

Berlin: Centre of Creativity and Design

UNESCO Creative City of Design

Berlin, March 2017 Since German reunification, Berlin has emerged as a booming capital of modern design that attracts creative entrepreneurs from all over the world with its eclectic and vibrant lifestyle. In 2006, the German capital was officially designated a UNESCO City of Design, the first German city to be included in the Creative Cities Network organised by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).

A Forge for Talent and Creativity

The winds of change throughout Berlin's history, its role as the capital of a united Germany and its openness to the world's diversity have created the ideal conditions for innovation and creativity to flourish here.

More and more creative people from all over the world are finding inspiration in Berlin's experimental climate and are choosing to move their professional and personal lives here. The city offers plenty of artistic freedom, extraordinary exhibit spaces, a relatively low cost of living, global networks and, not least, a public interested in design that is open to new ideas. Design has thus become one of the most important factors behind the city's economic success. There are approximately 3,100 studios for artists making fashion, graphics, jewellery, and furniture in the city.

State-run arts universities, including the Udk (Universität der Künste), and various privately-run educational institutions offer a broad range of options for studying design in the city. The city's nine schools specialising in fashion and clothing design are the most in any European city. Many students stay in Berlin after graduating and enrich the creative potential of the city for the long term. Compared to that produced in other centres of terms of fashion and design, Berlin design is often set apart by a modern, urban style.

Creative Centres and Networks

Similar to the internationally recognised centres of non-commercial art in Berlin such as the Künstlerhaus Bethanien and the KW Institute for Contemporary Art, there are also several creative centres for design professionals and fans in the city. The Internationales Design Zentrum Berlin (IDZ) thus functions as a place for encounter among the creative scene, politics, economy, society and culture. www.idz.de

The ĪMA Design Village in Kreuzberg is located in a former industrial building and offers offices, studios, showroom and retail space for designers working in a variety of disciplines. The ĪMA café is also open to visitors. The attached ĪMA Loft Hotel provides individuals and design companies with completely equipped apartments of different sizes for short- or long-term stay in the creative capital. It has become a veritable institution in the city, now with

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five locations, including ones at Rosa-Luxemburg-Platz and Oldenburger Str. www.imavillage.com

Nearby, betahaus on Kreuzberg's Moritzplatz has also become a centre for promoting innovation. Approximately 120 freelance professionals have found workspace and a platform for exchanging ideas in the 1,000 m² offered by the new collaborative project. Temporary workspace can be rented and a workshop with 3-D printer, woodworking tools and laser cutters is also available. Guided tours can be booked by writing fuehrung@betahaus.de or going to www.betahaus.de.

One of the latest creative and design contexts in the city is Aufbau Haus, which opened on Moritzplatz in 2011. The Aufbau Verlag, one of Germany's leading publishing groups, moved into the four floors of the building, together with TAK (Theater Aufbau Kreuzberg) and 50 partners from the manufacturing and services sector. Fellow occupants include Metrolit, a pop-culture press; shortcut, specialising in architectural models; and the Stiftung Kommunikationsaufbau, a foundation focusing on promoting literacy among children and adults. Berlin designers have caused a furore in the wallpaper market with Extra Tapete, creating fresh wallpaper collections in small, limited editions. The home furnishings shop minimum is another space for Berlin designers to show and sell their work. In addition, the building is home to a restaurant, a café, a book shop, a nursery and and Imago 1:1, the only self-portrait camera in the world that you can walk into. The Create Berlin network also makes its home in Aufbau Haus. www.aufbauhaus.de

Agora, operated by a group of Brazilian performers, is a relatively new and exciting co-working space for creative professionals with a focus on food and gardening trends. agoracollective.org.

In addition to the creative centres, there are numerous networks and websites that provide important platforms for exchange among designers. Above all, Create Berlin should be mentioned. It brings together design professionals in all areas with major institutions, agencies and companies in the capital, organises important exhibitions and provides networking opportunities at an international level. www.create-berlin.de

Some designers work in networks that focus on creating high-end, high-quality works. One of the better-known members is Magdalena Schaffrin, who won the Berlin Environmental Award in the category of business and innovation for her commitment to sustainable fashion. Schaffrin is co-founder of the GREENshowroom that is a part of Berlin Fashion Week. This eventually gave birth to the Ethical Fashion Show Berlin, which focuses on street fashion, unlike the high-end fashion focus of the GREENshowroom. Both shows take place under one roof at Postbahnhof in Friedrichshain. www.magdalenaschaffrin.com, www.greenshowroom.com, www.ethicalfashionshowberlin.com

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Sustainability plays a central role in the work of designers Bobby Kolade and Alarma Futura. Kolade's collection is exclusively produced locally and can be checked out at Happy Shop Global Alliance in Torstraße. www.happyshop-berlin.com.

Berlin is known not only for androgynous models, but also transgender and politically and culturally motivated fashions. Danish designer and UdK graduate Mads Dinesen's label has been offering ungendered fashions since 2012. Other labels worth mentioning are Sarah Effenberger's Fomme and Tim Labenda which design looks for women based on classic men's styles.

During the twice-yearly Fashion Week, the Berlin Modesalon created by Vogue has become the talk of the town. It has featured Berlin-based labels like those of Nobieh Talaei and Marina Hörmanseder from the outset. While Talaei combines tradition and modernity to create a simple, elegant style, Hörmanseder creates shrill corsages and fetish-inspired designs that demand attention.

Design Hotels

Das Stue is located in the former Danish embassy in Tiergarten's embassy district and combines the clean lines of classicist architecture from the 1930s with a very successful modern interior by famous Spanish designer Patricia Urquiola. www.das-stue.com

Since 2010, Soho House Berlin in Mitte has been serving creative types in the media and fashion industries as a place to stay and work while in Berlin. The hotel is based on exclusive club hotels in cities such as London, Hong Kong and New York. While the upper floors offer overnight accommodation and places to work with a roof-top lounge and heated pool for club members, the lower three floors offer restaurants, shops, a cinema and a wellness centre that are open to non-members as well. www.sohohouse.com

One of the hottest hotels for musicians is Nhow in trendy Friedrichshain. The distinctive structure was designed by Sergei Tchoban and stands directly on the river Spree. It features interior design by star architect Karim Rashid and is the only hotel in Europe with two recording studios. www.nhow-hotels.com/berlin/

Friedrichshain's Hotel Michelberger is another hip accommodation in the city. Renowned interior designer and architect Werner Aisslinger furnished the listed former factory in Friedrichshain with flea market objects and created an unconventional hotel with a special Berlin feel. fancy pants by Sigurg Larsen has been available since autumn 2015, offering spacious rooms clad in room, private saunas, and plenty of opportunities to retreat. www.michelbergerhotel.com

Bikini Berlin and its Hotel 25hours was also designed by Aisslinger, who created an interior that skilfully reflects the contrasts of Berlin on every floor of the hotel. Two concepts drove the design: urban and jungle. On the south side, cool modern materials dominate. From the

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north side, guests have a view of Berlin Zoo and the rooms are decorated in warm tones with lots of wood. One highlight is the restaurant and bar on the top floor with a surrounding terrace and great views of Berlin. www.25hours-hotels.com/de/bikini/home/home.html

After two years of renovation, the Hotel am Zoo reopened in 2014. US designer Dayna Lee, a former art director for the Hollywood film industry, has combined stylistic elements from the 1920s with fantasy pieces reminiscent of a film set. This hotel once inhabited by film stars of yore has once again become the West-side counterpart of the Soho House. www.hotelzoo.de

A recent achievement in the field of design hotels is the MaxBrown near Kurfürstendamm, offering a mix of vintage flair and youthful design targeted for young, smart travellers. Also impressive is Benedict 24/7 from Tel Aviv, where you can enjoy breakfasts from around the world 24/7. <http://www.maxbrownhotels.com/de/kudamm>

Berlin Design Museums

Berlin's museums present various historical and aesthetic aspects of the fields of design and fashion. The Bauhaus Archive and Berlin Museum for Design is home to the world's most extensive collection of materials from the Bauhaus and is a must for all fans of design. The building's exterior, designed by Walter Gropius, is also a masterpiece of avant-garde design. The Bauhaus has redesigned the permanent exhibition on the Bauhaus collection and is presenting approximately 80 new acquisitions as well as a number of temporary exhibitions to create a deeper interest in the museum's new extension, scheduled to open in 2019, the centenary of the design movement. The Berlinische Galerie on the northern edge of Kreuzberg focuses on art and design made in Berlin during the past hundred years.

www.bauhaus.de, www.berlinischegalerie.de

Art Nouveau, Art Deco and Functionalism are the three decorative styles that are the focus of the specialist period museum the Bröhan. The displays cover two main areas: the decorative arts and fine arts. Selected objects using different materials and techniques are presented in combination with furniture, carpets, graphics and images as comprehensive room ensembles. www.broehan-museum.de

The Lipperheide Costume Library at the Kunstbibliothek in the Kulturforum near Potsdamer Platz houses the world's largest collection on the cultural history of clothing and fashion, costume and fashion designs as well as graphics from the Renaissance to the present.

www.smb.spk-berlin.de

The Kunstgewerbemuseum (Museum of Decorative Arts) is the oldest of its kind in Germany. It houses one of the most important collections of European decorative arts and is presented at two locations in Berlin. The location at the Kulturforum near Potsdamer Platz provides a systematic overview of the masterpieces of European design and object art from the Middle Ages to the present. The second site at Köpenick Palace features furniture and decorative

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arts from the Renaissance, Baroque and Rococo periods. www.smb.museum/museen-und-einrichtungen/kunstgewerbemuseum

Handmade porcelain of the highest quality and artistic tradition can be found in the interactive exhibition at KPM, Berlin's oldest crafts business still in operation. The factory was founded in 1763 by Frederick the Great. And those who fall in love with the "white gold" like Frederick himself, can acquire design objects and exclusive collector's editions in the KPM sales galleries. www.kpm.de

The Werkbundarchiv – Museum der Dinge (Museum of Things) presents its collection of design and everyday culture in the 20th century in a former workshop building in Kreuzberg. It documents the history of the Deutsches Werkbund (German Association of Craftsmen), founded in 1907 and the century's material culture dominated by industrial mass production. www.museumderdinge.de

The Sammlung Industrielle Gestaltung (Collection of Industrial Design) offers a comprehensive insight into the design history of the Soviet occupation zone and the former GDR. It is housed in the listed Kulturbrauerei facility in Prenzlauer Berg. The unique collection contains about 160,000 objects both everyday and high design. www.hdg.de

Galleries and Temporary Showrooms

In addition to the city's countless galleries devoted to contemporary art, Berlin's diverse creative scene has opened up many showrooms to present the many facets of modern design. For example, Galerie Karena Schüssler specialises in contemporary design while the Appel Design Gallery and Jacksons in the Galerienhaus on Kreuzberg's Lindenstraße specialise in Scandinavian design classics from the twentieth century. The Galerie für Architektenmöbel on Brunnenstraße focuses on furniture designs from the likes of Bruno Taut to Norman Foster. Charlottenstraße is home to the showroom of Ulrich Fiedler, one of Germany's design gallerists, where he displays quality Modernist pieces that are the envy of many. www.karenaschuessler.com, www.appel-design.com, www.galerienhaus.com, www.ulrichfiedler.com

Direktorenhaus is an attractive space for art and design events in what was the director's house at the old mint between the Nikolaiviertel and Alexanderplatz. Its founders are the initiators and leaders of the Illustrative. The Direktorenhaus seeks to create an experimental forum for addressing aesthetic concepts and the dissolution of the boundaries between art and design. www.direktorenhaus.com, www.illustrative.de

designtransfer, on the other hand, is a gallery space for the design college at UdK Berlin and functions as a place for academia and the public to meet. www.designtransfer.udk-berlin.de

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Events with a Design Focus

Established trade fairs such as the DMY International Design Festival, Germany's most important major event for contemporary product design, have long been obligatory events within the industry. In recent years, it has developed into the place for innovative Berliners to meet, check out the latest trends and see some creative experiments. The DMY is supplemented by numerous special events by Berlin-based design studios, galleries, museums and embassies across the city. The 15th edition of the DMY International Design Festival at Kraftwerk Berlin on Köpenicker Straße in Mitte once again promises to be quite stimulating. <https://dmyberlin.com/de/news>

To mark European Artistic Crafts Days in April, many artisans and designers will be opening their doors to the public. 3tage-handwerk-design-berlin.de

The transitions between design and contemporary art are often fluid. That's why it's worthwhile for design enthusiasts to take a look at the city's arts calendar as well. In addition to major events such as the Berlin Biennale, the abc, the Preview, the Berliner Liste and the Transmediale that address certain aspects of design, you should check out the semi-annual Zeughausmesse for applied arts and design held in the architecturally significant Schlüterhof at the Deutsches Historisches Museum. www.zeughausmesse.de

Design Markets for Every Season

Away from the big, often costly trade shows, smaller sales platforms and creative markets offer young designers an opportunity to promote their products and network with each other. The pre-Christmas creative markets have also made a name for themselves. Their concept is simple: art and design blended with music and party in a relaxed club atmosphere. Those who are still looking for the right Christmas present can check out seasonal shows such as the Nowkölln Christmas flea market, the Weihnachtsrodeo X-Mas Market, Klunkerkränich in Neukölln, or Holy.Shit.Shopping. www.nowkoelln.de, www.weihnachtsrodeo.de, www.klunkerkranich.de, www.holyshitshopping.de

Due to popular demand, Holy.Shit.Shopping offers a summer market as well. The Sommer.Pop.Shopping works on the same principle. Its new location is the Alte Münze, where 150 talented young designers will present their latest collections and creations. www.holyshitshopping.de

Department Stores with Style

stilwerk, a design and home furnishings shopping centre, is located close to Kurfürstendamm, between Theater des Westens and Savignyplatz. A total of about 60 up-scale furnishings and designer shops present their wares on the five-storey building that was formerly the administrative headquarters of Dresdner Bank. The vault was retained and integrated as an architectural highlight in the glass structure. Also located here is Zeitlos, a design shop

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specialising in Bauhaus and Art Deco originals from designers such as van der Rohe, Wagenfeld and Breuer as well as exquisite design replicas. www.stilwerk.de, www.zeitlos-berlin.de

Stylish furnishings and high-quality designer furniture for your home can also be found at Exil-Wohnmagazin, BoConcept and Moove. The young designers at Steinbühl, NUTSANDWOODS, and lighting labels Lukkizi are getting the attention they deserve from the showroom and studio space they share with vintage label Stilraum Berlin in Friedrichshain. www.exil-wohnmagazin.de, www.boconcept.de, <https://www.steinbuehl.com>, nutsandwoods.de

Exclusive and sustainably produced products from Berlin designers and manufacturers are on offer at the of/Berlin concept store on Nositzstraße in Kreuzberg. The offerings range from the culinary to interior design and gift ideas that will thrill all fans of design. The networking and support by Berlin designers is a passion at of/Berlin. The tours on offer allow visitors to meet the creators of the products featured. <http://www.ofberlin.com>

The small shop Kult pur on Kreuzberg's Muskauerstraße offers exceptional design and crafts from international, often not very well-known designers from the fields of fashion, home décor and accessories. Organic coffee and up-cycling products add to Kult pur's reputation for promoting sustainability. In addition to changing exhibitions, various readings, fashion shows and concerts are held on the premises. Home-made culinary delights complement the store's devotion to design, pleasure and culture. www.kult-pur.de

Those looking for something valuable will certainly find it Kreuzberg's Süper Store, featuring bakeware from Neukölln metal factory, soaps from Germany's oldest family-owned soap factory, and stools and lamps by the Berlin furniture label. www.sueper-store.de

A truly special kind of department store is the Manufactum Warenhaus in Haus Hardenberg on Ernst-Reuter-Platz. On two floors, the shop offers high-quality products, some of which are still made according to traditional, labour-intensive artisanal standards. The "good things" on offer range from household goods to clothing, tools, toys and furniture. www.manufactum.de

Modern design, old-world craftsmanship – that's also available at die Imaginär Manufaktur (DIM). In a former institute for the blind in Kreuzberg's Oranienstraße, people with disabilities craft attractive and modern design objects from wicker, brushes and brooms. More than 70 international designers create stylish DIM objects that are not only sold in Kreuzberg but also in museum shops around the world. The products are sold in the shop, which also runs a café. www.dim-berlin.de

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Modulor offers accessories, materials and all kinds of tools for designers, architects, model-builders and hobbyists. The specialist for art supplies has recently moved to the Aufbau Haus on Moritzplatz. www.modulor.de

Authentic, one-of-a-kind pieces of Berlin design can be found at Hauptstadtunikate. Design lovers can choose affordable examples of oil paintings, photographs, furniture and fashion in the online shop featuring the work of the city's creative residents. www.hauptstadtunikate.de

Many Berlin designers have caused quite the uproar at various exhibitions and trade shows, for example, Friederike Delius at her Studio Berg and Joa Herrenknecht. www.studioberg.de, www.joa-herrenknecht.com

Sustainability and Innovation

Green Living in Prenzlauer Berg's Kulturbrauerei is also setting trends for a sustainable future. It sells beautiful furniture and furnishings that also meet the principles of green living. www.green-living-berlin.de.

The Type Hype concept store in Berlin's Mitte district focuses on premium design products that focus on fonts, letters, and words. It is located in a former typesetting shop and focuses on high quality, sustainable manufacture. www.typehype.com

The Federal Ministry of the Environment and the Federal Environmental Agency awarded the first Federal Ecodesign Prize in January 2012. The goal was to make good examples of ecodesign better known and to encourage innovation in this area. The Internationales Design Zentrum Berlin (IDZ) is responsible for the design and implementation of the competition. Eight projects received prizes in 2016. Projects include chemical-free raincoats made of cotton to automotive paint designed to cut car temperatures under strong sunlight and passive filtration of plastic particles from oceans which are then converted to help grow algae. The competition is held annually. www.bundespreis-ecodesign.de

One of the coolest concept stores in Berlin is The Store at Soho House. where men and women not only can buy luxurious outfits by Jil Sander and The Row, but also admire modern interior design by Berlin label New Tendency or legendary furniture pieces by Le Corbusier. The Store Kitchen, its restaurant, offers cold-pressed juices and delicacies that invite you to linger whilst browsing books, records, or magazines. thestore-berlin.com

Design Guides

For those who want to get away from the crowds of tourists and dive into the diverse world of design in Berlin, GoArt! and artberlin offer thematic walks and programme covering the exciting world of fashion and design, contemporary art, Berlin's neighbourhoods and modern architecture. Berlinagenten directs its focus on lifestyle, culinary tours and events, while nicheberlin focuses on architecture and art. Of/Berlin offers two guided tours of

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workshops and studios in Kreuzberg and Mitte. www.goart-berlin.de, www.artberlin-online.de, www.berlinagenten.com, www.nicheberlin.de, <https://www.ofberlin.com>

Other websites with useful information about design in Berlin include

www.creative-city-berlin.de, www.designszeneberlin.de, www.berlindesignblog.de, www.berlindesign.net

More information can be found at visitBerlin.de.

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