

1<sup>st</sup> WORLDWIDE CONFERENCE

Berlin, Germany – 9<sup>th</sup> October 2009



## Introducing Berlin

Berlin is the capital and the biggest city of Germany. It has a population of about 3.5 million and extends over 889 square kilometers. It is located in central Europe.

Berlin was the capital of Prussia until 1945 and the capital of Germany between 1871 and 1945 and again since the reunification of Germany on October 3, 1990. (The German parliament, called Bundestag, and the German government moved from Bonn to Berlin in 1999.) Between 1949 and 1990, it was divided into East Berlin, the capital of the German Democratic Republic, and West Berlin. It was divided by the Berlin Wall between August 13, 1961, and November 9, 1989.



## Culture

Berlin – the old and new capital of Germany is a city loaded with history and, with its Wall, symbolic for the Cold War in Europe. After the reunification of the two parts of Germany in 1990 it became a place where East met West which is still visible in the structure of the city. One example of the surviving differences is that street car (Straßenbahn) lines can generally be found in the previous eastern part of Berlin only, since in the western part they had been gradually replaced by buses over the 30 years of the divided history. When you are crossing a street in Berlin look carefully at the street light – you will notice that most of the lights in the ex-eastern part still have a different figure as a "stop" and "go" sign than the lights in the old West Berlin.



Berlin's numerous cultural attractions include, among others, the Museums Island with Pergamon Museum, Old National Gallery, and Bode Museum, the Culture Forum with the New National Gallery and Picture Gallery as well as the Egyptian Museum with the Nofretete bust, and countless Palaces and Residences of the Prussian kings and princes. Music is an essential part of the Berlin culture. The Berlin Philharmonics and several other world famous orchestras provide for excellent opportunities to hear the old and the new masters. The Berlin Philharmonics will give a special concert for the Congress participants on Monday, June 9. Berlin is also well known for its off-scene with small galleries, cabarets and independent artists' studios.

The month of June is one of the most enjoyable months in this part of Europe and Berlin is one of the best cities to visit in summer. Located close to countless lakes and canals it creates a very relaxed atmosphere offering numerous opportunities for outdoor activities. Did you know that you can make a boat tour starting in Potsdam and ending in the Government quarter right in the centre of Berlin? If you look around Berlin don't forget to walk through its landmark – the Brandenburg Gate. You can also climb to the top of the glass copula of the Reichstag (the old name for the German Parliament) or visit the futuristic Potsdamer Platz which has been rebuilt from scratch in the last ten years. A great attraction for the small and big visitors to Berlin are also the two Zoos and the Aquarium, all with a long tradition. Finally, Berlin's offer of countless street cafes, restaurants, various shops and boutiques should be mentioned as well.



## Sights

Brandenburger Tor (Brandenburg Gate, built 1788-1791 by C. G. Langhans, with Schadow's quadriga on its top), the place Gendarmenmarkt with Deutschem and Französischem Dom (German and French cathedral) and Konzerthaus ("Schauspielhaus", concert hall), the historic Nikolaiviertel (Nikolai quarter) with the oldest church of Berlin, the Nikolai-Kirche, the Deutsche Staatsoper (opera house) Unter den Linden, the Pergamon museum, the Zeughaus, the Siegessäule (Victory Column, 69 m), the Funkturm ("Langer Lulatsch", radio tower, 150 m) and the Fernsehturm (TV tower, 368 m, at Alexanderplatz), the Reichstagsgebäude (house of parliament, built 1884-1894 by P. Wallot), Schloß Charlottenburg (Charlottenburg Castle) and Schloß Bellevue (Bellevue Castle, seat of the President of the Federal Republic of Germany), (congress hall, now called "Haus der Kulturen der Welt"), (International Congress Center), the and the new church , the (from 1936).

## Interesting facts on Berlin (September 2002)

- **Area of Berlin** About 890 square km.
- **Number of inhabitants** About 3.5 million
- **Population density** Almost 4,000 per square kilometer
- **Capital** Berlin is the capital of Germany
- **Monetary unit** Euro
- **Telephone country prefix** 49
- **Internet country code** .de
- **Time difference** GMT+1
- **Road network** Quite good, even in former East Berlin
- **Prices in general** We used this measure: the prices for one coffee and one beer (our normal consumption): € 2,90 (large beer) in Potsdam up to € 16,50 (small beer) near the Brandenburger Tor. So prices vary much. On Alexanderplatz and the former eastern part of the city there are still many very cheap places for eating and drinking.
- **The best in Berlin** We liked the (short) ride in the elevator to the top of the Fernsehturm (Television Tower behind Alexanderplatz) the best (€ 6 per person).
- **The most important...**  
Public transport: buy a card for one day or a few days and travel to all places in Berlin. This way one can see most of Berlin for a relatively cheap price. Walking around won't bring you as far as by public transport in this metropolis.



## ■ Climate

Berlin has a moderately cool and humid climate determined by a mixing of air masses from the Atlantic Ocean and the continental climate of eastern Europe. Predictably, December to February are the coldest months. When the winds blow from Russia it can get mighty chilly, with temperatures dropping below freezing. Generally winters are relatively mild. The nicest months are September and October, which deliver the added bonus of autumn foliage. There are mostly between 10 and 20 degree. But nevertheless an umbrella is recommended.

## ■ Festivals and recreation areas

Every year there are several festivals, like the Berliner Festwochen (party-weeks, since 1951 with concerts, opera, theatre and visual arts), the international filmfestival (Golden and Silver Bear) and the Berliner Jazztage. The Zoologischer Garten (29 ha., constructed in 1841) is known as one of the best zoos in the world. It has a botanical garden, an observatory and a planetarium. There are many sports and recreation facilities: the Olympic stadium was build for the Olympic Games of 1936. For recreation the many woodlands at the borders of Berlin are of great importance: city parks in Grunewald, Spandau, Köpenick and Friedrichshain, as well as the many lakes in Berlin: Wannsee, Havel, Tegeler See, Grosser Müggelsee, Langer See and Seddin See.

## This is a list of links to Websites with all information about Berlin.

The official Berlin Tourist Office Website <http://www.berlin-tourism.de>

For general tourist information in German, English, Italian, French and Spanish  
<http://www.berlin.de>

For public transportation schedule and maps  
<http://www.bvg.de>

For information about museums  
<http://www.museen-berlin.de/e/index.html>

The Jewish Museum in Berlin  
<http://www.jmberlin.de>

Berlin city map  
<http://www.stadtplan.net/brd/berlin/berlin/home.html>

For information and schedule of the tourist ships in Berlin  
<http://www.sternundkreis.de>

For a professional childcare provider in Berlin  
[http://www.kinderinsel.de/englisch/index\\_e.html](http://www.kinderinsel.de/englisch/index_e.html)

For information about how to rent a bike in Berlin  
[http://www.callabike.de/konzern/holding/db\\_rent/dbag\\_60\\_cab\\_engl.shtml](http://www.callabike.de/konzern/holding/db_rent/dbag_60_cab_engl.shtml)



**THE HOTEL:****Mercure Hotel Berlin Tempelhof Airport**

The Mercure Hotel Berlin Tempelhof Airport is a 4 star hotel located at the closed airport Tempelhof. The hotel is well-known for its professional conferences. Whether it's 2 persons or 500 – the conferences and banquet center with its 1.100 sqm provides superb conditions for private and business events. Also major tourist sites such as Potsdammer Platz and Kurfürstendamm are within easy reach.

**Contact information****HOTEL:**

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