
Travel Guide Rostock

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Quick view Rostock – a brief overview

The former Hanseatic city of Rostock was the largest port in the former DDR. Despite suffering heavy damage during WWII, and enduring the insults of Soviet architectural ideals for the following 44 years, it managed to hold its head high, and a small but beautiful historic enclave packed with 14th- and 15th-century buildings survives. Rostock's population expands greatly in summer each time one of the regular Baltic Sea cruise ships docks at the nearby harbour of Warnemünde.

And every August, during the Hanse Sail yacht-racing week, the city fills to bursting with visitors. At other times it remains a vibrant place, with a vitality that's driven by its high student population.



Germany General Information

Country overview

Once mockingly referred to as the "land of schnitzels and leather pants," Germany has acquired a much more modern image in recent decades. International visitors are attracted to the big cities, especially the capital, Berlin. Since the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, in particular, the city with its many cultural and entertainment attractions has become a major tourist destination. But other German cities also know how to celebrate and enjoy life.

Hamburg's annual Hafengeburtstag port anniversary festival attracts around two million visitors every year, the Rhineland is famous for its carnivals, and Munich's Oktoberfest is famous the world over.

Germany also has a variety of natural landscapes: for example, from the Wadden Sea and lowland plains of the northwest, the lakelands in the northeast of the country, numerous low mountain ranges and heathlands, to the central highlands and Alpine regions.

Geography

Germany borders Austria, Belgium, the Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Luxembourg, The Netherlands, Poland and Switzerland. The northwest has a coastline on the North Sea, while the Baltic coastline in the northeast stretches from the Danish to the Polish border.

The country is divided into 16 states (*Bundesländer*) and has an exceedingly varied landscape. In what was once known as West Germany, the Rhine, Bavaria and the Black Forest stand as the three most famous features, while in the east, the country is lake-studded with undulating lowlands.

River basins extend over a large percentage of the region, and some of Europe's most prominent rivers flow through the country. These include the Elbe, the Danube and the Rhine.

The highest point in the country is the 2962m (9718ft) peak of Zugspitze Mountain in the Bavarian Alps. Cable cars run to the summit, which can also be climbed.

General Information

Key facts

Population: 82,79 million (2017)
Capital: Berlin.

Language

German is the official language. Regional dialects often differ markedly from standard German.

Currency

Euro (EUR; symbol €) = 100 cents. Notes are in denominations of €500, 200, 100, 50, 20, 10 and 5. Coins are in denominations of €2 and 1, and 50, 20, 10, 5, 2 and 1 cents.

Electricity

230 volts AC, 50Hz. European-style round two-pin plugs are in use.

Public holidays

Listed below are the public holidays for the period January 2020 to December 2021.

Note:

* In catholic regions only

** Sachsen only

*** Not in all Laender (Bundesländer)

**** Berlin only, 2020 only

2020

New Year's Day: 1 January 2020

Epiphany: 6 January 2020*

Good Friday: 10 April 2020

Easter Sunday: 12 April 2020

Easter Monday: 13 April 2020

Labour Day: 1 May 2020

Liberation Day: 8 May 2020****

Ascension Day: 21 May 2020

Whit Sunday: 31 May 2020

Whit Monday: 1 June 2020

Corpus Christi: 21 June 2020*

Assumption: 15 August 2020*

Day of German Unity: 3 October 2020

Day of Reformation: 31 October 2020***

All Saints' Day: 1 November 2020*

Repentance Day: 21 November 2020**

Christmas: 25 and 26 December 2020

2021

New Year's Day: 1 January 2021

Epiphany: 6 January 2021*

Good Friday: 2 April 2021

Easter Sunday: 4 April 2021

Easter Monday: 5 April 2021

Labour Day: 1 May 2021

Ascension Day: 13 May 2021

Whit Sunday: 23 June 2021

Whit Monday: 24 May 2021

Corpus Christi: 3 June 2021*

Assumption: 15 August 2021*

Day of German Unity: 3 October 2021

Day of Reformation: 31 October 2021***

All Saints' Day: 1 November 2021*

Repentance Day: 21 November 2021**

Christmas: 25 and 26 December 2021

All information subject to change.



Travel etiquette

How to fit in

Handshaking is customary in Germany, and it is considered rude to address people by their first name unless invited to do so. Normal courtesies should be observed. Before eating, it is normal to say *"guten Appetit"* to the other people at the table to which the correct reply is *"danke, gleichfalls"* ("Thank you, the same to you"). If you've been invited to eat at a German house, it is customary to present the hostess with unwrapped flowers (according to tradition, you should always give an uneven number, and it is worth noting that red roses are exclusively a lover's gift).

In shops and other businesses, courtesy dictates that visitors should utter a greeting, such as *"guten Tag"* (or *"grüß Gott"* in Bavaria) before saying what it is that they want; to leave without saying *"auf Wiedersehen"* or *"tschüss"* can also cause offence.

Similarly, when making a telephone call, asking for the person you want to speak to without stating first who you are is impolite. Casual wear is widely acceptable, but more formal dress is required for some restaurants, the opera, theater, casinos and important social functions. Smoking is prohibited where notified, on public transportation and in most public buildings.



Health

Health

Main emergency number: 112

Food & Drink

There's nothing to mark out German products as particularly risky to general health (although it has a partly founded reputation for being high in fat). Tap water is safe to drink.

Other Risks

Tick-borne encephalitis is present in forested areas of southern Germany; vaccination is advisable. Rabies is present; look out for 'Tollwut' signs. For those at high risk, vaccination before arrival should be considered.

During the summer months, sunburn can be a problem. The southwest generally has the highest temperatures. The usual precautions apply: Use a generous amount of sunscreen and be sensible about how long you spend in direct sunlight. Be aware that a breezy day can sometimes mask high temperatures.

If walking over a long distance in warm weather, it's advisable to drink – and carry – plenty of water and wear appropriate clothing, including a sun hat. Blisters can be another problem for hikers. These can often occur if new walking shoes are being worn over a long distance. Ideally, footwear should be worn in before the trip.

As a counterpoint to the balminess of the summer, German winters can be fairly severe. This is generally truer the further east you travel. If you're arriving during the coldest months of the year, make sure you have adequate clothing. At any time of year, in fact, temperatures can be unpredictable – even in July and August it makes sense to have a sweater (and maybe an umbrella, too) to hand.

Other health problems that inexperienced travelers might reasonably encounter are the various knock-on effects of consuming too much alcohol. The risk, unsurprisingly, is particularly prevalent among those attending Munich's Oktoberfest. Be aware that some beers have ABV levels of as much as 6 or 7% and should therefore be treated with respect.



Phone calls & Internet

Phone calls & Internet

Telephone

Country code:+49

Mobile telephony and Internet

Since June 2017, EU citizens traveling within the EU, and also in Iceland, Norway and Liechtenstein have been able to use their cell phones and surf the Net without incurring any extra charges: In other words, customers pay the same price for phone calls, text messages and data volume as they do at home. Restrictions do apply to the constant use of SIM cards abroad, however, and caps may be set on data packages. For full details, contact your mobile telephony provider in your country. Travelers using a SIM card from a non-EU state do not benefit from the new arrangement.

Free Internet access via Wi-Fi is possible in many busy tourist spots. When using public Wi-Fi networks, it is a wise precaution to ensure encryption of all passwords, credit card details and banking credentials entered. Use of a VPN app or security software to check the safety of a hotspot is recommended.



Top 10 sights

Top 10 sights in Rostock

Kröpeliner Straße

This pedestrianised cobblestone street stretching from Kröpeliner Tor city gate to Neuer Markt is filled with some of the city's finest examples of late-Gothic and Renaissance merchant houses.

Kröpeliner Straße
18055 Rostock
Germany

Universitätsplatz

The centrepiece of this leafy central square is the playful Brunnen der Lebensfreude, or Fountain of Happiness, filled with humans and animals in various amusing poses. Most buildings around the square belong to the university, founded in 1419 and the oldest in the Baltic region.

Universitätsplatz
18055 Rostock
Germany

Neuer Markt

Rostock's picturesque main square is dominated by its town hall, the Rathaus. Although its baroque pink facade dates from the 18th century, most of the building behind this is 13th-century Gothic.

Neuer Markt
18055 Rostock
Germany

Schiffahrtsmuseum

The Maritime Museum in Rostock is said to be Germany's largest floating museum. It traces the history of the city's proud shipbuilding heritage from ancient times to the present day.

Schmarl-Dorf 40 18106 Rostock Germany Tel: +49 381 1283 1364	Opening times: Tue-Sun 1000-1800 www.schiffahrtsmuseum-rostock.de
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Zoological Gardens

Home to one of northern Germany's best collections of exotic animals and birds, this zoo is particularly noteworthy for its polar bear enclosure. Some of the animals were born and bred here.

Rennbahnallee 21 18059 Rostock Germany Tel: +49 381 20820	Opening times: Daily 0900-1800 (May-Aug) Daily 0900-1700 (Mar-Apr and Sep-Oct) Daily 0900-1600 (Nov-Feb) www.zoo-rostock.de
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Kulturhistorisches Museum

Housed in the Convent of the Holy Cross, a Cistercian nunnery founded in 1270, the Cultural History Museum has held an important collection of local art and cultural historical artefacts since it opened in 1859.

Klosterhof 7 18055 Rostock Germany Tel: +49 381 203 590	Opening times: Tue-Sun 1000-1800 www.kulturhistorisches-museum-rostock.de
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St Marienkirche

This highlight of this 400-year-old Gothic church is its wonderful astronomical clock, which dates from 1472, and has an intricate calendar that extends from then until 2017.

Am Ziegenmarkt 4 18055 Rostock Germany Tel: +49 381 5108 9711	Opening times: Mon-Sat 1000-1800 (May-Sep) Sun 1115-1700 (May-Sep) Mon-Sat 1000-1600 (Oct-Apr) Sun 1115-1215 (Oct-Apr) www.marienkirche-rostock.de
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Petrikirche

The 117m steeple of the Gothic Petrikirche was a landmark for passing ships for centuries until being destroyed in WWII. It was restored in 1994, and you can take a lift to the viewing platform at 45m up.

Alter Markt 18055 Rostock Germany Tel: +49 381 21101	Opening times: Daily 1000-1800 (May-Sep) Daily 1000-1600 (Oct-Apr) www.petrikirche-rostock.de
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Alter Strom

The 'Old Stream' in Warnemünde, just a few kilometres north from Rostock, is a picturesque marina lined with fishing boats selling their latest catch, and plentiful

bars and restaurants.

Am Strom, Warnemünde
18119 Rostock
Germany

Leuchtturm Warnemünde

Resembling a mosque minaret as much as a lighthouse, this 34m tower is a landmark of Warnemünde. Dating from 1898, you can climb to the top for great views of the coast and Rostock harbour.

Am Leuchtturm, Warnemünde
18119 Rostock
Germany
Tel: +49 381 519 2626

Opening times:
Daily 1000-1900 (Easter-Sep)
www.warnemuende-leuchtturm.de



Shopping in Rostock

Key Areas

As well as being worth a visit in its own right for its characterful old architecture, central Kröpelinerstrasse and the pedestrianised streets running off it are the best places to look for most everyday items.

Markets

Rostock has several outdoor markets that set up on various days and in various locations. The handiest spot in the city centre is Neuer Markt. A market selling food and other cheap items appears on this square every Monday to Friday, and on Saturday mornings.

Shopping Centres

In the heart of the city at the west end of Kröpelinerstrasse, Kröpeliner Tor Center is the biggest central shopping mall, with around 50 outlets selling most items. Ostsee Park (Ostsee-Park-Strasse 3, Rostock-Lambrechtshagen) is a large out-of-town mall in a suburb just west of Rostock, with around 70 shops and restaurants.



Restaurants

Rostock's restaurant scene covers all bases from Michelin-garlanded eateries to cheap bar snacks. One popular area for dining out is around the yacht harbour in Warnemünde.

Der Butt

Elegant Michelin-starred restaurant preparing top-end modern cuisine with international influences.

Am Yachthafen 1, Warnemünde Price: Expensive
18119 Rostock
Germany

Borwin Hafenrestaurant

Friendly harbourside restaurant serving refined German classics including great seafood.

Am Strande 2A
18055 Rostock
Germany

Price: Moderate

Ratskeller‘12

Atmospheric restaurant offering traditional and hearty Germanic dishes in the vaulted town hall cellars.

Neuer Markt 1
18055 Rostock
Germany

Price: Moderate

Altstädter Stuben

Friendly restaurant in the vaulted basement of a 16th-century house, specialising in local Mecklenburg cuisine.

Altschmiedestrasse 25
18055 Rostock
Germany

Price: Cheap

Café Central

Modern, popular and trendy café with a wide choice of wraps, salads and other dishes at very reasonable prices.

Leonhardstrasse 22
18057 Rostock
Germany

Price: Cheap



Nightlife Nightlife in Rostock

Rostock has a buzzing nightlife scene thanks to its high student population. Many of its bars target this no-frills end of the market, but those looking for something more refined can also find plenty to suit.

Zur Kogge

This atmospheric harbourside pub in a gabled house has been a popular watering hole for over 150 years.

Wokreuter Strasse 27
18055 Rostock
Germany

Ostsee Brauhaus ‘Trotzenburg’

Spacious modern brewpub in a western suburb, with a large beer garden in summer.

Tiergartenallee 6
18059 Rostock
Germany

Bacio Club

Disco, club and lounge bar, appealing to the more upmarket, discerning clientele.

Am Strande 2E
18057 Rostock
Germany

LT-Club

Large disco and lounge bars with various themed nights targeting both the student and over-30s markets.

Tiergartenallee 1-2
18059 Rostock
Germany

MAU Club

Music club in a former warehouse, with live acts from around the world playing everything from rock to disco.

Warnowufer 56
18057 Rostock
Germany



Calendar of events Calendar of events

Warnemünde Winter Fun

Colourful kites whoosh through the air, horses thunder along the shore and brave swimmers plunge into the icy Baltic Sea during this winter weekend festival. There are campfires and tasty mugs of mulled wine on hand to warm up, plus live music in the evenings.

January 31 - February 2, 2020

Venue: Warnemünde lighthouse and beach

Easter Bonfire

On Easter Saturday, crowds fill the beach at Warnemünde to celebrate the end of winter with a huge bonfire and live music. Visitors can climb to the top of the lighthouse for phenomenal views back to Rostock and out to sea, then enjoy a torchlit walk after dark.

April 11, 2020

Venue: Warnemünde lighthouse and beach

Stromerwachen (River Awakening)

Stalls and crowds pack the river promenade as summer kicks off in Warnemünde. It's the only time of the year when the historic railway bridge is opened up. The season's first barrel of beer is tapped, organ grinders entertain revellers, and a procession of costumed characters winds its way through town.

April 30 - May 1, 2020

Venue: Warnemünde

Klassik-Nacht (Classic Night in the Zoo)

In a magical experience beneath the stars, the North German Philharmonic Orchestra entertains a large crowd in the unusual venue of Rostock Zoo. Whether or not the zoo's residents enjoy the open-air classical concert should be evident by their squeals and roars.

June 5, 2020

Venue: Rostock Zoo

Warnemünder Woche (Warnemünde Week)

For nine days each July, around 2,000 sailors take to the water, with hundreds of thousands of spectators lining the shore to watch a series of thrilling cups and championships. There are plenty of festivities on dry land too, including the Ümgang, a parade of around 3,000 traditionally dressed residents.

July 4 - 12, 2020

Venue: Baltic Sea and various venues on land

Hanse Sail Rostock

Over 200 historic sailing ships meet in Rostock each year, attracting around 1 million visitors. From elegant tall ships to zeesenboats (small, historic fishing vessels), there's plenty for enthusiasts to gaze at, with many boats running trips too. Back on shore, there are numerous stalls, live performances and fireworks.

August 6 -9, 2020

Venue: Warnow River and Baltic Sea

River Festival

Warnemünde wraps up the summer season with a fabulous three-day festival. Around 200 fishermen battle it out to catch the biggest cod and win the title of 'Cod King', while visitors can potter round market stalls, admire the spectacular evening boat parade and enjoy a sparkling fireworks display.

September 2020

Venue: Warnemünde

Lange Nacht der Museen (Long Night of the Museums)

A whole raft of special activities and performances takes place on this evening, when more than a dozen Rostock museums and galleries stay open late. Visitors might check out puppet shows, documentary screenings, guided tours or one-off exhibitions. The ticket also includes rides between venues by bus and boat.

October 2020

Venue: Various venues

Weihnachtsmarkt (Christmas Market)

A giant tree, dazzling Ferris wheel and glistening stalls draw shoppers to Rostock's Christmas market. Visitors can pick up handcrafted wooden toys or colourful blown glass, and munch on smoked sausages and roasted almonds. Kids love the fairytale tent and storyteller, while Santa himself makes regular appearances.

November - December 2020

Venue: Neuer Markt

Lighthouse Ablaze

On the stroke of midnight, Rostock welcomes in the New Year with a dazzling display of lights, lasers and fireworks around the Warnemünde lighthouse. Thousands of people bundle up against the bracing winter seaside air to line the shore and watch this mesmerising sight.

31 December 2020

Venue: Warnemünde



Hotels

Hotels in Rostock

Rostock has a good choice of accommodation to suit all tastes, and reasonable prices across the board. Around the time of the Hansa Sail yacht-racing week in August however, rates rise and the availability of rooms is at a premium.

Rostock Apartment Living Hotel

Modern, well-equipped rooms and apartments with luxury fittings and a central location.

Grosse Wasserstrasse 10 Category: Expensive
18055 Rostock
Germany

Hotel Warnow

Small new-build hotel with fabulous harbour views amid green surroundings.

Bei der Knochenmühle 1 Category: Moderate
18146 Rostock
Germany

Krahnstöver

Small inn in a 700-year-old former merchant's house, with traditional wood furniture, but modern fittings.

Grosse Wasserstrasse 30 Category: Moderate
18055 Rostock
Germany

Stadtperle Rostock

Art nouveau villa hotel built in 1894, offering comfortable budget rooms in the city centre.

Rosa-Luxemburg-Strasse 32 Category: Cheap
18055 Rostock
Germany

Gästehaus Rostock Lütten-Klein

Large hotel in a northern suburb with budget rooms.

Warnowallee 23-24 Category: Cheap
18107 Rostock
Germany

**Crew tip**
Rostock

A lovely way to explore Rostock is to walk through its medieval town center. I always like to climb the tower of St. Peter's church, from where you can see all the way to the seaside town of Warnemünde on the Baltic coast. A stroll along Kaistraße with its seafood restaurants and cafés as far as the lighthouse on the waterfront is a must. The beaches are great, too!

