

Travel Meets Culture

Unique Tours in Germany On and Off the Beaten Path

Eastern Route Itinerary

Day 1: **Berlin**

Settle into hotel and relax. In the afternoon, get your first impression of the city by taking a cruise on the Spree River. Have dinner as a group which will include a trip orientation and a quick overview of Germany's history with themes relevant to the itinerary. **Overnight in Berlin**

Day 2: **Berlin**

Morning: Take our guided tour of the historic part of the city, which centers around the boulevard Unter den Linden ("Under the Linden Trees"). It includes the Brandenburg Gate and several memorials, and ends with a climb up the Berlin Cathedral tower, which affords a great view of the city. Enjoy your lunch at the historic Nikolaiviertel ("Quarter of Nicolas") and visit Alexanderplatz to get an impression of the former DDR (German Democratic Republic). Relax and rest in the hotel.

Late afternoon: Get an overview of the country's history in the German Historical Museum, one of Germany's best museums. **Overnight in Berlin**

Day 3: **Berlin**

Morning: Learn about the divided Germany after World War II. Explore the German Bundestag (Parliament), a unique blend of modern and old architecture with a glass dome and spiral staircase. Reflect at the Memorial of the Murdered Jews of Europe, a stark reminder of Germany's past atrocities. Take in the modern skyline of Potsdam Plaza.

Afternoon: Get an impression of Nazi crimes and their manipulative actions in the museum of the Topography of Terror. Return to the hotel, rest, and later walk to the Berlin Wall Memorial, once a piece of the border strip and now a memorial to Berlin's divided past. **Overnight in Berlin**

Day 4: **Potsdam to Quedlinburg**

Morning: Drive to Potsdam (30-minute drive) over the "Bridge of Spies" (Glienicker Bridge). Take the official tour of Frederick the Great's lavish "New Palace" and explore the adjacent Baroque park with Frederick's summer Residence Sanssouci ("Without Worry"). Explore old town of Potsdam on your own.

Afternoon: Visit the Russian Quarter and drive to Cecilienhof, the palace built by Germany's last Emperor during World War I and site of the historically significant Conference of Potsdam of 1945. Drive to Quedlinburg (2-hours drive). **Overnight in Quedlinburg**

Day 5: **Quedlinburg**

Morning: Morning: Follow our guided tour of Quedlinburg, a UNESCO world heritage site untouched by war and a superb example of medieval Germany. Enjoy the quaint shops and have a leisurely lunch in Old Town.

Afternoon: Visit the Collegiate Church of St. Servatius and its treasury, site of a famous twentieth century art theft. Climb the Munzenberg (Coin Mountain) and enjoy wonderful views

of the town and Quedlinburg Abbey. Visit the fascinating Munzenberg Museum and the ancient St. Wiperti Church and crypt nearby. **Overnight in Quedlinburg**

Day 6: **Thale and Erfurt**

Morning: Drive up the Rosstrappe Mountain in nearby Thale. A short walk brings you to a rocky crag with spectacular views of the Bode valley, a place famous for pagan rituals that inspired German writers and poets.

Afternoon: Drive to Erfurt (1 hour 45 minute drive). After settling into your hotel, take our tour of this beautiful and well-preserved medieval city where Martin Luther studied. **Overnight in Erfurt**

Day 7: **Eisenach**

Morning: Drive to Eisenach (50-minute drive). Take the official tour of the Wartburg Castle, a UNESCO World Heritage site. Learn about St. Elizabeth's life, Luther's translation of the New Testament, and the contest of the Minnesingers. Enjoy lovely views of the surrounding hills.

Afternoon: Visit the Bach House and return to Erfurt. **Overnight in Erfurt**

Day 8: **Weimar**

Morning: Drive to Weimar (30-minute drive). Our morning guided tour focuses on the Golden Age of Weimar (18th century).

Afternoon: After lunch in town, our guided afternoon tour highlights the art and music during the 19th and 20th century including the Bauhaus. Take time to relax and enjoy the many shops and the idyllic park in Weimar. Return to Erfurt. **Overnight in Erfurt**

Day 9: **Leipzig to Dresden**

Drive to Leipzig (1 ½-hour drive) Tour the city and witness another important Bach site, the Thomas Church where Bach worked for 27 years. Have lunch in one of Leipzig's historic shopping passages and enjoy the city's architectural juxtaposition of the former GDR and modern unified Germany. Drive to Dresden (1 ½-hour drive). **Overnight in Dresden**

Day 10: **Dresden**

Morning: Take our guided tour highlighting the Baroque splendor of Dresden and enjoy lunch with local friends.

Afternoon: Shop, relax, or explore the Zwinger (Museum), The Green Vault, or choose another of the many diverse museums this culturally rich city has to offer **Overnight in Dresden**



Day 11: **Saxon Switzerland**

Drive to Saxon Switzerland (45-minute drive). Spend the day exploring the Elbe Sandstone Mountains and decide whether to opt for the more rigorous climb to the top of a cliff (2 ½ hours total) or a leisurely walk with beautiful views of the dramatic and bizarrely formed columns. Drive to Berlin (2 ½ hours). **Overnight in Berlin airport hotel**

Day 12: **Depart from Berlin**