

# Historic Mitte

GOVERNMENT QUARTER | PARISER PLATZ | UNTER DEN LINDEN | GENDARMENMARKT |  
FRIEDRICHSTRASSE | CHECKPOINT CHARLIE

## Neighbourhood Top Five

- 1 Standing in awe of history at the **Reichstag** (p82), then taking in the views from its landmark dome.
- 2 Soaking in the stillness and presence of uncounted souls at the **Holocaust Memorial** (p85).
- 3 Indulging in a gourmet meal at one of the stellar restaurants surrounding **Gendarmenmarkt** (p87).
- 4 Confronting the horrors of Nazi Germany at the haunting **Topographie des Terrors** (p89) exhibit.
- 5 Catching cabaret, comedy, musicals or concerts at the historic **Admiralspalast** (p96).



For more detail of this area, see Map p322 →

## Explore: Historic Mitte

A cocktail of culture, commerce and history, Mitte packs it in when it comes to blockbuster sights: the Reichstag, the Brandenburg Gate, the Holocaust Memorial and Checkpoint Charlie are all within its confines. Cutting through it all is Unter den Linden, a chic boulevard stretching from Pariser Platz to Museum Island, past a phalanx of imposing structures built under various Prussian kings and reflecting the one-time grandeur of the royal family.

These days, though, the grand boulevard is one giant construction zone, thus upholding Berlin's reputation as the 'eternally unfinished city'. A ballet of cranes swings above sites where the U-Bahn is being extended, the Berlin City Palace is resurfacing and the State Opera House is getting a facelift. It'll be years before all is finished.

Unaffected by the temporary turmoil is Friedrichstrasse, which bisects Unter den Linden and runs north into the 'East End' theatre district and south to Checkpoint Charlie. Gendarmenmarkt, Berlin's most beautiful square, is just one block east and surrounded by ritzy restaurants and fancy shops. It too is expected to get a makeover starting in 2015.

## Local Life

➔ **Glamour shopping** Brand-name bunnies flock to Friedrichstrasse to give their credit cards a serious workout. Aside from boutiques, the Friedrichstadtpassagen, led by the stunningly designed Galeries Lafayette (p97), beckon with top-flight Berlin and international designers.

➔ **High-brow culture** Music and theatre fans are drawn to this part of town to take in concerts at the Konzerthaus Berlin (p96), theatre at the Maxim Gorki (p96) and opera at the Komische Oper (p96).

➔ **Power of words** What's better than a night off in front of the TV? Browsing a bookstore, of course. Open until 11pm, Dussmann (p97), the self-titled 'cultural department store', is an eldorado for bookworms and also has a huge music selection.

## Getting There & Away

➔ **Bus** Buses 100 and 200 run along most of Unter den Linden from Alexanderplatz.

➔ **S-Bahn** S1 and S2/25 stop at Brandenburger Tor and Friedrichstrasse.

➔ **Tram** The M1 travels from Museumsinsel to Prenzlauer Berg via Friedrichstrasse.

➔ **U-Bahn** Stadtmitte (U2, U6), Französische Strasse (U6) and Hausvogteiplatz (U2) are all convenient for Gendarmenmarkt. For Unter den Linden, get off at Brandenburger Tor (U55), Friedrichstrasse (U6) or Französische Strasse (U6).

## Lonely Planet's Top Tip

For an engaging overview of the Berlin Wall and related key Cold War sites scattered around the city, visit the Mauerinformation exhibit in the Brandenburger Tor U-Bahn station. Aside from photographs and an aerial map, it presents a film about the border installations and an opportunity to rent a Berlin Wall audioguide for a more in-depth experience.

## Best Places to Eat

➔ Restaurant Tim Raue (p95)

➔ Augustiner am Gendarmenmarkt (p94)

➔ Chipps (p94)

➔ Ishin (p94)

For reviews, see p94 ➔

## Best Places to Drink

➔ Drayton Bar (p95)

➔ Tausend (p96)

➔ Berliner Republik (p96)

For reviews, see p95 ➔

## Best Landmarks

➔ Brandenburger Tor (p84)

➔ Reichstag (p82)

➔ Holocaust Memorial (p85)

➔ Gendarmenmarkt (p87)

For reviews, see p82 ➔