

**WIMDU**  
City Guides

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NO 1

**BERLIN**

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# 'WILLKOMMEN' TO BERLIN

## 'Willkommen' to Berlin

A couple of useful tips  
before you visit...

Climate

Money

Smoking in public

Language barrier

Transport

Vegetarianism

Nightlife

Public nudity



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## Willkommen to Berlin

Few western nations can boast the unique bohemian cultural blend that is so typical to Berlin.

From electro clubs to symphony orchestras and from classical museums to the **East Side Gallery**, Berlin's unforgettable cultural landscape is one of a kind.

Catalysed by the vast changes in the city's social, political and architectural trends, over the past century Berlin has undergone a long and painful evolution. Today, the capital stands out as a centre for diversity and freedom of expression, though the scars of oppression and war can still be seen in the plastered bullet holes on its baroque architecture, and the many monuments to the victims of fascism.

After the second world war, up to 80% of the city centre was destroyed or badly damaged. Reconstruction work took place gradually over the decades that followed, though it wasn't until German reunification that this picked up pace. The task of

rebuilding continues to this day, with the formerly demolished **City Palace** being rebuilt from the original designs with a colossal budget of €590 million.

Today, visitors are able to explore the many historical museums, art galleries and monuments to trace the journey of this remarkable city through the decades. With countless opportunities available, it can be difficult to know where to start. This guide aims to provide you with all the need-to-know information that you will require, as well as offering you some insight into the best sights and sounds within the city. Covering everything from museums and galleries to restaurants and transport, we hope this guide will help you to plan what to do, where to eat and how to get around while visiting Berlin on a city break.

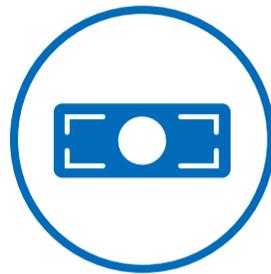
# A COUPLE OF USEFUL TIPS BEFORE YOU VISIT...

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## CLIMATE

Berlin winters can get pretty cold, so if you visit the city between December and February, make sure you've packed your winter woollens!



## MONEY

Most shops, bars and restaurants don't take credit cards — cash is king. Make sure you're carrying enough before dining out.



## SMOKING IN PUBLIC

Smoke alert! Unlike the UK, Berlin has so far escaped the smoking ban. While most restaurants are smoke-free, the majority of bars and clubs allow smoking indoors.



## LANGUAGE BARRIER

While it's always useful to learn a little of the native tongue before visiting a country, rest assured that most people in the service industry speak English very well.



## TRANSPORT

The public transport links are sufficient in Berlin to get you pretty much anywhere. By purchasing a Berlin Welcome Card, you'll get free transport for the duration of the card and discounts on over 200 attractions.



## VEGETARIANISM

Berlin has a huge vegetarian and vegan population, with a large focus on organic produce. So if you're a vegetarian, it's always easy to find great dining options.



## NIGHTLIFE

72 hours of relentless partying. Berlin's nightlife caters to hardcore party-goers, with many nightclubs remaining open throughout the entire weekend, without a break.



## PUBLIC NUILITY

Pack those sunglasses - white bits on show! Nudism is particularly popular within Germany, and many of Berlin's parks have designated nudist areas.



# 2

## BERLIN'S TOP LANDMARKS

1. [Brandenburger Tor](#)  
(Brandenburg Gate)
2. [Berliner Fernsehturm](#)  
(TV Tower)
3. [Reichstag Building](#)  
(Bundestag Building)
4. [Tiergarten Park —  
Victory Column](#)
5. [Museumsinsel](#)  
(Museum Island)
6. [Potsdamer Platz](#)  
(Potsdamer Square)
7. [Checkpoint Charlie](#)
8. [East Side Gallery](#)
9. [Berliner Dom](#)  
(Berlin Cathedral)
10. [Schloss Charlottenburg](#)  
(Charlottenburg Palace)
11. [Potsdam & Sanssouci](#)

Berlin has a seemingly infinite range of attractions to explore and enjoy, making it difficult to know where to start.

Here is a shortlist of some of Berlin's top landmarks to visit during your stay. While the list is by no means exhaustive, it will hopefully offer some insight into the history, culture and need-to-know information for some of the city's main attractions.

WEST

**1** **Brandenburger Tor**  
(Brandenburg Gate)

**3** **Reichstag Building**  
(Bundestag Building)

**4** **Tiergarten Park —  
Victory Column**

**6** **Potsdamer Platz**  
(Potsdamer Square)

**7** **Checkpoint Charlie**

**10** **Schloss Charlottenburg**  
(Charlottenburg Palace)

**11** **Potsdam & Sanssouci**

**10**  
(4.4 KM)

(34 KM)  
**11**



EAST

**2** Berliner Fernsehturm  
(TV Tower)

**8** East Side Gallery

**5** Museumsinsel  
(Museum Island)

**9** Berliner Dom  
(Berlin Cathedral)





# 1 BRANDENBURGER TOR (Brandenburg Gate)

The **Brandenburg Gate** is perhaps one of the most iconic images of modern day Berlin. Built in 1791 upon the site of a customs gate, it was one of the city's first Neo-classical structures. Representing peace within the Prussian Empire, it was originally given the name **Friedenstor (Peace Gate)**.

The monument is formed by 12 columns, laid out to create 5 passageways. Permission to pass through each archway was traditionally determined by rank – only royals and senior nobles could pass through the central arch.

Atop the Gate is the impressive Quadriga – a chariot pulled by 4 horses. The original Quadriga featured the

Goddess Eirene, symbolic of peace. However, after the Prussian defeat in 1806, Napoleon stole the Quadriga and took it to Paris. When it was later returned following Napoleon's defeat in 1814, it was redesigned to represent the Goddess Victoria – symbolic of triumph and power.

This imposing structure has been a focal point for many of the city's festivals and demonstrations throughout history, and remains an integral symbol and functional part of Berlin culture. Recently, the Brandenburg Gate was where football fans gathered to watch the **World Cup**, and was also where the **Berlin Wall 25 Year Anniversary Concert** took place.



**ADDRESS:**  
Pariser Platz, 10117 Berlin



**GETTING THERE:**  
**U-Bahn:** U6 (Friedrichstraße)  
**S-Bahn:** S1, S2, S25 (Brandenburger Tor)  
**Bus:** 100, M85 (Reichstag), 200 (Brandenburger Tor)

# 2 BERLINER FERNSEHTURM

(TV Tower)

Built by the East-German GDR government in the 1960s, the construction of the **TV Tower** had both a political and a functional purpose. The strategic positioning of the building combined with its grand scale meant that it would be visible from all areas within the city - serving as a symbol of the efficiency and power of the socialist party system.

In the years that followed, the image of the TV Tower became as iconic as the **Brandenburg Gate**. Every year 1.2 million tourists decide to take the lift to the top of the tower and enjoy the panoramic view over the city from the observation deck or the revolving restaurant.

Tickets for the TV Tower can be purchased online or on the door, and there are several options available.

With the regular entry ticket, you'll need to wait. Luckily though, you'll be allocated a time at the ticket desk. The 'Fast View' ticket allows you the privilege of jumping the queue. To dine in the tower's revolving restaurant, you either need to reserve a table online and then pay for admission separately or buy the 'VIP' ticket, which offers fast-track entrance to the tower and the next available table in the restaurant.

If you haven't reserved a table and you don't have a 'VIP' ticket, you'll be pleased to know that there is a snack bar in the observation deck. Although the observation deck doesn't revolve, it does contain information plaques explaining the history of what you can see as you walk round to enjoy the 360 degree view.



#### OPENING TIMES:

Mar—Oct: 9am—midnight  
Nov—Feb: 10am—midnight



#### ADMISSION

Regular €13, Child (4-16y) €8.50  
VIP Adult €23.00, Child (4-16y) €15.00  
Fast view Adult €19.50, Child (4-16y) €12.00  
Early Bird (9.00am): Adult €13.00,  
Child (4-16y) €8.50  
Late Night (9.30-11pm): Adult €13.00  
Child (4-16y) €8.50



#### VISITOR ENTRANCE:

Panoramastraße 1A, 10178 Berlin



#### GETTING THERE:

**U-Bahn:** U2, U5, U8 (Alexanderplatz)  
**S-Bahn:** S5, S7, S75 (Alexanderplatz)  
**Tram:** M4, M5, M6 (Alexanderplatz)  
**Bus:** TXL, M48, 100, 200, 248, N5, N8  
(Alexanderplatz)



#### OFFICIAL WEBSITE:

<http://www.tv-turm.de/en/>

#### TABLE RESERVATION:

<http://tv-turm-reservierung.de/index/login/lang/en>



# 3 REICHSTAG (Bundestag Building)

After the **Reichstag Building** was completed in 1894 it was destined to be the main seat of the German parliament. This was until the 'Reichstag fire' of 1933 which destroyed large segments of the building. The destruction of the parliament building caused the 'state of emergency' that allowed the Nazi party to lay down the necessary legislation for dictatorial rule.

From this point onwards, the Reichstag building was largely unused. A redesign and renovation project in 1964 removed most of the heraldic symbols, to create a comparatively plain building for conferences. After German reunification in 1990, an architectural competition took place to find an architect to redesign the Reichstag Building to reinstate it as the seat of central government. The winning design came from **Norman Foster**, whose design removed many of the modern

additions while attempting to maintain the historic aspects of the building.

Foster's glass dome addition references the original dome, but with an added symbolism. The structure enables visitors to view the bundestag chamber from above. This represents the transparency of modern politics and the idea that the people are above the government, in contrast to the oppressive nature of government in previous years.

Visitors receive a 20-minute audioguide, which outlines important facts about the Reichstag, the German Parliament and the visible sights as visitors ascend the spiral pathway to the top of the dome. Guided tours in English are also available, but should be booked online well in advance to ensure a place.



#### OPENING TIMES:

Daily: 8am—midnight (last admission: 11pm)



#### GETTING THERE:

**U-BAHN:** U55 (Bundestag)

**S-BAHN:** S1, S2, S25 (Brandenburger Tor)

**BUS:** 100, M85 (Reichstag)



#### VISITOR ENTRANCE:

Platz der Republik 1, 11011 Berlin



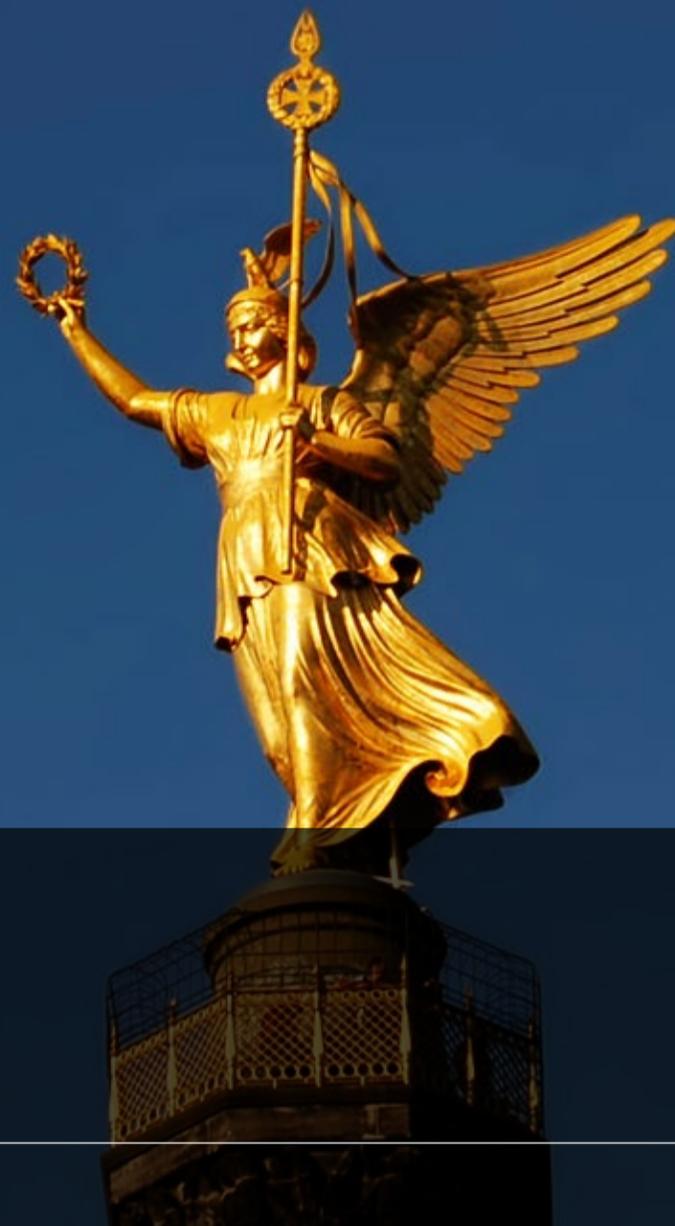
#### OFFICIAL WEBSITE:

[http://www.bundestag.de/htdocs\\_e/visits](http://www.bundestag.de/htdocs_e/visits)

#### ONLINE REGISTRATION:

<https://visite.bundestag.de/BAPWeb/pages/create-BookingRequest.jsf?lang=en>

# 4 TIERGARTEN PARK — VICTORY COLUMN



As the second largest urban park in Germany, the **Großer Tiergarten** is unsurprisingly impressive. The total size comes to a whopping 520 acres, and the park offers sculpted gardens, art installations, water features and a number of historically significant monuments. Due to its proximity to numerous attractions, such as the **Reichstag Building**, the **Brandenburg Gate**, **Berlin Zoo** and countless museums and galleries, the Tiergarten is the perfect place to enjoy a picnic or a quiet walk after sightseeing in the local area.

Within the park, visitors will find several 19th-century statues, including the Beethoven-Haydn-Mozart Memorial.

## TIERGARTEN PARK



### GETTING THERE:

**U-Bahn:** U55 (Bundestag)  
**S-Bahn:** S5, S7, S75 (Tiergarten)  
**Bus:** 100, 106, 187 (Großer Stern)  
187 (Schloss Bellevue)

More recent monuments include the Soviet War Memorial, the Memorial to the Sinti and Roma victims of National Socialism, and the Memorial to Homosexuals Persecuted Under Nazism.

The **Victory Column** (Siegessäule) is undoubtedly the masterpiece of the Tiergarten park. Originally located opposite the Reichstag building, the column was moved in 1939, and re-designed to add another 7.5 metres to its height. Entrance to the column is accessible via an underground passage through the Großer Stern intersection. Visitors are able to climb to the top of the column, which offers panoramic views over the city.

## VICTORY COLUMN



### ADMISSION

Regular €2.20 Concessions €1.50



### OPENING TIMES:

**Apr—Oct:** Mon—Fri: 9:30am—6:30pm  
Sat—Sun: 9:30am—7pm  
**Nov—Mar:** Mon—Fri: 10am—5pm  
Sat—Sun: 10am—5:30pm



### GETTING THERE:

**Bus:** 100, 106, 187 (Großer Stern)



# 5 MUSEUMSINSEL (Museum Island)

Located in the centre of Berlin, this small island was once the 13th-century citadel of Cölln and was the sister town of Old Berlin (Altberlin). Today, the island is home to some of the greatest treasures and works of art in the whole of Europe. The island was awarded **UNESCO World Heritage** status in 1999, and boasts 5 of Berlin's most famous museums - the Pergamon Museum, the Bode-Museum, the Alte Nationalgalerie, the Altes Museum and the Neues Museum.

The Pergamon Museum is perhaps the best known museum on the island, and amongst its most famous artefacts visitors will find the **'Pergamon Altar'**, the **'Ishtar Gate'**, the **'Market Gate of Miletus'** and the **'Meissner fragment'** of the **'Epic of Gilgamesh'**.

In the Neues Museum, visitors will find the Egyptian Collection, which houses the **'Bust of Nefertiti'** and one of the few female sphinxes - the **'Sphinx of Shepenupet II'**.

Museum Island is also the home of Berlin Cathedral, and the location of Berlin's 15th-century City Palace (Stadtschloss). Demolished after the Second World War, the City Palace is now being rebuilt in line with original designs, and construction work is expected to be complete by 2019.

For more information on the treasures of Museum Island as well as transport information and opening-times check out our [Museums and Galleries chapter](#).



# 6 POTSDAMER PLATZ

(Potsdamer Square)

**Potsdamer Platz** is one of the oldest squares in Berlin, and with the exception of the Cold War years it has always been a centre for commerce and trade. Despite having its roots in the 17th-century, virtually nothing remains of the historic buildings that once lined its surrounding streets.

Allied bombing raids led to the near-total destruction of its infrastructure and architecture during the Second World War. However, within weeks of the war's end, citizens and businessmen patched up the remaining floors of bombed-out buildings so that trade could once again commence - in spite of the wreckage and loss.

Potsdamer Platz has seen a complete overhaul in its appearance in recent years, combining art, entertainment

and shopping opportunities to follow in its history as a centre of commerce, but with a unique modern flair. The square attracts up to 100,000 visitors per day, and has something for everyone - from art and history, to fine dining, shopping and evening entertainment. The famous **Cinemaxx** cinema boasts a total of 19 screens, and has been the main location of the **Berlinale Film Festival** since the year 2000.

The square is best appreciated in the evening, when the lights of the Sony Center lend a futuristic beauty. The **Sony Center** is also a great place to go if you feel like watching a movie, as it shows films in their original language.



#### GETTING THERE:

**U-Bahn:** U2 (Potsdamer Platz)

**S-Bahn:** S1, S2, S25 (Potsdamer Platz)

**BUS:** 200, M48, M85, N2 (Potsdamer Platz)



#### OFFICIAL WEBSITE:

<http://potsdamerplatz.de/en/home/>

YOU ARE LEAVING  
THE AMERICAN SECTOR  
ВЫ ВЫЕЗЖАЕТЕ ИЗ  
АМЕРИКАНСКОГО СЕКТОРА  
VOUS SORTEZ  
DU SECTEUR AMÉRICAIN

## 7 CHECKPOINT CHARLIE

A visit to Berlin is not complete without a trip to Checkpoint Charlie. Attracting over one-million visitors each year, the now-symbolic border crossing is one of Berlin's most famous monuments. After the Berlin Wall was constructed, several checkpoints were set up as border crossings. For foreigners and allied troops there were 2 main checkpoints that could be used - Checkpoint Charlie and Checkpoint Bravo.

During the time of separation, Checkpoint Charlie garnered the most media attention - initially due to the famous tank stand-off between Soviet and U.S. troops in 1961. A year later, the station received media attention once again following the tragic death of 18-year old Peter Fechter as he attempted to escape to freedom in

the West. Fechter almost made it across to the Western side when he was shot by Soviet troops. Neither side intervened to provide medical assistance, which caused uproar amongst the population. A memorial to Peter Fechter is now located on Zimmerstraße, near Checkpoint Charlie.

The original Checkpoint Charlie station has now been moved to the [Allied Museum](#) in Berlin-Zehlendorf, though a symbolic station has been placed on the original site, along with a sign marking the border of the American and Russian sectors. For a small fee, visitors can have their pictures taken with the actors in military uniform. The Allied Museum offers free admission and is open Tuesday- Friday from 10am until 6pm.

### CHECKPOINT CHARLIE



**PHOTO FEE €5**



**GETTING THERE:**  
**U-Bahn:** U6 (Kochstraße)  
**Bus:** M29 (Kochstraße)

### ALLIED MUSEUM



**VISITOR ENTRANCE:**  
Clayallee 135, 14195 Berlin



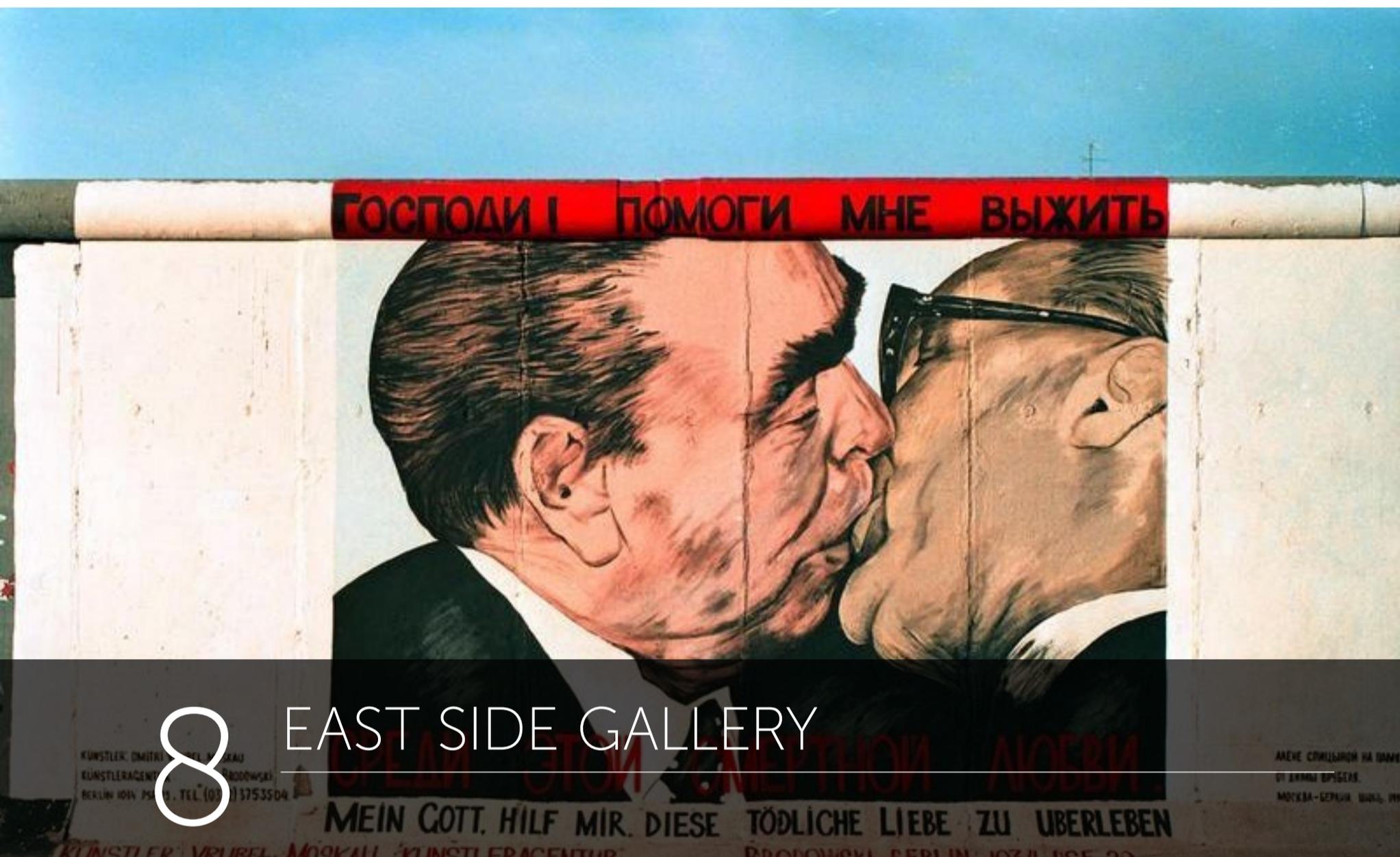
**OPENING TIMES:**  
Tues—Sun: 10am—6pm



**GETTING THERE:**  
**U-Bahn:** U3 (Oskar-Helene-Heim)  
**Bus:** 115, X83 (AlliiertenMuseum)



**OFFICIAL WEBSITE:**  
<http://www.alliiertenmuseum.de/en/home.html>



8

## EAST SIDE GALLERY

Spanning 1.3 kilometres, the East Side Gallery is undisputedly the largest art gallery in Berlin. This enormous stretch of **Berlin Wall** was painted in 1990 by 102 artists, who came together to create an international memorial for freedom. Each of the 105 paintings individually represents the many forms of freedom, and the ability to overcome oppression. Prior to reunification, the east side of the wall had been untouchable.

When the gallery was created, some paintings garnered more media attention than others. One of the most famous works is 'My God, Help Me to Survive This Deadly Love' by Dmitri Vrubel - a depiction of the Soviet leader Leonid Brezhnev and GDR Chairman Erich Honecker kissing. The image came from an actual photograph that

was taken while Brezhnev visited East Germany to sign a mutual trade agreement and celebrate the anniversary of East Germany becoming a Communist nation.

The condition of the wall has deteriorated gradually over time due to erosion, graffiti and vandalism, leading to restoration efforts in 2000. The decision to restore the paintings was intended for both the preservation of art history and the maintenance of a culturally-significant monument. It is estimated that the gallery attracts around 3 million visitors per year. A great way to see the monument is to start out from Ostbahnhof Station, and follow the wall along to Warschauer Straße. This way you can enjoy the gallery, and then check out some hipster shops in the Friedrichshain district.

**LOCATION:**

Mühlenstraße, Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg,  
10243 Berlin

**OFFICIAL WEBSITE:**

<http://www.eastsidegallery-berlin.de/data/eng/index-eng.htm>

**GETTING THERE:**

**U-Bahn:** U1 (Warschauer Straße)

**S-Bahn:** S5, S7, S75 (Warschauer Straße)

**Tram:** M10 (Warschauer Straße)

**Bus:** 140, 142, 147, 240, 248, 347

(Ostbahnhof) 347 (Warschauer Straße)

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