



# Experience Accessible Berlin

Tourism for all in Germany's capital city

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A trip away starts with the pleasure of anticipation and ends with a final rating – in the best case, ‘would recommend to others’. In between, the services and infrastructures ideally fit together harmoniously like parts of a single chain. But if one part of that chain is missing, it makes things especially difficult for people with disabilities – as well as for seniors or families with buggies or pushchairs. We want a trip to Berlin to be as comfortable as possible, and so our aim is to create a seamless service chain – from travel information to booking, arrivals and departures, accommodation, customer support, services, restaurants and cafes, and cultural and leisure activities. That sounds like a Herculean task, yet *visitBerlin* and its partners have already made considerable progress towards their goal.

### Success for the entire city: Access City Award

*visitBerlin* is a member of the Accessible City Round Table, founded in 2012 to improve services for people with disabilities. The Round Table, hosted by the Senate Department for Urban Development and the Environment, steers concrete projects to develop tourist services and communicate them to the public. At the end of 2012, the European Commission and the European Disability Forum already honoured this commitment with the Access City Award – the highest award of its kind. In particular, the Award praised the city's local transport services as well as its efforts to ensure new building projects are benchmarks of modern infrastructure and reflect a sustainable urban development policy. Since the Accessible City Round Table was set up, the interests and requirements of Berlin tourism have been systematically considered and implemented in coordinated planning. [www.stadtentwicklung.berlin.de](http://www.stadtentwicklung.berlin.de)

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Berlin plays its part – “Reisen für Alle” (Tourism for All): Project steered by *visitBerlin*

In 2013, the *Reisen für Alle* (Tourism for All) project was launched. For the first time, Germany now has a quality system with unified standards for certifying accessible facilities and services across the country. Berlin is also actively lending its support to the project. Growing numbers of tourist service providers in Germany's capital city have already joined the *Reisen für Alle* scheme. *visitBerlin* is the project's licensee for Berlin and responsible for professionally managing the project in the city. Specially trained personnel visit facilities, sites and service providers, applying unified nationwide quality criteria to assess their accessibility infrastructure. At present, six Berlin Tourist Info Centres, 32 partner hotels, 21 cultural institutions, 2 tour boat companies, 16 tourist attractions, 15 restaurants and cafes and many other facilities and sites have been certified under the *Reisen für Alle* scheme – with more joining all the time.

Through the *Reisen für Alle* scheme, the Federal Ministry of Economic Affairs and Energy is supporting the implementation of the UN Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. The *Reisen für Alle* scheme is under the responsibility of the German Seminar for Tourism and NatKo (the National Coordination Office for Tourism for All). Together, as a voice for self-help organisations and people with disabilities, they cooperate closely on coordinating this nationwide project, function as the central qualification and testing centre, and set up a nationwide internet platform intended to serve as an information point for national and international visitors. [visitBerlin.de/en/accessible-berlin](https://www.visitberlin.de/en/accessible-berlin)

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### „accessBerlin“ app: A mobile app to make a Berlin visit even easier

Berlin wants to be a city easy for visitors with a disability to explore and access tourist attractions and services. To support this aim, *visitBerlin* launched its *accessBerlin* mobile app in 2017. Since then, the app has been regularly updated and expanded. *accessBerlin* enables user groups with limited mobility to explore the city following reliable tourism service chains down six suggested routes. The tourist attractions, sites and facilities along these routes have, to a great extent, been assessed and certified under the *Reisen für Alle* scheme. As a result, visitors can obtain a maximum of reliable information – including the downloadable Test Reports. The app supplements details of accessibility at tourist attractions and sites with a range of other useful information, e.g., locations of wheelchair accessible City toilets operated by the Wall company, overview of elevators at tube stations, etc. and details on the conditions of paths.

The *accessBerlin* app is a real help for visiting the city, both for Germany's estimated seven million people dependent on accessible services and facilities as well as for international visitors with disabilities. What's more, this service is also a plus for many other groups exploring Berlin – from families with buggies or prams to people with limited mobility using a wheeled walker, or those temporarily less mobile due to, for example, a leg or knee splint.

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At present, six routes with over 59 tourist attractions and services are available.

- From Zoologischer Garten to Alexanderplatz – Across Berlin on the 100 bus
- From Zoologischer Garten to Potsdamer Platz – Across Berlin on the 200 bus
- From Grunewald to Kreuzberg– Across Berlin on the M29 Metrobus
- From Central Station (*Hauptbahnhof*) to Fischer Island – Across Berlin on the 147 bus
- Taking that 'Special Train to Pankow' – Across Berlin on the U2 underground line
- From Spandau to Berlin Schönefeld airport – Across Berlin on the S 9 S-Bahn line

[visitBerlin.de/en/accessberlin-app](https://visitBerlin.de/en/accessberlin-app)

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### Well prepared to enjoy your trip: The joy of anticipation – thanks to clear information

Anyone planning their Berlin trip will find a mass of useful information on [www.visitBerlin.de](http://www.visitBerlin.de). The website also offers lots of ideas and a wealth of tips especially for visitors with disabilities. Here, you can also find selected links to advice for people who are hard of hearing, blind, or partially sighted, as well as people with cognitive disabilities. For wheelchair accessible accommodation, check out the [online booking portal](#) and use the 'limit search' filter– or just phone +49 / (0)30 / 25 00 25.

The *accessBerlin* app provides the latest on accessibility and on-site conditions at many of the city's attractions and sights, as well as restaurants, hotels and other services. More information can be found on the Mobidat database, maintained by the non-profit association Albatros with information for Berlin visitors with disabilities. The service is available in English, German, French, Spanish, Russian, Turkish and, in part, in Polish. [www.mobidat.net](http://www.mobidat.net)

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### Berlin – There and back: Arrivals and departures, public transport

Berlin's Central Station (*Hauptbahnhof*), Europe's largest and most modern interchange station, has orientation systems for blind and partially sighted passengers, and elevators with spoken announcements. This service has been developed in close cooperation with the Berlin Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired (ABSV). Public tours of the station are also on offer twice a week. The downloadable audio guide of the tour with background information is available online. The mainline stations of Südkreuz and Ostbahnhof also have an accessible design. For questions about arriving in Berlin by train, help with boarding and leaving trains, and other details on rail travel, contact the Deutsche Bahn Mobility Service Centre on + 49 (0) 180 651 25 12 (costs for calls depend on provider). [www.bahn.de](http://www.bahn.de)

Berlin's airports are largely accessible. Tegel and Schönefeld airports both offer accessible parking spaces and have accessible toilet facilities. If you are flying into or out of these airports and require assistance or support, you should contact your airline 48 hours in advance. [www.berlin-airport.de](http://www.berlin-airport.de)

The VBB (Verkehrsverbund Berlin-Brandenburg) transport association's free mobility assistance services for buses and trains is quite unique in Europe. This free service provides a mobility assistance guide for passengers travelling on BVG transport services or the S-Bahn (city railway). What's more, you do not need a disabled identification card to request this service and it is not only for wheelchair users. Seniors, travellers with bulky luggage or with prams and push chairs, or people whose mobility is limited in another way or who are partially sighted can contact the service and book a mobility assistance

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guide. Appreciated by local residents as well as tourists, this service is much in demand – so visitors are well advised to book a mobility guide for their travel plans at least seven days in advance. The service is confirmed the day before the date required. Mobility assistance guides not only help find the right transport connections, but collect passengers from their hotel or home, help with ticket purchases and transport transfers, and accompany passengers to their destination and, if required, back again. The service covers the entire city of Berlin including Schönefeld Airport, and is available Monday to Friday from 7am to 8pm. The mobility assistance service guide can be ordered by phone at the Service Office on +49 / (0)30 / 34 64 99 40. [www.vbbonline.de](http://www.vbbonline.de)

Over the last years, the Berlin public transport services (BVG) and the S-Bahn Berlin (city railway) have equipped many of the tube and city railway stations with elevators or ramps. The details on the accessible services are explained in the free flyer *Berlin Barrier-free 2018* (in English), which also has a map of the local transport services. The *accessBerlin* app tells you in real-time whether and where elevators are out of order. Accessible stations are also all marked on the BVG public transport network and city maps. All platforms and surface exits at Alexanderplatz station, a major interchange, can be reached by elevator. In addition, the station has a guidance system for people who are blind.

All the vehicles in bus fleet on the BVG public transport network are accessible. The only exception here is the excursion route of the 218 bus, since this is sometimes served by vintage vehicles. The accessible buses are all fitted with extendable wheelchair ramps, so where needed drivers can assist passengers to board. The 400 new double-deckers for the BVG public transport services are also very comfortable. Their generous multifunctional areas include a seat

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for a person of short stature as well as enough space for two wheelchairs, for parents with prams or buggies or passengers using wheeled walkers. These new double-deckers service the popular 100 and 200 bus lines which pass many well-known sites between Zoological Garten station and Alexanderplatz square. The trams on many lines through the city also have a ramp or wheelchair lift at the first or second door. You can find more information on accessible public transport lines and vehicles on [www.bvg.de/barrierefrei](http://www.bvg.de/barrierefrei).

### Guided Berlin: Exploring the city

A travel planner for individual routes on public transport is available (in English or German) on the BVG webpage [www.fahrinfo-berlin.de](http://www.fahrinfo-berlin.de). The Travel Information includes an 'accessible search' with recommendations for routes with disabled access. If you prefer, you can also contact the BVG Call Center hotline on (030) 19 449 for information on accessible routes.

Many tour operators already offer bus, minibus or minivan city tours for people who depend on walking aids. You can find an overview of the leading tour operators on [visitBerlin.de](http://visitBerlin.de)

Aside from city tours in catalogues from tour operators, many specialised providers of tours with wheelchair accessible coaches or buses also include Berlin in their programme. Their sightseeing tours are specifically designed to meet the needs of customers with limited mobility. [www.natko.de](http://www.natko.de)

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bbv Tours Berlin or the Tourenbus transport service, for example, provide services for Berlin visitors to book a tour combining professional sightseeing with dedicated spaces for wheelchair users. [www.bbv-tours-berlin.de](http://www.bbv-tours-berlin.de); [www.tourenbus.de](http://www.tourenbus.de)

The FührungsNetz association of Kulturprojekte Berlin, a not-for-profit group, also offers a professional service for various museums and exhibitions. The service includes tours for people with disabilities which can then be adapted to meet each group's own special needs. [www.kulturprojekte-berlin.de](http://www.kulturprojekte-berlin.de)

Wheelchair users keen to explore the wonderful parks and countryside in and around the city can find a wealth of information on the [Barrierefrei ins Grüne](http://www.barrierefrei-ins-gruene.de) website (also in English). The various Berlin routes, all longer than 2.5km, are described in such detail that they are easy to follow. [www.gruen-berlin.de](http://www.gruen-berlin.de)

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### Accommodation for all: Accessible accommodation in every price category

Berlin's hotel landscape is changing for everyone's benefit. Not only have many new hotels opened in the city over the last years but, thanks to new building regulations, these have wide entrances and sufficient space to turn a wheelchair. The Scandic Hotel at Potsdamer Platz with 60 accessible rooms is one of the leading providers of hotels for people with disabilities. Following a strong inclusion policy, the Scandic Hotel group has even appointed its own Disability Ambassador, who is much in demand the world over. In this spirit, the first Scandic hotel opened in Germany has been a 'hotel for all' since 1993. Guests also appreciate this service, with 93% ranking it as 'would recommend to others'. For their guests with disabilities, the Scandic Hotel at Potsdamer Platz takes a relaxed, inclusive approach with everything from a walking-stick holder to charming vibrating alarm clocks for people with visual impairments. On the Scandic homepage, you can find more information on accessibility under 'Special Needs'. [www.scandichotels.de/berlin](http://www.scandichotels.de/berlin)

The Hotel Augustinenhof Berlin, conveniently located in the Mitte district, has a total of 63 rooms. Here, eight rooms are wheelchair accessible, as are the hotel areas with the restaurant and conference rooms. The abba Hotel and the Melia also have wheelchair accessible rooms for guests. The modern arcotel Velvet designer hotel in the heart of the vibrant Mitte district offers six wheelchair accessible double rooms with wide doors, zero thresholds, emergency alarms and spacious ensuite facilities. [www.abbaberlinhotel.com](http://www.abbaberlinhotel.com); [www.melia.de](http://www.melia.de); [www.hotel-augustinenhof.de](http://www.hotel-augustinenhof.de); [www.arcotel.at](http://www.arcotel.at)

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Some hotels have specialised in providing services for guests with physical disabilities. The NH Hotel Berlin Alexanderplatz, for example, has a guidance system for people who are blind. In andel's Hotel Berlin, in addition to accessible rooms for wheelchair users, there are also special rooms for people with allergies. The Novotel Berlin Am Tiergarten boasts no less than 27 accessible rooms, making this an ideal venue for a group of people using wheelchairs. Even larger groups can be accommodated at the Hotel Kolombus in Berlin's Lichtenberg district. With a total of 97 wheelchair accessible rooms, this hotel also works together with tour operators specialising in accessible tourism. The Hotel Kolombus often hosts groups of athletes – staying in Berlin, for instance, during the Special Olympics for people with intellectual disabilities. [www.nh-hotels.de](http://www.nh-hotels.de); [www.vi-hotels.com/de/andels-berlin](http://www.vi-hotels.com/de/andels-berlin); [www.novotel.com](http://www.novotel.com); [www.hotel-kolombus.de](http://www.hotel-kolombus.de)

Among the five-star hotels in town, the Hilton Berlin, the legendary Hotel Adlon and The Westin Grand, among others, each have two wheelchair accessible rooms with specially equipped ensuite facilities. The luxury Waldorf Astoria hotel also has two accessible rooms. The Maritim Hotel Berlin congress hotel at Potsdamer Platz offers 24 disability-friendly rooms, five of them suitable for wheelchair users. [www.hiltonberlinhotel.de](http://www.hiltonberlinhotel.de); [www.maritim.de](http://www.maritim.de); [www.kempinski.com/Adlon](http://www.kempinski.com/Adlon); [www.westingrandberlin.com](http://www.westingrandberlin.com); [www.waldorfastoriaberlin.com](http://www.waldorfastoriaberlin.com)

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Berlin also has a range of offers at more affordable prices. For example, the Hotel Mitmensch in the green district of Karlshorst is noted for its friendly service and comfortable rooms for visitors with special needs. In addition to all the standard comforts, including automatic doors and motion-sensitive lighting, the hotel has seven wheelchair accessible rooms with spacious ensuite facilities. Berlin also has several hostels and B&Bs with wheelchair accessible rooms – for example, the Generator Hostel Berlin, Germany's largest youth hostel with 850 beds. [www.mit-mensch.com](http://www.mit-mensch.com); [www.generatorhostels.com](http://www.generatorhostels.com)

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### “What are we doing today” – Cultural and leisure activities

The stunning glass dome on the Reichstag, home to the German Bundestag, is one of Berlin's top must-see sights. The glass dome, which is open to the public, is also wheelchair accessible. However, with the dome's walkway rising in a long spiral, wheelchair users are advised to visit with an accompanying person. An extra entrance for people with disabilities ensures immediate admission (visit must be pre-booked) and saves waiting in queues.

[www.bundestag.de](http://www.bundestag.de)

The Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe next to the Brandenburg Gate is Germany's main Holocaust Memorial. The Field of Stelae designed by Peter Eisenman has 13 specially signed routes. These are also wheelchair accessible, with a maximum gradient of 8%. There is elevator access to the subterranean Information Centre. The exhibition there documents the persecution and destruction of European Jewry and the historic sites of the crimes.

[www.stiftung-denkmal.de](http://www.stiftung-denkmal.de)

The Berlin Wall Memorial and Documentation Centre in Bernauer Strasse vividly recounts the history of the Berlin Wall and a city divided in the post-war years. Here, at the site of the former border between East and West Germany, visitors can see original remnants of the Wall. The Documentation Centre can be reached by elevator and has accessible public toilets. [www.berliner-mauer-gedenkstaette.de](http://www.berliner-mauer-gedenkstaette.de)

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Berlin has more bridges than Venice – and there are many tour boats on the Rivers Spree and Havel and the Landwehr Canal to give visitors a different perspective on the city. The Stern und Kreisschiffahrt tour fleet includes the MS Havel Queen and MS Moby Dick, both equipped to take passengers using wheelchairs. The Stern und Kreisschiffahrt website includes information (in German) on other routes with wheelchair accessible or disability-friendly cruise boats, as well as how to reach the piers where the boats leave. The boats of the Reederei Riedel tour company have recently been certified under the *Reisen für Alle* (Tourism for All) scheme. For inner city boat tours in Berlin, the FS Rummelsberg's barrier-free design is a first – not only providing level access for wheelchair users to board, but also ensuring no assistance is needed to move between the interior saloon and the exterior stern seating.

[www.sternundkreis.de](http://www.sternundkreis.de); [www.reederei-riedel.de](http://www.reederei-riedel.de)

Many museums, public collections and leisure facilities are also wheelchair accessible. On Berlin's famous Museum Island, for instance, the Bode-Museum is wheelchair accessible, as is the Neues Museum, home to the legendary bust of Egyptian Queen Nefertiti. Other accessible museums include the German Historical Museum (DHM) showcasing 2000 years of German history, the Bauhaus Archive with the world's largest collection on every aspect of this seminal design and architecture movement, and Daniel Libeskind's impressive zig-zag building for the Jewish Museum Berlin. For visitors who are deaf or hard of hearing, tours in sign language are on offer at, among others, the Jewish Museum and the Gemäldegalerie art gallery at the Kulturforum. The Musikinstrumentenmuseum (Music Instrument Museum) next to Berlin's famous Philharmonic Hall is also wheelchair accessible. On Sundays after the noon tour, visitors there can listen to 'The Mighty Wurlitzer' – Europe's largest cinema and theatre organ. [museumsinsel-berlin.de](http://museumsinsel-berlin.de); [dhm.de](http://dhm.de); [bauhaus.de](http://bauhaus.de);

<sup>15</sup> [inberlin.de](http://inberlin.de); [mim-berlin.de](http://mim-berlin.de)

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One of Berlin's special attractions is the Museum für Naturkunde, the natural history museum. The fascinating displays explore the evolution of plant and animal species, present the world's largest dinosaur skeleton – and include interactive Jurascopes bringing the dinosaur skeleton to life! Visitors with limited mobility can access the museum at the side entrance. There is also an elevator at the rear of the museum for electric wheelchairs. To explore today's animal kingdom in Tierpark Berlin, Europe's largest wildlife park, and the Berlin Zoo, visitors with limited mobility can also borrow a wheelchair free of charge. The toilet facilities are also wheelchair accessible. [www.naturkundemuseum-berlin.de](http://www.naturkundemuseum-berlin.de); [www.tierpark-berlin.de](http://www.tierpark-berlin.de); [www.zoo-berlin.de](http://www.zoo-berlin.de)

Schönhausen Palace is also suitable for disabled visitors. The palace has an elevator, zero thresholds, and display cases able to be viewed when seated or standing. The offers for people who are blind or partially sighted include special audio guides as well as tactile exhibits, from a palace model to a noblewoman's dress, providing a special insight into court life here. For the hard of hearing, sign language video guides are available as well as images for orientation in the palace's rooms. There are also simple language audio guides for people with learning difficulties that vividly present the history of the palace and its residents. [www.spsg.de](http://www.spsg.de)

The offices of the Federal Government Commissioner for Matters relating to Persons with Disabilities are located in Kleisthaus in the heart of the city. Over the recent years, this heritage building has developed into an accessible location for cultural and political events, regularly offering a programme of performances, readings or exhibitions by disabled and non-disabled artists. [www.behindertenbeauftragter.de](http://www.behindertenbeauftragter.de)

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For an accessible overview of Berlin's sights in miniature, visit the Berlin-Brandenburg Model Park in the Wuhlheide Park. Here, you can find over 50 buildings and monuments of outstanding historical and architectural interest all lovingly build on a scale of 1:25. The models including such famous sites as the Brandenburg Gate, Sanssouci Palace and the Pergamon Museum. The site is designed as wheelchair accessible, with wheelchair accessible toilet facilities in the park. For visitors who are blind, the names of the models are also given in Braille.

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### Breaking the time barrier: Open till late

When shopping hours were liberalised, Berlin jumped at the chance to introduce longer opening hours from Monday through Saturday. Longer opening hours are especially popular at the large malls with their wide range of stores under one roof and accessible design. The Potsdam Platz Shopping Arkaden – open until 9pm Monday through Saturday – is equipped with elevators and spacious, broad aisles. At Alexanderplatz, the Galeria Kaufhof's flagship store has elevators and wheelchair accessible toilet facilities. The elevators are equipped with floor guides as well as tactile controls. At Wittenbergplatz, the legendary KaDeWe, the largest department store on the European mainland, also offers the same services. The outlets and stores in the Alexa mall directly at Alexanderplatz are also open until 9pm Monday through Saturday. The Alexa, with its attractive Art Deco design, also has spacious aisles and elevators. [www.potsdamer-platz-arkaden.de](http://www.potsdamer-platz-arkaden.de); [www.galeria-kaufhof.de](http://www.galeria-kaufhof.de); [www.kadewe-berlin.de](http://www.kadewe-berlin.de);

Disabled and non-disabled visitors also enjoy exploring Berlin's neighbourhoods with their wealth of independent boutiques and quirky stores. Some shops display the 'Accessible Berlin' icon, or you can check the addresses of wheelchair accessible shops in advance via the link on this website. Other accessible outlets are also listed in the Mobidat database. As part of the EU project 'Accessible Shopping in Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg', many outlets in this borough are now accessible for all visitors, for example in the weird and wonderful shopping areas along Bergmannstraße or Oranienstraße. [www.berlin-barrierefrei.de](http://www.berlin-barrierefrei.de); [www.mobidat.net](http://www.mobidat.net); [www.barrierefreieinkauf.de](http://www.barrierefreieinkauf.de)

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### From hearty to hip: Wheelchair-friendly pubs and restaurants in Berlin

Since 2006, all new restaurants in Berlin have to be accessible, and provide accessible toilet facilities. Many long-established restaurants, though, are also wheelchair accessible. At Hackescher Markt, for example, where the old and new Berlin meet, guests using wheelchairs can look forward to a warm welcome in both the Oxymoron as well as the Hackescher Hof café and restaurant. Both these venues have wide entrances as well as wheelchair accessible toilet facilities. [www.oxymoron-berlin.de](http://www.oxymoron-berlin.de); [www.hackescher-hof.de](http://www.hackescher-hof.de) For a special gastro experience in Berlin, try dining in the dark. At the restaurants Nocti Vagus or unsichtBar, for example, visually impaired waiting staff serve the evening's set menu to guests eating in the dark. Without any visual stimulus, the guests' other senses become more acute – and they also leave with a far greater awareness of what it means to be blind.

[www.noctivagus.com](http://www.noctivagus.com); [www.unsicht-bar-berlin.de](http://www.unsicht-bar-berlin.de)

For hearty traditional Berlin fare, head for the Julchen Hoppe in the Nikolai Quarter. This gastro-pub is a good example of how tavern-style rooms can be combined with a design suitable for people with disabilities. For the lighter touch of Vietnam's cuisine, check out Mr. Hai & Friends on Savignyplatz. The restaurant is not only accessible, but ranked among the best Asian venues in the city. Lovers of the classic steak and other BBQ specials can be found indulging in their favourites at Midtown Grill at Potsdamer Platz. [www.julchenhoppe.de](http://www.julchenhoppe.de); [www.mrhai.de](http://www.mrhai.de); [www.midtown-grill.de](http://www.midtown-grill.de) The Käfer, on the roof garden of the Reichstag parliament building, offers a selection of delicious dishes for lunchtime and evening diners. It also has the added spice of its direct proximity to the German Bundestag and the country's political decision-makers. [www.feinkost-kaefer.de](http://www.feinkost-kaefer.de)

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### Services for wheelchair users: From hiring wheelchairs to mobility assistance

In an emergency, companies offering wheelchair hire and support services can quickly provide assistance, as can the German Red Cross. [www.drk-berlin.de](http://www.drk-berlin.de)

The Wall company webpage lists the locations of their wheelchair accessible City toilets. [www.wall.de](http://www.wall.de)

For people with limited mobility who need assistance when travelling in the city, Berlin has over 20 providers specialising in mobility assistance guides. The mobility assistance guides accompany older people, people with disabilities and wheelchair users through the city, pushing wheelchairs if needed. They collect visitors from airports, coach or train stations, and can help with transfers, excursions, and shopping trips. [www.berliner-mobilitaetshilfedienste.de](http://www.berliner-mobilitaetshilfedienste.de)

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### Berlin through other eyes: Special services for people who are blind or partially sighted

'Experience Berlin' is the first acoustic guide for Berlin visitors who are blind or partially sighted. It offers detailed descriptions of routes to the various sights, enabling its users to explore the city independently. This acoustic audio guide (in German) is available as a free download on [www.berlinfuerblinde.de](http://www.berlinfuerblinde.de). On request, team members from the Berlin Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired (ABSV) can accompany blind visitors through exhibitions and to other interesting locations and events. From time to time, many museums belonging to the Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, e.g. the Gemäldegalerie – Old Master Paintings, offer touch tours allowing people who are blind or partially sighted to explore this wealth of art and cultural treasures. The dates for these tours are listed in the online event calendars on the museums' websites. [www.absv.de](http://www.absv.de); [www.smb.museum](http://www.smb.museum) The German Bundestag offers people with visual impairments a special tour (pre-registration required). On these tours, visitors are not only taken to the visitors' gallery, but directly into the plenary chamber, something not available for other tour groups. [www.bundestag.de](http://www.bundestag.de) Built from 1695 to 1699, Charlottenburg Palace is the loveliest and largest residence of the royal rulers in Berlin. The private royal chambers can be viewed on a guided tour. For visitors who are blind or partially sighted, the tours include a touch model of the entire palace complex as well as other tactile exhibits to provide a fascinating insight into the palace and its former residents. [www.spsg.de](http://www.spsg.de) With a tradition going back over 300 years, Berlin's Botanic Garden is among the world's largest and most important. Here, you can also visit a specially designed Fragrance and Touch Garden, experiencing the diversity of the plant world through smell and touch. Wheelchairs are also available for hire at the entrances to the gardens. [www.botanischer-garten-berlin.de](http://www.botanischer-garten-berlin.de)

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Bundesliga football in Berlin's Olympic Stadium – a thrilling experience for football fans who are blind or partially sighted! As a special service at home games of Hertha BSC, Berlin's premier league team, an audio commentary via earphones is available at 50 seats. These seats need to be booked in advance by contacting the Hertha fan representatives on +49 / (0)30 / 30 09 28 55.

Located off a back courtyard in Rosenthaler Straße 39, you can find the Otto Weidt Workshop for the Blind, today a small museum. Otto Weidt was himself partially sighted. During the Second World War, he used his brush and broom factory to save and shelter dozens of Berlin's Jews. The wall texts and labels on the exhibits and personal documents, such as letters, poems and photos, are all provided in Braille as well. [www.blindes-vertrauen.de](http://www.blindes-vertrauen.de)

The Cinemaxx multiplex at Potsdamer Platz and the Delphi Palast cinema show films with audio descriptions via earphones. The innovative *Hörspielkino* ('radio play movie') continues to wow audiences. These popular shows, equally attractive for people who are blind or sighted, are performed in parks in summer, and regularly in winter on Friday and Saturday evenings in Berlin's two observatories. [www.deinkino.de](http://www.deinkino.de); [www.radioeins.de](http://www.radioeins.de)

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## Tourism for all in Germany's capital city

### Economic potential & Comfort

In Germany, four out of every ten people (42.9%) with limited mobility or activity limitations spend their holidays in their home country. A similar number of people (37%) have decided at least once against a trip because of concerns over the lack of accessibility. But when visitors with limited mobility do find an accessible location, they return more often than many other groups of visitors – and they are extremely well networked. So, a good destination is always recommended to others. Studies commissioned by the European Union predict that by 2020 the number of seniors (65+) and people with disabilities travelling inside the EU will rise from the current 783 million trips for one or more days to over 862 million. This figure look set to grow further with up to 21 million trips a year by visitors from the leading non-EU markets. As the report stated, if there were “almost complete accessibility of buildings, hotels, restaurants and museums with various accessible services available,” demand from within the EU could be expected to reach “1,231 million trips per year”. Against that background, Berlin's focus on accessibility is not just a question of ensuring comprehensive inclusion and participation, but is also relevant for the city's future economy. Given the demographic changes, seniors, those with temporary limited mobility or activity limitations, as well as families with children, all profit from accessible offers and services. More families with children (67%) are already checking out accessibility and barrier-free services in the run-up to their trips than people with limited mobility or activity limitations (57%). Similarly, every second traveller over 65 is also checking the accessibility of their chosen destination. For that reason, thinking accessibility means increasing comfort for all – for Berlin, its residents and all the target groups keen on experiencing for themselves Germany's number one city destination and its environs.

# Experience Accessible Berlin

More research information

**Find more details and tips on accessible Berlin here:**

[visitBerlin.de/en/accessible-berlin](https://visitBerlin.de/en/accessible-berlin)

# Pictures

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