



Federal Ministry
of Defence



Berlin Information



NATO-INDUSTRY FORUM 2018

Berlin, November 12 - 13

Berlin's Top 10 Attractions

Top pick 1: Reichstag



When the decision was made to move the Federal Government to Berlin, it was time to reawaken the Reichstag building from its long years of slumber on the Mauerstreifen, the military zone between the two sides of the Wall. The building has since been completely modernised, and today's visitors to the Reichstag can look out from the building's glass dome to get a bird's eye view of the hustle and bustle in the city. There are also a number of government buildings in the vicinity of the Reichstag, for example the Bundeskanzleramt (Federal Chancellery) and the Brandenburg Gate.

Top pick 2: Brandenburg Gate



Without a doubt, the Brandenburg Gate is Berlin's signature attraction. Built in 1791, it was just one of many old city gates around the city of Berlin which, at that time, was still a manageable size. The decorative Pariser Platz was laid at the foot of the gate and is now home to many of the city's important buildings, for example, the Hotel Adlon with its wealth of history and the Akademie der Künste (Academy of the Arts).

Top pick 3: Berlin Television Tower (Fernsehturm)



The Berlin Television Tower, which is known to locals as the Fernsehturm, and is instantly recognisable from the distance, stand outs of the skyline at 368m, making it the tallest building in Berlin. Built in the 1960s, visitors to the tower can enjoy a unique 360° panorama of the city.

Top pick 4: Gendarmenmarkt



The Berlin Cathedral (Berliner Dom) with its magnificent dome is a remarkable example of late 19th century architecture. Near the Cathedral are also the German Historical Museum and the Museum's Island. On the side of Berlin's boulevard "Unter den Linden" stands the Catholic St.Hedwigs-Cathedral.

Top pick 6: Kurfürstendamm



Extending all the way from the ruins of the Kaiser Wilhelm Memorial Church on Breitscheidplatz to Berlin's elegant Halensee neighbourhood, the affectionately termed Kurfürstendamm is the most expensive address in the capital city and home to the most exclusive brands. Europe's biggest department store KaDeWe is also situated on the extension of the Ku'damm, on the street known to locals as the Tauentzien (short for Tauentzienstrasse). You also will love the Zoo Berlin, Germany's oldest zoo.

Top pick 7: Charlottenburg Palace



The magnificent Charlottenburg Palace is located just out of the centre of the city. The beautiful palace hosts fine collections of china and paintings and is situated in the middle of a picturesque palace garden right next to the river Spree. If you don't fancy a walk in the park, you can feed your mind instead in the Charlottenburg museums located directly opposite.

Top pick 8: Museum Island



Berlin's Museum Island is one of the UNESCO world heritage sites and home to the city's most important exhibition centres: the Altes Museum (Old Museum), the Neues Museum (New Museum) the Bode Museum, the Pergamon Museum and the Alte Nationalgalerie (Old National Gallery). The collections in these buildings encompass over 6,000 years of art and cultural history.

Top pick 9: The Berlin Wall Memorial and Documentation Centre



The Gedenkstätte Berliner Mauer (Berlin Wall Memorial) is located between the districts of Wedding and Mitte on Bernauer Straße, consisting of the Memorial to the Victims of the Wall, a Documentation Centre and the Chapel of Reconciliation. The surviving section of the wall and watchtower enable visitors to get a real feel for the reality of the border facilities.

Top pick 10: Potsdamer Platz



Once the bustling heart of the city before the Second World War, then a no man's land from 1945 until the fall of the wall, the history of Potsdamer Platz has been eventful to say the least. It changed completely after the fall of the wall in 1989 and is now dominated by the presence of the Sony Center, skyscrapers and endless shops. What's more, Potsdamer Platz is the main place to be for stars and celebrities, and not only during film festivals.

Berlin History



Compared to other European cities, Berlin with its less than 800 years is considered a rather young city, but its history is unique. The two founding towns **Cölln and Berlin** affiliated in **1307** for a union. After riots, elector Friedrich II. declared the twin town his **residence** in 1451.

1701, after elector Friedrich III had coronated himself as king Friedrich I in Prussia, Berlin rose to a **Royal Capital and Residence Town**. Numerous well-known buildings were designed then, his grandson **Friedrich II** (1740–1786) continued with the architectural redesign of the city, assisted by the famous architect **Knobelsdorff**. 1806–08 Napoleon's troupes occupied the city; after the victory of Leipzig the Quadriga, which was annexed by **Napoleon**, was returned to the Brandenburg Gate in 1814.

In the following decades, the splendid classicist buildings by **Schinkel** and the blossoming park areas by **Lenné** emerged. Since the middle of the century, Berlin's economy boomed, the population grew rapidly. After 1871, when the city had become **capital of the 'Deutsches Reich'**, the construction and economy boom even grew in the **Gründerzeit** ("founding era"), Berlin's population exceeded one million. The heavy defeat of World War I as well as **revolutionary riots** caused a deep crisis of the Reich and its capital. Out of the riots the **Republic** was proclaimed in **1918**. Despite the difficult economical situation and further riots, art and culture flourished during the twenties; innovative theatre productions, splendid film premieres, vivid vaudevilles and an uncomparable nightlife made Berlin the centre of the "**Golden Twenties**". The takeover by the National Socialists in **1933** marked the beginning of the persecution of Jews, Communists, Homosexuals, Oppositionals and many more.





After the Nazi terror and the end of **World War II** the city was finally devastated in **1945**. The four allies divided Berlin in four parts: the East was administered by the Soviet Union, the Southwest by the USA, the West by Great Britain and the Northwest by France. With the "**Berlin-Blockade**" in 1948, the city became object of the Soviet-American conflict; Americans and British supplied the three West sectors via "**Luftbrücke**" with "Candy Bombers". In East and West Berlin the reconstruction began.

The construction of the **Berlin Wall** on Aug 13, 1961 set the seal on the city's division and separated its people.



The city celebrated on **Nov 9, 1989** when the Berlin Wall was torn down. After the **reunification** in 1990 Berlin became residence of the Federal Government, which held its first plenary session in the redesigned Reichstag on Apr 19, 1999. The Reichstag with its new glass dome became an attraction for both Berliners and tourists from all over the world. The new millennium was celebrated with a magnificent party at the Brandenburger Tor. A lot has changed in Berlin since then. And Berlin will keep changing

Berlin Wall



On August 13th in 1961 a cordon was put around West-Berlin in an overnight action. The intention was to stop the permanent stream of refugees from the GDR which weakened the socialist State. Barricades, barbed wire fences and roadblocks by tanks were put up. In the following days construction workers began to build a wall made of concrete to reinforce the barrier. The wall, presented as "antifascist embankment for protection" in GDR propaganda, became an insurmountable obstacle.

At first the wall was built of 12 km of slabs and 137 km of barbed wire fences with 116 observation towers. The border area had been rebuilt four times through the years. All in all the wall parted 192 streets (97 within Berlin and 95 between the GDR and West-Berlin), 32 railroads, 8 suburban and 4 underground trains. Even lakes and rivers were blocked and observed.

West-Berlin was an enclave: travellers between West-Germany and West-Berlin had to pass the frontier and undergo tough controls. Again and again individuals tried to surmount the inhumane frontier in order to be free.

The Berlin wall claimed according to current status of knowledge at least 134 deaths that were shot on escape attempts by frontier guards, drowned in river Spree or in lakes or died in other tragic ways. The first victim Rudolf Urban died when he jumped out of a window in Bernauer Straße. The last refugee who lost his life on the wall was Chris Gueffroy, shot on February 6th, 1989.



Protest Movements

During the end of the eighties the change in politics in the Soviet Union under Michael Gorbatschow affected the situation of the GDR, which underwent more and more political and economic difficulties. In 1989 countless citizens of the GDR fled to the opened border between Hungary and Austria and others sought refuge in embassies. In those years more than 220,000 East Germans left the GDR. At the same time many demonstrations took place and called for political changes. The national celebrations of the 40th anniversary of the GDR turned into protest movements against the regime.

The night the wall fell

The evening of November 9th, 1989 the anxiously longed for freedom of travelling was proclaimed. Thousands of people rushed to the frontiers that had been opened in the course of the night. People from East- and West-Berlin lay in each other's arms. This was one of the most beautiful days in the history of Berlin.



Little Berlin Chronicle

1237	First documentary mention of Cölln (Berlin's sister town)
1618–48	The Thirty Years' War left the two towns devastated and ravaged. Population of Berlin/Cölln: 6000
1740–86	Under Friedrich II the Great Berlin rises to a European metropolis
1806	Napoleon conquers Berlin
1871	Berlin becomes capital of the Deutsches Reich. Economy booms and the city's population surpasses 1,000,000
1920–29	In the "Golden Twenties" Greater Berlin with its almost four million inhabitants develops a myth of art and culture
1936	The Olympic Games are performed in Berlin
1939–45	World War II. 50,000 inhabitants die of allied bombings, every second apartment (more than 600,000) is destroyed
1948	Berlin Blockade. The "Air Lift" supplies the city
1961	Construction of the Wall between West and East Berlin
1989	Fall of the Berlin Wall
1991	Berlin as capital of reunified Germany is appointed for residence of the Federal Government
19.4.99	First session of the Bundestag in the reopened Reichstag's building
30.4.01	With the new Bundeskanzler's Office opening, the government's relocation to Berlin continues.