



Tom Abbott's Berlin

An insider's view of Germany's ever-changing capital

25–29 April 2024 (MK 255)

5 days • £2,660

Lecturer: Tom Abbott

Architectural, artistic and cultural development of Berlin from the Baroque to now.

Privileged access to sites not usually open to the public and visits to some of Berlin's less well known sites and museums.

Seen through the eyes of cultural historian, famed lecturer and Berlin resident Tom Abbott.

This is only a summary of the visits; there are more which are not mentioned here. As the itinerary is dependent on a number of special appointments, the order and even the content of the tour may vary.

Itinerary

Day 1: Berlin Old and New. Fly from London Heathrow to Berlin (British Airways) at c. 11.00am. The symbolic centre of West Berlin, the Kaiser Wilhelm Memorial Church was only partly restored after Allied bombing as an anti-war monument. An adjacent modern church by Egon Eiermann, consecrated in 1962, has walls made up of 20,000 panels of stained glass. Still in the '60s, the Bikinihaus, Germany's first 'concept mall', is part of a listed building complex in the zoological garden area.

Day 2: Baroque Berlin, Jewish Berlin, the GDR. See the Marienkirche, Berlin's oldest parish church, with a 20-metre Dance of Death fresco (c. 1485), and the beautiful Baroque Lutheran Sophienkirche. A vibrant Jewish community developed around Hackescher Markt in the 19th century, and in 1866 the 'New' Synagogue was built on Oranienburger Straße. Visit the Theater am Schiffbauerdamm (1892), home to the *Berliner Ensemble* company, established in 1949 by Bertolt Brecht. The Friedrichstraße station was from 1962 the crossing point from East to West; known as the *Tränenpalast* (Palace of Tears) it now houses an exhibition documenting the fates of those who passed through its doors.

Day 3: Art of the Weimar Republic and New Museum Design. Drive west to Grünewald and visit the Brücke Museum with its Expressionist art collection. Close by is Kunsthaus Dahlem, a NS-atelier turned post-war modern art and sculpture museum. Return to central Berlin along Königsstraße, taking in the



Photograph: Berlin, dome of the Reichstag building, used under license from shutterstock.com.

turn-of-the-century Grünewald villas and the Kurfürstendamm. Final stop of the day is dedicated to the Humboldt Forum, housed in the new Berlin Palace, which focuses on intercultural dialogue, and provides a range of perspectives on globally significant issues, both historical and contemporary.

Day 4: Art in Charlottenburg; the Reichstag. Drive to Charlottenburg to see the excellent collection of Expressionist works by Käthe Kollwitz on display in new premises. Continue to the George Grosz museum, a former 1950's petrol station, now dedicated to the city's master chronicler. In the afternoon see the AEG Turbine Factory, a turning point in architectural history designed by Peter Behrens. Potent and symbolic, the Reichstag is a ponderous 1880s structure scarred by the vicissitudes of the 20th century, now brilliantly rehabilitated by Norman Foster and topped by the famous glass dome. We hope to gain special admission to the government art collection. Dinner is at the rooftop restaurant.

Day 5: Memory. Berlin has engaged with its troubled history with as much energy as its dynamic present. Political scars are dramatically addressed in Bernauer Strasse at the Berlin Wall Memorial, by architects Kohlhoff & Kohlhoff. The Chapel of Reconciliation, replacing a 19th-century church cleansed from the former 'death strip', provides

an ethereal monument (by Peter Sassenroth and Rudolf Reitermann and Austrian clay artist Martin Rauch). Fly from Berlin arriving London City at c. 5.45pm.

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

Price, per person. Two sharing: £2,660 or £2,410 without flights. Single occupancy: £3,160 or £2,910 without flights

Included: flights (Euro Traveller) with British Airways (Aircraft 320); travel by private coach throughout; hotel accommodation; breakfasts, 1 lunch and 3 dinners with wine, water, coffee; all admissions; all tips for waiters; all state and

Tom Abbott's Berlin
continued

airport taxes; the services of the lecturer and
tour manager.

Accommodation. Regent Hotel, Berlin
(theregentberlin.de): an elegant 5-star hotel
decorated in Regency style, located close to
Unter den Linden. Rooms are of a good size and
excellent standard. Single rooms throughout
are doubles for sole use.

How strenuous? The tour involves a lot of
walking and a lot of standing in museums and
churches. A good level of fitness is essential.
You will be on your feet for lengthy stretches
of time. Average distance by coach per day: 12
miles.

Group size: between 10 and 22 participants.