

Christmas in Berlin

December 4–10, 2023



Heritage Tours
by American Ancestors



DICAMILLO
TRAVEL

ITINERARY

Monday, December 4

Arrive independently at Berlin Brandenburg Airport and transfer to the Hotel de Rome. We'll gather in the late afternoon for a guided walking tour to see some of the city's highlights close to our hotel. Beginning at Pariser Platz, we'll see the classic architecture that lines the renowned Unter den Linden Boulevard, which leads up to the soaring Brandenburg Gate. We'll walk past the American Embassy and Frank Gehry's intriguing DZ bank building, whose sedate façade belies its avant-garde interior and fishlike dome. We will delve into the conglomeration of old and new during our visit to the historic Reichstag Building, whose neo-Baroque architecture is topped with a striking glass dome offering superb views of the city. We'll toast the beginning of a festive week together at a welcome reception and dinner in the heart of downtown Berlin.

Tuesday, December 5

This morning, we'll stroll across the Schlossbrücke—the elegant arched sandstone bridge designed by Prussian court architect Karl Friedrich Schinkel in the 1820s—to Museum Island, a UNESCO World Heritage Site and repository of ancient art and architectural treasures from Babylon to Egypt to Rome. En route, we'll stop along the way to take in two powerful memorials: Bebelplatz, the site of the infamous Nazi book burning, and the New Guardhouse, designed by Schinkel, which houses Käthe Kollwitz's moving Pietà, a memorial to victims of war and tyranny.

On Museum Island, we'll pause in front of the Altes Museum, one of the finest Neoclassical buildings in Germany, and learn more about Schinkel. This prominent 19th-century German architect reshaped the unspectacular city of Berlin into a magnificent representative capital for Prussia. Next, we'll visit the Pergamon Museum to view ancient Babylon's astonishing and colossal Ishtar Gate, the Roman market gate from Miletus, and the dramatic Pergamon Altar. At the Humboldt Forum, formally the Berlin Palace, we'll see the façade and learn about the painstaking restoration of the newly restored sculpted façade. After a lunch featuring local German specialties, we'll visit the Neues Museum, designed by the renowned architect David Chipperfield, where we will see the highlights from the Egyptian Museum, including the remarkable bust of Nefertiti.

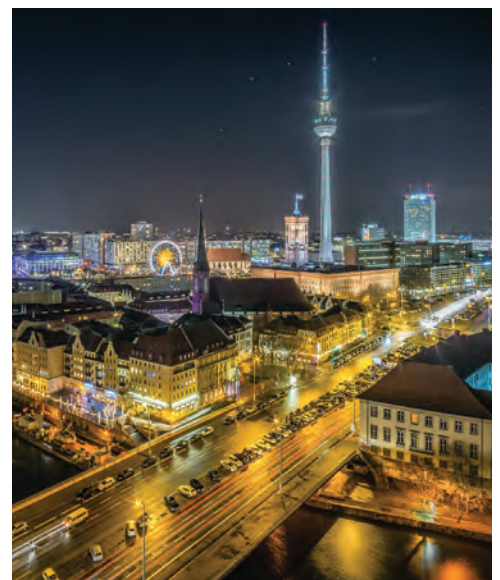
The evening is at leisure and we will provide a list of recommended nearby restaurants.



Reichstag dome interior (Josiah Mackenzi)



Ishtar Gate, detail, in the Pergamon Museum (momo)



View over Berlin (Stefan Widua)



Sanssouci Palace (Nigel Swales)

Wednesday, December 6

Today we'll venture to Potsdam, where we will traverse the Glienicke Bridge, the famous Bridge of Spies. We'll spend the morning exploring Sanssouci Palace, the exquisite summer residence of Frederick the Great, one of the greatest Prussian monarchs and enlightened patron of the arts. Considered Germany's most outstanding palace complex, Sanssouci's design is a remarkable marriage between landscape and architecture. Considered Germany's Versailles, the 300 acres of grounds are dotted with gardens, fountains, and delights. Weather permitting, we'll walk through the gardens.

Following lunch at a restaurant in Potsdam, we'll tour the Neues Palais, the lavish palace built by Frederick the Great for visiting dignitaries. This afternoon there will be free time to explore the charming Christmas Market in the main square of downtown Potsdam.

This evening, we will be welcomed into the Museum Barberini for a private reception with appetizers, wine, and traditional German Christmas cookies. Next, we will have an after-hours tour of *Edvard Munch: Transforming Nature*, the first exhibition of landscapes by the Norwegian painter, which brings together over ninety loans from institutions around the world.



Edvard Munch's *Summer Night by the Beach* (1902-03)

Thursday, December 7

Today begins with an excursion to the suburb of Berlin-Spandau, where we will visit the workshop of the masons who spent 15 years restoring the facade of the Humboldt Forum. We'll be met by the director for a tour of the workshop with an opportunity to talk about the archaeological process. Following the opening of the Humboldt, the workshop was converted into a long-term depository of the collection, which includes finds, bozzetti, and models of the process of recreating the façades and sculptures.

Back in downtown Berlin, we'll visit the Gemäldegalerie, which houses a magnificent collection of Old Master paintings, including Dürer, Holbein, Titian, Botticelli, Van der Weyden, Bruegel, and one of the largest Rembrandt collections in the world. Then, we'll have lunch at a restaurant near the Kulturforum.

This afternoon, we'll drive along Potsdamer Platz to see how this area has been completely transformed since German reunification from a "no man's land" into an exciting new architectural and cultural mecca, bridging Berliners from both sides of the former divide. It now boasts some of the city's most impressive contemporary architecture and has become a symbol of the new Berlin.



Humboldt Forum (Huân Lê)

Next, we will experience the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe, which was completed in 2005. We will return to the hotel via Checkpoint Charlie, the best-known Berlin Wall crossing point during the Cold War.

This evening, we'll venture outside the city for a cozy dinner with mulled wine and other Christmas specialties at a restaurant surrounded by the Gr newald Forest.

Friday, December 8

This morning, we will visit the Baroque Charlottenburg Palace, the largest and most magnificent royal residence in Berlin. The palace was named after Sophie Charlotte, the first queen consort of Prussia. An accomplished musician, the queen loved to stroll the grounds with the renowned scholar and philosopher Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz. We'll explore both the old and new palaces on a private tour.

Following a lunch of German specialties, we'll have a private tour of the Br han Museum, a treasure trove of Art Nouveau and Art Deco masterpieces.

Next, we'll have time to wander the Charlottenburg Christmas Market, set up in front of this famous palace. About 250 vendors display and sell nostalgic Christmas crafts such as nativity figures and tree decorations and traditional German Christmas sweets like stollen, spritz biscuits and marzipan loaves. We'll return to our hotel late this afternoon and enjoy an evening at leisure.

Saturday, December 9

On our last full day in Berlin, we'll step back in time at the Knoblauchhaus, one of the few remaining bourgeois houses from the 18th century in central Berlin, now a living museum. The restored living quarters are furnished in the Biedermeier style and shows how Berlin merchants lived in Germany in the 19th century. We will have a private tour of this uniquely preserved house, which will be festively decorated for the Christmas season.

Next, we'll be treated to a private holiday organ concert in the Berlin Cathedral. At its inauguration in 1905, the cathedral's Sauer organ was the largest in Germany, with 7,269 pipes and 113 registers. We'll enjoy a free afternoon for a visit to a museum, last-minute shopping, and soaking in the magic of Christmas in downtown Berlin.

This evening, we'll bid *auf wiedersehen* to Berlin at our farewell dinner in the intimate private drawing room of Borchardt, one Berlin's top restaurants.



A piece of the Berlin Wall in Potsdamer Platz
(Marie Bellando Mitjans)



Christmas Market characters, Berlin (Sergiy Galyonkin)



Christmas Market at Charlottenburg Palace (Reiseuhu.de)



Berlin Cathedral (Karli Cumber)

Sunday, December 10

Following breakfast at the hotel, transfer independently to Berlin's Brandenburg Airport for flights back to the United States.

ABOUT OUR TOUR LEADER



Curt DiCamillo

Curt is the Curator of Special Collections at New England Historic Genealogical Society (NEHGS). Before he came to NEHGS he worked for the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, and the National Trust for Scotland. Curt is a noted historian and a recognized authority on the British country house, about which he has written, lectured, and taught in the U.S. and abroad. Since 1999 he has maintained an award-winning database on the web, TheDiCamillo.com, which seeks to document every English, Scottish, Welsh, and Irish country house ever built, standing or demolished. He is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts, is listed in *Who's Who in America*, *Who's Who in the World*, is a Fellow of the Massachusetts Historical Society, and a member of the Council of the American Museum in Britain.

ACCOMMODATION

Hotel de Rome, Berlin

This elegant 5-star hotel is ideally situated in the heart of Berlin. Housed in a former bank, the property exudes old world elegance, while comfortably appointed rooms infuse a contemporary touch.



American Ancestors/New England Historic Genealogical Society is America's founding genealogical organization, the most respected name in family history, and one of the leading non-profit organizations in the field. We create enriching opportunities for members and the public to research their own family history, attend educational programs and tours, exhibitions, and other inspirational experiences that communicate the power and importance of family history.

To learn more, visit AmericanAncestors.org: <https://www.americanancestors.org>

CHRISTMAS IN BERLIN

December 4–10, 2023

Tour Cost:

Land Package: \$8,995

Single Supplement: \$1,495

Tour price is per person, based on double occupancy, with a minimum of 12 paying participants.

Deposit & Final Payment: A deposit of \$2,000 per person is required to reserve a spot on the tour. Deposits are payable by check or credit card (MasterCard, Visa, or American Express). Final balance will be invoiced and is due on July 21, 2023. Final balance payments are payable by check only to International Seminar Design, Inc. Registrations will be accepted beyond this date on a space-available basis.

Activity Level: Moderate; good walking ability is advised. Some museum and palace visits require use of staircases, and there will be a limited amount of walking on uneven ground.

Flights: Airfare is not included in the tour price. Participants are responsible for all aspects of their round-trip air arrangements. Please do not purchase airline tickets until the operation of the tour is confirmed.

Terms & Conditions: New England Historic Genealogical Society (NEHGS) and International Seminar Design, Inc. (ISDI) require that all tour participants be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 to participate on the tour. Upon receipt of registration, ISDI will send registrant a Participant Tour Agreement detailing the full terms and conditions for this tour. This document must be signed and returned to ISDI before participant's registration is considered complete and any arrangements can be confirmed.

Travel Insurance: Travel Insurance is not included in the tour cost, but participants are strongly encouraged to purchase a travel protection plan in conjunction with this tour, including coverage of trip cancellation, trip interruption, emergency evacuation/repatriation, medical expenses, lost or damaged baggage, and other expenses and/or losses incurred due to unexpected situations. Should a participant cancel at any time after registering for the tour, NEHGS and ISDI must strictly abide by the cancellation policy outlined herein. Travel insurance information will be sent upon tour registration.

Tour Price Inclusions: 6 nights' accommodation at the Hotel de Rome, Berlin; breakfast daily at the hotel, 4 lunches, 3 dinners, 1 reception with heavy appetizers at the Museum Barberini, Potsdam; wine or beer at included lunches and dinners; land transportation by private motor coach; entrance fees to sites and visits listed in the itinerary; leadership of Curt DiCamillo for duration of the tour; services of an American Ancestors/NEHGS tour manager; expert local guides for all touring; gratuities for guides and drivers and at included meals; handling of 2 pieces of luggage per person upon arrival and departure from the hotel; bottled water on coach; service charges and taxes.

Tour Price Exclusions: Airline tickets, airline taxes and surcharges, and baggage fees; airport portorage; airport transfers upon arrival and departure; passport or visa fees; meals other than those specified in the itinerary; gratuities for hotel housekeeping; personal items such as telephone calls, room service, valet service, à-la-carte orders, specialty wines and liquors, laundry charges, travel extensions, or tour deviations; entry or departure fees levied by local governments; travel insurance; any other items not specifically included in the itinerary.

Cancellations & Refunds: Cancellation by participant must be made in writing to NEHGS and is effective only upon acknowledged receipt by NEHGS. There is a non-refundable registration and planning fee of \$500 per person regardless of cancellation date. Written cancellation received by NEHGS on or before July 21, 2023: full refund minus \$500 per person registration and planning fee. Written cancellation received by NEHGS between July 22 and October 20, 2023: full refund minus \$4,500 per person cancellation fee (includes registration and planning fee). Written cancellations received by NEHGS on or after October 21, 2023: no refund. Tour registration is non-transferable. In the case of cancellation, substitutions are not allowed. After the tour has commenced, no refunds will be issued for any reason including, but not limited to, unused portions of tour. If the tour is cancelled by NEHGS or ISDI due to low enrollment, active registrants will receive a full refund of all tour payments.

For more information:

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