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## Hotel Palace Berlin

### Under a lucky star

Just 300 metres away – many of City West’s major sights are that close to the privately-run Hotel Palace Berlin. Located on Budapest Strasse directly opposite the entrance to the Berlin Zoo, the hotel is just 300 metres from the legendary KaDeWe department store, the Kaiser Wilhelm Memorial Church and the magnificent Kurfürstendamm boulevard.

In the 1970s, the Hotel Palace ushered in a new era in the otherwise rather traditional West Berlin district of Charlottenburg. Constructed for Karl Heinz Pepper, the hotel was completed in 1968. Following the American model, the hotel directly adjoined the Europa-Center, Europe’s first shopping mall, opened three years before. The Hotel Palace Berlin was something completely new. Not just colourful, modern, and glitzy – but also with its own ice rink! In then West Berlin, this was a window on the big wide world. The main speaker at the opening ceremony was no less a figure than Willy Brandt, at that time West Berlin’s Governing Mayor. The glass-fronted building complex, today a heritage building, is always under its very own lucky star – the brilliantly lit Mercedes star topping the Europa-Center. One hundred and three metres up and ten metres across, the Mercedes star is the world largest rotating neon sign.

The Zoo Palast Cinema, newly built in the 1950s, is only 300 metres away as well. For over forty years, from 1957 to 1999, this was the home of Berlin's International Film Festival. Even visitors from Hollywood were thrilled by the cinema auditorium's oval ceiling decorated with tiny lights to resemble a starry sky. Many movie stars walked across the red carpet here, from James Stewart and Sophia Loren to Jodie Foster, Tom Hanks, Julia Roberts and John Travolta. Moreover, many also took advantage of the hotel's proximity to the cinema and stayed the night at the Hotel Palace Berlin, or at least dropped by for a drink.

Today's guests can enjoy their drinks mixed to perfection in the House of Gin. The bar with over 150 types of gin - more than any other Berlin hotel bar - also includes five Berlin gins and even three of its own creation. For some of these gins - such as the Berlin Urban Gin - herbs such as woodruff, mint or elder leaves are even hand-picked on Berlin's Teufelsberg hill. Admittedly, that's slightly more than 300 metres away - but still pretty local!

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