



Auszug aus dem Reisejournal der britischen  
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## TRAVEL BRIEF

**Getting there:** British Airways (0345-222111; [www.britishairways.com](http://www.britishairways.com)) flies five times a day from Heathrow to Tegel airport in northwest Berlin — returns over the weekend of November 6/7 from £168.90. From October 31, KLM UK (08705-074074; [www.klmuk.com](http://www.klmuk.com)) will be flying direct from London Stansted to Tegel — weekend returns from £89 — and from November 10, Virgin Express (0171-744 0004; [www.virgin-express.com](http://www.virgin-express.com)) will be flying to Schönefeld airport to the south — weekend returns from £96.50. All the above flights include tax.

**Where to stay:** one of the hidden delights of Berlin is the price of its rooms. A number of excellent hotels have opened recently in anticipation of a demand that hasn't yet fully materialised. As a result, if you book directly it is worth asking them if they will discount their standard rack rate.

There are plenty of top-notch five-star hotels in town, the best of which is the Adlon, on Unter den Linden (00 49 30-22610; [www.hotel-adlon.de](http://www.hotel-adlon.de) — doubles from DM510, about £175). Better value can be had, however, in Berlin's four-star hotels, and the best of these is the Alexander Plaza (24 00 10; [www.alexander-plaza.com](http://www.alexander-plaza.com) — doubles from DM255), on Rosenstrasse. Its location, about four minutes' walk from the Hackesche Höfe, is near perfect, but its chief delight is its rooms, which are enormous by the standards of boutique hotels, and drenched with daylight.

Of a similar standard, but offering less space in their standard rooms and situated in less interesting locations, are the Art'otel (24 06 20; [www.artotel.de](http://www.artotel.de) — doubles from DM275), with a famous restaurant, the Ermelerhaus, attached, two stops south of the Fernsehturm on the U-bahn; and the groovy Bleibtrau (884 740; [www.savoy-hotels.com](http://www.savoy-hotels.com) — doubles from DM289), just off the Kurfürstendamm — ideal for shoppers, but a little worn in places.

Much more space is available in the rooms of the brand-new Madison in the Potsdamer Platz development (202 920), where junior suites with kitchenettes cost only DM190 a night.

The bad news about Berlin hotels is that at the cheaper end of the market you won't find much that is bright,

cheerful, or particularly good value. If budgeting is a priority, make a beeline for Circus (28 39 14 33; [www.circus-berlin.de](http://www.circus-berlin.de)). It's just been forced to move by redevelopment to a rather grim east Berlin building but, inside, the rooms are, as ever, light and clean, and the atmosphere is friendly and international. Its location — on the eastern edge of the Scheunenviertel — is good too. Doubles are DM70 a night.

**Operators:** most city-break operators offer hotels in the old west, around the Kurfürstendamm, rather than in the centre or the east. An exception is Travelscene (0181-427 4445), which has the Art'otel, mentioned above, for £309pp B&B for two nights, including flights, at the end of this month. Crystal (0181-241 5040) has the Hilton, near Unter den Linden, for £299pp B&B for two nights including flights. Other operators include British Airways Holidays (0870-242 4243), Thomson (0181-210 4500) and the Bridge Travel Group (01992-456600). Or consult a German specialist such as Moswin Tours (0116-271 9922), which can tailor-make a trip for you.

**Guidebooks:** the Time Out Guide to Berlin (Penguin £9.99) is the best single volume. If you want to know more about the new buildings of the city, buy the English edition of Berlin: Open City (Nicolai DM29.80, available from bookshops such as Bücherbogen, 19 Kochstrasse). For background, Faust's Metropolis: A History of Berlin by Alexandra Richie (HarperCollins £14.99) is fascinating and disturbing in equal measure.

**The Love Parade:** after a modest start in 1989, this open-air technofest has mushroomed into a huge event. Last year, 1.2m people converged on the Tiergarten's victory column to take off their T-shirts and wave their arms to the beat of cutting-edge dance music. If you want to go next year (the main procession is on July 9), book your accommodation right now: there aren't enough beds to go round.

**Website:** [www.timeout.com/Berlin](http://www.timeout.com/Berlin)

**Further information:** German National Tourist Office, 0171-317 0908.