

WHY SHOULD I GO TO BERLIN



WHY SHOULD I GO TO ↓
BERLIN

THE CITY YOU DEFINITELY
NEED TO VISIT
BEFORE YOU TURN 30





THIS IS WHY!

Berlin is a city of contrasts. It was once divided into East and West and traces of the division are still visible, whether you're just strolling the streets or visiting the various monuments. You'll find more museums scattered across the city than anywhere else in Europe and each one is worth the visit. But Berlin is also all about good yet affordable food, the best bars and yes, the techno scene is on the UNESCO cultural heritage list. The city's nightlife is legendary, with an eclectic array of bars, clubs, and music festivals for every genre and subculture.

Exploring this vibrant city doesn't have to break the bank. Walk, cycle, and use the U-Bahn if you don't want to miss out. Book a nice hostel, join free tours, and visit the most beautiful sights; there is a lot to see. You don't have to go up the Fernsehturm to enjoy it. Grab a bottle at one of the Spätis, get yourself a (vegan) *Döner*, have a picnic in one of the numerous parks, and immerse yourself in the local culture: there is something to suit every taste and budget.

Berlin stands for creativity, culture, and history but is modern nonetheless. From the colourful and buzzing areas of Kreuzberg and Neukölln to laid-back Mitte and Prenzlauer Berg, each Bezirk has its own distinctive character. We assure you: you'll feel at home everywhere. Keep on walking, take in the scenery, and soak up the atmosphere. One thing is certain: you will want to come back for more.

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DISTRICTS

Berlin is divided into twelve *Bezirke* or areas. We'll focus on the areas that are interesting for visitors who want to blend in with the locals, and where the famous Berlin vibe can be best experienced. Each area is divided into smaller parts, *Kiez*. In every chapter of this book, the addresses are arranged by the following areas.

Mitte

The city centre is called Mitte, literally meaning 'middle'. In Mitte you'll find the Reichstag, the Brandenburger Gate, the TV tower, and an abundance of shopping streets. Back in the days, half of Mitte was part of East Germany, half of it was West. If this is your first visit to Berlin, Mitte is where you should start.



Prenzlauer Berg

Also known as Prenzl Berg, it's one of the first areas where artists and young families started to settle after the fall of the Berlin wall in 1989, and therefore known as the place where gentrification started. You'll find a lot of nice shops, quiet cafés, bookshops, parks, and lovely restaurants in Prenzlauer Berg. And lots and lots of young children.

Friedrichshain

Best-known for the East Side Gallery, a popular tourist destination. We like to roam the flea market on Boxhagenerplatz on Sundays. Go to Simon-Dach-Strasse for bars and cafés, as well as affordable restaurants. Volkspark Friedrichshain is nice if you need a bit of green, but we also like to walk along the river Spree. Don't forget to check out R.A.W. Gelände (see page 63).

Kreuzberg

This part of town is split in two: Kreuzberg 36 and Kreuzberg 61, with the latter being a residential area. The magic happens at 36: street art, a lively club scene, lots of cool places and nice parks, markets, and much more. We love the alternative vibe of Kreuzberg and the range of things to do.

Neukölln

Located very close to Kreuzberg (meeting at the middle at Kreuzkölln), this area is lively and diverse, housing a large Turkish community. You'll find a lot of street art and a good vibe. It's also the area where you find Berlin's largest open space Tempelhofer Feld and (vintage) markets along the Maybachufer.

Charlottenburg

Historical, *schick* (chic) and very classy, Charlottenburg in a few words. You'll find many theatres, museums, and restaurants. Don't miss Kurfürstendamm, one of the most famous shopping streets (with mainly chains), or head to Charlottenburg Palace instantly.

Schöneberg

From the place where J.F.K.'s famous words "Ich bin ein Berliner" were spoken, to the heart of the Berlin gay scene (Nollendorfplatz), Schöneberg is very diverse.

Wedding

Multicultural Wedding, north of Mitte and Prenzlauer Berg, is an ever-upcoming area of the city. The neighbourhood is still quite affordable, and there are lots of creative spots. Vagabund Brauerei and

Eschenbräu are two breweries where you can drink and eat. Or have a meal at Café Pförtner, in an old bus along the river Panke. Or just have a stroll along the river.





PRACTICAL INFO

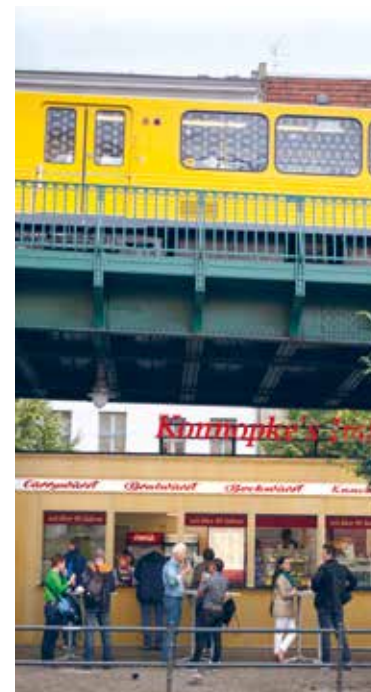
TRAVEL

Walking is a good way to explore Berlin: the pavements are wide, and just strolling through a city, being able to stop wherever you like, gives you the ultimate experience. However, as different areas of Berlin can be quite far apart and if you might not have a lot of time, you could take the S-Bahn (tram) or U-Bahn (underground). Or rent a bike.

Berlin's main central train station is Hauptbahnhof. The station – one of the biggest in Europe – can be a bit overwhelming, with platforms on multiple floors and levels. But there are many screens and endless signs; if you check them, you won't get lost. If you're interested in exploring Eastern Europe, you can catch trains to Bratislava, Budapest, Vienna, Prague, Poznan, Gdansk, and Warsaw, which depart from here daily. For day trips to

Leipzig or Dresden, bahn.de will show you the best ticket options. If you arrive at Hauptbahnhof at the start of your Berlin trip, take the S-Bahn into the city. Buses and trams depart just outside the station.

The U-Bahn (short for *U*ntergrundbahn, the underground) has a blue sign with a white U on it. Together with the S-Bahn (short for *S*tadtschnellbahn, typically trams), with a green sign with a white S, form the main transportation network for both the city and the suburbs and surrounding area. As confusing as it might seem, the S-Bahn goes underground in some parts of the city. Buy your tickets at ticket vending machines (cash or card) in the station. Some stations have service points. The fastest way is to download the BVG App and buy the tickets for instant or





later use. Always validate your tickets beforehand. There are no gates or turnstiles at the stations, but there are regular ticket inspections on the U- and S-Bahn.

There are multiple ticket types to choose from. For longer trips, you could buy the 7-day ticket to cover your fares. With the Berlin WelcomeCard you'll have one or two days of public transport, as well as discounts on sights and attractions.

Bus 100 was the first bus to connect the former East and West after the fall of the Wall and acts as a low-budget tourist bus. The first stop is Alexanderplatz. After that, you'll ride along the

Berliner Dom, Reichstag, Schloss Bellevue, Siegessäule, the Kaiser Wilhelm Gedächtniskirche, and the bus trip ends at Zoologischer Garten, the zoo. Bus 200 takes about the same route but travels south from Tiergarten Park and will stop at Potsdamer Platz and the Holocaust Monument.

Renting a bike is a pleasant way of moving around any city. Berlin has many bike sharing services such as Bolt, Donkey Republic, LimeBike, Nextbike, and Tier. You'll come across many groups with yellow signs on their bikes, they are on guided tours with Berlin on Bike (berlinonbike.de).