



Around Berlin

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Best Places to Eat

- » Maison Charlotte (p126)
- » Schlossrestaurant Lübben (p129)
- » Brauhaus Babben (p131)

Best Places to Stay

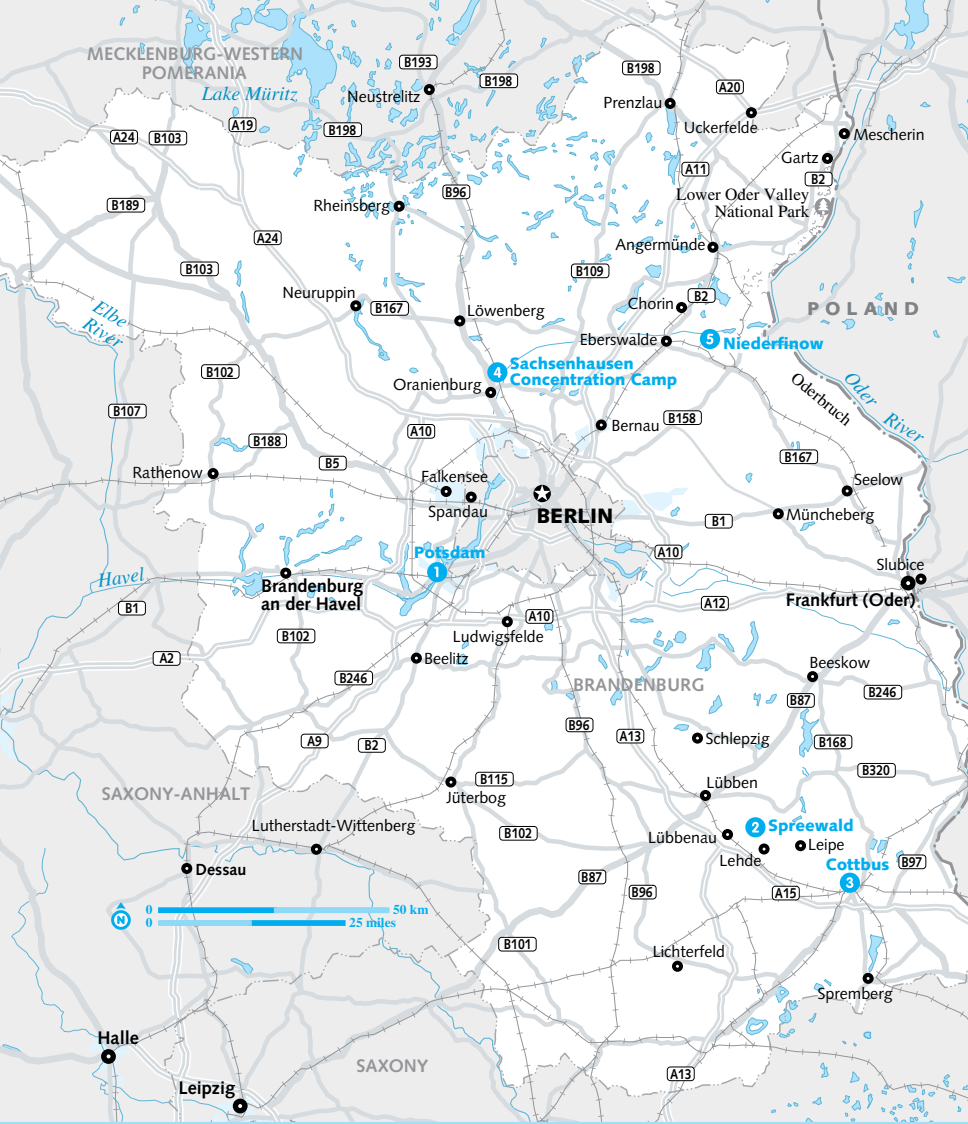
- » Hotel Villa Monte Vino (p126)
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Why Go?

Berlin is fabulous, and you'll certainly want to spend quite a bit of time there, but don't forget to earmark a day (or two or three) for the surrounding state of Brandenburg. Headlining the list of discoveries here is the drop-dead-gorgeous park and palace of Sanssouci (the 'German Versailles') in Potsdam, a jewel box of a summer retreat built by King Frederick the Great and merely a quick train ride from central Berlin. This is a land shaped by water, and nowhere is this more evident than in the Spreewald, one of Germany's unique landscapes and home to the indigenous Sorb, who cling to their ancient customs and traditions in pretty, remote hamlets. A sobering antidote to all that cultural and natural splendour – and no less important or memorable – is Nazi Germany's first concentration camp at Sachsenhausen, north of Berlin.

When to Go

Water characterises much of the countryside around Berlin, meaning that you will want to visit between spring and autumn when you can experience the region at its best by taking a boat trip or hiring a kayak. Of course you won't be alone, especially on weekends and around holidays. Potsdam, too, is best visited midweek during summer, but its palaces and museum also make it a fine destination year-round. Sachsenhausen is, by definition, of timeless appeal.



Around Berlin Highlights

- 1** Relive the majesty that once surrounded **Schloss Sanssouci** (p120) and other Potsdam palaces
- 2** Commune with nature while punting around the web of waterways in the enchanting **Spreewald** (p128)
- 3** Get into the mind of an eccentric aristocratic garden artist at **Schloss & Park Branitz** (p131)
- 4** Prepare for goosebumps as you confront the ghosts of **Sachsenhausen** (p127) concentration camp
- 5** Rub your eyes in disbelief at huge barges travelling in a massive **ship's lift** (p134) at Niederfinow