

BERLIN OFFERS GREAT PRICES AND SEXY EXPERIENCES



Almost two decades after the collapse of the Berlin Wall, Berlin has become arguably the most vibrant city in Europe. Statistics have proven that it is Europe's third most popular capital city, behind London and Paris. The reason for this boom in tourism, particularly amongst young people was once perfectly depicted by one of Berlin's former mayors who described his capital as "poor, but sexy". As price plays a pivotal role in attracting tourists, this is precisely the way many Berliners, hotels and other tourist organisations want foreigners and non-Berliner Germans to view the city. This applies especially to Americans. The Euro reached an all-time high against the American dollar this summer, making trips to Europe more of a financial burden and trips to London or Paris quickly gained the label of 'wallet breaking' for most visitors.

Let's look at the plain statistics: a hotel room in London costs an average of \$256, in Moscow a crippling \$364, whereas visitors to Berlin can get away with a mere \$122. These are, of course, average figures and the bargain hunting backpacker can easily lighten the strain on their resources by finding even cheaper accommodation. This does not necessarily mean that they would have to travel far out of the centre to achieve this feat. Almost 13.000 of Berlin's 90.000 hotel beds have been constructed with budget travel in mind. Many of the hotels, especially in the east of the city have decor reminiscent of the dull communist era, yet this does not discourage the cent savers. An example is the MotelOne, situated in the Alexanderplatz, offering rooms for \$82 and breakfast for a mere \$9. The hotel has been booked solid since its opening in June this year.

Accommodation is not the only area where budget travellers can save some cash. Berlin is littered with cheap food outlets, not particularly lacking in quality. Turkish döner kebab houses and busy Vietnamese buffets are popular sites in Berlin. On a similar note, travelling is also inexpensive. It is possible to buy an all-day pass for just \$8.

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