

# Welcome to Berlin

*Berlin is a mix of glamour and grit that will fascinate lovers of history, art, architecture, restaurants and nightlife.*

## Time Travel

Berlin is like a virtual 3D textbook where you find history staring you in the face at every turn. Strolling around, you pass by legendary sights that reflect key eras in city history. Schloss Charlottenburg, the Brandenburg Gate and Unter den Linden take you back to the period of Prussian glory. The dark ages of the Third Reich reverberate through the Scheunenviertel, the old Jewish quarter. Checkpoint Charlie and the East Side Gallery reflect the tense times of the Cold War. Potsdamer Platz and the new government quarter stand representative of a forward-looking, post-reunification Berlin.

## Art & Culture

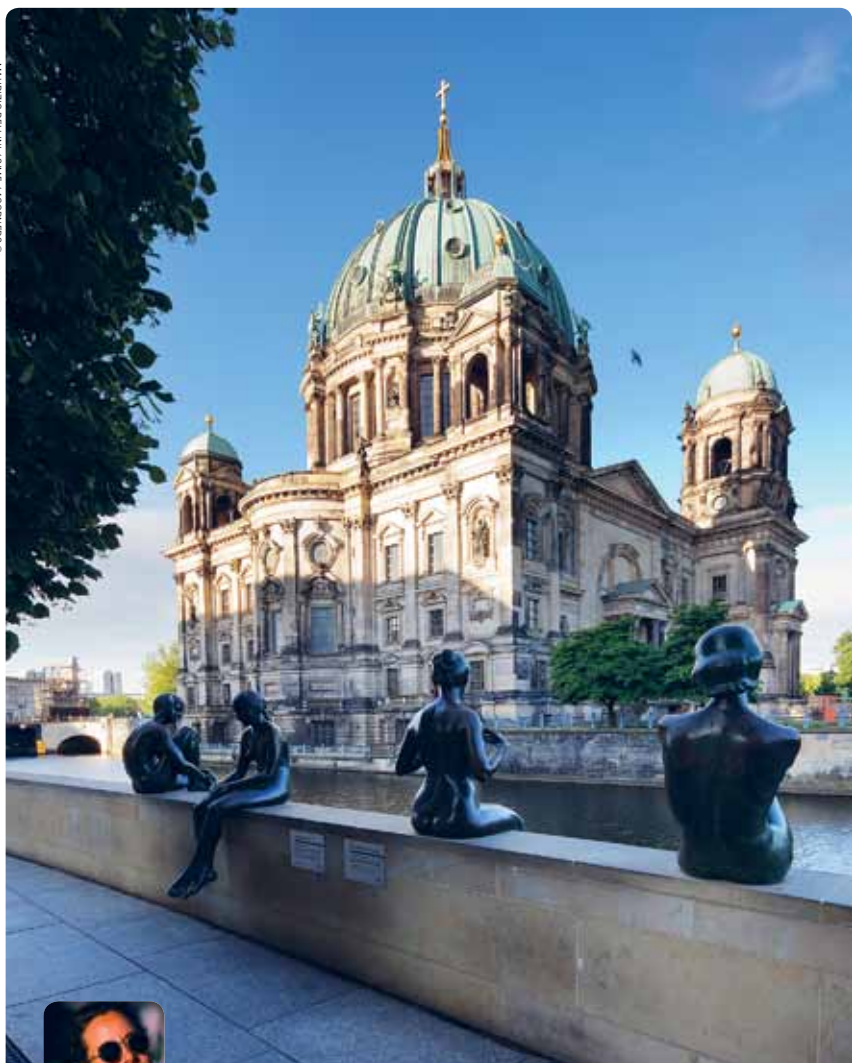
With 600 galleries, 175 museums, three opera houses, five major symphony orchestras and scores of theatres and cabarets, Berlin's extraordinary cultural landscape is the envy of many a small country. It's a pillar of the fashion, art, design and music worlds, not just keeping up with but setting new trends. An influx of creatives has turned it into a cauldron of cultural cool comparable to New York in the '80s. It's Berlin's legendary spirit of tolerance and experimentation infused with a dose of gritty subculture that gives this exciting city its edge.

## Nightlife

Forget about New York – Berlin is the city that truly never sleeps. Sometimes it seems as though Berliners are the lotus eaters of Germany, people who love nothing better than a good time. The city's vast party spectrum caters for every taste, budget and age group. From tiny basement clubs to industrial techno temples, chestnut-canopied beer gardens to fancy cocktail caverns, saucy cabarets to ear-pleasing symphonies – Berlin delivers hot-stepping odysseys, and not just after dark and on weekends but pretty much 24/7. Pack your stamina!

## People & Quality of Life

Berlin may be 10 times the size of Paris but its key areas are pleasingly compact and human-scale with plenty of green and open spaces. Public transportation is brilliant, you can walk without fear at night, few clubs have velvet ropes, and your restaurant bill would probably only buy you an appetiser in most other European capitals. It's a multicultural metropolis infused with the unpretentious charm of an international village. Berliners are a laid-back bunch who follow the credo 'live and let live' and put greater emphasis on enjoying life than accumulating material wealth.



## Why I Love Berlin

By Andrea Schulte-Peevers, Author

To me, Berlin is truly one of the world's great capitals and nothing short of addictive. I fell in love with the city the first time I visited, mere months before the Wall's 1989 collapse. Since then, it's been exciting to see Berlin shed its Cold War-era brooding and blossom into a vibrant, sassy yet wonderfully relaxed capital city. I simply love the energy of the place, its ability to reinvent itself time and again. The nightlife, the people, the museums, the landmarks – the mix is an intoxicating cocktail that I'll never get tired of drinking.

**For more about our authors, see p336.**