Focus: Berlin

May 3 to 12, 2017

“Intellectually stimulating and thought-provoking, this trip provided an invaluable backdrop for understanding American-German foreign relations, past and present.”

—Nancy Samuels, Focus on Berlin, 2015
BERLIN IS UNQUESTIONABLY ONE OF THE WORLD’S GREATEST CITIES. From its proudly Prussian past, to the hedonistic inter-war years of the Weimar Republic and from the dark time of the Third Reich, through the strange, sad decades of the Cold War to the dismantling of the Berlin Wall and the subsequent Reunification, each historical era has left an indelible mark on this indefatigable city. Throughout its history Berlin has flourished as a center of music, art and architecture, and today’s cutting-edge designers and avant-garde street artists are keeping the tradition of artistic innovation very much alive. On this program, designed by faculty leader Bob Hamrdla, visit Berlin’s most renowned sites, attend guest lectures by local experts and enjoy ample free time for independent exploration. Delight in classical music and opera performances in three of Berlin’s illustrious venues—the Konzerthaus Berlin, the State Opera House and the Berliner Philharmonie, and learn how Berliners are committed to acknowledging their troubling history in order to reunify and rebuild their capital.
Faculty Leader

G. ROBERT HAMRDLA, ‘59, MA ‘64, who is fluent in German and a specialist on Nazi Germany as well as the former German Democratic Republic, has introduced hundreds of Stanford students and alumni to Berlin. He taught at Stanford for more than 35 years, most recently in the Continuing Studies program. Bob has been to Berlin nearly every year since 1959, and his long-standing connections in the city open doors to a Berlin not found in any guidebook. About the German capital, Bob says, “Berlin has it all: music, art, 170 museums of all sorts, high-fashion and lowbrow taverns. On this program we’ll investigate not only the coming together of East and West but also the intricate politics of memory of the German past.” Bob’s lectures during our program will cover the history, politics and ever-evolving culture of Berlin.

- Former director of Stanford’s overseas campuses in Beutelsbach, Berlin and Kraków
- Faculty leader for more than 45 Stanford Travel/Study programs in Central Europe
- BA in mathematics, 1959, and MA in history, 1964, Stanford

“Bob Hamrdla truly loves Berlin and considering the sights, sounds and interactions with the local people afforded by this program, now we understand why.” —Jim Mehring, MA ‘81, PhD ‘83, Focus on Berlin, 2015

Itinerary

Wednesday & Thursday, May 3 & 4

U.S. / Berlin, Germany

Depart the U.S. on overnight flights, arriving in Berlin on Thursday and transferring to our hotel, centrally located on the restored Gendarmenmarkt, an 18th-century town square that is home to the Konzerthaus (Concert Hall), the Huguenot Französischer Dom (French church), the Deutscher Dom (formerly a Lutheran church) and an imposing statue of poet-philosopher Friedrich Schiller. Enjoy an optional orientation walk in our new neighborhood this afternoon, then gather for a welcome orientation and reception at our hotel this evening. HILTON HOTEL GENDARMENMARKT

Friday, May 5

Berlin

After an introductory lecture this morning, drive by some of the major landmarks of Berlin, that include the Schloss Bellevue, official residence of Germany’s president; the Neo-Romanesque Kaiser-Wilhelm-Gedächtnis-Kirche, its gutted, WWII-bomb-strafed tower now surrounded by a modern blue-glass bell tower, octagonal church and memorial hall; and Tempelhof Airport, the largest remaining structure from the Nazi era. Also visit the memorial to the Berlin Wall in the Bernauer Strasse. The rest of the day is free for exploring other Berlin landmarks independently, or alternatively join Bob Hamrdla for a walk to the monumental Brandenburg Gate and Wilhelmstrasse, Berlin’s pre-WWII diplomatic quarter. Dine as a group tonight at a popular local restaurant. HILTON HOTEL GENDARMENMARKT (B,D)
Saturday, May 6

Berlin
This morning attend a guest lecture by Professor Heinrich Bortfeldt, a local historian and political scientist specializing in contemporary German history and American-German relations, then set out on the second half of our tour of Berlin’s major sites. Drive past the modern Federal Chancellery, part of the new complex of government buildings built alongside the 630-acre Tiergarten, Berlin’s largest park, and the Reichstag, Germany’s seat of government. Also see the Soviet War Memorial at Treptower Park, a massive and spectacular sight inexplicably set in an obscure location. This afternoon join Bob for an optional visit and walk to the Memorial to German Resistance, a museum and memorial located at the execution site of Colonel Claus von Stauffenberg, who made a failed attempt to assassinate Adolf Hitler in 1944, and to the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe, an architecturally striking, abstract memorial to the Jewish victims of the Holocaust. This evening attend a classical music performance at the Konzerthaus conducted by Iván Fischer. HILTON HOTEL GENDARMENMARKT (B)

Sunday, May 7

Berlin
Following a guest lecture on the current situation in Berlin and Germany by Peter Unfried, a local journalist, walk to Museum Island, located in the heart of the city in the middle of the River Spree. Its ensemble of five world-renowned museums has merited a World Heritage site designation. Enjoy guided tours of the Neues Museum, whose star attraction is the famed bust of Nefertiti, and the Alte Nationalgalerie, with its fantastic collection of 19th-century art. The afternoon is at leisure to visit the three other museums on the island including the Pergamon Museum, home to the incomparable Ishtar Gate; all five museums are included on the museum pass that members of our group will have been given at the beginning of the day. This evening attend an opera performance of the Staatsoper or Berlin State Opera at the Schiller Theater. HILTON HOTEL GENDARMENMARKT (B)

Monday, May 8

Berlin
This morning, attend a private briefing at the U.S. Embassy. Then walk to the nearby Reichstag for a guided tour of the interior of the building. The Reichstag as home to parliament dates back to its opening in 1894. It ceased to serve as the Parliament building during the Nazi era and regained that status when it reopened in 1999 after being renovated. Our tour ends on the roof where we enjoy lunch at the roof-garden restaurant that boasts dazzling bird’s-eye views of Berlin. After lunch walk up a spiral ramp to the top of the Reichstag’s transparent dome created by Sir Norman Foster. HILTON HOTEL GENDARMENMARKT (B,L)

Tuesday, May 9

Potsdam
Today we spend the entire day in the historic city of Potsdam. Visit the famous 18th-century baroque palace of Sans Souci, the summer residence of Frederick the Great of Prussia, and its spectacular gardens. Following lunch, stroll through the historic Schloss Cecilienhof, built in the early 1900s in the style of an English country manor and, more notably, where the Potsdam Agreement was signed in 1945, an agreement that settled the status of Germany at the end of World War II. Also drive over the Glienicke Bridge, site of various Cold War spy exchanges as depicted in the recent film, Bridge of Spies. In the late afternoon we return to a residential neighborhood in Berlin for a reception and dinner with current Stanford undergraduates studying at Stanford’s Center in Berlin. HILTON HOTEL GENDARMENMARKT (B,L,D)

Wednesday, May 10

Sachsenhausen
Take an excursion to the former concentration camp of Sachsenhausen today. Located in Oranienburg, approximately 20 miles north of Berlin, Sachsenhausen was originally a training center for SS officers who were later sent to oversee other camps. Sachsenhausen was also the site of Operation Bernhard, one of the largest currency counterfeiting operations ever recorded. After the fall of the Third Reich, the camp became the largest concentration camp in the Soviet Occupation Zone. In the 1950s the
government of East Germany turned the site into a memorial that focused on the suffering of political prisoners to the exclusion of other groups but after Reunification it was turned into a more inclusive museum. Return to Berlin for dinner at a local restaurant, then attend a musical performance of the Deutsches Sinfonie-Orchester Berlin at the landmark Philharmonic Concert Hall. HILTON HOTEL GENDARMENMARKT (B,L,D)

Thursday, May 11

Berlin

Following a morning lecture, the day is free for last-minute independent pursuits. Gather in the afternoon for an optional walk and tour of the Topography of Terror Museum, which opened in 2010. This history museum is located on the site of the Nazi regime’s SS and Gestapo headquarters, which operated here from 1933 until 1945 when it was destroyed by Allied bombs. The museum is adjacent to a remaining segment of the Berlin Wall, most of which was torn down in 1989. Enjoy farewell festivities at a reception at our hotel this evening before dinner. HILTON HOTEL GENDARMENMARKT (B,D)

Friday, May 12

Berlin / U.S.

After breakfast and checkout, transfer to the airport for flights home, arriving back in the U.S. the same day. (B)

What to Expect

We consider this program to be a moderately active one that is at times physically demanding. All participants must be physically fit, active and in good health. Although we use a motorcoach on occasion, most of our daily excursions will be via the Berlin U-Bahn (subway) and on foot, and will involve walking from two to three miles. Participants must be able to stand outside with limited shelter and no available seating for up to three hours, rain or shine. Significant walking and climbing of stairs, sometimes without handrails, will also be required at historic buildings, museums, castles and U-Bahn stations. Mornings are busy, usually beginning with a lecture followed by an extensive walking tour. Many afternoons are free for individual pursuits; to facilitate exploration we will provide each traveler with a 7-day transit pass that allows unlimited access to Berlin’s comprehensive public transportation network including U-Bahn, bus and tram, as well as information about, directions to and discounts for some of Berlin’s most commonly visited sites. As many lunches and dinners are independent, in order to facilitate program participants’ full enjoyment of Berlin’s culinary offerings, we’ll provide a detailed list of recommended restaurants and assist travelers in making reservations through our hotel concierge. We welcome travelers 15 years of age and older on this program.
Information

Dates
May 3 to 12, 2017 (10 days)

Size
This program can accommodate 40 participants. Single accommodations are limited; please call for availability.

Cost*
$6,095 per person, double occupancy
$7,095 per person, single occupancy
*Association nonmembers add $300 per person

Included
- 8 nights of hotel accommodations at the Hilton Hotel Gendarmenmarkt
- 8 breakfasts, 3 lunches and 4 dinners
- Welcome and farewell receptions
- Unlimited access to Berlin’s public transportation system
- Day pass to Museum Island
- Gratuities to porters, guides and drivers for all group activities
- All tours as described in the itinerary
- Transfers and baggage handling on program arrival and departure days
- Minimal medical, accident and evacuation insurance
- Educational program with lecture series (including two lectures by local experts) and pre-departure materials, including recommended reading list, a selected book, map and travel information
- Services of our professional tour manager to assist you throughout the program

Not Included
- International and domestic airfare
- Passport and visa fees
- Immunization costs
- Meals and beverages other than those specified as included
- Independent and private transfers
- Trip-cancellation/interruption and baggage insurance
- Excess-baggage charges
- Personal items such as internet access, telephone and fax calls, laundry and gratuities for nongroup services

Air Arrangements
International and U.S. domestic airfare is not included in the program cost. Round-trip, economy-class airfare on Lufthansa between San Francisco and Berlin is approximately $1,200 as of September 2016 and is subject to change without notice.
Terms and Conditions

Deposit and Final Payment
A $1,000-per-person deposit is required to hold space on this program. Sign up online at alumni.stanford.edu/trip?berlin2017 or call the Travel/Study office at (650) 725-1093. Final payment is due 120 days prior to departure. As a condition of participation, all confirmed participants are required to sign a Release of Liability.

Cancellations and Refunds
Deposits and any payments are refundable, less a $500-per-person cancellation fee, until 120 days prior to departure. After that date, refunds can be made only if the program is sold out and your place(s) can be resold, in which case a $1,000-per-person cancellation fee will apply.

Insurance
Stanford Travel/Study provides all travelers who are U.S. or Canadian citizens with minimal medical, accident and evacuation coverage under our group-travel insurance policy. Our group policy is intended to provide minimal levels of protection while you are traveling on this program. You may choose to subscribe to optional trip-cancellation and baggage insurance. Information offering such insurance will be provided to travelers with their welcome materials. The product offered includes special benefits if you purchase your policy within 14 days of written confirmation of your participation on the trip.

Eligibility
We encourage membership in the Alumni Association as the program cost for nonmembers is $300 more than the member’s price. A person traveling as a guest paid for by a current member will not be charged the nonmember fee. Call (650) 725-0692 or visit alumni.stanford.edu/goto-membership for more information or to purchase a membership.

Responsibility
The Stanford Alumni Association, Stanford University and our operators act only as agents for the passenger with respect to transportation and exercise every care possible in doing so. However, we can assume no liability for injury, damage, loss, accident, delay or irregularity in connection with the service of any automobile, motorcoach, launch or any other conveyance used in carrying out this program or for the acts or defaults of any company or person engaged in conveying the passenger or in carrying out the arrangements of the program. We cannot accept any responsibility for losses or additional expenses due to delay or changes in air or other services, sickness, weather, strike, war, quarantine, force majeure or other causes beyond our control. All such losses or expenses will have to be borne by the passenger as tour rates provide arrangements only for the time stated. We reserve the right to make such alterations to this published itinerary as may be deemed necessary. The right is reserved to cancel any program prior to departure in which case the entire payment will be refunded without further obligation on our part. The right is also reserved to decline to accept or retain any person as a member of the program. No refund will be made for an unused portion of any tour unless arrangements are made in sufficient time to avoid penalties. Baggage is carried at the owner’s risk entirely. The airlines concerned are not to be held responsible for any act, omission or event during the time passengers are not onboard their plane or conveyance. Neither the Alumni Association, Stanford University nor our operators accept liability for any carrier’s cancellation penalty incurred by the purchase of a non-refundable ticket connected with the tour. Program price is based on rates in effect in September 2016 and is subject to change without notice to reflect fluctuations in exchange rates, tariffs or fuel charges.

California Seller of Travel Program Registration #2048 523-50

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