

Ido Oren

SPRING BREAK 2006
BERLIN STUDY TOUR—ITINERARY

SUNDAY, 12 March 2006

4:30 PM Meet in the Transit Loft Hotel's reception area. We'll go on a **sightseeing orientation tour**, taking city bus 200 to Zoo Station, in the center of Berlin's Western sector. From there, it's a short walk to the Kaiser Wilhelm Memorial Church—built in 1895 and damaged in 1943 by allied bombs. If we have energy left, we'll take a stroll along the fashionable Ku'damm, West Berlin's famous commercial drag. Hungry? We could stop for authentic Italian pizza at *Piccola Taormina*, Uhlandstrasse 29. Then, we'll ride bus 100 back to the hotel. From the upper deck of buses 100 and 200, we'll see some of Berlin's landmarks—the Reichstag, Brandenburg Gate, the Prussian victory column, Potsdamer Platz, Alexanderplatz, and more.

MONDAY, 13 March 2006

8:45 AM Departure from the hotel (meet in the reception area). We'll take tram M4 to the last stop, *Hackescher Markt*. We'll meet Ida, our tour guide, outside the Häagen-Dazs café opposite Hackescher Markt S-bahn station.

9:30 AM **“Discover Berlin” guided walking tour.** The duration of the tour will be 3.5–4 hours; wear comfortable shoes and don warm cloths. Highlights include the Berlin Wall, site of Hitler's bunker, site of the Kaiser's palace, Museum Island, the Brandenburg Gate, and much more. The endpoint of the tour is the former Checkpoint Charlie.

~ 1:30 PM **Coffee time at Balzac Coffee shop**, located at Friedrichstrasse 207/208, across the street from the Checkpoint Charlie Museum. A short cappuccino will set you back 2.20 euros or so.

~2:30 PM **Haus am Checkpoint Charlie Museum.** The exhibit documents the history of Berlin during the Cold War, including the construction of the Wall, methods of escape from the East to West, and reunification. Wander on your own—everything is marked in English.

Evening (time TBA) **Optional.** Walk to **Prater**, Berlin's oldest beer garden (they serve food, too). It's a 25–30 minute walk across Prenzlauer Berg—a neighborhood that, according to the *Lonely Planet* guide, “in recent years, evolved from a working-class backwater to one of the hippest and prettiest of Berlin's neighborhoods.”

TUESDAY, 14 March 2006

- 8:45 AM Departure from the hotel. We'll take bus 200 to the *Lustgarten* (on Unter den Linden). From there, it's a short walk to the **German Federal Foreign Office** (Auswärtiges Amt), Werderscher Markt 1. *Bring your passport—you will not be allowed into the Foreign Office or the Bundestag without it.*
- 9:30 AM Mr. Heinz-Peter Behr will show us around the crisis management center of the **Foreign Office**. He will explain what the center does for German citizens facing difficult situations abroad.
- ~10:45 AM Walk back to Unter den Linden and hop on bus 100. It's a short trip to the Reichstag.
- 11:15 AM Report to the left entrance of the west portal of the **Reichstag Building**, Platz der Republik 1.
- 12:00 PM We'll attend a 45 minute talk (in English) at the visitors' gallery of the plenary chamber of the **German Bundestag** (Parliament).
- ~1:00 PM We'll take the elevator to the famous **Dome atop the Reichstag Building**. Explore it at your own pace.
- Afternoon **Free time**. You may want to get some rest—we have a long night ahead!
- 6:30 PM Departure from the hotel. We'll ride bus 200 to Philharmonie.
- 8:00 PM An evening at the **Philharmonie** concert hall. The *Bamberger Symphony*, with pianist Gerhard Oppitz, will perform the following program: (1) Leoš Janáček, Suite from the Opera *From the House of the Dead*; (2) Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, Piano Concerto No. 24 in C Minor; (3) Antonin Dvořák, Symphony No. 8 in G Major. Jonathan Nott, the *Bamberger's* musical director, will be the conductor.
- ~10:30 PM After the concert, we'll take bus 200 to Zoo Station, then walk 10–15 minutes along Kantstrasse to the corner of Wielandstrasse (if the concert ends late, we may make the trip by taxi).
- 11:00 PM A **group dinner** at *El-Borriquito* (Wielandstrasse 6; Tel. 312 99 29), a Spanish restaurant that often features live guitar music. After dinner, plan to share a taxi to return to the hotel (or, if you stick around until the restaurant's 5:00 AM closing, you can hop on the day's first bus ☺). Note: this meal is included in the cost of the trip.

WEDNESDAY, 15 March 2006

- 10:15 AM Departure from the hotel. We'll take tram M4 to the Greifswalder Strasse S-Bahn station, then board either the S8 (direction: Zeuthen) or S41 train, whichever comes first, and get off at the third stop: *Frankfurter Allee*. From there, it's a 10 minute walk east on Frankfurter Allee to the entrance of the Stasi Museum at Ruschestraße 103.
- 11:00–12:45 A tour of the **Stasi Museum** (Gedenkstätte Normannenstraße), guided (in English) by Steffen Leide. The building used to house the headquarters of East Germany's notorious Ministry of State Security (Stasi). We'll see the office of Erich Mielke, who headed the Stasi from 1957 to 1989, and learn about the repressive methods employed by the organization.
- ~1:00–2:00 From the Stasi Museum, we'll walk back toward the Frankfurter Allee S-Bahn station. We'll take a lunch break at the indoor mall adjoining the station. After lunch, we'll hop again on either the S8 (direction: Zeuthen) or S41 train, whichever comes first. It's a short ride (two stops) to *Treptower Park*.
- ~2:30–4:00 From the Treptower Park S-Bahn station, we'll walk 10–15 minutes through the park to the monumental **Soviet Victory Memorial** (Sowjetisches Ehrenmal), erected in 1949 to commemorate the Soviet victory over Nazi Germany. The centerpiece of the memorial is a mausoleum topped by a 40 ft. high statue of a Russian soldier clutching a child while smashing a swastika. Some 5000 Red Army soldiers who died in the battle for Berlin lie buried beneath the memorial.
- Evening You're on your own. Jodi and I will be happy to offer suggestions or recommendations.

THURSDAY, 16 March 2006

- 9:15 AM Departure from the hotel. We'll either ride the 200 bus or walk to Senefelderplatz and take the U2 train (direction: Ruhleben) to Potsdamer Platz. We'll walk to Niederkirchner Straße 8, west of Checkpoint Charlie.
- ~10:00–11:00 A visit to the **Topography of Terror** exhibit, located on the site of the Gestapo's headquarters. You will learn about the history, organization, and central figures of the Nazi security services. Borrow a free audio-guide (in English) and tour the exhibit at your own pace (Note 1: you will need to deposit your passport to borrow the audio-guide; note 2: the exhibit is outdoors—dress warmly). When finished, return your audio-guide and wait for the rest of the group in the exhibit's office.
- ~11:00 AM From the Topography of Terror, we'll walk (through Potsdamer Platz) to the German Resistance Memorial. If time permits, we'll take a quick coffee break.

THURSDAY, 16 March 2006 (Continued)

- 12:00–2:00 A guided tour (in English) of the **German Resistance Memorial** (Gedenkstätte Deutscher Widerstand), located in the Bendlerblock Building, Stauffenbergstrasse 13–14.
- Afternoon You're **free** to explore Berlin on your own. If you'd like to visit a museum, Jodi and I will be happy to help you pick one of the city's numerous outstanding museums (fine arts, antiquities, musical instruments, architecture and more). Many museums are open late on Thursdays and admission is free during the four hours before closing.
- 10:00 PM **Optional: Quasimodo** Jazz Club, located at Kantstrasse 12a, near Zoo Station. Program: Fanny Krug & Band. Cover charge: 18 euros. Krug is a local singer whose repertoire appears to consist of jazz standards in the style of, say, Diana Kraal.

FRIDAY, 17 March 2006

- 7:45 AM Departure from the hotel. We'll take tram M4 to the last stop, Hackescher Markt. There, we'll board either the S9 (direction: Grunewald) or the S7 (direction: Wannsee) train, whichever comes first. After a 20–25 minute ride, we'll get off the train in *Grunewald*.
- ~8:45–9:30 Visiting the **memorial to the deportation of Berlin's Jews** (track 17) at the **Grunewald** train station. From here, the Nazis deported tens of thousands of Jews to concentration and death camps beginning in October 1941.
- ~9:30 AM We'll take train S7 to *Wannsee* (approx. 10 minutes). From the Wannsee station, it's a six minute trip on bus 114 to the *Haus der Wannsee-Konferenz*.
- 10:00-12:00 A guided tour (in English) of the **House of the Wannsee Conference**. On January 20, 1942, Reinhard Heydrich, Head of the Reich Security Main Office, chaired a meeting of fourteen high-ranking civil servants and SS-officers in this mansion. The protocol of the meeting, recorded by Adolf Eichmann, detailed the plan for implementing the "final solution" of the Jewish question. The House now serves as a museum documenting the history of the Nazi persecution and genocide of the Jews from 1933 to 1945, including the story of the Wannsee Conference.

FRIDAY, 17 March 2006 (Continued)

- ~12:00 PM We'll take bus 114 back to the Wannsee train station. There are several food vendors outside the station, including a good döner kebab shop. After a brief lunch break, we'll board the S1 train for a short ride to the last stop: *Potsdam Hauptbahnhof* (central train station).
- ~1:30–5:00 UF alum Michael Agner—who has been living in Berlin in recent years and has studied at the University of **Potsdam**—will show us around this historic town. Potsdam, the former seat of the Prussian monarchy, has many magnificent palaces and gardens. We will visit either the famous **Schloss Sanssouci** (built in 1747 by Friedrich the Great) or the **Neues Palais** (New Palace, built in 1769), or, if time permits, both.
- ~ 5:00 PM We'll end our tour in the **Dutch Quarter**, built in the 1730s for Dutch workers who came to Potsdam at the invitation of King Friedrich Wilhelm I. The area's homes have been restored and they now house galleries, cafés, and restaurants. We'll relax in one of the cafés and perhaps decide to linger over dinner—we'll play it by ear.

SATURDAY, 18 March 2006

Goodbye Berlin, *Auf Wiedersehen!*

Have a safe trip home!