



# Berlin: “Is this real life?” the ultimate guide

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## WILLKOMMEN IN BERLIN...

Upon arrival the very question of "Is this real life?" may pop into your head. It may be after your first time seeing someone face down on a park bench with a Pilsner beer in hand, or perhaps it will be after you read a German menu for the first time and attempt to order your food. Nevertheless, the culture shock is one to note.

The city of Berlin is known for its unique and anti-corporate economy with independently created lifestyles. Poor but sexy, Berlin is a diverse and vibrant city with a tumultuous historical past. Noted as Europe's 'Capital of Cool', Berlin is Germany's largest city.

Berlin is a city of culture and is shaped by encompassing a diverse range of creative industries and serves as a popular tourist destination. Berlin is home to the famous Humboldt University, where Albert Einstein and Karl Marx studied. If that groundbreaking historical fact doesn't enthrall you, maybe the art will. If that groundbreaking historical fact doesn't enthrall you, maybe the art will.

The whole city is a canvas made up of street art, graffiti and stickers leaving little space untouched. Art covering everything from telephone poles, shop fronts to U-Bahn stations and even the pavement itself.

Artistic talent can also be seen in the city's architecture such as the emblematic Reichstag. This building features the glass dome designed by Norman Foster.

Other lesser known buildings from the GDR era have been converted into distinctive night clubs. Whether a historical outing or a night on the town, visitors are sure to get a taste of the old and the new.

A guide to Berlin would be incomplete without mentioning the vast array of food the city has to offer. From traditional spätzle noodles to the more prominent kebab, all taste buds are catered for, even on the strictest of budgets. Not to mention the copious amounts of coffee and cake consumed daily such as the rich German chocolate cake complimented by a steaming latte macchiato.

When you're not eating cake and drinking coffee Berlin is the perfect place to practice retail therapy. For those with more than a pretty penny in their pockets, The Gallery of Lafayette is the perfect place to take a stroll through designer. When you're not eating cake and drinking coffee Berlin is the perfect place to practice retail therapy. For those with more than a pretty penny in their pockets, The Gallery of Lafayette is the perfect place to take a stroll through designer stores. Those shopping on a shoe string budget will appreciate the plethora of second hand shops and markets scattered all over the city. -MC & HH

# GOOD TO KNOW...

## > Emergency Numbers

Police: 110

Ambulance: 112

Fire: 112

> Stay out of the bike lanes! Biking is a huge method of transportation and getting in their way will only cause a fuss on the streets.

> Recycling plays a big part in the Berlin community. Save your bottles during your stay and return them to your local market to receive a small reimbursement.

> Have cash on you at all times. Berlin is made up of many independent companies, meaning most places will not take credit cards or any other type of plastic

> Be prepared to pay to use public restrooms. These fees's can range from 30cents to €1 depending on how populated the area is.

> Have cash on you at all times. Berlin is made up of many independent companies, meaning most places will not take credit cards or any other type of plastic.

> Internet can be found at various cafés, coffee shops and shops noted as "internet cafes". Inside you will pay between 30-80 cents per half hour to use their computers, head phones and/or webcams.

> The Germans love their sparkling water. When requesting still water, ask for "ohne gas". For Sparkling water, ask for "mit gas".

> Do not attempt to jaywalk; traffic is moving at a fast pace and if you jaywalk in front of a mother and her children, prepare to be scorned for setting a bad example.

> Stay out of the bike lanes! Biking is a huge method of transportation and getting in their way will only cause a fuss on the streets.

> Tips are appreciated in bars and restaurants, ranging between 5%-10% depending on the service

> Expect to pay a glass deposit at most bars and clubs ranging from 50c to €1

> You can drink in the streets!

> Most people do speak English, but it is good to know the basics so turn the page for a crash course.



Although many Berliners speak English, especially the younger generation, it doesn't hurt to try and speak the local language. A phrase words and phrases should help make your stay feel a bit more authentic, and even endear you to the locals.

## Pleasantries

<b>Hello</b>	<b>Hallo</b>
<b>Goodmorning/afternoon/night</b>	<b>Guten Morgen/abend/nacht</b>
<b>How are you?</b>	<b>Wie geht es Ihnen/dir?</b>
<b>I am good and you?</b>	<b>Mir gehts gut, und dir?</b>
<b>What is your name?</b>	<b>Wie heiße du?</b>
<b>My name is....</b>	<b>Ich heiße</b>
<b>Do you speak English?</b>	<b>Sprechen Sie English?</b>
<b>I don't understand</b>	<b>Ich verstehe nicht</b>
<b>Please</b>	<b>Bitte</b>
<b>Thankyou</b>	<b>Danke</b>
<b>Bye</b>	<b>Tschüs</b>
<b>Goodbye</b>	<b>Auf Wiedersehen</b>

## I want...

<b>I want...</b>	<b>Ich hatte gern...</b>
<b>a glass of wine</b>	<b>ein Glas Wein</b>
<b>four beers</b>	<b>vier Bier</b>
<b>a single room</b>	<b>das Einzelzimmer</b>
<b>a double room</b>	<b>das Doppelzimmer</b>

## Directions

<b>Excuse me</b>	<b>Entschuldigen Sie</b>
<b>Where is:</b>	<b>Wo ist:</b>
<b>The Toilet</b>	<b>die Toilette</b>
<b>The train station</b>	<b>der Bahnhof</b>
<b>The airport</b>	<b>der Flughafen</b>
<b>The police</b>	<b>die Polizei</b>
<b>Go...</b>	<b>Gehen Sie...</b>
<b>Left</b>	<b>Links</b>
<b>Right</b>	<b>Rechts</b>
<b>Straight ahead</b>	<b>Geradeaus</b>
<b>Along</b>	<b>Entlang</b>
<b>Go along this street</b>	<b>Gehen Sie diese Straße entlang!</b>
<b>It is</b>	<b>Es ist</b>
<b>Near here</b>	<b>Nah hier</b>

## Conversation

<b>What's new?</b>	<b>Was gibt's neues</b>
<b>I missed you so much</b>	<b>Du hast mir so gefelht</b>
<b>Shall we go clubbing?</b>	<b>Clubben gehen?</b>
<b>I have a hangover</b>	<b>Ich habe einen Kater</b>
<b>I am hungry like a wolf</b>	<b>Ich bin hungrig wie ein wolf</b>
<b>I am looking for John</b>	<b>Ich suche John</b>
<b>What are you looking at?</b>	<b>Was gukst du?</b>
<b>In your dreams!</b>	<b>Du träumst wohl!</b>
<b>Is this real life?</b>	<b>Ist dies das wahre Leben?</b>



# TRANSPORT {transport}

At first it the sheer size of Berlin can be quite daunting, but the variety of both public and private transport options help shrink the distances and will take you to pretty much anywhere you want

## Public transport

The Berliner Verkehrsbetriebe (BVG) operates the city's S-Bahn, U-Bahn, tram and bus networks, which all interconnect very efficiently, making travel simple. BVG's website ([www.bvg.de](http://www.bvg.de)) provides a journey planner, which helps you find the fastest route and is regularly updated with service alterations.

To make life easier, be sure to grab maps for both the S-/U-Bahn network and the tram services. Conveniently, both the S-/U-Bahn network and the tram lines are colour-coded, in addition to being numbered.

## Tram

The eastern side of the city is served by an extensive network of trams. They stop frequently, but generally travel on a dedicated section of the road, meaning they are quite quick. Most tram services run 24 hours a day.

## Buses

The bus network operates throughout the day and night, and also serves as a handy late-night replacement for trains Monday to Thursday nights. In addition to the metro buses are the express buses, denoted by an X, which have fewer stops. Services run frequently during the day and from 12:30 am to 4:30 am Monday to Friday they serve as a replacement for the U-Bahn.

## U-Bahn

The U-Bahn is the city's metro train service. Stops are frequent and conveniently located, meaning you'll generally arrive close to your destination. Monday to Thursday trains run from 4:30 am to 12:30 am and all night on Fridays, Saturdays and Sunday.

## S-Bahn

The S-Bahn is an urban rail service and extends further than the U-Bahn, but stops less frequently. Given its reach, it is very useful for daytrips to places such as Potsdam or Wannsee. Trains run from 4:30 a.m. to 12:30 a.m. Monday to Thursday, with additional services on Friday, Saturday and Sunday nights.

## Airports

Two airports currently serve Berlin: Tegel (to close in mid-2012) and Schönefeld. Served by numerous buses, it is easy to get from Tegel to any of the main train stations. Those travelling to Schönefeld have fewer complications, as it's served by both the bus and S-Bahn.