

Berlin exceeds 20 million room night mark

Historical record / Governing Mayor welcomes jubilee visitor from Spain

Berlin, 16 December 2010 Tourism metropolis Berlin has set a historical record: for the first time the magical mark of 20 million room nights per year is exceeded. Berlin's Governing Mayor Klaus Wowereit and *visitBerlin* CEO Burkhard Kieker made this announcement today during a press conference at the WeltWissen Exhibition at the Martin Gropius Bau. Ana Domingo of Barcelona was welcomed as jubilee visitor.

Klaus Wowereit, Governing Mayor of Berlin: "It took Berlin 55 years to reach ten million room nights. The next ten million have now been achieved in only ten years. This is a remarkable achievement for the German capital. No other European city has had such a dynamic development over the last years. Berlin is hence among the big winners in city tourism. Berlin's Senate has granted special priority to the promotion of Berlin tourism in the past and will continue to do so. In this way we invest in the future, secure jobs and strengthen the economic power of the German capital."

"The force of attraction of the German capital is today as strong as never before", said *visitBerlin* CEO Burkhard Kieker and added: "The Berliners have reinvented their city and the world seems to like it. The German capital now plays in the league of the Big Three, alongside London and Paris. Who would have thought that 20 years ago? Berlin is 'back on the map'."

Willy Weiland, President of the Berlin Hotel and Restaurant Association (DEHOGA Berlin): „Many years of hard work and continuity have been rewarded, but we will not lean back!"

According to an analysis by *visitBerlin*, there are essentially four points which determine Berlin's current appeal: Berlin is perceived as a total work of art; tourists visit the city and the lifestyle of its inhabitants. In addition, the German capital is a focal point of history. In no other European metropolis exists a comparable cultural densification. Favourable prices are another driver of the force of attraction for visitors.

During the last years the destination Berlin has recorded significant growth rates – as opposed to almost all comparable destinations. Whilst the city counted some five million visitors and 11.5 million room nights in 2000, there were already 8.3 million guests with a total of 18.9 million overnight stays in the German capital in 2009. For 2010 forecasts anticipate around nine million guests and more than 20 million room nights. Apart from visitors from Germany, Berlin is particularly popular with guests from Italy, the United Kingdom, Spain and the USA. Every overnight guest spends on average EUR 196.70 per day during a visit to Berlin; this mainly benefits the hospitality industry and retail trade. With gross sales revenues of EUR 9 billion, tourism is definitely an important economic factor for the city.

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