

Mitte

Berlin Mitte contains the historical heart of Berlin and represents in many ways the real center of the city. Most of the main sights are located within the Mitte district, as are most of the political institutions and also many media companies. The area around Unter den Linden is Berlin's primary boulevard and represents the very core of the central Berlin Mitte district. In 2001 the eastern district Mitte was joined with the western districts Tiergarten and Wedding (which has nothing to do with the English word). This can lead to confusion, because normally (but not officially) one says *Mitte* when thinking about the old district. Tiergarten consists largely of the big central park (in the south), on which borders some political and cultural institutions and the Potsdamer Platz are located and a (rather poor) residential area with a high immigrant population in the north. Wedding is, similar to northern Tiergarten basically a poorer residential district with a high immigrant population and only a few minor interesting things for tourists.

Understand

Here, we speak about the districts in their old sense (Mitte, Tiergarten, Wedding).

Orientation

The old district *Mitte* can be divided into several neighborhoods and sub-districts in order to help travelers crossing it:

- Mitte:
 - Unter den Linden, the main boulevard, from Museum Island to Brandenburg Gate, crossing the main shopping street, Friedrichstrasse, half way along.
 - Museuminsel (Museum Island) and Lustgarten (the square in front of the Altes Museum and adjacent to the Berlin Cathedral).
 - Nikolaiviertel, a quarter near Alexanderplatz which comes close to old town style, but built by the DDR regime.
 - Spandauer Vorstadt with Scheunenviertel.

The Spandauer Vorstadt is located north of the River Spree and the Hackescher Markt. It is bordered on the north by the east-west course of the Torstrasse, on the east by Karl-Liebknecht-Strasse and by the northern part of Friedrichstrasse to the west. The eastern part of the area takes its name Scheunenviertel (the "Barn Quarter") from the move in 1672 by the Great Elector of all the hay barns out of the fire-prone city center. In the late 19th century, the area became a refuge for Jews fleeing persecution and pogrom in Russia and Poland. By then it was the center of Jewish life in Berlin.

- Tiergarten is located west of Mitte, the Brandenburg Gate marks the north-south border.
- Wedding is located north of Mitte, with Bernauer Strasse as its border. There you can also visit some remains of the Berlin Wall.

Get in

Mitte regained its position as the main transfer point as in June 2006 with the opening of the new main station (**Hauptbahnhof**), a giant palace of glass and steel, which is at the border of Mitte and Tiergarten. Almost all short- and long-haul trains will arrive and depart from this station. Other main public transport stations are Friedrichstrasse and Alexanderplatz.

Public transport

Many S- and U-Bahn lines serve Mitte. The S1 and S2 go from north (Oranienburg and Wedding) to south (Potsdamer Platz and Schöneberg), the Stadtbahn (city S-Bahn, line 5, 7, 9 and 75) goes from west (Charlottenburg) to east (Friedrichshain). They cross at Friedrichstrasse. U-Bahn line 2 connects Mitte with Charlottenburg (west) and Prenzlauer Berg (northeast), the U-Bahn lines 6 and 8 go north to Wedding and south to Kreuzberg and Neukölln.

The most important stations are:

- **Alexanderplatz**— The main connecting station; old centre of East Berlin, now about to experience a major revival.
- **Friedrichstrasse**— For Friedrichstr, Unter den Linden and as a connecting station.
- **Unter den Linden**— For Unter den Linden, Brandenburger Tor and Reichstag.
- **Hackescher Markt**— For the lively Spandauer Vorstadt/Scheunenviertel.
- **Stadtmitte**— For Gendarmenmarkt.
- **Klosterstrasse**— For Nikolaiviertel.
- **Potsdamer Platz**— For Potsdamer Platz and Kulturforum (the philharmonic, some museums).
- **Tiergarten**— For the Tiergarten park, the flea market on the Strasse des 17th Juni and the Siegessäule (Victory column).
- **Gesundbrunnen**— The main station of Wedding, where also some regional trains stop.

See

Landmarks

- Berliner Dom (Berlin Cathedral), Am Lustgarten (U-Bahn: U2, U5, or U8 to Alexanderplatz. S-Bahn: S5, S7, S9, or S75 to Hackescher Markt), +49 (0/20) 2026 91 36 (info@berlinerdom.de), Hours: M-Sa. 9AM - 8PM. Sunday and holidays: Noon - 8PM (From October until April the cathedral is open only until 7PM). The city's Protestant cathedral and the burial place of the Prussian kings.
- The **Reichstag** — This imposing building houses the Federal German Parliament or "Bundestag" and was originally completed in 1894 to meet the need of the newly-unified German Empire of the Kaisers' for a larger parliamentary building. The Reichstag was intended to resemble a Renaissance palace, and its architect, Paul Wallot, dedicated the building to the German people. The massive inscription in front still reads: "Dem Deutschen Volke" - 'For the German people'. The Nazi leader Adolf Hitler exploited the fire which gutted the Reichstag building in 1933 by blaming the Communists for the arson and for attempted revolution. There is good evidence to suggest, however, that his followers were actually responsible and that this was a manufactured crisis. When German reunification became a reality, the new republic was proclaimed here at midnight on the 2nd October 1990. The Reichstag has undergone considerable restoration and alteration, not least the addition of a spectacular glass dome designed by the British architect Norman Foster. Norman. The Reichstag building is well-known in the art world thanks to Paris-based Bulgarian artist Christo's mammoth 'Wrapped Reichstag' project 'Wrapped Reichstag' project in 1995. The entire building was swathed in silver cloth for two weeks that summer.
- **Fernsehturm/Alexanderplatz**

The Fernsehturm's nickname, "Telespargel" (television-asparagus) does not come close to expressing how this huge monument to tacky 20th-century culture dominates the sweeping, open square.

This 368-meter high metal vegetable (it's a TV tower) sprouted from the concrete in the years 1965-69, during a particularly hideous Soviet-inspired architectural era in the East. During certain times of day, sunlight reflecting from the top caused a large cross-shaped light to shine down on the city. Called the Rache des Papstes (Pope's revenge) by nominally atheist East Berliners, the light-cross was an ironic result of socialist architecture. Rumor has it the architect was deprived of more than his next commission after that fiasco.

At night, the Fernsehturm sometimes appears to be shooting light beams from the tower section, giving the impression it's a Death Star à la Star Wars.

Park Inn Alexanderplatz— The tallest multistory building in Berlin at 132 meters. There is a panoramic restaurant in the uppermost floor.

Sneak into the main entrance of the Radisson SAS business hotel on Karl-Liebknecht Straße. Here you can have a quick glance at the famous **Aquadom**, the world's biggest

cylindrical Aquarium. It was built in 2003 by the US company Reynolds and **Hydro Sight**. The best news at the end; There is no entrance fee for watching (but for taking a trip with the elevator you have to pay the entrance fee for the whole Sea Aquarium adjacent to the hotel).

- **Marienkirche/Karl-Liebknecht-Strasse**

Next to the Fernsehturm, is located the gothic Marienkirche, the second oldest church (built in late 13th century) of the historical centre of Berlin. It's the highest church tower of Berlin (about 90 m), but seems rather small beneath the gigantic TV tower. Carl Gotthard Langhans, the architect of the Brandenburg Gate, built the church tower in the late 18th century.

- **Siegessäule (*Tiergarten*) (Victory Column)**. Want to feel like one of the angels in Wim Wenders' classic film *Der Himmel über Berlin* (a.k.a. *Wings of Desire*)? Climb to the top of Gold-Else, as the statue of Victory on the top of the Victory Column is known. Just don't jump off if you're not actually an angel. Else was moved to her present location by the Nazis, but was originally built to commemorate Prussian military prowess in the wars against Denmark (1864), Austria (1866) and France (1870-71). Five roads run into a traffic circle called Grosser Stern, in the center of which is the Siegessäule. Else is visible from much of the city district known as Tiergarten. At the base of the statue are reliefs of war scenes representing the conflicts which this monument memorializes. The Allies forced Germany to take those panels down in 1945, but they were remounted in 1984 and 1987.
- **Brandenburg Gate (*Brandenburger Tor*)**— The only surviving Berlin city gate and a potent symbol of the city. This is the point where *Strasse des 17. Juni* becomes *Unter den Linden*. The gate was designed by Carl Gotthard Langhans in 1791 and was intended to resemble the Acropolis in Athens. The Brandenburg Gate now symbolizes reunification, after dividing East and West Berlin for decades)
- **Pariser Platz**— The large square in front of the Brandenburg Gate contains the French and American embassies, as well as the rebuilt Hotel Adlon and the new building of the Academy of Arts.
- **Memorial for the Murdered Jews of Europe** (Denkmal für die ermordeten Juden Europas), Ebertstraße 20, +49 (0/20) 26 39 43 36 (besucherservice@stiftung-denkmal.de, fax: +49 (0/20) 26 39 43 21), A vast Holocaust memorial designed by the American architect Peter Eisenman and built close to the Brandenburg Gate and Pariser Platz, only a few hundred meters from the site of Hitler's bunker. The memorial is a very controversial one with several painful scandals coming to light over the project's life. Some criticize the memorial for only being dedicated to murdered Jews and not to other victims of Nazi genocide. It was later discovered that a company producing an anti-graffiti

chemical which was used to protect the memorial owned a company that produced Zyklon-B, which was used in concentration and death camps to kill prisoners. After much criticism, it was decided to continue working with the company, much to the dismay of the Jewish community. Furthermore, Joseph Goebbels', the Nazi propaganda minister, wartime bunker is located under a part of the memorial.

- **Russische Botschaft** (Russian Embassy), Unter den Linden 55/65. A vast wedding cake of a building, built between 1949-1951 in the best Stalinist style and meant to symbolize the dominance of the Soviet Union in East German affairs before 1989.
- **Opernplatz, Opernplatz.** Nazi Propaganda Minister Josef Goebbels made Bebelplatz (then called *Opernplatz*) infamous on 10th May 1933, when he used the square across from Humboldt University to burn 20,000 books by "immoral" authors of whom the Nazis did not approve. Their list included Thomas and Heinrich Mann, Arnold Zweig, Kurt Tucholsky and Sigmund Freud. Today a monument is the reminder, though it blames Nazi students for the episode. When entering the square it's easy to miss the monument. Look dead centre: the monument is underground. A piece of plexiglass allows the viewer to look underground into a large, white room, filled with entirely empty, blank white bookcases. The absence of books reminds the viewer just what was lost here: ideas. But the event did reveal things to come, as author and philosopher Heinrich Heine, whose books were burned, said in 1821: "This was only the foreplay. Where they burn books, they will also burn people". He was correct.
- **Neue Wache** (New Guardhouse), Unter den Linden 4, Originally erected in 1818 to a classically-inspired design by Karl Friedrich Schinkel as a guardhouse for the imperial palace, since 1993 this compact building has housed a small, but extremely powerful war cenotaph, the Central Memorial of the Federal Republic of Germany, continuing its use under East German rule as the primary "Memorial to the Victims of Fascism and Militarism". The interior of the Doric column-fronted building is intentionally empty, but for a small but moving sculpture by Käthe Kollwitz depicting a mother cradling a dead child. The statue is positioned beneath a round hole in the ceiling, exposing the figures to the rain and snow
- **Neue Synagoge** (New Synagogue), Oranienburger Straße 28/30, +49 (0/30) 8802 83 00 (office@cjudaicum.de, fax: +49 (0/30) 8802 84 83),
- **Alter Jüdischer Friedhof** (Old Jewish Cemetery), Grosse Hamburger Strasse.
- **Weltzeituhr** (World Clock), Alexanderplatz (U-Bahn & S-Bahn: Alexanderplatz). Built in 1969, this 16-ton, communist-era clock is one of Berlin's main meeting points. Each of its 24 sides corresponds to one of Earth's 24 time zones and it has the names of some of the world's most important cities written on it.

Museums and Galleries

Based on plans of the famous architect Karl Friedrich Schinkel in 1822 and starting with construction from 1830 onwards, the island in the river Spree was developed as a Museum island by the Prussian emperors. There are five museums today on that island that mainly focus on archaeology and art of the 19th century. After the reunification, all museums were restored (or are restored still) and were brought back to life. The Museuminsel (*Museum Island*) has been inscribed on the [UNESCO World Heritage List](#).

- **Pergamon Museum (*Museuminsel*)** There are three huge collections housed within this grand building: the Collection of Classical Antiquities, the Museum of Near Eastern Antiquities and the Museum of Islamic Art. The Pergamon Museum was the last museum built on Museumsinsel (Museum Island) and was intended to house the great acquisitions brought back to Germany by archaeologists of the eighteenth and nineteenth century. Schliemann and his forerunners revolutionized the archaeology world with their precise and increasingly scientific methods. It was their methodology and documentation that began to separate those in the archaeological profession from mere grave-robbers of centuries past! In fact, the adventuresome exploits of Indiana Jones could have been based on some of these men, and the Pergamon Museum is a result of their efforts. Start in the museum's best-known attraction, the Pergamonsaal. The Pergamon Altar (165 BC), from the eponymous Asia Minor city-state, is three stories high and served as the entrance gate to an entire complex. It is astounding both because of its size and extremely precise detail, especially in a frieze which shows the gods battling giants. The entire room is the same color as the building's stone, making the details on the frieze section stand out even more. Facing the stairs, on the left hand side of the room there is a small-scale model of the altar which allows the viewer to see where the frieze segments would have originally been mounted. A 1:300 scale model of Pergamon city is located on the right side of the room. *The monumental market door of Milet is under restoration, but it is still possible to see large parts of it.* <http://www.smb.spk-berlin.de/smb/home/index.php?lang=en>
- Part of the **Antikensammlung** (Collection of Classical Antiquities) &mdash The most spectacular part of which is the reconstructed temple of Pergamon. There is also the perhaps even greater Ish-Tar gate of Babylon, from centuries BC, which is reconstructed together with a stretch of the procession way.
- **Altes Museum**, Museuminsel. The main floor houses the antiquities collection in an ongoing exhibit called "Neue Antike im Alten Museum" (New Antiquities in the Old Museum). Directly through the front door, entering from the Lustgarten (Pleasure Garden, now under reconstruction), there is a domed rotunda with red and white cameos, Greek-style, with statues of the gods. To reach the Hildesheim silver collection, go to the back of the rotunda, turn left, walk through the long gallery and turn left into a small room at the end.

- **Alte Nationalgalerie** (Old National Gallery), Bodestraße 1-3, +49 (0/30) 2090 5801 (ang@smb.spk-berlin.de, fax: +49 (0/30) 2090 5802), Specializes in 19th century painting and sculpture; Monet, Manet, Cézanne, C. David Friedrich and other important 18th and 19th century artists are well-represented.
- The **Bodemuseum** (*Museuminsel*) is closed until 2006 for renovations and usually exhibits Byzantine arts and impressive coin collection.
- **Deutsches Historisches Museum**, Unter den Linden 2 (U-Bahn: Französische Straße, Hausvogteiplatz or Friedrichstraße. Bus: 100, 200 und TXL (Staatsoper stop)), +49 30 203040 (fax: +49 30 20304 - 543), Daily 10AM-4PM. German historical museum covering everything from pre-history right up to the present day. One can spend many, many hours here! €5 for a day, €30 for annual pass. Children and under-18s free.
- **Deutsche Guggenheim**, Unter den Linden 13-15 (U-Bahn: U6 to Französische Strasse), +49 (0/30) 20 20 930 (berlin.guggenheim@db.com, fax: +49 (0/30) 20 20 9320), Compared to New York, Bilbao and Venezia, it is a relatively small exhibition place. It usually hosts a temporary exhibition and is free on Monday, with a free guided tour starting at 4PM. Since the place is small and the name "Guggenheim" a very famous one, the place is often very crowded.
- **Museum für Post und Kommunikation**, Leipziger Straße 16, +49 (0/30) 202 94 0 (mk.berlin@mspt.de, fax: +49 (0/30) 202 94 111), Hours: Tu. - Fr.: 9AM - 5PM. Sa., Su., and holidays: 10AM - 6PM (Closed Monday). Museum for telecommunication and post with many interesting historical objects. Normal ticket: 3 Euro.
- **Zille Museum, Propststraße 11**, +49 (0/30) 246 32 502, A museum dedicated to the Berliner artist.
- **Museum of Applied Arts** divided between two sites - the Culture Forum (together with the Picture Gallery) and Koepenick Castle.
- **Berlin Wall Documentation Center**, Bernauer Straße 111, +49 (0/30) 464 10 30 (fax: +49 (0/30) 460 69 740), April to October; Tu. - Su.: 10AM - 6PM. November - March; Tu. - Su.: 10AM - 5PM. (Closed Monday).
- **DDR Museum** A museum dedicated to every day life at the DDR time. The museum has very relaxed rules and you are allowed to touch and examine almost every object, which adds greatly to the experience.
- **Hugenottenmuseum**, in Französischer Dom, Platz der Akademie. The Hugenottenmuseum represents the ongoing influence on Berlin by the Huguenots who emigrated from France after the revocation of the Edict of Nantes. Crown Prince Friedrich William encouraged them to settle here because most of them

were skilled workers or otherwise useful to the Kingdom. One memorable artwork, in room nine of the museum, pictures Crown Princess Dorothea exclaiming "But he's a refugee!" upon being presented a very valuable set of jewels by Pierre Fromery. The generally agreed-upon view of refugees as poor, without resources let alone diamonds, was blown apart by the talented French Protestants forced to leave their country due to religion.

One of the most notable effects of having such a large French population was their influence on the infamous Berlin dialect. Berlinerisch words such as Kinkerlitzchen (from French "quincaillerie" - kitchen equipment) and Muckefuck (from French "mocha faux" - artificial coffee) are unique to the area.

The Französischen Dom (cathedral) itself was built to resemble the main church of the Huguenots in Charenton, France, destroyed in 1688. It has housed the museum since 1929.

- **Hanf Museum Berlin, (*Mitte*)** Mühlendamm 5 (Bus M48, Station 'Nikolaiviertel', everything else near Alexanderplatz), 030 / 242 48 27 (info@hanfmuseum.de), open Tue-Fr: 10AM-9PM, Sa/So: 12PM-8PM, Mo closed; It is the only hemp museum in Germany; you can see the history of hemp, the culture and use of it. You can see hemp grow. There is a cafe downstairs, with an open wavelan access. 3,- Euros, Kids under 10 go free and tours are possible.
- The Neptunbrunnen bronze fountain by Reinhold Begas. It was erected in 1891 as a present from the city of Berlin to the Kaiser. It stands between the Marienkirche and the Rotes Rathaus, Berlin's 5th town hall, built in 1869. This is one of the nicer Neptune statues in Europe, and there are many. Neptune, trident in hand, presides over the square supported by sea-nymphs with webbed feet carrying him on a seashell. Denizens of the deep (a seal, an alligator, snakes and turtles, among others) spray water at him in homage while languishing mer-ladies pour water into the fountain, clutching sea-nets overflowing with marine bounty.

The Rotes Rathaus, which is the town hall, is so called because it is made of red brick, not due to its former political persuasion. There are nice Prussian rooms inside, which are worth a look.

Looking back in time, it becomes easier to appreciate Alexanderplatz's importance to Berlin. Historically the square was called Ochsenplatz or Ochsenmarkt (Ox-Place or Market), and the southern segment known as Paradeplatz. The section nearer the old town wall housed a wool and meat market until the nineteenth century and the southern section was used to exercise horses. The square was renamed in 1805 when Tsar Alexander I came to town to make a mutual-defense pact with Prussian King Friedrich Wilhelm III against Napoleon. Five streets which radiate out from the square like spokes are named after their intended destinations (Schönhauser, Prenzlauer, Greifswalder, Landsberger, and Frankfurter Allees - "allée" is another word contributed to the German language by its seventeenth-century French settlers, meaning boulevard.)

In 1882 Alexanderplatz gained a train station, cementing its importance as a transportation center. Four years later, north of the station, Berlin's first large department store, the Zentral-Markthalle opened. The "Berolina," a 7.5 meter high statue by Emil Hundreiser which symbolized Berlin until it was melted down for its copper during World War II, was installed nearby in 1895, close to the then-central police station. All the hustle and bustle would soon come to an end - luckily, doctor and sometime novelist Alfred Döblin immortalized the square in a memoir titled Berlin Alexanderplatz in 1929 before everything came crashing down. Literally. During World War II almost everything in Alexanderplatz was bombed out, crashed into or otherwise destroyed.

- The **Gemäldegalerie (*Tiergarten*)** (Painting Gallery) Kulturforum, Matthäikirchplatz (Stauffenbergstraße 40), tel 030-2662101, fax 030-2662103, open Tu- Su 10AM-6PM, Th 10AM-10PM *U-Bahn / S-Bahn Potsdamer-Platz*, Bus 129, 341 (Potsdamer Brücke), 148, 348, (Kulturforum), 200 (Philharmonie), 248 (Potsdamer Platz)— The Gemäldegalerie contains an astounding array of paintings, including works by Rembrandt, Rubens, Botticelli, Raphael, Titian, Goya, Velasquez and Watteau. The collection contains works from the old Bodemuseum on Museuminsel in the East, now closed, and the former Gemäldegalerie in Dahlem. Its strong points are German paintings of the 13-16th centuries, Netherlandish painting of the 15th and 16th centuries, Flemish paintings of the 17th century, and miniature paintings of the 16th-19th centuries. In the newer section of the museum, designed by architects Heinz Hilmer and Christoph Sattler, there is enough space to display 1,150 masterpieces in the main gallery and 350 in the studio gallery - of the almost 2,900 pieces in the European painting collections. Established in 1830, the newly built gallery from 1998 is situated at the Kulturforum complex and has about 7,000 sq m of exhibition space (a complete tour of the 72 rooms covers almost 2 km).
- **Kunstgewerbemuseum** (Museum of Decorative Arts), Tiergartenstraße 6 (U-Bahn / S-Bahn Potsdamer-Platz, Bus 129, 341 (Potsdamer Brücke), 148, 348, (Kulturforum), 200 (Philharmonie), 248 (Potsdamer Platz)), +49 (0/20) 266 2902 (kgm@smb.spk-berlin.de, fax: +49 (0/20) 266 2947), Tu-Fri-10AM-6PM, Sa & Sun-11AM -6PM (Closed Monday). The oldest museum of its kind in Germany which, despite great losses during the World War II, still possesses one of the world's primary collections of European applied art. There are two sections to the collection: one located at the Kulturforum in Tiergarten, the other at Köpenick Palace (re-opened 27th May 2004).
- **Nikolaikirche**. Berlin's oldest church (1230) is a 3-nave hall church. It is located in the center of an area destroyed by bombs in the war which was then turned into a faux "old town" by the East German authorities called Nikolaiviertel. The area is more a hodge-podge of relocated buildings than an authentic reproduction, and the newly-built 1988 apartments that attempt to "harmonize" with the older buildings are embarrassing. The church itself is one of the only structures that was renovated rather than rebuilt. It is best known for a sandstone sculpture called the

Spandauer Madonna (1290), but there are other interesting pieces here. When the church was destroyed in 1938 and rebuilt in the 1970s, the communist officials intended to use it as a museum, which did not open until 1987. The museum includes sacred textiles and religious sculpture from the fourteenth to the sixteenth centuries. The Nikolaikirche is the showplace of the Nikolaiviertel, which isn't saying much.

Private art galleries

As Berlin is a city of art, it is quite easy to find an art gallery on your way. They provide a nice opportunity to have a look at modern artists' work in a not so crowded environment for free. Some gallery streets in Mitte with more than about a dozen galleries are Auguststraße, Linienstraße, Torstraße, Brunnenstraße (all north of S-Bahn station Oranienburger Straße) and Zimmerstraße (U-Bahn station Kochstraße).

- **Art Center Berlin Friedrichstraße**, Friedrichstraße 134, Tel. +49 30 27879020 Four floors of exhibitions with a relatively good variety of genres and artists. A very nice oasis of calm from the busy Friedrichstraße.
- **boxoffberlin** (a/k/a **bob**), Zimmerstraße 11, Tel. +49 30 44701555 Exhibitions of Berlin artists. **bob** is also a shop for Berlin-Design-Souvenirs and a Café.
- **Galerie Eigen & Art**, Auguststraße 26, Tel. +49 30 280 6605, One of the most famous German art galleries, home to the Neue Leipziger Schule (Neo Rauch et al.)

Do

- **Love Parade**, when over a million ravers and spectators descend on the area. Trucks laden with sound systems roam up and down the park, gathering at dusk at the Siegesäule for a final free giant concert. This massive techno parade takes place almost every summer. After a two year hiatus it was back on 15 July 2006 but was sold to Essen. The actual parade begins at the Ernst-Reuter-Platz and moves across Strasse des 17. Juni to Brandenburg Gate and then turns back to Siegesäule. Post-parade events wrap up around 11PM.

During summertime you can enjoy an open-air cinema in front of the **Altes Museum**, showing alternative movies (most of them in original language). It's very wise to buy tickets for the "Sommerkino" in the afternoon if you don't want to join a long queue at night with the chance of not getting a ticket.

Theatre

- **Grips Theater** Famous children's theater with a light political touch, European recognition for the musical *Linie 1*.
- **Kabaret Theater Distel** Cabaret and comedy, political satire in German.

- **Maxim Gorki Theater** Sometimes plays the *3 Pennys Opera* by Brecht.

Malls

- **Potsdamer Platz Arkaden** is a medium sized shopping mall with the usual variety of department stores and boutiques.

Flea markets

- **Arkonaplatz**, Prenzlauer Berg/Mitte, Sundays 10AM-5PM.
- **Am Kupfergraben/Museumsinsel**, Saturdays and Sundays 10AM-4PM.

Gifts + Souvenirs

- **boxoffberlin** (a/k/a **bob**), Zimmerstraße 11 (*U Kochstr.*)

Only 100 meters from **Checkpoint Charlie** you will find a small but very interesting place for extraordinary souvenirs and gifts, the **boxoffberlin**. It's a shop, café and gallery in one. The shop offers **unique souvenirs and cool gifts made by local designers** (shirts, bags, comics, music, films, games, post cards, toys, books). The café has coffee specialties based on organically grown and fair traded espresso and an individual selection of soft drinks (e.g. Fritz Kola, Bionade) and beer (e.g. Berliner Weisse, Palast-Bier) and the gallery shows changing exhibitions of contemporary art, films and more from Berlin artists. **Every day of the year** 11AM–8PM

Record shops

- **Rotation**, Weinbergsweg 3 (Mitte) Offers a vast range of techno, house and electronica. Weekly news. Open Mon-Sat noon-8PM.
- **Leila M**, Rosa Luxemburg Str. 30 (Mitte), inside Kino Babylon, A large selection of music on CD & vinyl: romantic songwriters, inspiring pop-music, minimal techno, contemporary electronica and so on. Open Mon-Fri noon-10PM, Sat 1PM-8PM.

Eat

City centre Berlin "Mitte".

Budget

- **Cafe Restaurant Berlin**, Gleimstrasse 24, tel 030-4480792 German & regional cuisine, breakfast buffet Mon-Sa 8AM-12AM, Berlin Brunch Sunday 8AM-2PM.
- **Kasbah**, Gipsstraße 2, tel 030-2759 4361 Moroccan restaurant, cafe and bar.

- **Susuru**, Rosa-Luxemburg Str. 17, tel 030-211 1182 Stylish new Japanese restaurant specializes in *Udon* dishes - Japanese noodles in a tasty soup. Be prepared to get a bit slurpy with your soup - it adds to the flavours!
- **De Nhat**, Auguststrasse (*near Oranienburger Strasse*). The best Vietnamese in town, every meal is 5 euro.

Splurge

- **Brecht Keller**, Chausseestr. 125, tel 030-2823843 Famous basement restaurant in former house of Brecht with Austrian inspired kitchen (receipts from Helene Weigel), reservations essential!
- **Brasserie Ganymed**, Schiffbauerdamm 5, tel 030-28599046. Good French cuisine direct at the terrace of the river and close to the theaters.
- **San Nicci**, Friedrichstr. 101 tel 030 306454980. Excellent Italian restaurant next to train station Friedrichstrasse.
- **Grill Royal**, Friedrichstr. 105b tel 030 288 79 288. Best grill restaurant in town with divine steaks and fresh oysters. Reservation is essential.
- **Kuchi** Gipsstr. tel 3 030 28 38 66. Excellent sushi restaurant with a nice garden right in the centre of Mitte.

Around Gendarmenmarkt

Splurge

- **VAU** A Michelin star restaurant, was awarded 17 points from Gault Millau. Reservations are essential.
- **Aigner** Haute cuisine mixed with influences from Berlin and Vienna (reservations essential).
- **Lutter & Wegner** Berlin cuisine in top style, since 1811. They offer their own sparkling, red and white wine selections.
- **Fischers Fritz**, Charlottenstraße 49, tel. 030-2' 33 63 63. Offers a Japanese breakfast in the Regent hotel.

Drink

- **Haifischbar**, Arndtstr. 25, tel 030-691 13 52 Bar with sushi and excellent cocktail and whiskey selection.
- **Victoria Bar**, Potsdamer Straße 102, tel 030-25 75 99 77 Comfortable bar with a huge variety of cocktails.
- **Newton Bar**, Charlottenstr. 57 (direct at Gendarmenmarkt), tel 030-20 61 29 90. Impressive bar that is the must hang-out place for the beautiful, the famous and the rich. Excellent cigar and whiskey selection.
- **Reingold**, Novalisstrasse 11, tel. 030 217 516 45. Lounge in a former locomotive construction hall (1930s style), mix of after work crowd and normal scene.

Clubs

- **Delicious Doughnuts**, Rosenthaler Strasse 9, 10119 Berlin Mitte, U-bahn Rosenthalerplatz. Very cozy venue (bar-style) with a relaxed atmosphere. Definitely non-pretentious with a diverse and friendly crowd. Remember to ring the door bell and wait for the door to be opened before you walk in. There is usually a small entry fee. Especially great when coming in the early morning hours.
- **Adagio**, Marlene-Dietrich-Platz 1, direct on Potsdamer Platz. A place with chandeliers for the healthy and older (30+) crowd.
- **Felix**, Behrenstraße 72 (backside of Hotel Adlon), Club for the rich and (wannabe) famous. Popular for its Thursday after work party.
- **Cafe Moskau**, Karl-Marx-Allee 34. Every Sunday night there is the GMF, a mainly gay party U-Schillingstraße(U5).
- **Kinzo**. Situated under the TV tower at Alexanderplatz.
- **Sophienclub**, Sophienstr. 6. Tuesdays is Britpop, Disco on Thursdays and Funk & Soul on Saturdays.
- **Fate Club**, Hochstr. 46. Techno, trance and house; houses an after hour (5am) gay and lesbian lounge.
- **H2O-Club**, Dircksenstr./Ecke Karl-Liebknecht-Str. Mainly hiphop with a younger crowd.
- **Grüner und Roter Salon**, Rosa-Luxemburg-Platz 2, right and left at the Volksbühne. On weekends hip hop, electro, 80s and indie with freestyle DJs. Grüner Salon also features Swing/Tango/Salsa Parties.
- **Club der polnischen Versager**, Ackerstraße 170, tel 030-280 937 79. From Polish films to country music, everything to make our neighbors feel like home. Closed right now till the end of the year (2008).
- **CCCP**, Torstrasse 136, tel 0179 69 29 13. Situated in a red, square house on Torstrasse, CCCP is a GDR-inspired club/bar with a nice atmosphere and alternative music.

For more info see: www.wikipedia.org

- Based on work by jan, Jim Nicholson, Mark, Mike, Peter Fitzgerald, Stephan Schmidt and Andrew Haggard, Wikitravel user(s) MarinaK, Emarketingdh and Travelempire, Anonymous user(s) of Wikitravel and others.
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