



BERLIN VISITORS GUIDE

VERSION 1 – MAY 2024

PREPARED BY THE 2024 ISPE ANNUAL MEETING LOCAL HOST COMMITTEE

Frank Andersohn (Chair)
Andrea Margulis
Niklas Schmedt
Kiliana Suzart-Woischnik

Gianmario Candore
Karin Müller
Martin Schulz
Pareen Vora

Antonios Douros
Tania Schink
Montse Soriano Gabarro
Sascha van Boemmel-Wegmann

1 Welcome

WELCOME

Dear friends and colleagues,

Welcome to Berlin, a city where history, culture, and modernity converge.

This guide provides insights into Berlin's diverse neighborhoods, practical navigation tips, and recommendations for art, culture, sports, as well as dining and entertainment options.

INSIDE THIS GUIDE:

- 1 Welcome
- 2 City Structure
- 3 General Tips and Information
- 4 Estrel Hotel in Berlin Neukölln and the Surrounding Area
- 5 Local transport in Berlin
- 6 Touristic recommendations
- 7 Restaurants + Bars

SHORT BERLIN HISTORY

Before 1989

Berlin has a rich history dating back to the 13th century. It served as the capital of the Kingdom of Prussia, the German Empire, the Weimar Republic, the Third Reich of National Socialism, and the German Democratic Republic. The city was heavily bombed during World War II and was subsequently divided into East Berlin, controlled by the Soviet Union, and West Berlin, controlled by the Western Allies. This division culminated in the construction of the Berlin Wall in 1961, separating the city for nearly three decades.

After 1989

The fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 marked the reunification of East and West Berlin, leading to the reunification of Germany. Since then, Berlin has undergone significant transformation, becoming the capital of a unified Germany. The city has experienced rapid development, with many historical landmarks being restored and new structures being built. Berlin has also become a cultural and artistic hub, known for its vibrant nightlife, diverse population, and innovative architecture.

Berlin's city structure is defined by its diverse and distinct neighborhoods, each offering a unique atmosphere and cultural experience. Even though the differences between the former districts of East Berlin and West Berlin have weakened during the last two decades, you will find residuals of the city history in several neighborhoods. For instance, there is no single “city center” in Berlin – both parts of Berlin had their own “centers”. For East Berlin, this was the area surrounding the Alexanderplatz, while for West Berlin it was the area near to Kurfürstendamm (People from Berlin often call it “Ku’damm”). After reunification, the areas around Potsdamer Platz and the Brandenburg Gate – previously dominated by the Berlin Wall – became new “centers” as well. Some of the most favorite and well-known Berlin districts are:

1. **Mitte:** Located in the heart of Berlin, Mitte is a bustling district characterized by historical landmarks such as the Brandenburg Gate and Museum Island. It blends centuries-old architecture with modern art galleries and trendy boutiques.
2. **Kreuzberg:** Known for its vibrant street art, multicultural community, and lively nightlife, Kreuzberg exudes a bohemian charm. The area is home to a diverse array of restaurants, cafes, and bars, making it a hub for creativity and alternative culture.
3. **Charlottenburg:** This elegant neighborhood is marked by its grand avenues, opulent palaces, and upscale boutiques. Charlottenburg offers a glimpse into Berlin's royal past and is a haven for luxury shopping and fine dining.
4. **Prenzlauer Berg:** Once a hub for artists and activists, Prenzlauer Berg has evolved into a family-friendly area with leafy streets, cozy cafes, and a thriving artisanal scene. Its renovated pre-war buildings and relaxed vibe make it a popular residential district.
5. **Friedrichshain:** With its industrial heritage and vibrant energy, Friedrichshain is a magnet for young creatives and urban adventurers. The neighborhood boasts an eclectic mix of underground clubs, vintage markets, and green spaces, reflecting its dynamic and alternative spirit.
6. **Neukölln:** Embracing cultural diversity, Neukölln is a melting pot of international cuisines, independent shops, and community initiatives. Its lively street life and community-driven projects contribute to its reputation as a vibrant and evolving neighborhood.

3 General Tips and Information

You can find a lot of tips and information on the official Berlin Visitors website:

<https://www.visitberlin.de/en>

We have nevertheless included you here some information that we considered as being of particular relevance / interest:

- In general, Berlin is a safe city also during the evening and the night hours. Some public parks should be avoided at night due to drug trafficking (e.g. "Görlitzer Park").
- Drinking alcohol in the public (e.g., on streets or in public parks) is allowed in Germany (with the exception of public transport vehicles).
- Smoking inside buildings (restaurants, bars) is usually prohibited, unless it is clearly specified that smoking is allowed, usually in separate rooms. In the so called ""Raucherkeipen"" (bars for smokers) smoking is allowed in the whole bar.
- One can reach all places of interest easily via public transport – please see special section on public transport for details.
- Prices listed in menus or shop windows include taxes. Standard tip in restaurants, bars, taxi etc: approx. 5% to 10%

4 Estrel Hotel in Berlin Neukölln and the Surrounding Area



Next public train station to the Estrel hotel is "S-Bahn" station Sonnenallee, approx. 6 mins walking distance. While the area directly surrounding the hotel might appear a bit "industrial", the dynamic neighborhood of Neukölln west of the S-Bahn station Sonnenallee offers a gateway to a culturally diverse and lively district. Neukölln is celebrated for its multicultural ambiance, with a blend of

international influences reflected in its culinary offerings, vibrant nightlife, and community events. The area is renowned for its array of international cuisine, from traditional Middle Eastern eateries to trendy fusion restaurants, catering to a wide range of tastes. The Richardplatz represents the historical center of Neukölln (sometimes also called “Rixdorf”) and is approx. 10 mins walking distance from S-Bahn station Sonnenallee. Some restaurant recommendations are included below. If you want to enjoy a cocktail, try the bar “Torte” (directly in front of entry to S-Bahn station Sonnenallee). A small Pizzeria (“Das Pi”) is located also in front of S-Bahn station Sonnenallee.

Neukölln is also a hub for artistic expression, with numerous galleries, street art, and creative spaces that showcase the neighborhood's avant-garde spirit. Visitors can explore a variety of music venues, from intimate jazz clubs to larger concert halls, providing a rich tapestry of entertainment options. Additionally, the neighborhood features a mix of parks and green spaces, offering opportunities for leisurely strolls and relaxation.

The hotel's location in Neukölln provides guests with a glimpse into the authentic, everyday life of Berliners, as well as easy access to the city's public transportation network, making it convenient to explore other areas of Berlin. Whether it's savoring diverse cuisines, immersing in artistic expression, or simply enjoying the local atmosphere, Neukölln offers a rich and multifaceted experience for visitors.

5 Local transport in Berlin

General

This guide nicely explains how to use trains, trams, and buses in Berlin:

<https://allaboutberlin.com/guides/public-transit>

Tickets can be bought at machines in the basement of the airport, train stations and S-Bahn platforms, and on buses and trams (slightly more expensive on buses and trams). Tickets must be validated in validating machines in buses, trams and stations.

The fine for not having Ticket BVG when requested is 60EUR.

Alternatively, you might also use an app (available for Android or iOS) to purchase your tickets (see again the link above for some recommendations). If you decide to use the **BVG Jelbi: Mobility in Berlin** app, which also can be used to rent cars, bicycles, scooters and mopeds. The **BVG Fahrinfo: Routes and Tickets** app helps you to choose the easiest route and timetable to your destination.

Airport to hotel

Using public transport from the airport to the hotel takes about 35 minutes and costs 4.40€ (single ride ‘ABC Ticket’; the airport is in zone C). From the airport, board the regional trains to ‘Ostkreuz’ station (the following trains may be used: FEX, RE7, RB14, RB22). Upon arrival at Ostkreuz, transfer to the S-Bahn

S41 and get off at 'Sonnenallee' station. The Estrel Hotel is conveniently located just a 6-minute walk from the 'Sonnenallee' S-Bahn station.

The Estrel recommends another path from BER to the hotel: AIR TRAVEL PASSENGERS From Berlin-Brandenburg Airport BER Terminal 1–2 S-Bahn S45 (direction Südkreuz) to station "Köllnische Heide" and then bus M41 (direction "S+U Hauptbahnhof") to "Ziegrastraße" (Estrel).

Central station to hotel

There is a direct connection with bus M41 from the central station to the hotel. Get off at 'Sonnenallee/Baumschulenstr.' Bus station and walk 100m to the hotel. Alternatively, take S-Bahn S3, S5 or S7 to 'Ostkreuz' station. From Ostkreuz board S-Bahn S41 and get off at 'Sonnenallee' station. The Estrel Hotel is located a 6-minute walk from 'Sonnenallee' S-Bahn station.

Public transport in the city

Single ride tickets within the city (sectors 'AB', excluding the airport station) are 3,50€. There are cheaper options available such as the '4-Fahrten-Karte AB', i.e. 4-rides, for 10,80€ (AB tickets are not valid to get to or from the airport). Paper tickets must be validated in validating machines in buses, trams and stations (please see <https://allaboutberlin.com/guides/public-transit> for more information).

6

Touristic recommendations from the local host committee



Schiffsrundfahrt an der Museumsinsel © visitBerlin , photo: Günter Steffen

Top 10 Attractions

<https://www.visitberlin.de/en/berlins-top-10-attractions>

<https://www.berlin.de/en/attractions-and-sights/top-10/>



Highly desired are visits/tours to the Reichstagsgebäude & glass dome (Kuppel) – but early/prior application/registration with name and date of birth (ID) is needed! Several variants of this visit are offered: dome only (might be booked at short notice in an office only steps away from the building entrance), guided tour to Reichstagsgebäude and dome (online reservation ahead of time needed)

Museums/Art

Museum Island in Berlin is a UNESCO World Heritage site and home to five world-renowned museums, including the Pergamon Museum (currently closed for construction work) and the Neues Museum. Situated on the Spree River, this cultural treasure trove offers an unparalleled collection of art, artifacts, and historical objects, spanning various civilizations and time periods. The island's architecture and exhibitions provide visitors with an immersive journey through human history and artistic achievement. <https://www.smb.museum/en/museums-institutions/museumsinsel-berlin/plan-your-visit/information-for-your-visit/>

Humboldt Forum <https://www.humboldtforum.org/de/>

Neue National Galerie <https://www.smb.museum/museen-einrichtungen/neue-nationalgalerie/home/>

Museum Gropius Bau <https://www.berlinerfestspiele.de/gropius-bau>

Museum für Naturkunde (Natural Sciences Museum) <https://www.museumfuernaturkunde.berlin/en>

Jüdisches Museum Berlin (Jewish Museum Berlin): <https://www.jmberlin.de/en>

Deutsches Technik Museum (German Museum of Technology) <https://technikmuseum.berlin/en/>

Visit East Side Gallery, the longest open-air gallery in the world and the Wall Museum

<https://www.visitberlin.de/en/east-side-gallery>

<https://thewallmuseum.com/en/>

Berliner Kunstmarkt an der Museumsinsel (Saturday and Sunday 11-17 h)

<https://kunstmarkt-berlin.com/>

KW Institute for Contemporary Art

Auguststraße 69, 10117 Berlin

Tel. +49 30 243459-69

info@kw-berlin.de

<https://www.kw-berlin.de/en/>

Berlin Museum of Medical History



Wonderful collection of gallstones in all shapes and colors (visible without a ticket), delivery training models, glass models of eye diseases, and old medical tools in the Charité Mitte campus. Also of interest are the campus itself and the former lecture hall in ruins, which is currently used for lectures, including lectures from visitors from abroad; <https://bmm-charite.de/en/museum>

Stasi Museum in the former headquarters of the German Democratic Republic Ministry for State Security, <https://www.stasimuseum.de/en/enindex.htm>

Disgusting Food Museum: exhibition on out-of-the-ordinary foods from around the world; the entrance fee includes a tasting; <https://disgustingfoodmuseum.berlin/en/>

City Tours

<https://www.visitberlin.de/en/sightseeing-tours-berlin>

Live music (classical)

Berliner Philharmoniker <https://www.berliner-philharmoniker.de/en/>

Konzerthaus Berlin <https://www.konzerthaus.de/en/>

Running

Tempelhofer Feld (old airport)

Have you ever run on a former airport runway? Visit Tempelhofer Feld and enter at Oderstraße/Crashgate for a unique experience of running along the runways. From the Estrel Hotel, you can take the S-Bahn S42 from Sonnenallee for 2 stops and disembark at Hermannstraße, which is about 1km/10 min from the Oderstraße/Crashgate entrance.

Treptower Park

For those who prefer running in natural surroundings, i.e. a park and along the river, a visit to Treptower Park may be ideal. You can take the S-Bahn S41 from Sonnenallee to Treptower Park station (1 stop) to enjoy the pleasant scenery while running.

Sports - Work out locations

Adidas Playground / Böcklerpark Prinzenstraße 1, Kreuzberg

Adidas Playground / Volkspark Friedrichshain Margarete-Sommer-Straße/Danziger Straße, Friedrichshain

Adidas Playground / Treptower Park Insel der Jugend, Treptow

Adidas Playground / Friedrich Ludwig Jahn Sportpark Cantianstraße 24, Prenzlauer Berg

Adidas Playground / Volkspark Wilmersdorf Straße am Schoelerpark, Wilmersdorf

Adidas Playground / Weissensee Große Seestraße 13, Weissensee

Adidas Playground / Volkspark Wuhlheide Kastanienallee, Oberschöneweide

Sportpark Hasenheide Hasenheide, Neukölln

Freeletics Training Ground Monbijoupark, Mitte

Calisthenics-Park Müllerstraße 162, Wedding

Freizeitforum Marzahn Marzahner Promenade 45, Marzahn

Street Workout Rummelsburger Bucht Fischzug 22, Lichtenberg

Visit a Kleingarten



What are they? <https://www.dw.com/en/a-brief-guide-to-german-garden-colonies/a-39133787>

Map (official): [https://fbinter.stadt-](https://fbinter.stadt-berlin.de/fb/index.jsp?loginkey=zoomStart&mapId=kleing@senstadt&bbox=385739,5811114,394527,5816002)

[berlin.de/fb/index.jsp?loginkey=zoomStart&mapId=kleing@senstadt&bbox=385739,5811114,394527,5816002](https://fbinter.stadt-berlin.de/fb/index.jsp?loginkey=zoomStart&mapId=kleing@senstadt&bbox=385739,5811114,394527,5816002)

Kleingärten in the vicinity (Google maps): <https://maps.app.goo.gl/XwFgvpK9BcqfPkN2A> ,
<https://maps.app.goo.gl/1YMAER3gdf2YDH5F6>

Ideas for day trips

Potsdam / Sanssouci Palace: <https://www.berlin.de/en/attractions-and-sights/3561636-3104052-sanssouci.en.html>

Just outside Berlin you will find the city of Potsdam, capital of Brandenburg and part of the Berlin/Brandenburg Metropolitan Region.

Potsdam sits on the river Havel and offers a unique combination of history, art, nature also as the home of the “Age of Enlightenment”, the intellectual and philosophical movement in Europe (17th and the 18th centuries) that centered on the value of knowledge.

The city, which is over 1,000 years old, is a UNESCO World Heritage Site since 1990 and is one of the most-visited cities in Germany. Potsdam is known for its palaces (such as Sanssouci Palace, [Cecilienhof Palace](#), and [Charlottenhof Palace](#)), lakes, historical and cultural significance. Potsdam was also the location of the significant [Potsdam Conference](#) in 1945, the conference where the three heads of government of the USSR, the US, and the UK decided on the division of Germany following its surrender, a conference which defined Germany's history for the following 45 years.

Potsdam developed into a center of science in Germany in the 19th century. Today, there are three public colleges, the [University of Potsdam](#), and more than 30 [research institutes](#) in the city.

Wannsee: <https://www.visitberlin.de/en/wannsee>

Wannsee is a locality in the southwestern [Berlin borough](#) of [Steglitz-Zehlendorf](#). In the quarter there are two lakes, the larger [Großer Wannsee](#) (Greater Wannsee, "See" means lake) and the [Kleiner Wannsee](#) (Little Wannsee), located on the River [Havel](#). At the western rim of the Wannsee locality the famous [Glienicke Bridge](#) connects it with the city of [Potsdam](#). The late [neoclassical Glienicke Palace](#) as well as the [Pfaueninsel](#) are nearby. Since 1990 these palaces and parks also form part of the [Palaces and Parks of Potsdam and Berlin](#) UNESCO [World Heritage Site](#).

7

Restaurants + Bars

Restaurants (a selection of ideas from committee members 😊)

Note: Prices listed in menus include taxes. Standard tip: round up or 5%-10% (source: [link](#))

Mitte

- The Grand Berlin: Fine dining in hotel restaurant, upper price range <https://www.the-grand-berlin.com/>
- Zollpackhof: informal German food in the beer garden (no reservation needed); expanded menu and more formal sitting inside (reservation recommended) <https://zollpackhof.de/landingpage.html>
- Kaefer: Fine dining in the Reichstag building terrace (reservation needed) <https://www.feinkost-kaefer.de/berlin>
- Calvin Berlin Rosenhöfe, Rosenthaler Straße 36, 10178 Berlin, berlin@capvin.de, 030 29360014: nice pizza in a wonderful location in Hackescher Markt, <https://www.capvin.de/> (may not be able to accomodate large groups)
- Standard Serious Pizza: nice pizza, <https://www.standard-berlin.de/>
- Very nice restaurant and atmosphere with modern cuisine in Mitte, Torstr., <https://www.gaertnerei-berlin.com/>
- Crackers, Friedrichstrasse 158/Unter den Linden, 10117 Berlin-Mitte, delicious high quality menu, <https://crackersberlin.com/> (for the evening)
- Blockhouse, Friedrichstraße 100, 10117 Berlin, divers menu, mid to upper price range, <https://www.block-house.de/>
- Ständige Vertretung, Schiffbauerdamm 8, 10117 Berlin, german food and beer garden along the river Spree, mid price range, <https://www.staev.de/>
- Gendarmerie Berlin, Behrenstraße 42, 10117 Berlin, french food, upper price range, <https://www.gendarmerie-berlin.de/>
- Dieselhaus, Forum an der Museumsinsel 10, 10117 Berlin-Mitte. Traditional German food and Bavarian beer in a smart, industrial-like location. Mid price range. <https://dieselhaus-berlin.de/>
- PeterPaul, Torstraße 99, 10119 Berlin. Sophisticated versions of German dishes (eg, sauerkraut foam) in a classy atmosphere, <https://peterpaul.berlin/en/startseite-english/>

Prenzlauer Berg / Pankow

- Prater Biergarten: very informal beer garden in Prenzlauer Berg (no reservation needed) <https://www.prater-biergarten.de/en/>
- Zur Haxe: rather small restaurant with affordable and tasty German cuisine with somewhat kitsch deco <https://zurhaxe-berlin.de/>

- Anna Blume: beautiful place for simple meals or coffee and cake in the heart of Prenzlauer Berg, <https://cafe-anna-blume.de/>
- Standard Serious Pizza: nice pizza, <https://www.standard-berlin.de/>
- 60 Seconds to Napoli: nice pizza, informal atmosphere, <https://60secondstonapoli.de/berlin/>
- Rotisserie Weingrün, Gertraudenstraße 10-12, 10178 Berlin, german food, upper price range, <https://www.rotisserie-weingruen.de/>
- Schankhalle Pfefferberg Braugasthaus: Modern German Food; mid price range. <https://schankhalle-pfefferberg.de/braugasthaus/>

Friedrichshain

- Volkskammer: affordable East Germany restaurant with nice deco <https://www.volkskammer.de/>
- Standard Serious Pizza: nice pizza, <https://www.standard-berlin.de/>
- Excellent Italian restaurant close to U-Bahn stop 'Strausberger Platz, outside seating possible': <https://www.amano-ristorante.de/>
- Restaurant with Berlin flair located at a very hip location (Holzmarkt) and excellent food: <https://www.fame.kitchen/>

Kreuzberg

- Restaurant with Berlin flair located at the river with outside seating and modern cuisine: <https://www.freischwimmer-berlin.com/>
- Kalle Klein, Restaurant/Café, Harzer Str. 119, 12435 Berlin, bourgeois cuisine, mid to upper price range, <https://www.kalle-klein.de/speisen.html>
- SAGE Berlin Restaurant with outdoor area, Köpenicker Str. 18-20, 10997 Berlin, mixed international food + steaks, mid price range, <https://sageberlin.com/>
- ORA Weinbar-Restaurant, Oranienplatz 14, 10999 Berlin, mixed international food, mid price range, <https://ora.berlin/about/>
- Kreuzberger Weltlaterne. A cozy, family-run Greek restaurant. They have tables both inside and outside. It's usually busy, so booking is essential: [Kreuzberger Weltlaterne] (<https://www.kreuzberger-weltlaterne.com>).
- Fahimi is a cocktail bar with a somewhat hidden entrance, typical of Berlin with its graffiti-covered walls. The bar is on the first floor, and you wouldn't expect such a nice cocktail bar behind those walls: [Fahimi Bar] (https://fahimibar-de.translate.google/?x_tr_sl=de&x_tr_tl=es&x_tr_hl=es&x_tr_pto=sc).
- Monarch is located next to Fahimi. It's a nice, relaxed bar where you can enjoy a beer and listen to some music..[Monarch](<https://www.kottimonarch.de/>)
- Südblock is a socially engaged, arty bar with outdoor seating, located in the middle of Kotti. Tables can be reserved for groups: [Südblock](https://www.suedblock.org/wp/?doing_wp_cron=1716485525.2089240550994873046875).

Charlottenburg/Wilmersdorf

- Don Camillo Schloßstrasse 7/8 14059 Berlin Charlottenburg <https://www.don-camillo-berlin.de/>. Excellent Italian food, mid to upper price range

- Taverna Athos, Bundesplatz 2, 10715 Berlin, authentic greek food, mid price range, <https://taverna-athos-berlin.de/>

Neukölln

- Trattoria LA TERRAZZA, Steinbockstraße 20, 12057 Berlin, Italian cuisine, mid to upper price range, <http://www.la-terrazza-berlin.de/>
- Hallmann und Klee, Böhmische Str. 13, 12055 Berlin, gourmet, high priced, <https://www.hallmann-kee.de/>
- Estrel Berlin, Sonnenallee 225, 12057 Berlin, <https://www.estrel.com/de/hotel/restaurants-und-bars>. Grill: steaks + burger, mid to upper price range, https://www.estrel.com/files/downloads/hotel/restaurants_bars/estrel_speisekarte_grill_2024.pdf
- Estrel Biergarten Waterfront: different snacks, lower price range, https://www.estrel.com/files/downloads/hotel/restaurants_bars/Waterfront%20Eurof.%202022%20Food.pdf

Bars & Music Clubs

Near Estrel

- Torte (Cocktail bar). Brusendorfer Str. 12, 12055 Berlin (across the street of S-Sonnenallee entry)
- Loreley Bar (Cocktail bar). Saalestraße 38, 12055 Berlin (across the street of S-Sonnenallee entry)

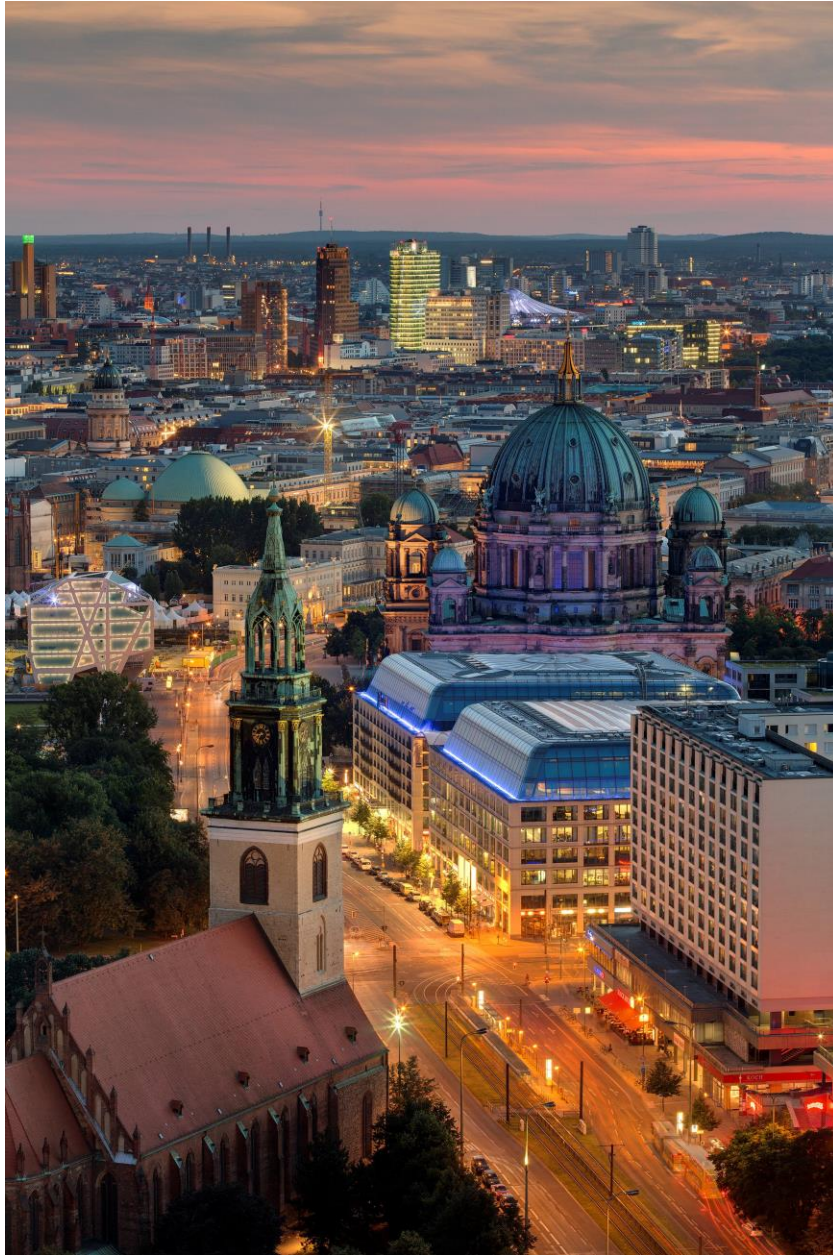
Beer gardens and more:

- Germany is well-known for its beer culture. See here for a list of Berlin breweries and beer gardens: <https://www.visitberlin.de/en/german-beer-culture>

Berlin nightlife:

Learn from the guide linked below as to why Berlin is a city where nightlife is recognized as a culture and partying as a lifestyle: <https://housinganywhere.com/Berlin--Germany/guide-to-berlin-nightlife>

- Green areas and lakes in Berlin:
someone would enjoy a short trip to one of the lakes: [Top 11 Lakes for Swimming in Berlin] (<https://www.visitberlin.de/en/blog/top-11-lakes-swimming-berlin>).



Blick auf die Berliner Innenstadt, im Vordergrund die Marienkirche © visitBerlin, photo: Wolfgang Scholvien