

Berlin's Social Housing gets UNESCO World Heritage status: In early July 2008, the UNESCO committee decided to award the World Heritage status to six housing estates dotted across Berlin. These buildings are an outstanding example of the building reform movement that contributed to improving housing and living conditions for people with low incomes. What makes these social housing projects particularly special was that they were designed by the leading architects of the day, including Bauhaus founder Walter Gropius, as well as Bruno Taut and Hans Scharon. In the 1920s, Berlin became the creative center of modernism in art, literature and architecture. The city exported its modernist aesthetic around the world but its own examples of Bauhaus-style social housing had long gone unrecognized: the horse-shoe-shaped complex in Britz, the Siemensstadt and White Estates, the Schillerpark settlement, the Falkenberg Garden City and the Carl Legien estate in Berlin's trendy Prenzlauer Berg district. Their construction took place in the Berlin of the Weimar Republic, when social commitment and modernist aesthetic combined. The right to decent housing has been enshrined in the new 1919 constitution. In Berlin under the capital's left-wing director of municipal construction, Martin Wagner, particularly strict new construction rules were enforced. All new apartments had to have a separate bathroom and kitchen, as well as a balcony. At the beginning of the 20th century, where most of Berlin's working classes lived in dark, unhygienic and over-crowded tenement buildings, this was very revolutionary at the time. The Social Housing gives the German capital its third UNESCO World Heritage site after the Museum Island and the ornate royal palaces and gardens. <http://whc.unesco.org/en/statesparties/de>

The brewpub "Bayerischer Bahnhof" in Houston's German Sister City Leipzig: One of Leipzig's famous monuments is the "Bayerischer Bahnhof" (Bavarian Railway Station). Built in 1842, the world's oldest terminus has been the starting point for a flourishing trade in the region. The Italian-style classical building is facing south and was forming Leipzig's gate to Bavaria: Nuremberg and Munich. Today Leipzig in Saxony is one of Germany's most important centers of trade shows and fairs, books, music and education.

Now the “Bayerischer Bahnhof” is the scenic stage for culinary delights and the house-brewed original beer specialty, the “Leipziger Gose”. As the name implies, the “Gose” originates from the German town of Goslar in the Harz Mountains. According to the legend, the Emperor Otto III. enjoyed it very much already in 996. In an official document, the Gose beer was mentioned first in 1470. Finally in 1738, Prince Leopold I. of Anhalt-Dessau brought the Gose beer to Leipzig, because he did not like the local beer. He made sure, that Leipzig’s pubs got the permit to pour out-of-town brewed beer. Under Napoleon’s Continental System the Gose beer supply to Leipzig was blocked. That’s why the first Gose brewery in Leipzig was founded – and the “Leipziger Gose” was born. The Gose beer is a sparkling tartish and slightly salty top-fermented beer. The brewmaster Matthias Richter himself guides brewery tours and holds brewseminars. The “Leipziger Gose” is either served straight or with a caraway schnaps – or more “women-friendly” with cherry brandy. In any case the old saying still applies today: “ If you haven’t had your Gose you haven’t been to Leipzig.” Leipzig is part of our [German Beer Crawl](http://www.bayerischer-bahnhof.de). <http://www.bayerischer-bahnhof.de>

Palaces in Thuringia’s center of classical cultural heritage – the city Weimar:

The highlights of Weimar’s enormously rich historical landscape – the splendid palace in the town centre and no fewer than three summer residences: the exquisite Belvedere Palace, the more restrained Tiefurt Palace and Ettersburg Palace – all offer visitors a very real sense of a bygone era. The castle Belvedere was built between 1724 and 1732 in Belvedere Park just outside Weimar. It was built as a summer residence and “Lustschloss” (pleasure-house) for Ernst Augustus, the Duke of Saxe-Weimar. Its gardens were laid out in a French style, with an Orangery, although later much of it was converted to an English garden style which is still well preserved today. The Belvedere palace houses some of Weimar’s art collections, including porcelains, furniture and paintings from the 18th century. The historical rooms with the festive hall, the silver salon and the side pavilions, have been restored during the last few years at great expense. The romantic Tiefurt Palace in the outskirts of Weimar was built in 1765 as a tenant house on ducal property on the bank of the river Ilm. It served as Duke Carl August’s younger brother’s residence from 1776 on. Until 1806 it was the summer residence of Duchess Anna Amalia and a place for literary and social encounters. Weimar’s splendid Town Castle was once the seat of government and residence of dukes and grand dukes. The sumptuous rooms are just as

impressive as the collection of first-class European art spanning the period from the Middle Ages and the Reformation to the beginning of the twentieth century. The palaces today are open to the public and house excellent museums and art exhibitions. Today on the grounds of the castle Belvedere you find the modern buildings of the state-owned Weimar College of Music. As already one of Weimar's famous residents, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe once said: *"Works of art do not belong to individuals, they belong to the whole of educated mankind"*. <http://www.weimar.de>

Soak up the flavors of summer with fresh seasonal fruits – Berry delicious!:

In Germany people just love fresh fruits and consume an average of almost 200 pounds per capita per year. It's a natural part of the summer feeling to savor the ripe fresh fruits right from the tree or shrub – or to use them for the many delicious fruity dishes. The pleasure of locally harvested berries only lasts a few weeks every year. Freshness is particularly crucial for taste and quality. Cherries and berries like strawberries, raspberries, blackberries and blueberries are very common, but other fruit specialties like currants and gooseberries enjoy great popularity too. Available in red, black or white, the tartish currants are very high in vitamin C, vitamin E and fiber. Ripe gooseberries have the highest sugar content of all berries and make a delightful summer snack – they are high in vitamin C too and very low in calories! Sumptuous cherries are another summer favorite. There are two basic types: the sweet cherry (Suesskirsche) and sour cherry (Sauerkirsche). Cherries and berries are widely used for baking and cooking but it's also processed into many food products, such as jelly, jam, confections, juices, wine and brandy. Apart from major commodity crops and professional gardening firms, seasonal fruits are often produced in allotment gardens – a vibrant sector between private agriculture and active recreation with a long rich history in Germany. The best way, of course, to enjoy the real delicious taste of German summer fruits is to go on a trip to Germany between late May and early October. Fresh home-made Kuchen (cake) of all kind is awaiting you as well as other fruity culinary delights: sorbets, parfaits, soups, sauces, souffles, jelly and much more. Along the routes through Germany you have a very good chance to see some of those cozy small private gardens including the owner's whole family being very busy harvesting the summer treasures. Recipes straight from Germany: <http://www.germanfoods.org/consumer/recipes/cherryberryrecipes.cfm>

Private Rooms, Pensions, Inns and Vacation Apartments in Germany – from moneysavers to exclusive luxury accomodation: Especially for individual travelers, families and small groups, Pensions, Inns, Private Rooms or Vacation Apartments are a worth-wile alternate to regular Hotels in Germany. A Pension or boarding-house (Pension) is kind of homely family-run hotel. Inn or Guesthouse (Gasthaus) is mostly a combination of a family-run restaurant and a small hotel – often to be found in small towns and villages off the beaten tourist track. An insider tip especially for couples and families, who want to stay more than one or two nights at one place, are private Vacation Apartments. Regarding the quality and prices, there is the entire range available from very basic moneysaver Private Rooms over farmhouse accomodation to high-class luxurious apartments in romantic historic castles. Pensions, Inns, Private Rooms and Vacation Apartments have one characteristic in common: very few rooms and therefore a limited capacity and availability especially during high season. But what's an exclusion criterion for larger groups, is an advantage for independent travelers and small groups: exclusivity, more relaxation, the personal attention of the host (Gastgeber) and great deals on the price compared to regular Hotels. As an example, average prices for an overnight stay in and around Thuringia's capital Erfurt range from 40 Euros to 60 Euros per night for a double room in Pensions/Inns and from 35 Euros to 50 Euros per night for a double room in Private Rooms – mostly breakfast is included! Vacation Apartments can usually house between 2 and 8 people and charge per night. They have a kitchen with a fridge, microwave and/or oven and a dining area. Self-catering is a great moneysaver particularly for families with children and with the benefit of a much more private ambience. Even romantic Vacation Apartments in historic castles are not necessarily very expensive, but they are very much in demand – and mostly booked by German leisure travelers who are familiar with the destination. Those places can be hard to find for foreigners or to book from abroad. It can be both a language problem or an issue of accessibility. Helpful are the local Tourist Information Centres, which can be mostly contacted online and in english – at least in larger towns and cities. Alternatively you can rely on the expertise of The German American Connection and take advantage of our [Individual Travel Service](#).

More news & travel tips:
<http://www.tgac-us.com>