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Berlin

This is a city in perpetual flux and its ability to reinvent itself can be attributed to its complex history. Today there's a seductive allure to the German capital's dynamism and willingness to create anew. Be it a luxury hotel in an old bathhouse, experimental artwork in a former margarine factory or an ever-evolving roster of musicians, the city thrums with ingenuity. Berlin is about more than nightclubs and hammering hangovers – although a night on the tiles here still rarely disappoints.

Need to know

Get to grips with the basics

- 01 **Geographical states of mind:** These days Berlin's physical divide has disappeared but Berliners still tend to stick to their neighbourhood so the city can feel like several villages stuck together.
- 02 **Say what you mean:** When talking to Germans, irony of the British sort is met with confusion at best or shock at worst. So don't say you could eat a horse unless you are actually planning to.
- 03 **Handshakes and introductions:** In business meetings or more formal settings, offer your hand and your name. But at private parties, doing such a thing too soon is considered forward and slightly awkward.
- 04 **Good neighbours:** Locals pushed back on anti-tourist behaviour recently. Be as considerate a guest in Berlin as you can be. Residents (usually) return the respect.
- 05 **Shopping hours:** While closing time was once 18.00, now it's 20.00 (in some cases even 22.00). Unlike the rest of Germany, shops in Berlin can open on selected Sundays too.

Hotels

Where to hang your hat

- 1 **25hours Hotel Bikini Berlin, Charlottenburg**
Cosy and cosmopolitan

There are panoramic views from the 10th floor, where restaurant Neni Berlin serves a Moroccan, Middle Eastern and Russian fusion menu and the Monkey Bar stirs a stiff sundowner.
40 Budapester Strasse, 10787
+49 (0)30 120 2210
25hours-hotels.com

- 2 **Das Stue, Tiergarten**
Flawless design

This stately hotel hosts jazz on Fridays and boasts three libraries, a 14-metre swimming pool, a sauna, a spa and a 24-hour gym.
1 Drakestrasse, 10787
+49 (0)30 311 7220
das-stue.com

- 3 **Soho House Berlin, Mitte**
Exclusive elegance

Guests and members can enjoy a gym, rooftop pool and the Club Bar, while two restaurants serve US and Aegean dishes respectively.
1 Torstrasse, 10119
+49 (0)30 405 0440
sohohouseberlin.com

Food and drink

Top tables and bar stools

- 1 **Katz Orange, Mitte**
Warm welcome

The former brewery site is fronted by a pretty courtyard; inside, the dining room and cocktail bar boast plenty of cosy nooks. Raising the comfort level further is a meat-centric menu dominated by steaks and roasts.
22 Bergstrasse, 10115
+49 (0)30 983 208 430
katzorange.com

- 2 **Lokal, Mitte**
Neighbourhood favourite

With its bright dining room, jumbled furniture and simple yet modern German food, Lokal offers a reprieve from the many conceptually ambitious restaurants in the area.
160 Linienstrasse, 10115
+49 (0)30 2844 9500
lokal-berlin.blogspot.de

- 3 **Café Einstein Stammhaus, Charlottenburg**
New ground

Elderly regulars, suited business people and curious newcomers alike seek out this café's wood-panelled rooms to read the newspaper and eat breakfast that comes served on tiered stands.
58 Kurfürstenstrasse, 10785
+49 (0)30 263 9190
cafeinstein.com

- 4 **Markthalle Neun, Kreuzberg**
Varied ingredients

Markthalle Neun is the centre of Berlin's food culture. Farmers' markets take place on Tuesdays, Fridays and Saturdays, though there are also some permanent vendors and restaurants.
42/43 Eisenbahnstrasse, 10997
+49 (0)30 6107 3473
markthallenneun.de

- 5 **Cordobar, Mitte**
Washing away the pain

Come on an empty stomach as the kitchen serves some of the best bar food in town; the black pudding pizza is a favourite. The wine selection is remarkable too.
32 Grosse Hamburger Strasse, 10115
+49 (0)30 2758 1215
cordobar.net

Retail

Top shops

- 1 **A Kind of Guise, Mitte**
German-made brand

The formidable fashion label opened its Berlin flagship in 2015. Its light-filled space on Mulackstrasse sells the full range of menswear. Each and every one of its pieces, from knitwear to bags and shoes, is made in Deutschland with fabrics sourced from Japan, Italy and domestically.
23 Mulackstrasse, 10119
+49 (0)30 2809 1725
akindofguise.com

- 2 **Andreas Murkudis, Tiergarten**
Expansive range

Hidden in a quiet courtyard, it stocks Céline, Aspesi and Mykita, as well as Susanne Kaufmann's skincare, Werkstatt:München jewellery and Hohgant's babywear.
81E Potsdamer Strasse, 10785
+49 (0)30 680 798 306
andreasmurkudis.com

- 3 **Of/Berlin, Bergmannkiez**
One-stop design shop

Of/Berlin is a concept shop selling homeware, accessories and stationery from the city's best budding designers. Peruse the city's top design wares at the permanent space in the charming Bergmannkiez neighbourhood.
23 Nostitzstrasse, 10961
+49 (0)30 6800 8975
ofberlin.com

- 4 **Kadewe, Schöneberg**
A German institution

There's no shortage of superlatives to describe this 60,000 sq m retail space, the place to find luxury international brands and German favourites. The gourmet department on the sixth floor is legendary. This food temple is perfect for picking up wurst and *weissbier* (wheat beer).
21-24 Taubentzenstrasse, 10789
+49 (0)30 21 210
kadewe.de

Vocabulary

Local lingo

- 01 **Guten tag:** Hello
- 02 **Tschüss:** Goodbye
- 03 **Späti:** A neighbourhood shop with food and drink that stays open late
- 04 **Rechnung or "Zahlen bitte":** Bill or "I'd like to pay"
- 05 **Kiez:** Neighbourhood



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