



# Around Berlin

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Chorin & Niederfinow	139

## Best Places to Eat

- ➔ Maison Charlotte (p132)
- ➔ Edelmond Fisch- und  
Steakhaus (p135)
- ➔ Restaurant Altes  
Gärtnerhaus (p135)
- ➔ Schmiede 9 (p132)

## Best Places to Stay

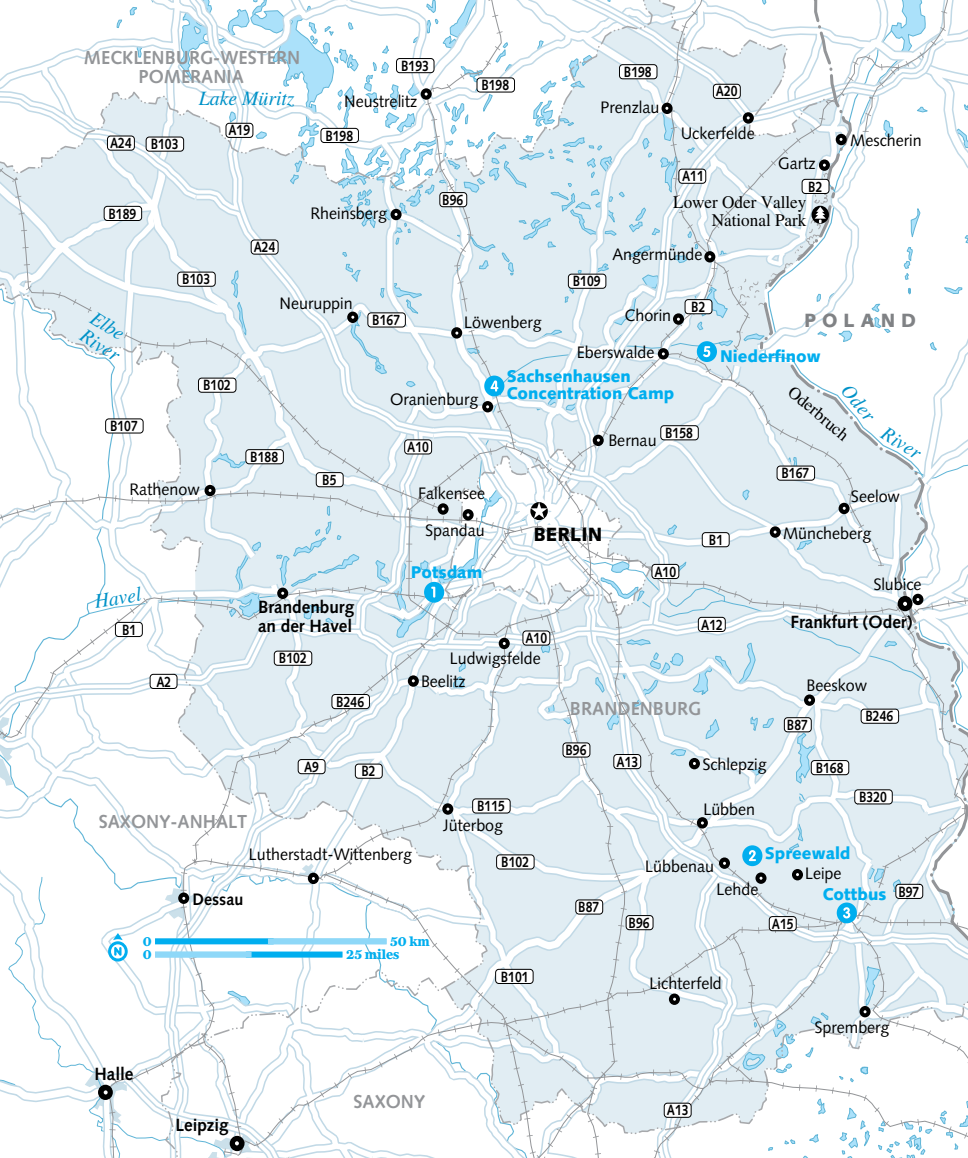
- ➔ Hotel Villa Monte Vino  
(p132)
- ➔ Schlosshotel Lübbenau  
(p137)
- ➔ Pension Zum Birnbaum  
(p138)
- ➔ Pension am Alten  
Bauernhafen (p137)

## 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. A land shaped by lakes, canals and waterways, large swathes of it are protected as biosphere preserves and nature parks, creating a delightful escape from the urban hustle for Berliners and visitors alike. Culture lovers, too, will be rewarded. Headlining the list of discoveries 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 a mere half-hour train ride from central Berlin. Nowhere is Brandenburg's watery heritage more evident than in the Spreevald, one of Germany's most unique landscapes and home to the indigenous Sorb ethnic minority, who cling to their ancient customs and traditions in handsome remote hamlets. A sobering antidote to all that cultural and natural splendour – and no less important or memorable – is the Nazi-era 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 blue-sky weekends, during the summer school holidays and around public holidays. Potsdam, too, is best visited midweek during summer, but its palaces and museum actually make a fine destination year-round. Sachsenhausen is, by definition, of timeless appeal.



## Around Berlin Highlights

- 1 Reliving the majesty that once surrounded **Schloss Sanssouci** (p126) and other Potsdam palaces
- 2 Communing with nature while punting around the web of waterways in the enchanting **Spreewald** (p134)
- 3 Getting into the mind of an eccentric aristocratic garden artist at **Park & Schloss Branitz** (p136) in Cottbus
- 4 Preparing for goosebumps as you confront the ghosts of **Sachsenhausen concentration camp** (p133)
- 5 Rubbing your eyes in disbelief at huge barges travelling in a massive **ship lift** (p139) at Niederfinow