

Berlin's Year of History 2015: War's End and New Beginning

Overview of events and exhibitions in Berlin / 70 years end of World War II on 8 May / 25 years German Reunification

Berlin, 4 May 2015 This year, Berlin is commemorating two significant dates in German history: the end of the Nazi regime and the Second World War on 8 May 1945 and the unification of the two post-war German states on 3 October 1989. Numerous events for Berliners and visitors alike will focus on these turning points in German (and world) history and offer the perfect opportunity to learn more about German history where it was made.

War's End and New Beginning in Berlin

Exhibitions, commemorative events, guided tours, and film series are planned across Berlin to mark these anniversaries. For example, the German Historical Museum is marking 70 years since the end of World War II with its exhibition "1945. Defeat. Liberation. New Beginning", which focuses not just on events in Berlin, but also on what happened in other European countries. In addition, vivid photos of the final days of the war are on display on many places in Berlin's city centre, including the Brandenburg Gate and Potsdamer Platz. A commemoration week under the title "May 45 – Spring in Berlin" until 8 May will offer guided tours, events, and films addressing the anniversary of the war's end. An overview of the events can be found at visitBerlin.com and www.berlin.de/mai45/en/may-45-spring-in-berlin.

Another turning point in German history will also be marked in Berlin this year: a quarter century since the signing of the treat that reunited the two post-war German states in 1990. The photo exhibition "Unification. German society in transition" will open on 28 May at the German Historical Museum. The exhibition will look at everyday life as two economic and political systems came together with the merger of East and West. In autumn 2015, a permanent open-air exhibition will open in front of the Stasi Museum Berlin to tell the stories of the events and the leading players in the peaceful revolution of 1989-90 with photos, documents, and films. More at revolution89.de.

Other Commemorative Sites and Events

There are many sites across Berlin commemorating German history which have become must-see attractions for visitors to the city. The Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe will be celebrating its tenth anniversary on 10 May 2015. The stelae were erected on a centrally-located city block between Potsdamer Platz and Brandenburg Gate. In the first year after its opening, it had already received 3.5 million visitors. The Topography of Terror educates visitors about the Nazi institutions of terror near their one-time headquarters. As of 27 April 2015, ten million people had visited the site since its opening in 1987.

Many other institutions in Berlin are also planning events and exhibitions in 2015 to address the two anniversaries. An overview of all events can be found at visitBerlin.com.

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