Quick view
Leipzig - a brief overview

With historical links to JS Bach, Wagner, Schubert, Mendelssohn, Goethe and Martin Luther among others, Leipzig has clearly always been culturally enlightened. It has grand art nouveau architecture, and Goethe famously described it as 'little Paris'. Wartime bombs destroyed the centre, and it suffered further neglect under the DDR regime,

but the city never gave in. It played a major role in instigating the fall of Communism, and has rebounded since reunification. Its bohemian charms now attract young artists, and business is booming. In fact, this vibrant place – ranked the most liveable city in Germany in 2013 – has become so hip it’s been nicknamed ‘Hypezig’.

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
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
Travel Guide

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

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.

Contractual physician of Lufthansa
Dr. Reinhold, Klaus-Peter
Zur Lindenhohe 1
D – 04158 Leipzig
Germany
Tel. +49-341-4616-683

Please note that Lufthansa accepts no responsibility for the treatment nor will it bear the cost of any treatment.

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.

Getting around Leipzig

Public Transport
Trams and buses are operated by LVB (tel: (0341) 19449; www.lvb.de). There is also a suburban rail (S-Bahn) and night bus network. Short-trip tickets, single fares or day tickets are available – the latter offer the best value for visitors. Buy from LVB offices, ticket machines at stations, some stops and aboard trams, or from bus drivers. Validate them when boarding. The tourist Leipzig Card includes free public transport.
Taxis
Taxis wait in designated ranks. You can also hail one on the street if its sign is lit. Alternatively, call a reputable company such as Taxi 4884 (tel: (0341) 4884) or LöwenTaxi Leipzig (tel: (0341) 952 222). 10 percent is a reasonable tip for good service.

Top 10 sights
Top 10 sights in Leipzig

Bach Museum
Johann Sebastian Bach’s family home, by the Thomaskirche, is now a museum dedicated to the great composer’s life and work. The exhibits are enlivened with a range of interactive displays.

Thomaskirchhof 15-16 04109 Leipzig Germany
Tel: (0341) 913 7202
Opening times: Tue-Sun 1000-1800
www.bachmuseumleipzig.de

Mendelssohn Haus
Like Bach, the composer Felix Mendelssohn also has a museum dedicated to him, in his only surviving residence. It is preserved in its 19th-century state, just as it was at the time of his death. Concerts are held here every Sunday at 1100.

Goldschmidtstrasse 12 04103 Leipzig Germany
Tel: (0341) 127 0294
Opening times: Daily 1000-1800
www.mendelssohn-stiftung.de

Markt & Altes Rathaus
One side of Leipzig’s huge market square is taken up by its Renaissance town hall, the Altes Rathaus, built in 1556 and one of Germany’s largest. It now houses a museum about local history.

Markt 04109 Leipzig Germany

Thomaskirche
Bach was choirmaster at the Gothic St Thomas Church, and composed cantatas here. Martin Luther also preached from its pulpit in 1539, heralding the arrival of Protestantism in Leipzig.

Thomaskirchhof 04109 Leipzig Germany
Tel: (0341) 222 240
Opening times: Daily 0900-1800
www.thomaskirche.org

Zoo Leipzig
One of Germany’s largest and best zoos has several themed zones, including an
enclosure where you can watch elephants bathing from below water level.

Pfaffendorfer-Strasse 29
04105 Leipzig
Germany
Tel: (0341) 593 3385

Opening times:
Daily 0900-1900 (Mai-Sept)
Daily 0900-1800 (Oct)
Daily 0900-1700 (Nov-March 20)
Daily 0900-1800 (March 21 - April)

www.zoo-leipzig.de

Nikolaikirche
The St Nicholas Church became globally famous in 1989 when it was the focal point of demonstrations that helped bring down the communist DDR regime. Prayers for peace are still held here every Monday at 1700.

Nikolaikirchhof 3
04109 Leipzig
Germany
Tel: (0341) 124 5380

Opening times:
Mon-Sat 1000-1800
Sun during services

www.nikolaikirche-leipzig.de

Grassimuseum
This art deco 1920s building, modernised in 2005, houses three museums: one dedicated to regional handicrafts, one to global arts and craft, and one to historical musical instruments.

Johannisplatz 5-11
04103 Leipzig
Germany

Opening times:
Tue-Sun 1000-1800

www.grassimuseum.de

Zeitgeschichtliches Forum Leipzig
The Museum of Contemporary History focuses on the positive and negative aspects of life in the DDR as a socialist state, from the division of Germany in 1945 to reunification in 1990.

Grimmaische Strasse 6
04109 Leipzig
Germany
Tel: (0341) 22200

Opening times:
Tue-Sun 1000-1800

www.hdg.de

Museum in der Runden Ecke
The Museum in the Round Corner was once the city headquarters of the feared DDR secret police, the Stasi. The exhibition shows the extent to which they spied on people’s private lives, and how they conducted their surveillance work.

Dittrichring 24
04109 Leipzig
Germany
Tel: (0341) 961 2443

Opening times:
Daily 1000-1800

www.runde-ecke-leipzig.de
asisi Panometer Leipzig

At 105m (345ft) in circumference and 30m (98ft) in height, this is the largest 360-degree panorama picture in the world. It is displayed inside a former gasometer, dating from 1909.

Richard-Lehmann-Strasse 114
04275 Leipzig
Germany
Tel: (0341) 860 3940
Opening times:
Tue-Fri 1000-1700
Sat-Sun 1000-1800
www.asisi.de

Shopping in Leipzig

Key Areas
Leipzig has several art nouveau arcades and passages that have become shopping meccas as well as tourist destinations. Many contain eclectic stores ranging from second-hand bookstores to smart fashion outlets. Most famous is the Mädler Passage, which has a mix of luxury goods and trendy boutiques.

Markets
Leipzigers are particularly fond of food markets selling regional produce – on Saturdays head for the Festwiese near the city’s Stadium. An antique and flea market is held at the Old Exhibition Centre on the first Sunday of every month.

Shopping Centres
Opened in 2012 on the exact site of Richard Wagner’s birthplace, the new Höfe am Brühl (Brühl 1) shopping mall contains over 110 shops. Another shopping mall in the main station contains over 150 outlets.

Restaurants in Leipzig

There are plenty of restaurants in every category, from Michelin-starred chic eateries to simple pub grub. Regional Saxony food is widely available both in its hearty traditional form and given a refined modern makeover by contemporary chefs.

Falco
Superb two-Michelin-starred cuisine, served at the top of a 100m (328ft) office tower.
Gerberstrasse 15
04105 Leipzig
Germany
Price: Expensive

Stadtpfeiffer
Classic seasonal Michelin-starred dishes served in the elegant surrounds of the Gewandhaus concert hall.
Augustusplatz 8
04109 Leipzig
Price: Expensive
Germany

**Auerbachs Keller Leipzig**
Magnificent vaulted beer cellar dating from 1912, specialising in hearty local fare.

Grimmaische Strasse 2-4
04109 Leipzig
Germany

**Zill's Tunnel**
Barrel-ceilinged beer hall serving traditional local dishes from a menu published in Old Saxon.

Barfussgässchen 9
04109 Leipzig
Germany

**Bagel Brothers**
Despite the name, sandwiches and salads are also served in this popular low-budget hangout.

Nikolaistrasse 42
04109 Leipzig
Germany

Nightlife
Nightlife in Leipzig
Leipzig has a growing reputation for its vibrant nightlife, from age-old beer cellars and modern brewpubs to stylish cocktail and lounge bars and quirky dance clubs. Don’t miss trying the local speciality beer, Leipziger Gose.

**Bayerischer Bahnhof**
Large modern brewpub in the former main railway station, dating from 1842.

Bayrischer Platz 1
04103 Leipzig
Germany

**Brauhaus an der Thomaskirche**
Cosy and popular brewpub in a central location beside St Thomas Church.

Thomaskirchhof 3-5
04109 Leipzig
Germany

Moritzbastei
This warren of underground cellars has several bars, a disco, café, theatre and even a cinema.

Universitätsstraße 9
04109 Leipzig
Germany

Flowerpower

Retro nightclub with a flower power theme and mostly 1970s classic rock playing through the night.

Riemannstrasse 42
04107 Leipzig
Germany

Falco

Atop a 100m (328ft) tower, the cocktail lounge beside the acclaimed restaurant offers amazing city views as you sup.

Gerberstrasse 15
04105 Leipzig
Germany

Calendar of events

Leipzig Book Fair

Writers, publishers and readers mingle at this annual forum for literary enthusiasts. Newly published fiction and limited edition books are up for grabs and there’s a superb programme of author readings plus book awards. The Manga Comic Convention runs alongside the fair with Manga signings, Anime films and calligraphy workshops.

March 12 - 15, 2020
Venue: Leipzig exhibition grounds

A cappella: International Festival of Vocal Music

Solo artists and small ensembles sing their hearts out at this celebration of vocal music, covering everything from jazz to pop to classical. The programme also includes academic-led seminars, workshops and an international contest for young vocal groups; hear the winners at the final concert.

May 1 - 9, 2020
Venue: Various venues

Wave-Gotik-Treffen

It’s a spectacular sight as around 20,000 goths dress up in their finery and hit Leipzig for the world’s largest goth get-together. Over 100 bands covering a whole range of musical genres perform at venues across the city. Festival-goers are also treated to readings, films and theatrical shows.
May 29 - June 1, 2020  
Venue: Various venues

**Bachfest Leipzig**
Baroque music fans are in heaven as 10 days of outstanding performances pay homage to the work of JS Bach, who spent over 20 years in Leipzig as cantor of the Thomaskirche. Other composers get a look in too, including Bach’s talented offspring.

June 11 - 21, 2020  
Venue: Various venues

**Classic Open**
Live music fills Leipzig’s marketplace each evening in August as big-name classical, jazz and pop artists take to the open-air stage and crowds pack the square. In the daytime, music fans can listen to concert recordings and watch screenings of famous performances.

August 2020  
Venue: Marketplace

**Highfield Festival**
A classic indie rock and camping fest, Highfield Festival always attracts a phenomenal line-up of German and international acts, such as Blink 182, Placebo and the Foo Fighters. Around 25,000 fans pitch their tents on the shores of Störmthaler See for the three-day event.

August 14 - 16, 2020  
Venue: Störmthaler See, Grosspösna

**Schumann Festival Week**
Concerts, films and cultural tours trace the lives of Leipzig’s musical husband-and-wife team Robert and Clara Schumann. The programme takes a different theme each year and explores the influences of their family, friends and acquaintances on their music and lives.

September 12 - 20, 2020  
Venue: Schumann-Haus

**Leipzig Christmas Market**
Spruces and stalls are aglow with glistening lights as seasonal shoppers throng to Leipzig’s market square, a tradition dating back over 550 years. Trombone and choral music, Scandinavian tents (complete with Glögli, a berry mulled wine), a traditional craft fair and twinkling carousel all add to the magic.

November – December 2020  
Venue: Marketplace

**Hotels in Leipzig**
Leipzig’s central hotels are mainly focused on the business sector and tend toward the upper price ranges. Finding budget places in the heart of the city can be tricky, but bargains await in the suburbs if you are prepared to travel out a little.

**Steigenberger Grandhotel Handelshof**

New luxury hotel with all modern furnishings in a former trade fair palace.

Salzgäßchen 6  
04109 Leipzig  
Germany  
Category: Expensive

**Pentahotel Leipzig**

Chic and stylish design hotel on a grand scale, close to the centre.

Grosser Brockhaus 3  
04103 Leipzig  
Germany  
Category: Moderate

**Galerie Hotel Leipziger Hof**

Art hotel with individually furnished rooms hung with works by local artists.

Hedwigstraße 3  
04315 Leipzig  
Germany  
Category: Moderate

**Brauereigasthof Napoleon**

Newly built comfortable guesthouse beside a southeast suburban brewpub.

Prager Strasse 233  
04289 Leipzig  
Germany  
Category: Budget

**Pfefferkiste Gasthaus & Pension**

Traditional guesthouse in an eastern suburb, with good transport links.

Wurzner Strasse 167  
04318 Leipzig  
Germany  
Category: Budget