage are delicious. Do make reservations, or wait for a table while circling the observation level. ▶ Open 10:00 - 23:30. Entrance fee €8.50. (€9-14). ☞

More reviews? Go to  
[www.inyourpocket.com](http://www.inyourpocket.com)

Hyped and heckled, at least Berlin's nightlife scene is varied, offering all kinds of nocturnal fun you might be looking for. A perk is that admission and drink prices are often lower than those in other European cities.

## Bars

**Astro-Bar I-2, Simon-Dach-Str. 40, FH, [M]Warschauer Str., www.astro-bar.de.** A firm Friedrichshain favourite, this incredibly scruffy sci-fi themed bar is open late - very late - and serves good cocktails at great prices. Visited by a wild variety of people, weekend evenings are the best times to come, when DJs from Berlin's underground party scene spin their electropop and retro records. No real dancefloor unfortunately, but nobody will stop you from just wiggling anywhere. It has an Attacks From Mars pinball machine. ▶ Open 20:00 - 01:00. [F]

**Bar am Lützowplatz D-3, Lützowpl. 7, TG, [M]Nollendorfl., tel. 262 68 07, www.baramluetzowplatz.com.** From his portrait at the back of the narrow, stylish bar, Chairman Mao is forced to take in the scene of successful capitalists poring over each other. Professionals line what's reputed to be Berlin's longest bar counter, or settle into the low leather couches in the back - the most comfy spot to read the cocktail menu, which listing 150 kinds of champagne and 250 cocktails, is thicker (and a better read) than the Little Red Book. At these prices, you'll be glad you came for happy hour - 14:00 - 21:00. ▶ Open 14:00 - 04:00.

**Delicious Doughnuts G-1, Rosenthaler Str. 9, MI, [M]Rosenthaler Pl., tel. 28 09 92 74, www.doughnuts.de.** Though the DJs in this loungey bar sometimes don't actually mix, the crowd does, and that's what might get you on the small dance floor. The cover runs €3 Wed - Sat, but at least a standard cocktail is only €5. ▶ Open 22:00 - 03:00. [F]

**Goldman's Bar G-1, Weinbergsweg 1a, MI, [M]Rosenthaler Pl., tel. 28 39 14 33.** For a real tourist information exchange, head to the basement of the Circus hostel where backpackers trade tips over cocktails that are as cheap as they come in Mitte. Bold post-30 visitors will like the Atari games from the late 1970s. Tuesday night is quiz night and karaoke takes place Wednesdays. ▶ Open 21:00 - 01:00.

**Green Door B-2, Winterfeldstr. 50, SB, [M]Nollendorfl., tel. 215 25 15, www.greendoor.de.** This dimly-lit, cool bar doesn't take itself too seriously. An undulating wall with a recessed shelf for drinks leads to an improbable end of Gingham-checked wallpaper. A padded, green leather door protects those prone to bumping into things after a few rounds. Most of the crowd is thirty and up, and quite steady on their feet. ▶ Open 18:00 - 03:00, Sat, Sun 18:00 - 04:00.

**Kaffee Burger G-1, Torstr. 60, MI, [M]Rosa-Luxemburg-Pl., tel. 28 04 64 95, www.kaffeeburger.de.** The patterned wallpaper and wood panelling has withstood decades of the alternative scene's smoke and its stuck-in-the-Socialist-Sixties-look is perfect for DJ/author Vladimir Kammer's wild and sweaty Russendisko nights. Happenings like poetry slams and jams start evenings that end with DJs spinning anything from Balkan and surf rock to samba. ▶ Open 19:00 - 03:00, Fri, Sat 21:00 - 05:00. [F]

**Keyser Soze F-1, Tucholskystr. 33, MI, [M]Oranienburger Str., tel. 28 59 94 89.** Crap service, but this renowned bar is perfect on all other accounts. The food, drinks, 20s-30s crowd, location, mysterious name, men's toilets and the fact that Toast Hawaii is listed under German specialities all add to its greatness. We can recommend the lamb chop, and Swabian specialities including Maultaschen (meat-filled ravioli, Wed only). ▶ Open 08:00 - 03:00. [F]

**Kula Karma G-1, Rosenthaler Str. 36, MI, [M]Weinmeisterstr., tel. 27 58 20 35, www.kulakarma.de.** Apparently the result of an explosion in a teenage girls' room, this place has happily clashing pinks and oranges, with golden stripes spiralling over the walls. You are the guru, and can indulge in lounging, dining or chilling together with Mitte's hip crowd. Come here for the relaxed atmosphere and the great cocktails. ▶ Open 17:00 - 02:00. [F]

**Magnet Club H-1, Greifswalderstr. 212-213, PB, [M]Rosa-Luxemburg-Pl., tel. 42 02 14 07, www.magnet-club.de.** In a black-box room, young bands from Berlin, Scandinavia and the U.S. play to attentive twenty-somethings. After the show, a DJ takes over the lounge, where couches rim the dance floor and the drink menu is projected onto the wall. Upstairs is a mellow spot that looks like a furniture store taken over after closing hours though nothing's for sale except the drinks. To get here, take trams N°4 or 10 from Alexanderpl. and hop off at Hufelandstr. ▶ Admission €6-8.

**Pfau F-4, Bergmannstr. 88, KB, [M]Gneisenaustr., tel. 69 81 89 96.** The Peacock's pride in its good-looking, diverse clientele is justified. It's our secret that the cheeky owner, after idly contemplating the taut red fabric mounted on the wall, picked up a piece of white chalk and zigzagged a signature across its corner. "Now it's art," he winked. The man has great taste in clubby music too, and that's what keeps this dimly lit and stylish restaurant/bar buzzing every night of the week - that and the huge, smooth cocktails for only €5 a pop. Delicious Italian dishes come from the one-man kitchen between 17:00 and 24:00. ▶ Open 09:00 - 02:00, Fri 09:00 - 04:00.

**Reingold F-1, Novalisstr. 11, MI, [M]Oranienburger Tor, tel. 21 75 16 45, www.reingold.de.** A lounge glowing in amber tones recalls the thirties with an oversize drawing of Thomas Mann's forlorn offspring, Klaus and Erika, and leather and velvet seating. Though it often has a DJ, no one dances here. It's a setting for making stationary moves on your date. ▶ Open 19:00 - 02:00, Fri, Sat 19:00 - 04:00.

## Pubs

**Oscar Wilde F-1, Friedrichstr. 112a, MI, tel. 282 81 66, www.oscar-wilde-irish-pub.de.** A brash, large, Irish pub that fills up with expats and visitors whenever there's a football rolling over some foreign field. Its big screen shows Sky Sports, Premiership, Champions League and mixture of international sport, while the kitchen churns out Irish food, including a good all-day breakfast, and a menu that changes every week, it's the kind of place you want to come back to. Every Friday and Saturday there's live music, and every second Friday a wild karaoke party and Monday night is Quiz Night. 0.4L Guinness €3.20. ▶ Open 12:00 - 02:00, Fri, Sat 12:00 - 03:00, Sun 12:00 - 24:00. (€3-10). [F]

**The Old Emerald Isle G-3, Erkelenzdamm 49, KB, [M]Kottbusser Tor, tel. 615 69 17, www.old-emerald-isle.de.** None other than the Guinness brewery anointed this hobbit hole the best Irish Pub in Germany in 2002. The cosy den with soft amber lighting is the right setting for Sunday roast beef with Yorkshire pudding, Irish music on Monday, and barkeeps with lightning-quick wit make this an expat favourite. The 250g burgers and steaks are made with organic Irish beef and the scones and cakes are homemade. ▶ Open 12:00 - 02:00, Sat 12:00 - 04:00. (€3-15). [F]

DJ names may mean nothing to you, but music genres go by their English terms so check for your scene in any listings publication, like Zitty or Tip. Covers run from €5 to €11 on weekends. Bands stick to their universal timetable, and usually go on well after the time advertised.

**Grüner Salon G-1, Volksbühne, Rosa-Luxemburg-Pl. 2, MI, [M]Rosa-Luxemburg-Pl., tel. 24 59 89 36, www.gruener-salon.de.** Chandeliers dress up this occasional club venue, talk-show stage, and cabaret. Grab your partner for standard evenings like Thursday Tango and Friday Swing. ▶ Open Thu 21:00 - 04:00; Fri, Sat 23:00 - 04:00.

**Hoppetosse Eichenstr. 4, KB, [M]Schlesisches Tor, tel. 53 32 03 40, www.moneypennys-club.de.** There's nothing like cooling off from a dance floor by walking one flight to a roof with a view. Here, it's the deck of a docked boat on the Spree. In sight upstream are the Oberbaumbrücke and Universal Music headquarters. Thursday is reggae, ragga, and dancehall night; genres alternate from Friday to Saturday. ▶ Open 15:00 - 02:00, Sat, Sun 11:00 - 02:00. Closed Mon.

**Icon Cantianstr. 15, PB, [M]Eberswalder Str., www.iconberlin.de.** The best drum n' bass DJs in Europe, including London's Optical and Grooverider, descend into the cavernous cellars of a brewery (built 1898) on Saturday night. Between hits on the cement dance floor, take it easy in the lounge areas with low sofas or high back padded benches. Friday night is for electric, hip hop, and funk fans. Berlin DJs get to shake their reputation and play whatever they want on Tuesday Electric Icon nights. ▶ Open Tue, Fri & Sat 23:00 - 07:00. Admission €3-6.

**Kato Underneath U-Bahn station Schlesisches Tor, [M]Schlesisches Tor, tel. 611 23 39, www.kato-x-berg.com.** This place is right underneath the Schlesisches Tor train station but don't worry - you will not hear or feel the steel wheels roar over head... as you will be engulfed in the sounds surrounding around you. So really anything goes and can happen... from punk to electro and from jazz noises to exploding frog death metal music. The main hall is an integral part of main indie band's tours from all around the world. Look out for posters on the walls or just go and see what may happen to you... and try not to get run over!

**Maria am Ufer H-3, An der Schillingbrücke/Stralauer Pl. 33-34, FH, [M]Ostbahnhof, tel. 21 23 81 90, www.clubmaria.de.** Light on décor and finished surfaces, this vast warehouse-like space can hold the masses drawn by DJ idols like Dorfmeister, or, for smaller record-release parties, gives you plenty of room to get your freak on without injuring anyone around you. ▶ Open Fri, Sat 23:00 - 05:00.

**Matrix I-3, Warschauer Pl. 18, FH, [M]Warschauer Str., tel. 29 49 10 47, www.matrix-berlin.de.** DJs under the Warschauer Straße U-Bahn station lay down tracks of disco, metal rock, and black music on three dance floors within the vaulted-ceiling brick rooms that date back to 1901. University students take advantage of the drink deal on Rock-it Tuesday and Thursday, and the more mature crowd comes on Saturday for 80s and disco nostalgia. Friday night is for contemporary rock, ragga, and chart music. ▶ Open 22:00 - 06:00, Tue, Thu 21:00 - 06:00, Wed 20:00 - 06:00. Closed Mon, Sun.

## Kulturbrauerei

**Kulturbrauerei G-1, Schönhauser Allee 36-39, PB, [M]Eberswalderstr., tel. 48 49 44 44, www.kulturbrauerei.de.** Follow the yellow brick wall of this 19th-century brewery and you'll eventually find an entryway into a nightlife Mecca that resembles an Old Town setting. A cobblestone pedestrian way courses through the center of the complex, whose 25,000 square meters is filled with bars, restaurants, clubs, galleries and a cinema. The only thing you won't find is freshly brewed beer; Schultheiss shut down production here in 1967. Soda Club is a both a restaurant and popular nightclub, and Kesselhaus and Alte Kantine host anything from readings to theater to live bands. A hub of nightlife for the hipsters of Prenzlauer Berg.

**Roter Salon G-1, Volksbühne, Rosa-Luxemburg-Pl. 2, MI, [M]Rosa-Luxemburg-Pl., tel. 24 06 58 06, www.roter-salon.de.** This place probably began with a faded elegance, but let's say it's just settled in after ten years of clubbers bouncing off its red walls. Most nights feature electro pop, electro lounge, and electroclash - the music Berlin is known for. ▶ Open 23:00 - 04:00. Closed Tue, Sun.

**SchuwZ F-4, Mehringdamm 61, KB, [M]Mehringdamm, tel. 629 08 80.** Men file through the sedate Melitta Sundström café to get busy on the underground dance floors of SchuwZ, an institution in Kreuzberg. One floor is usually reserved for eighties and disco, the other for either more experimental mixes or darkroom encounters. ▶ Open Fri, Sat from 23:00

**S036 G-3, Oranienstr. 190, KB, [M]Görlitzer Bahnhof, tel. 61 40 13 06, www.so36.de.** Live bands perform nearly every night at this institution that's home to any alternative lifestyle, from gay Turks and metal heads to punks and hardcore vegans. On popular club nights, like the gay Electric Ballroom or Gayhane, show up before 01:00 or face a long wait with the friendly door staff. ▶ Open 23:00 - 05:00. [F]

**Spindler & Klatt H-3, Köpenicker Straße 16, KB, [M]Schlesisches Tor, tel. 69 56 67 75, www.spindlerklatt.de.** Set in a century-old Prussian state bakery building, this "bigsize clubrestaurant" is the newest hot place for horizontal eating and making moves on the dancefloor. Lie down on the oversized beds of the restaurant while you sample the Asian fusion food, followed up by clubbing to the latest Berlin sounds. The entrance, a gate that looks accidentally open, is 100 metres south from the street number address. Walk straight back to the riverside and turn left. ▶ Restaurant open Fri, Sat 20:00 - 01:00, club open from 23:00.


**Watergate I-3, Falckensteinstr. 49a, KB, [M]Schlesisches Tor, www.watergate.de.** This club right on the edge of the Spree River is great for spying on Universal Music headquarters across the water, even if the crowd here would never dance to their pop artists. Also in view (and right next door) is the turreted Oberbaumbrücke, which makes an odd backdrop to drum n' bass (Fridays), house, or any guest DJ on the upper or lower dance floors. ▶ Admission €7-10.


**Week-End Club G/H-2, Alexanderplatz 5, www.week-end-berlin.de.** A club/bar/galerie/lounge set on the 12th floor of the beautifully hideous Haus des Reisens (the GDR state travel agency specialising in saying 'no') on the corner of Otto-Braun-Straße. ▶ Open 23:00 - 04:00. Closed Mon, Tue, Wed, Sun. €6-8.


Berlin is a huge, fascinating city, but lacks a clear central Old Town type area. Therefore it's a good idea to plan your trip according to time and interests so you don't end up spending more time staring at metro tunnel walls than at art.


## Main sights

**Berliner Dom G-2, Am Lustgarten, MI,  Hackescher Markt, tel. 20 26 91 19, www.berlinerdom.de.** This Protestant church dating from 1905 might not look as massive were the Stadtschloss still standing across Unter den Linden (the GDR regime demolished the city castle in 1951). The royal Hohenzollern dynasty worshipped here within the four incarnations of the church. Their places of rest in the crypt are indeed a yawn. The climb up to the dome's rim is forgiving, with broad staircases, landings, and side exhibit rooms. ▶ Open 09:00 - 19:00, Sun 12:00 - 19:00. Admission €4.10, including dome €5/3.


**Brandenburger Tor F-2, Pariser Pl, MI,  Unter den Linden.** Berlin's landmark building is one of 14 gates completed in 1792 by Carl Langhans. Nike, the goddess of victory, drives the chariot atop the gate, and German armies used to begin their parades here. The proud gate opens onto Pariser Platz, and it may as well have been built by the communists, so linked in people's minds is it to the double-wall system that essentially bricked it in. Fascists spoiled the gate as well by staging their torch-lit parades through it. Berliners celebrated the Wall's fall in 1989 by standing on it in front of the gate.


**Gedächtniskirche (Kaiser Wilhelm Memorial Church) D-3, Breitscheidpl, CB,  Kurfürstendamm, tel. 218 50 23, www.gedaechtniskirche.com.** The major attraction in what was West Berlin is this stark reminder of World War II's destruction. Kept as an open wound, the severe acknowledgement of German culpability is declared on a plaque near the entrance of the old bell tower: 'The tower of the old church serves as a remembrance of God's judgment, which befell our people during the war years.' Berliners hold little sacred and call the destroyed tower the hollow tooth. The erection of the once enormous church dedicated to the German emperor had been a feat of national pride: even synagogues contributed to its funding, and it was first opened in 1895. Inside is a gilded mosaic of the Hohenzollern dynasty. The modern chapel and tower next door were completed in 1961, and are worth entering on sunny days for the amazing blue stained glass windows. ▶ Old tower open 10:00 - 16:00, closed Sun. Memorial church open 09:00 - 19:00.

**Gendarmenmarkt F-2, Charlottenstr, MI,  Französische Str..** Twin cathedrals-turned-museums (dating to the early 1700s) and the Konzerthaus (from 1818, by Carl Langhans) make up this classic square in Berlin. It's so classic Berlin that with the adding of a lion statue here, a fountain there, the film production team of Jackie Chan's *Around the World in Eighty Days* turned it into 19th-century London in 2003. Luxury hotels use their position bordering it as their drawing card. The square's name stems from the mid-1700s when military regiments were stationed here. The Deutscher Dom (tel. 22 73 04 31) is home to a museum on the development of the German Parliamentary system, not dull at all if you're a politics buff. You'll have to read German or French to enjoy the *Französischer Dom's* (tel. 229 17 60) exhibit on the contributions of French Huguenots to Berlin's development, beginning in the late 1600s. ▶ Deutscher Dom open 10:00-18:00, closed Monday.

**Neue Synagoge F-2, Oranienburger Str. 28-30, MI,  Oranienburger Tor, tel. 88 02 84 51, www.cjudalum.de.** Though not worth the extra admission charge or the wait to stand inside it, the gilded cupola of the New Synagogue is one of the most eye-catching sights in Mitte. Exhibits strikingly balance the restoration of the Alhambra-inspired synagogue from 1866, with preserved evidence of its destruction, first on Kristallnacht on November 9, 1938, and then through Allied bombs. Documents and photographs remember the thriving Jewish community of the neighbourhood, many of whom worshipped here in what was the largest synagogue in Germany. A subtle but effective sound installation adds to the experience. ▶ Open 10:00 - 18:00, Fri 10:00 - 14:00. Closed Sat. Admission €4.60/3.

**Nikolaiviertel G-2, Between Rathausstr. and Mühlen-damm, MI,  Alexanderpl., www.stadtmuseum.de.** Berlin's tiny medieval heart is the Nikolai Quarter, whose only truly medieval-looking building today is the Nikolaikirche (the twin-spired, stone church). The church dates to 1230 and was rebuilt along with the entire quarter in the mid-80s to mark Berlin's 750th birthday in the area in which the fishermen's settlement first began. No one was trying to outdo Walt Disney here, and many of the buildings have the simple, concrete facades that the Communist government could afford. The small shops in the area mostly deal in toys and souvenirs and tourists gladly fill the sunny tables at the restaurants that face the Spree River. On Rathausstraße, there's a row of restaurants that flaunt old-fashioned Berlin cuisine and atmosphere. Other rebuilt historic buildings in the area date to the 1700s, such as the Ephraim-Palais and Knoblauchhaus. Both have changing exhibits related to Berlin.

**Potsdamer Platz E/F-3,  Potsdamer Pl.** Once the modern heart of a thriving metropolis, this urban centre was heavily damaged in the war, and suffered again when remaining buildings were pulled down to make way for the Wall's death strip. After years of construction in the mid-90s, skyscrapers have added a cosmopolitan and glassy edge to the city. The literal Potsdamer Platz is an intersection, and the east side of it, known as Leipziger Platz, is slowly building up in height as well. Potsdamer Platz's most popular public space and architectural attraction is the **Sony Center**, with its huge atrium and tent-like roof. It's best to view at night for its impressive lighting. The neighbouring **DaimlerChrysler complex** holds architecture by Renzo Piano and Richard Rogers, and the Arkaden shopping mall, with rather humdrum shops, but the best gelato café in the city.

**Reichstag/Bundestag F-2, Platz der Republik 1, TG,  Unter den Linden, tel. 22 73 21 52, www.bundestag.de/htdocs\_e/info/visit/vberl.html.** The name together with its monumental size make most people associate Germany's neoclassical parliamentary building with the Nazis, but Hitler and his party have little history here. After hosting parliamentary sessions since 1894, one month after Hitler was appointed chancellor in January 1933, it was set on fire by Dutch communist Marinus van der Lubbe. In the years during which it abutted the Wall as a conference centre, West Berliners played football on its lawn, while later artist Christo famously wrapped it in cloth. It did not serve as parliament again until a reunited German government returned to Berlin in 1999. Renovated by Sir Norman Foster, this building is perhaps the most public federal building in the world through its glass-dome tourist attraction. On the rooftop, photographs documenting the building's history circle the rim above the parliament chamber. Two ramps spiral up the side of the dome, an engineering feat even more fascinating than the panoramic view from the top. Avoid long queues by arriving early or late, or by booking at the Dachgarten restaurant. ▶ Open 08:00 - 24:00. Last admission at 22:00. Admission free.

## Ticket options

Discounts are a welcome relief, so if you are planning on seeing more than one museum, pick up one of these reduced rate cards.

**CityTourCard www.citytourcard.com.** The City-TourCard is good for unlimited travel in the AB zone for 48 hours (€14.90) or 72 hours (€19.90), and offers discounts of 20% or more at 50 tours, attractions and theatres. Buy the card at any BVG or S-Bahn ticket machine or counter; if you use a machine, collect the booklet free from any other salespoint.

**State Museum Card www.museen-berlin.de.** The Staatliche Museen zu Berlin (state museums) have several ticket options for their permanent collections. A single ticket ranges €4-8. You can buy a €15/7.50 **Schaulust three-day ticket** valid for all state museums (but remember all are closed on Mondays). There are groups of state museums in several neighbourhoods, and a **Bereich-karte** (area card, €6-12) grants admission to those near each other; a ticket for all the museums on the Museum Island costs €12/6. Admission is **free** for under-16s and for all visitors during the last four opening hours on Thursdays.

**Welcome Card www.btm.de.** The WelcomeCard is a combined transport and reduction card valid for 48 hours (€16) or 72 hours (€21). The card is valid for all public transport (ABC zone, including Potsdam), and offers reduced admission to several museums, bike tours and rental, boat tours, etc. The Welcome Card is sold at tourist offices, S-Bahn offices, hotels and kiosks. Note that students/youths may get better reductions at museums by just using their student cards.

## Museums

**Deutsche Guggenheim F-2, Unter den Linden 13-15, MI,  Französische Str., tel. 202 09 30, www.deutsche-guggenheim-berlin.de.** Distancing itself as far as possible from the conservative financial image, Deutsche Bank hosts world renowned contemporary artists in solo shows in this one-room museum designed by Zaha Hadid. The art spans classic modernism to contemporary works. ▶ Open 11:00 - 20:00, Thu 11:00 - 22:00. Admission €4/3, free Mon. Free guided tours at 18:00.

**Jewish Museum F-3, Lindenstr. 9-14, KB,  Hallesches Tor, tel. 25 99 33 00, www.jmberlin.de.** The famous zinc-plated fortress designed by Daniel Libeskind contains a moving perspective on the many ways in which German life and Jewish history are intricately interwoven. The interior contains dark 'voids' for contemplation, but the exhibits cover much more than the Holocaust chapter of Jewish history in Germany. All texts are also in English. ▶ Open 10:00 - 20:00, Mon 10:00 - 22:00. Admission €5/2.50, changing exhibitions €4/2; combined ticket €7/3.50.

**Neue Nationalgalerie E-3, Potsdamer Str. 50, TG,  Potsdamer Pl., tel. 266 26 51, www.museen-berlin.de.** You'd think that the art world had gone to minimalist extremes when passing Mies van der Rohe's empty glass box of a museum; the 20th century treasures are all underground. It was here that the wildly successful "MoMA in Berlin" exhibit was on view 24 hours during its last three days. Now that the guest exhibit is gone, the permanent collection greets: Otto Dix, Georg Grotz, Paul Klee, Wassily Kandinsky, Picasso and Leger, among others, can make themselves at home again. ▶ Open 10:00 - 18:00, Thu 10:00 - 22:00, Sat, Sun 11:00 - 18:00. Closed Mon. Admission €6/3.

**Story of Berlin C-3, Kurfürstendamm 207-208, CB,  Uhlandstr., tel. 88 72 01 00, www.story-of-berlin.de.** For those whose eyes glaze over every time they step into a museum, the bells, whistles, films, and original artifacts of this multimedia museum are sure to engage your attention and leave you better informed about the city's turbulent history. In the corridors covering the Nazi era, you walk over book bindings, hearing footsteps tread on broken glass. Lest you end on the positive note of Berlin's reunification, you can take a guided tour of the functional nuclear fallout shelter beneath the complex, built to shelter 3000 people for 14 days - there were no plans for what to do after that period. Though pricey, this is probably the best museum to visit with children, though mind to leave the bunker before they play the recording of a WWII bombing-raid. ▶ Open 10:00 - 20:00. Admission €9.80/€8. Last admission and bunker tour at 18:00.

## The Museumsinsel

**Alte Nationalgalerie G-2, Bodestr. 1-3, MI,  Hackescher Markt, tel. 20 90 55 77, www.smb.museum.** Cézanne, Rodin, Monet, Degas and Liebermann are some of the artists whose works hang around this museum of 19th-century art. Head to the top floor for the German Romantics. The temple-like structure itself was built in 1876, and is surrounded by a beautifully battered colonnade. ▶ Open 10:00 - 18:00, Thu 10:00 - 22:00. Closed Mon. Admission €8/4.

**Altes Museum G-2, Am Lustgarten, MI,  Hackescher Markt, tel. 20 90 55 77, www.smb.museum.** This neoclassic building by Prussia's star architect Karl Friedrich Schinkel was custom-made for the art collection of the royal Hohenzollerns of Berlin in 1830. Classical antiquities became the focus in 1904, and today the ground floor of the museum uses pottery and sculptures to take you on a well-presented tour through ancient Greek history. Upstairs is the temporary home to the Egyptian Museum (same ticket). ▶ Open 10:00 - 18:00, Wed 10:00-22:00. Admission €8/4.

**Pergamon Museum G-2, Am Kupfergraben, MI,  Hackescher Markt, tel. 20 90 55 55, www.smb.museum.** The Pergamon has the best of Berlin's classical antiquities: the Greek Pergamon Altar, the market gate of Miletus and the blue-tiled Ishtar Gate and processional way from Babylon. The Pergamon Altar's enormous frieze depicts the battle between the gods and the giants, with gals like Athena, Aphrodite and Artemis wiping out their opponents like robbed Charlie's Angels. Near-East antiquities, with an emphasis on Assyria and Iran, and Islamic art, including the great Mshatta palace facade round out the museum's treasure chest. The audioguide has an instructive 30-minute highlights tour. ▶ Open 10:00 - 18:00, Thu 10:00 - 22:00. Admission €8/4.

## Tourist information

**Berlin Infostore E-1, Hauptbahnhof station, tel. 25 00 25, www.berlin-tourist-information.de.** The helpful staff at the official Berlin tourist offices can provide a wide range of information and publications. Most offices will stay open longer than normal this summer. ▶ Open 08:00 - 22:00. Also at F-2, Reichstag kiosk; F-2, Brandenburger Tor (south wing, open 10:00 - 18:00); D-3, Budapest Str. (Europa Centre); C-3, Kurfürstendamm 21 (passage).

All hotel prices include VAT and breakfast unless otherwise mentioned, but it is still a good idea to check prices and see if any discounts are on offer.

## Over €200

**Adlon F-2, Unter den Linden 77, MI, [M]Unter den Linden, tel. 226 10, fax 22 61 22 22, adlon@kempinski.com, www.hotel-adlon.de.** The historic Adlon hotel has views of the Brandenburg Gate, unfussy 1920s-style rooms with cherry wood, black marble and rich fabrics, plus the staff provides impeccable service. However, the Adlon's excellent services can often bring notoriety - first Michael Jackson's baby-dangling episode, and now the CEO of the Bundesbank has been forced to resign after having Dresdner Bank pay his Adlon tab after he stayed here for the euro introduction celebrations. There is no such thing as bad publicity though, and with such esteemed guests checking in on a regular basis the Adlon remains the most famous hotel in Berlin, nay Germany. ▶ 375 rooms (302 singles €240 - 310, 302 doubles €290 - 360, 72 suites €520 - 3800, 1 presidential suite €8500). Breakfast €29. [M][P][F][A][S][B][C][D][E][F][G][H][I][J][K][L][M][N][O][P][Q][R][S][T][U][V][W][X][Y][Z] ★★★★★

**Brandenburger Hof C-3, Eislebener Str. 14, WD, [M]Augsburger Str., tel. 21 40 50, fax 21 40 51 00, info@brandenburger-hof.com, www.brandenburger-hof.com.** In this beautiful light-filled city mansion, rooms are classic Bauhaus designed by Le Corbusier and Mies van der Rohe, and make other design hotels look amateur. The Japanese garden courtyard works its way into the atrium in the form of ikebana floral arrangements and meandering vines overhead. Ms. Brueder in the 'beautysuite' could be the most personable masseuse and beautician in town - she offers the only silk cosmetic treatments of Kanebo in Berlin. ▶ 82 rooms (30 singles €170 - 260, 48 doubles €245 - 259, 4 suites €345 - 480). [M][P][F][A][S][B][C][D][E][F][G][H][I][J][K][L][M][N][O][P][Q][R][S][T][U][V][W][X][Y][Z] ★★★★★

**Dorint Sofitel am Gendarmenmarkt F-2, Charlottenstr. 50 - 52, MI, [M]Französische Str., tel. 20 37 50, fax 20 37 51 00, info.bergen@dorint.com, www.sofitel.com.** The success of this merger between sleek, modern design and 1980s East German grandeur is best seen in the impressive banquet/conference hall, where GDR columns and chandeliers meet a post-modern light-emitting floor. The fabulous top-floor fitness and sauna area with great views of the Gendarmenmarkt monuments, the huge buffet breakfast in the light-filled atrium and the in-house Aigner restaurant compensate for the small rooms, which use smart tricks, like rolling doors, to use the available space as efficiently as possible. ▶ 92 rooms (29 singles €160 - 205, 41 doubles €190 - 235, suites €310 - 580). Breakfast €9-23. [M][P][F][A][S][B][C][D][E][F][G][H][I][J][K][L][M][N][O][P][Q][R][S][T][U][V][W][X][Y][Z] ★★★★★

**Grand Esplanade D-3, Lützowufer 15, TG, [M]Nollendorfpf., tel. 25 47 80, fax 254 78 82 22, info@esplanade.de, www.esplanade.de.** Nowhere do people in suits look more relaxed than seated in wicker chairs outside Harry's New York Bar - even if the view is of the hotel's half-circle drive and grey wall of coursing water. Surely the easy smiles are from those who have booked at least a chic comfort suite, which has a leather couch, sauna, whirlpool bath, and chaise longue next to the work area. WLAN access gives you more time for meetings either at the renowned bar or the two restaurants. ▶ 386 rooms (211 singles €195 - 280, 125 doubles €230 - 305, 39 suites €420 - 2300). [M][P][F][A][S][B][C][D][E][F][G][H][I][J][K][L][M][N][O][P][Q][R][S][T][U][V][W][X][Y][Z] ★★★★★

**InterContinental D-3, Budapester Str. 2, MI, [M]Zoologischer Garten, tel. 260 20, fax 26 02 26 00, berlin@interconti.com, www.interconti.com.** The stretch it's on is a yawn, but this West Berlin stalwart has been keeping up with the times. The excellent restaurant Hugos has been relocated to the 14th floor for a stunning view, east-wing rooms have been recast into minimalist abodes with furnishings you can rearrange through swivel action, and the spa has been revamped with several saunas. ▶ 584 rooms (534 singles €165 - 350, 534 doubles €170 - 400, 50 suites €215 - 2500). Breakfast €20. [M][P][F][A][S][B][C][D][E][F][G][H][I][J][K][L][M][N][O][P][Q][R][S][T][U][V][W][X][Y][Z] ★★★★★

**Kempinski Bristol C-3, Kurfürstendamm 27, CB, [M]Uhländstr., tel. 88 43 40, fax 883 60 75, reservations.bristol@kempinski.com, www.kempinskiberlin.de.** The elite Kempinski and Adlon are sister properties, but this is where well-travelled regulars feel more at home - out of the limelight, but still on a swank corner of Ku'Damm. The business lunch special is a steal. ▶ 301 rooms (249 singles €265 - 326, 249 doubles €322 - 447, 52 suites €470 - 1800). Breakfast €9.90/23. [M][P][F][A][S][B][C][D][E][F][G][H][I][J][K][L][M][N][O][P][Q][R][S][T][U][V][W][X][Y][Z] ★★★★★

**Marriott E-3, Inge-Beisheim-Pl. 1, MI, [M]Potsdamer Platz, tel. 22 00 00, fax 22 00 01 00, www.marriott.com.** Ten floors of superb rooms, conference facilities and suites (including the Capital Suite with dining room, piano and entourage annex room). The lobby has a 3 tonne black granite globe spinning serenely on a watery base and the copper facade of one wall plays an unearthly light show. A wellness centre, classic Art Deco NY bar and grill and executive amenities round out one of Berlin's newest and finest hotels. ▶ 379 rooms (350 singles €159 - 219, 350 doubles €159 - 219, 9 suites €350 - 1200, 80 executive room €199 - 259). Breakfast €22. [M][P][F][A][S][B][C][D][E][F][G][H][I][J][K][L][M][N][O][P][Q][R][S][T][U][V][W][X][Y][Z] ★★★★★

**Radisson SAS G-2, Karl-Liebknecht-Str. 3, [M]Hackescher Markt, tel. 23 82 80, fax 238 28 10, reservations.berlin@radissonsas.com, www.radissonsas.com.** All new and all fabulous, the Berlin Radisson has an aquarium rising 25 metres in its lobby. Exterior rooms have the choice of views over the Spree and the Dom while interior rooms get the 2,500 hypnotic tropical fish swirling round the AquaDom. All minimalist and linear (though still warm), the elemental theme runs from the superchic Aqua lounge to the HEat restaurant with rotisserie, pizza and tandoori ovens. The wellness spa is relaxing and the Berlin bear in the lobby left blank for VIPs to sign. ▶ 427 rooms (405 doubles €160 - 210, 21 suites €230 - 280, 1 presidential suite €650). Breakfast 21€. [M][P][F][A][S][B][C][D][E][F][G][H][I][J][K][L][M][N][O][P][Q][R][S][T][U][V][W][X][Y][Z] ★★★★★

**Regent Berlin F-2, Charlottenstr. 49, MI, [M]Französische Str., tel. 203 38, fax 20 33 61 19, www.regenthotels.com.** Within the luxurious digs of the former Four Seasons hotel, the Regent would be stating a truth if it proclaimed from one of its "Juliet" balconies: "That which they call a rose, by any other name would smell as sweet." Will the Hollywood celebrities that frequently stayed here (especially during February's film festival) recognize Shakespeare's lines? Nothing that drew A-list guests has changed. The warm public spaces gleam with marble and plush guest rooms come with DVDs and even flatscreen TVs in the bathroom. ▶ 204 rooms (162 singles €265 - 325, 162 doubles €300 - 360, 41 suites €395 - 1600, 1 presidential suite €2750). Breakfast €27. [M][P][F][A][S][B][C][D][E][F][G][H][I][J][K][L][M][N][O][P][Q][R][S][T][U][V][W][X][Y][Z] ★★★★★

**Westin Grand F-2, Friedrichstraße 158-164, MI, [M]Friedrichstr., tel. 202 70, fax 20 27 33 62, info@westin-grand.com, www.westin.com/berlin.** Built in GDR times for Party bigwigs but now completely overhauled, the Westin is a classically-furnished delux hotel in an enviably good location. From the huge atrium hall (with a copy of the Adlon's marble staircase), the round pool, the copyrighted Heavenly Beds and the upmarket restaurant to the sumptuous suites with butler service, this place breathes quality. ▶ 358 rooms (25 singles €136 - 350, 273 doubles €136 - 375, suites €379 - 930, 15 junior suites €279 - 565, 1 presidential suite €986 - 1930). Breakfast €23. [M][P][F][A][S][B][C][D][E][F][G][H][I][J][K][L][M][N][O][P][Q][R][S][T][U][V][W][X][Y][Z] ★★★★★

## €150-200

**Bleibtreu C-3, Bleibtreustr. 31, CB, [M]Uhländstr., tel. 88 47 40, fax 88 47 44 44, info@bleibtreu.com, www.bleibtreu.com.** It's hard to tell the hip guests from the hip neighbours that share the dell and café fronting boutique-lined Bleibtreustraße. The design hotel's rooms operate by remote-controlled amenities but are decorated with natural fabrics and light tones. If only we could all live in such an airy and stylish apartment building. ▶ 60 rooms (15 singles €115 - 157, 45 doubles €125 - 182). [M][P][F][A][S][B][C][D][E][F][G][H][I][J][K][L][M][N][O][P][Q][R][S][T][U][V][W][X][Y][Z]

**Hecker's C-3, Grolmanstr. 35, CB, [M]Uhländstr., tel. 889 00, fax 889 02 60, info@heckers-hotel.de, www.heckers-hotel.de.** A superbly swank place - from the entrance next to the steelblue bar to the spacious double rooms, this hotel breathes subtle class. The three beautiful suites are the pride of the management, each with a different design (Bauhaus, Tuscany and Colonial), wooden floors, large balconies, walk-in closets and marble bathrooms complete with TV screens next to the mirror. Add the location near Savignyplatz, and you're set for a nice stay. ▶ 69 rooms (21 singles €100 - 150, 43 doubles €100 - 170, 3 suites €300 - 350, 2 junior suite €200 - 230). Breakfast €15. [M][P][F][A][S][B][C][D][E][F][G][H][I][J][K][L][M][N][O][P][Q][R][S][T][U][V][W][X][Y][Z] ★★★★★

**Ku'Damm 101 B-3, Kurfürstendamm 101, CB, [M]Ade-nauerpl., tel. 520 05 50, fax 520 05 55 55, info@kudamm101.com, www.kudamm101.com.** Modern and stylish, every room is furnished with designer chairs, and a rubber toy peers back at you from the white-tiled bathroom meant to emulate the Paris metro. Furnishings echo the 1950s and 70s, while 21st century, bi-colour rubber flooring is underfoot. Business travellers will appreciate the high speed wireless LAN access and the proximity to the convention centre, while everyone will like the sunny seventh-floor breakfast room. ▶ 170 rooms (34 singles €101 - 161, 136 doubles €118 - 178). Breakfast €13. [M][P][F][A][S][B][C][D][E][F][G][H][I][J][K][L][M][N][O][P][Q][R][S][T][U][V][W][X][Y][Z] ★★★★★

**Myer's G-1, Metzter Str. 26, PB, tel. 44 01 40, fax 44 01 41 04, info@myershotel.de, www.myershotel.de.** Entered from a quiet courtyard, Myer's is an upmarket private hotel catering to individual tourists and business travellers. Nearly all classically furnished rooms overlook the courtyard garden. The singles are small, but the double rooms offer adequate space. On the ground floor, a tearoom opens up to the pleasant terrace and garden. ▶ 41 rooms (8 singles €85 - 140, 33 doubles €110 - 175). [M][P][F][A][S][B][C][D][E][F][G][H][I][J][K][L][M][N][O][P][Q][R][S][T][U][V][W][X][Y][Z]

**Villa Kastania G-1, Kastanienallee 20, CB, [M]Theodor-Heuss-Pl., tel. 300 00 20, fax 30 00 02 10, info@villakastania.com, www.villakastania.com.** A dazzling small hotel near the trade fair, with spacious rooms in diverse styles, each with a balcony overlooking the chestnut trees surrounding the building. Naming itself an "art and business hotel," it's certainly lush, with sumptuous decoration and extras such as sauna, pool and beauty centre. ▶ 40 rooms (4 singles €120 - 150, 36 doubles €150 - 185, grand suite €250 - 270). Breakfast €11. [M][P][F][A][S][B][C][D][E][F][G][H][I][J][K][L][M][N][O][P][Q][R][S][T][U][V][W][X][Y][Z] ★★★★★

## €75-150

**Alexander Plaza G-2, Rosenstr. 1, MI, [M]Hackescher Markt, tel. 24 00 10, fax 24 00 17 77, info@hotel-alexander-plaza.de, www.hotel-alexander-plaza.de.** This former fur atelier dating from 1897 survived the war and has been beautifully restored and expanded into this well-designed hotel. All rooms have large beds and are decorated with modern art, while superior-class rooms also have kitchenettes. Other services include conference rooms and a business centre. ▶ 92 rooms (6 singles €110 - 115, 77 doubles €120 - 125, suites €155 - 185). [M][P][F][A][S][B][C][D][E][F][G][H][I][J][K][L][M][N][O][P][Q][R][S][T][U][V][W][X][Y][Z] ★★★★★

**Riehmers Hofgarten F-4, Yorckstr. 83, KB, [M]Mehring-damm, tel. 78 09 88 00, fax 78 09 88 08, info@riehmers-hofgarten.de, www.riehmers-hofgarten.de.** This grand dame of a 19th-century apartment building maintains her classy composure while the funky shops and gay nightlife unfurl around the corner on Mehringdamm. She's unfussy and stylish and near the popular Bergmannstraße drag. On a balmy evening, join the Kreuzberg couples making the pilgrimage to the top of Viktoriapark. ▶ 22 rooms (2 singles €98 - 108, 20 doubles €123 - 163, 20 triples €143 - 183). [M][P][F][A][S][B][C][D][E][F][G][H][I][J][K][L][M][N][O][P][Q][R][S][T][U][V][W][X][Y][Z] ★★★★★

## Apartments

**Home-Suite-Home Mitte E-1, Invalidenstr. 32-33, TG, [M]Zinnowitzer Str., tel. 24 04 91 00, fax 24 04 91 01, stay@hsh-mitte.de, www.home-suite-home.de.** The 39 excellent apartments on offer are comfortable and well-equipped with a modern kitchen and living room. Some apartments have balconies and there is a courtyard garden and bistro/bar with internet access. Guests can use the sauna and fitness room at no extra cost. ▶ 42 rooms (singles €95, doubles €105). [M][P][F][A][S][B][C][D][E][F][G][H][I][J][K][L][M][N][O][P][Q][R][S][T][U][V][W][X][Y][Z] ★★★★★

## Hostels

Berlin's new and independent hostels have completely overtaken the traditional IYH hostels in standards of service, location and quality. What remains are the noisy Italians next door, snoring Koreans and Austrians throwing up everywhere.

**Hostel X Berger Schlesische Str. 22, [M]Schlesisches Tor, tel. 69 53 18 63, fax 69 51 81 46, info@hostelxberger.com, www.hostelxberger.com.** A brand new backpacker's hostel in Kreuzberg, with spacious and sunny rooms and dorms (from €11 per night) for travellers, separate washrooms and girl-only dorms on demand. Other facilities include a common kitchen, laundry service, luggage storage and free use of internet. ▶ (singles €25, doubles €18, triples €16, quads €15, Dorm €11 - 14).

**Transit Loft H-1, Greifswalder Str. 219 (entrance at Emmanuelkirchstr. 14), PB, tel. 48 49 37 73, fax 44 05 10 74, loft@hotel-transit.de, www.transit-loft.de.** Is it a budget hotel? Is it a delux hostel for affluent backpackers? No, it's Superhostel! Take the lift to the top floor of this converted factory building to reach the huge 24hr reception-breakfast-bar-luggage-internet area. Rooms are large, fresh and blue and sleep 1-16 people. On the lower floors, you'll find an art cinema, café, fitness club and billiards hall, while a large concentration of nightlife options is just a short stroll away around Kollwitzplatz. ▶ 47 rooms (singles €59, doubles €69, triples €90, quads €30, five-bed room €30, dorm bed €19). [M][P][F][A][S][B][C][D][E][F][G][H][I][J][K][L][M][N][O][P][Q][R][S][T][U][V][W][X][Y][Z] ★★