



Music in Berlin at New Year

Art, architecture & music in the German capital

28 December 2023–3 January 2024

(MJ 155)

7 days • Prices from £4,250

(including tickets to 4 performances)

Lecturer: Tom Abbott

Four performances to be confirmed in late spring.

Numerous excellent collections of fine and decorative arts and first-rate architecture.

Day excursions to Charlottenburg and Potsdam.

Elegant 5-star hotel close to Unter den Linden.

Berlin possesses some of the finest art galleries and museums in the world and offers the highest standards of music and opera performance. It is endowed with a range of historic architecture and is also the site of Europe's greatest concentration of first-rate contemporary architecture.

Once again a national capital, it is also one of the most exciting cities on the Continent, recent and rapid changes pushing through a transformation without peacetime parallel.

One of the grandest capitals in Europe for the first forty years of the last century, it then suffered appallingly from aerial bombardment and Soviet artillery. For the next forty years it was cruelly divided into two parts and became the focus of Cold War antagonism, a bizarre confrontation between an enclave of western libertarianism and hard-line Communism.

Since the Wall was breached in 1989 the city has been transformed beyond recognition. From being a largely charmless urban expanse still bearing the scars of war, it has become a vibrant, liveable city, the very model of a modern major metropolis. The two halves have been knitted together and cleaning and repair have revealed the patrimony of historic architecture to be among the finest in Central Europe.

The art collections, formerly split, dispersed and often housed in temporary premises, are now coming together in magnificently restored or newly-built galleries. Berlin possesses international art and antiquities of the highest importance, as well as incomparable collections of German art. The number and variety of museums and the quality of their holdings make Berlin among the world's most desired destinations for art lovers.

With three major opera houses and



Berlin, Staatsoper, copper engraving c. 1750.

several orchestras, Berlin is a city where truly outstanding performances can be virtually guaranteed.

Itinerary

Because this itinerary is dependent on the music programme, the order and even the content of the tour may vary.

Day 1. Fly at midday from London Heathrow to Berlin (British Airways). Take an orientation tour by coach: Reichstag, Brandenburg Gate, Pariser Platz and Unter den Linden. Visit the Kaiser Wilhelm Memorial Church.

Day 2. A morning walk passes some fine 18th-century buildings including the arsenal, opera house, royal palaces and cathedrals, en route to the 'Museums Island', a group of major museum buildings. Visit the Alte Nationalgalerie which superbly displays European painting of the 19th century including the finest collection of German Romantics. After lunch visit the Bode Museum, home to a splendid, comprehensive collection of European sculpture, including works by Riemenschneider, as well as Byzantine art.

Day 3. Drive to Schloss Charlottenburg, the earliest major building in Berlin, an outstanding summer palace built with a Baroque core and Rococo wings, fine interiors,

paintings by Watteau, extensive gardens, pavilions and a mausoleum.

Day 4, New Year's Eve. Excursion to Potsdam which in the 18th century developed into Brandenburg-Prussia's second capital and acquired fine buildings, parks and gardens. Sanssouci, created as a retreat from the affairs of state by Frederick the Great, is among the finest 18th-century complexes of gardens, palaces and pavilions to be found anywhere. Visit his single-storey palace atop terraces of fruit trees, the Chinese Tea House and the orangery, and see the city centre with its Dutch Quarter and Neo-Classical buildings. Return to Berlin where there is some free time.

Day 5, New Year's Day. Visit the Jewish Museum in the celebrated and expressive building by Daniel Libeskind.

Day 6. Return to Museums Island to visit the Neues Museum, the stunning new home to the Egyptian Museum (among others), restored and recreated by British architect David Chipperfield. Visit also the Pergamon Museum which houses one of the world's finest collections of Near Eastern antiquities.

Day 7. Visit the Gemäldegalerie, one of Europe's major collections of Old Masters. Potsdamer Platz, for 50 years an even greater expanse of wasteland, became in the 1990s Europe's greatest building project with an array

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continued

of international architects participating. Lunch in the rooftop restaurant in the Reichstag, with the opportunity (without queuing) to walk around Foster's dome. Fly from Berlin Brandenburg, arriving at London Heathrow in the late afternoon.

Lecturer

Tom Abbott. Specialist in architectural history from the Baroque to the 20th century with a wide knowledge of the performing arts. He graduated in Psychology and Art History from Carleton College, Minnesota and studied at the Louvre School of Art History in Paris. Since 1987 he has lived in Berlin and has organised and led many academic tours in Germany. Tom has a particular interest in the German and American architectural and artistic modern including the Bauhaus and Expressionism.

Practicalities

Prices - per person - from £4,250. Final prices to be confirmed in late spring with full details of the music performances.

If you would like to guarantee a space, please complete our booking form along with a deposit of £100 (per person). This deposit is fully refundable should you change your mind once the full details are released.

Included: air travel (economy class) on scheduled British Airways flights (aircraft: Airbus A319); private coach for the excursions and airport transfers; hotel accommodation as described below; breakfasts, 2 lunches and 3 dinners with wine, interval canapés at one performance; all admission charges; all tips for waiters, drivers; all taxes; the services of the lecturer.

Accommodation. The Regent Berlin (www.ihg.com/regent): elegant 5-star hotel decorated in Regency style, close to Unter den Linden. Rooms are of a good size and excellent standard.

How strenuous? There is quite a lot of walking and standing around in art galleries. Average distance by coach per day: 12 miles.

Music: tickets to 4 performances are included. Tickets are confirmed in late spring.

Group size: between 10 and 22 participants.