

Country Guide for

GERMANY



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1 CONTACT ADDRESSES

Location: Western/Central Europe.

Deutsche Zentrale für Tourismus e.V. (DZT)
Beethovenstraße 69, 60325 Frankfurt/M, Federal Republic of Germany
Tel: (69) 974 640. Fax: (69) 751 903. E-mail: gntofra@d-z-t.com
Web site: <http://www.germany-tourism.de>

Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany
23 Belgrave Square, London SW1X 8PZ
Tel: (020) 7824 1300. Fax: (020) 7824 1435.
E-mail: mail@german-embassy.org.uk
Web site: <http://www.german-embassy.org.uk>
Consular section: (0990) 100 420 (recorded passport information: calls cost 60p per minute) or (0906) 833 1166 (recorded visa information; calls cost 60p per minute). Fax: (020) 7824 1449.
Opening hours: Monday to Friday 0900-1200; 1400-1600 (telephone enquiries only).

Consulate General of the Federal Republic of Germany
16 Eglinton Crescent, Edinburgh EH12 5DG Tel: (0131) 337 2323-24. Fax: (0131) 346 1578. Opening hours: Monday to Friday 0900-1200.

German National Tourist Office
PO Box 2695, London W1A 3TN
Tel: (09001) 600 100 (recorded information and brochure request line; calls cost 60p per minute) or (020) 7317 0908 (general enquiries). Fax: (020) 7495 6129. E-mail: gntolon@d-z-t.com
Web site: <http://www.germany-tourism.de>

British Embassy
Wilhelmstraße 70, 10117 Berlin, Federal Republic of Germany
Tel: (30) 204 570. Fax: (30) 204 57 574. E-mail: info@berlin.mail.fco.gov.uk (information department).
Web site: <http://www.britischebotschaft.de>
Consulates General in: Düsseldorf, Frankfurt/M, Hamburg, Munich and Stuttgart.

Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany
4645 Reservoir Road, NW, Washington, DC 20007-1998
Tel: (202) 298 4000. Fax: (202) 298 4249.
Web site: <http://www.germany-info.org> or <http://www.germany-tourism.de>
Consulates General in: Atlanta, Boston, Chicago, Houston, Los Angeles, Miami, New York, San Francisco.

German National Tourist Office
52nd Floor, 122 East 42nd Street, New York, NY 10168-0072
Tel: (212) 661 7200. Fax: (212) 661 7174. E-mail: gntony@aol.com
Web site: <http://www.germany-tourism.de>

Embassy of the United States of America
Neustädtische Kirchstraße 4-5, 10117 Berlin, Federal Republic of Germany

Tel: (30) 238 5174. Fax: (30) 238 6290.

Web site: <http://www.us-embassy.de>

Consulates in: Düsseldorf, Frankfurt/M, Hamburg, Leipzig and Munich.

Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany

1 Waverley Street, Ottawa, Ontario K2P 0T8

Tel: (613) 232 1101. Fax: (613) 594 9330.

E-mail: 100566.2620@compuserve.com

Web site: <http://www.GermanEmbassyOttawa.org>

Consulates General in: Montréal, Toronto and Vancouver.

German National Tourist Office

North Tower, Suite 604, 175 Bloor Street East, Toronto, Ontario M4W 3R8

Tel: (416) 968 1570. Fax: (416) 968 1986. E-mail: germanto@idirect.com

Web site: <http://www.germany-tourism.de>

Canadian Embassy

Friedrichstraße 95, 10117 Berlin, Federal Republic of Germany

Tel: (30) 203 120. Fax: (30) 20 31 25 90. E-mail: brlin@dfait-maeci.gc.ca

Web site: <http://www.kanada-info.de>

Consulates in: Düsseldorf, Hamburg, Munich and Stuttgart.

Country dialling code: 49.

2 GENERAL

Area: 357,021 sq km (137,847 sq miles).

Population: 82,057,379 (1997).

Population Density: 229.8 per sq km.

Capital: Berlin. Population: 3,446,600 (1997).

Geography: The Federal Republic of Germany shares frontiers with Austria, Belgium, the Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Luxembourg, The Netherlands, Poland and Switzerland. The northwest of the country has a coastline on the North Sea with islands known for their health resorts, while the Baltic coastline in the northeast stretches from the Danish to the Polish border. The country is divided into 16 states (Bundesländer) including the formerly divided city of Berlin. The landscape is exceedingly varied, with the Rhine, Bavaria and the Black Forest being probably the three most famous features of western Germany. In eastern Germany the country is lake-studded with undulating lowlands which give way to the hills and mountains of the Lausitzer Bergland, the Saxon Hills in the Elbe Valley and the Erzgebirge, whilst the once divided areas of the Thuringian and Harz ranges in the central part of the country are now whole regions again. River basins extend over a large percentage of the eastern part of Germany, the most important being the Elbe, Saale, Havel, Spree and Oder. Northern Germany includes the states of Lower Saxony (Niedersachsen), Schleswig-Holstein, Mecklenburg-West Pomerania and the city states of Bremen and Hamburg. The western area of the country consists of the Rhineland, the industrial sprawl of the Ruhr, Westphalia (Westfalen), Hesse (Hessen), the Rhineland-Palatinate (Rheinland-Pfalz) and the Saarland. In the southern area of the country are the two largest states, Baden-Württemberg and Bavaria (Bayern), which contain the Black Forest (Schwarzwald),

Lake Constance (Bodensee) and the Bavarian Alps. Munich (München), Stuttgart and Nuremberg (Nürnberg) are the major cities. The eastern part of the country is made up of the states of Thuringia, Saxony, Brandenburg, Saxony-Anhalt and Berlin. The major cities in eastern Germany are Dresden, Leipzig, Erfurt, Halle, Potsdam, Schwerin and Rostock. Apart from Leipzig and Rostock these are also all recently reconstituted state-capitals.

Government: Federal Republic. Head of State: President Johannes Rau since 1999. Head of Government: Chancellor Gerhard Schröder since 1998.

Language: German. English is widely spoken and French is also spoken, particularly in the Saarland. In the north of Schleswig-Holstein, Danish is spoken by the Danish minority and taught in schools. Regional dialects often differ markedly from standard German.

Religion: Approximately 34% Protestant, 33% Roman Catholic with Jewish, Muslim and other non-Christian minorities.

Time: GMT + 1 (GMT + 2 from last Sunday in March to Saturday before last Sunday in October).

Electricity: 230 volts AC, 50Hz. European-style round 2-pin plugs are in use. Lamp fittings are screw type.

Communications:

Telephone: Full IDD is available. Country code: 49. Outgoing international code: 00. National and international calls can be made from coin- or card-operated telephone booths. Calls can be made from post offices. Cheap rate applies between 1800-0800 Monday to Friday and all day Saturday and Sunday. Discount phonecards from private companies can be bought from shops and kiosks.

Mobile telephone: GSM 900 and 1800 networks cover the whole country. It is illegal to use a hand-held mobile telephone while driving.

Fax: Facilities are increasingly available in eastern Germany.

Internet/E-mail: There are many cybercafés all over the country. Large Internet access centres are opening in main cities. Hotels also provide facilities. ISPs include Data Online (web site: <http://www.d-online.com>).

Telegram: These can be sent during opening hours from all post offices.

Post: Stamps are available from hotels, slot machines and post offices. A 5-figure postal code is used on all internal addresses. Poste Restante mail should be addressed as follows: recipient's name, Postlagernd, Hauptpostamt, post code, name of town. Post office hours: 0900-1800 Monday to Friday and 0900-1200 Saturday. Smaller branches may close for lunch.

Press: The most influential dailies include the Süddeutsche Zeitung, Die Welt and the Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung. The most widely read of the weekly publications are Der Spiegel and Die Zeit. Some new or revamped newspapers, such as Berliner Kurier, have emerged out of eastern Germany and are competing well with western German papers. Most major English newspapers and international magazines are also available in Germany.

BBC World Service and Voice of America frequencies: From time to time these change.

BBC:

MHz12.099.4106.1950.648

Voice of America:

MHz15.4811.979.7701.197

3 PASSPORT

	<i>Passport Required?</i>	<i>Visa Required?</i>	<i>Return Ticket Required?</i>
British	Yes	No	No
Australian	Yes	No	No
Canadian	Yes	No	No
USA	Yes	No	No
OtherEU	1	No	No
Japanese	Yes	No	No

Note: Germany is a signatory to the 1995 Schengen Agreement. For further details about passport/visa regulations within the Schengen area see the introductory section How to Use this Guide.

PASSPORTS: Passport valid for at least 3 months beyond length of stay required by all except:
 (a) 1. EU nationals holding a valid national ID card;
 (b) holders of national ID cards issued to nationals of Iceland, Liechtenstein, Malta, Monaco, San Marino and Switzerland.

VISAS: Required by all except the following for periods not exceeding 3 months:
 (a) nationals referred to in the chart and those referred to under passport exemptions above;
 (b) nationals of American Samoa, Andorra, Argentina, Bermuda, Bolivia, Brazil, Brunei, Chile, Christmas Island, Cocos Island, Colombia, Cook Islands, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Darussalam, Ecuador, El Salvador, Estonia, Guam, Guatemala, Honduras, Hungary, Israel, Korea (Rep. of), Latvia, Lithuania, Macau, Malaysia, Malta, Mexico, Monaco, New Caledonia, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niue, Norfolk Island, Norway, Panama, Paraguay, Poland, San Marino, Singapore, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Uruguay, Vatican City, Venezuela and US Virgin Islands for stays of up to 3 months;
 (c) passengers continuing their journey by the same or first connecting aircraft, provided holding confirmed onward tickets and travel documents. However, certain nationals always need a visa even if transiting by the same aircraft; please check with the Embassy (or Consular section at Embassy).

Note*: A transit visa is not required by some nationals if in possession of a residence permit or visa for an EU country.

Types of visa and cost: A uniform type of visa, the Schengen visa, is issued for tourist, business and private visits. Short-stay: £14.00 for 1-30 days and £24.00 for 31-90 days (single-entry); £34.00 for 1 year. Transit: £7.00 (single- and multiple-entry). Fees may vary according to exchange rates.

Note: Spouses and children of EU nationals (providing spouse's passport and the original marriage certificate is produced), and nationals of some other countries, receive their visas free of charge (enquire at Embassy for details).

Validity: Short-stay (single- and multiple-entry): valid for 6 months from date of issue for stays of maximum 90 days per entry or for 1 year from date of entry for stays of maximum 90 days in one half-year. Transit (single- and multiple-entry): valid for a maximum of 5 days per entry, including the day of arrival. Visas cannot be extended and a new application must be made each time.

Application to: Consulate (or Consular section at Embassy); see address section. Travellers visiting just one Schengen country should apply to the Consulate of that country; travellers visiting more than one Schengen country should apply to the Consulate of the country chosen as the main destination or the country they will enter first (if they have no main destination).

Application requirements: Tourism: (a) Passport with at least 3 months validity beyond period of visa, with one blank page to affix visa stamp. (b) Application form(s); number dependent on nationality of applicant. (c) Photo(s); number dependent on nationality of applicant. (d) Proof of adequate means of support during stay (at least £20.00 per day). (e) Proof of medical insurance. (f) Proof of purpose of visit and/or a hotel reservation and/or a return ticket. (g) Fee (payable in cash or by postal order). (h) Letter from employer or place of study. (i) Self-addressed, special delivery envelope (if passport is not to be collected in person). Applicants under 18 years of age must submit a letter from their place of study or legal guardian.

Business: (a)-(i) and, (j) Letter from employer; if self-employed a letter from a solicitor, accountant, bank manager or local Chamber of Commerce.

Working days required: For UK residents applying in the UK, visas will normally be issued within 2 days; however, applications from some nationals can take up to 8 days to process. If the stay is likely to be for more than 3 months, applications should be made at least 10 weeks in advance of the intended date of departure. Visa applications by non-residents have to be referred to the German Embassy in the applicant's home country, and may take 10 weeks or more to be issued.

Temporary residence: Nationals of EU and EFTA countries (Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, Sweden and Switzerland) and nationals of the USA may apply for a permit from the local immigration office in Germany, no later than 3 months after entry. For further details on temporary residence in Germany, enquire at the Consulate (or Consular section at Embassy).

Work permits: European Union citizens do not need a visa or a work permit to work in Germany. A residence permit must, however, be obtained for stays of over 3 months (see above). Non-European Union nationals must obtain a visa/residence permit before entering Germany. There are special regulations for nationals of EU countries, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland and the USA. An information sheet, Residence and Work in Germany, is obtainable from the German Embassy (see address section).

4 MONEY

Single European currency (Euro): The Euro is now the official currency of 12 EU member states (including Germany), although it is currently only used as 'written money' (cheques, bank transactions, credit cards, etc). The first Euro coins and notes have been introduced in January

2002; the German Deutschmark was in circulation until July 1 2002, it is completely replaced by the Euro. 1 Euro = DM1.95583.

Currency exchange: Foreign currencies and travellers cheques can be exchanged at banks, bureaux de change, post offices, airports, railway stations, ports and major hotels at the official exchange rates.

Credit cards: These are accepted in approximately 60% of all shops, petrol stations, restaurants and hotels. Nationals of other Western European countries, Canada and the USA will find less credit card availability than they are used to in their own countries and it is advisable to carry cash or Eurocheques as well. All major credit cards are accepted. Check with your credit card company for details of merchant acceptability and other services which may be available.

Travellers cheques: Generally provide the best rate of exchange. To avoid additional exchange rate charges, travellers are advised to take travellers cheques in EURO.

Currency restrictions: There are no restrictions on the import or export of either local or foreign currency.

Banking hours: Generally 0830-1300 and 1430-1600 Monday, Wednesday and Friday; Thursday 0830-1300 and 1430-1800 in main cities. Main branches do not close for lunch.

5 DUTY FREE

The following goods may be imported into the Federal Republic of Germany without incurring customs duty by visitors arriving from countries outside the EU:
200 cigarettes or 100 cigarillos or 50 cigars or 250g of tobacco; 1 litre of spirits with an alcohol content exceeding 22% by volume or 2 litres of spirits or liqueurs with an alcohol content not exceeding 22% by volume or 2 litres of sparkling or liqueur wine; 2 litres of any other wine; 50g of perfume or 250ml of eau de toilette; 500g of coffee or 200g of coffee extracts; personal goods to the value of EUR200.

Note: (a) The tobacco and alcohol allowances are granted only to those over 17 years of age.
(b) Wine in excess of the above allowances imported for personal consumption and valued at less than EUR100 will be taxed at an overall rate of 16%.

Abolition of duty-free goods within the EU: On June 30 1999, the sale of duty-free alcohol and tobacco at airports and at sea was abolished in all 15 EU member states. Although there are now no limits imposed on importing tobacco and alcohol products from one EU country to another, (with the exceptions of Denmark, Finland and Sweden, where limits are imposed), travellers should note that they may be required to prove at customs that the goods purchased are for personal use only.

6 PUBLIC HOLIDAYS

Jan 1 2001 New Year's Day. Jan 6 Epiphany*. Apr 13 Good Friday. Apr 16 Easter Monday. May 1 Labour Day. May 24 Ascension Day. Jun 4 Whit Monday. Jun 14 Corpus Christi*. Aug 15 Assumption of the Virgin Mary*. Oct 3 Day of Unity. Oct 31 Day of Reformation*. Nov 1 All Saints' Day*. Nov 21 Day of Prayer and Repentance*. Dec 25-26 Christmas. Jan 1 2002 New

Year's Day. Jan 6 Epiphany*. Mar 29 Good Friday. Apr 1 Easter Monday. May 1 Labour Day. May 9 Ascension Day. May 20 Whit Monday. May 30 Corpus Christi*. Aug 15 Assumption of the Virgin Mary*. Oct 3 Day of Unity. Oct 31 Day of Reformation*. Nov 1 All Saints' Day*. Nov 20 Day of Prayer and Repentance*. Dec 25-26 Christmas.

Note*: Epiphany, Corpus Christi, Assumption of the Virgin Mary, Day of Reformation, All Saints' Day and Day of Prayer and Repentance are not observed in all areas. Consult the German National Tourist Office for details (see address section).

7 HEALTH

	<i>Special Precautions</i>	<i>Certificate Required</i>
Yellow Fever	No	No
Cholera	No	No
Typhoid and Polio	No	-
Malaria	No	-
Food and Drink	1	-

1: Tap water is considered safe to drink. Milk is pasteurised and dairy products are safe for consumption. Local meat, poultry, seafood, fruit and vegetables are generally considered safe to eat.

Rabies is present; look out for 'Tollwut' signs. For those at high risk, vaccination before arrival should be considered. If you are bitten, seek medical advice without delay. For more information consult the Health appendix. Tick-borne encephalitis is present in forested areas of southern Germany. Vaccination is advisable.

Health care: There is a reciprocal health agreement with the UK. On presentation of the form E111 (obtainable from post offices in the UK), UK citizens are entitled to free medical and dental treatment. Prescribed medicines may, in some cases, have to be paid for. The cost of treatment in public hospitals (on referral from a doctor, unless in emergencies) is covered by the public health authorities, except for a small daily charge from the start of hospital treatment up to a maximum of 14 days. Private insurance is recommended for specialist medical treatment outside the German National Health Service, which can be very expensive. Surgery hours are generally 1000-1200 and 1600-1800 (not Wednesday afternoon, Saturday or Sunday). The emergency telephone number is 112; additionally, there is an emergency call-out service out of surgery hours (1800-0700). Chemists are open 0900-1800 Monday to Friday and 0900-1200 Saturday. All chemists give alternative addresses of services available outside the normal opening hours. There are 350 officially recognised medical spas and watering places with modern equipment providing therapeutic treatment and recreational facilities for visitors seeking rest and relaxation. A list of the spas and health resorts and various treatments can be ordered from the German National Tourist Office, or directly from Deutscher Heilbäderverband e.V. (German Spas Association), Schumannstrasse 111, 53113 Bonn (tel: (228) 201 200; fax: (228) 201 2041).

Travel - International

AIR: The national airline is Lufthansa (LH). Many other airlines serve the country, including an increasing number of low-cost airlines (such as Go, Buzz and Ryanair) operating from the UK.

Approximate flight times: From London to Hamburg, Bremen or Hannover is 1 hour 20 minutes; to Cologne/Bonn is 1 hour 10 minutes; to Frankfurt/M is 1 hour 25 minutes; to Nuremberg is 2 hours 30 minutes (with one stop); and to Munich is 1 hour 40 minutes. From Los Angeles to Frankfurt/M is 14 hours 50 minutes, from New York is 8 hours 20 minutes, from Singapore is 14 hours 5 minutes and from Sydney is 24 hours 55 minutes.

International airports: Berlin-Tegel (TXL) (Otto Lilienthal) (web site: <http://www.berlin-airport.de/bbf/txl/>) is located 8km (5 miles) northwest of the city (travel time - 20 minutes). Bus nos. 109 and X9 go to the city every 5-10 minutes from 0500-2400; return is from Bahnhof Zoo, Budapester Strasse, Charlottenburg station or Kurfürstendamm underground station. Airport facilities include duty-free shop, bank/bureau de change, left luggage (0530-2200), 24-hour medical facilities, post office (0630-2100), restaurant (0600-2200), bars (0600-2300), snack bar (0515-2300), shops, tourist information, conference rooms, hotel reservation and car hire.

Berlin-Schönefeld (SXF) (web site: <http://www.berlin-airport.de/bbf/sxf/>) is 20km (12 miles) southeast of the city (travel time - 1 hour). The AirportExpress train departs for the city centre every 30 minutes (0430-2300). S-Bahn no. S9 departs to the city (to Westkreuz) via Alexanderplatz and Bahnhof Zoo; S45 (every 20 minutes, to Westend). Further connections with the regional train services R1, R2 and R12 are available at the same tariff as the S-Bahn. Bus no. 171 runs between U-Bahn Station Rudow (Line 7) and the airport. 24-hour taxi service is available to the city. Airport facilities include duty-free shop, bank/bureau de change, post office (0800-1800), restaurant (0730-2200 Monday to Friday, 0600-2200 Saturday and Sunday), 24-hour left luggage, medical facilities (0600-2200), 24-hour nursery, 24-hour snack bar, 24-hour hotel reservation, 24-hour tourist information and car hire (0900-2000). A main line railway station is a 10-minute walk from the airport; from here connections to major German cities and to Basle, Budapest, Prague and Vienna are possible. A free shuttle bus is available from the airport to the station.

Berlin-Tempelhof (THF) (web site: <http://www.berlin-airport.de/bbf/thf/>) is 6km (4 miles) southeast of the city centre (travel time - 20 minutes). Bus no. 119 departs every 10 minutes to the city. The underground lines 6 and 7 run every 2-10 minutes (travel time - 15 minutes). Taxis are available. Airport facilities include duty-free shop, left luggage (0600-2200), 24-hour medical facilities, bank/bureau de change, snack bar, other shops and car hire.

Bremen (BRE) (Neuenland) (web site: <http://www.airport-bremen.de/>) is 3km (2 miles) from the city (travel time - 10 minutes). Tram no. 5 takes approximately 12 minutes to the city centre (main railway station). Services run every 5-15 minutes Monday to Saturday, and every 15-30 minutes Sunday. There is a 24-hour taxi service. Airport facilities include a duty-free shop, bank, bureau de change, conference centre, car hire and hotel reservation.

Cologne (Köln/Bonn) (CGN) (Konrad Adenauer) (web site: <http://www.airport-cgn.de>) is 14km (9 miles) southeast of Cologne, and 21km (13 miles) northeast of Bonn (travel time - 25 and 35 minutes respectively). Express bus no. 170 goes to Cologne every 15-30 minutes. Express bus no. 670 goes to Bonn every 20 minutes. Return is from Stadthaltestelle am Hauptbahnhof (bus stop near the main railway station). There is a 24-hour taxi service at the airport. Airport facilities include a duty-free shop, tourist information, conference centre, car hire, restaurant (1100-2000), bar (0600-2300), bank/building society and shops.

Dresden (DRS) (Klotsche) (web site: <http://www.dresden-airport.de>) is 10km (6 miles) from Dresden (travel time - 25 minutes). Daily bus services are available to the city.

Düsseldorf (DUS) (Lohausen) (web site: <http://www.dusseldorf-airport.de>) is 8km (5 miles) north of the city. Trains depart to the city every 20 minutes (the airport station is under the arrival hall). Return is from Hauptbahnhof (main railway station) every 30 minutes. An S-Bahn connection (S7) every 20-30 minutes and bus no. 727 are available as well. Taxis run a 24-hour service to Düsseldorf. Airport facilities include a duty-free shop (0430-2130), bank (0630-2130), medical facilities, post office, restaurant (0600-2359), bars, snack bar (0430-2130), tourist information, car hire and conference rooms.

Frankfurt/M (FRA) (Rhein/Main) (web site: <http://www.frankfurt-airport.de>) is 9km (6 miles) southwest of the city. Travel to and from the city is by buses no. 61 and 62 every 20 minutes, returning from Hauptbahnhof (main station). Line S8 goes to the city (the station is underneath the arrival hall). S-Bahn S8 also goes directly to Mainz and Wiesbaden (travel time - 40 minutes). There is a 24-hour taxi service to Frankfurt. The airport has its own InterCity train station which also offers international services (Switzerland, Austria and Hungary). The Lufthansa Courtesy Airport Bus connects with Mannheim (travel time - 1 hour), Heidelberg (travel time - 1 hour) and Talheim (travel time - 2 hours). Japan Airlines also operates a bus service, to Düsseldorf (travel time 2 hours 30 minutes). Long-distance bus services from the airport include the T271 to Ostrava in the Czech Republic (travel time 4 hours) and the CHECK LINE bus to Strasbourg in France (travel time-3 hours). Airport facilities include left luggage, 24-hour medical facilities, duty-free shops, banks, restaurants, bars, snack bars, shops, Airport Conference Centre (23 conference rooms), post office (0600-2200), tourist information and car hire.

Hamburg (HAM) (Hamburg-Fuhlsbüttel) (web site: <http://www.airport.de>) is 9km (5 miles) north of the city centre (travel time - 25 minutes). Coaches go to the city every 20 minutes, returning from Zentral Omnibus Bahnhof Kirchenallee. The Airport City Line bus runs every 20 minutes to the railway station from 0500-2300. Express bus no. 110 runs every 10 minutes to Ohlsdorf station (travel time - 9 minutes). A taxi service is available. Airport facilities include duty-free shop, bank (0600-2200), shops, restaurants (0530-2200), snack bar, post office and tourist information.

Hannover (HAJ) (Langenhagen) (web site: <http://www.flughafen.hannover.de/start/start.html>) is 11km (7 miles) north of the city (travel time - 30 minutes). Express bus no. 60 goes to the city every 20-30 minutes, returning from the city air terminal at the main railway station (Ernst-August-Platz). A 24-hour taxi service runs to Hannover. Airport facilities include a duty-free shop, 24-hour luggage lockers, 24-hour medical facilities, banks/bureau de change (0630-2100 Mon-Fri, 0900-1730 Sat-Sun), bars (0600-1900), snack bar, post office, restaurants and car hire.

Leipzig/Halle (LEJ) (web site: <http://www.leipzig.com/verkehr/flug>) is 12km (7 miles) northwest of the city (travel time - 30 minutes). Coaches depart to the city. Return is from the main railway station and major hotels. 24-hour taxi services are available to the city. Airport facilities include duty-free shop, conference centre, bank (0800-2000), post office (0730-2100 Monday to Friday, 0800-1200 Saturday and Sunday), snack bar (0600-2200), medical facilities (0600-2230), tourist information and restaurant (0700-2100).

Munich (MUC) (Franz Joseph Strauss) (web site: <http://www.munich-airport.de>) is 28.5km (18 miles) northeast of the city (travel time - 38 minutes). Direct link with the S-Bahn S8 runs every 20 minutes from Hauptbahnhof (main station) (0313-0042; return 0355-0115). The Airport City Bus runs every 20 minutes from 0650-1930 to the Hauptbahnhof and every 30 minutes from 0755-2055; further bus services are available. Coach Oberbayern runs every 10 minutes to the city centre. Airport facilities include duty-free shop, 24-hour left luggage, 24-hour medical facilities, snack bar, restaurants, post office, banks, conference centre, car hire and bars.

Münster-Osnabrück (FMO) (web site: <http://www.flughafen-fmo.de>) is 25km (16 miles) from the city. Buses go to Münster (travel time - 30 minutes) and Osnabrück (travel time - 35 minutes). Taxis take 40 minutes. Airport facilities include a duty-free shop.

Nuremberg (NUE) (web site: <http://www.flughafen-nuernberg.de/>) is 7km (4 miles) north of the city centre. The Airport Express runs every 30 minutes to the Hauptbahnhof 0500-2330. There is a 24-hour taxi service. Bus no. 32 goes to Thon with interchanging bus no. 30 to Erlangen (travel time - 20 minutes) as well as trams no. 4 and 9. Taxis are available. Airport facilities include a duty-free shop, 24-hour luggage lockers, business centre, 24-hour medical facilities, bars (0500-2000), snack bar (0430-2000), post office (0630-1730 Mon-Fri, 0630-1200 Sat), restaurants (1100-2300) and car hire.

Saarbrücken (SCN) (Ensheim) (web site: <http://www.flughafen-saarbruecken.de>) is 16km (10 miles) from the city centre. There is an hourly bus service to the city and taxis are also available.

Stuttgart (STR) (Echterdingen) (web site: <http://www.stuttgart.airport.de>) is 14km (9 miles) south of the city (travel time - 35 minutes). Express bus connection (Line A) goes direct to the main station every 20 minutes. Return is from the city Air Terminal. An S-Bahn link (lines S2 and S3) is available with trains running at 10-minute intervals. Bus nos. 33, 7600 and 7556 also connect with the city. There is a 24-hour taxi service to Stuttgart. Airport facilities include duty-free shops (0430-2359), 24-hour luggage lockers, conference centre, 24-hour medical facilities, bank/bureau de change (0730-2100), bars (0530-2359), post office, restaurant (0530-2300) and car hire.

SEA: The following shipping lines serve routes to Germany from the UK:

DFDS Seaways: Harwich-Hamburg.

Stena Line: Harwich-Hook of Holland.

P&O Stena Line: Dover-Calais, Dover-Ostend.

P&O European Ferries: Portsmouth-Le Havre, Portsmouth-Cherbourg.

P&O North Sea Ferries: Hull-Rotterdam, Hull-Zeebrugge.

Hoverspeed: Dover-Calais, Folkstone-Boulogne, Newhaven-Dieppe, Dover-Ostend.

Ferry connections also exist from Germany to The Netherlands, Norway, Denmark, Sweden, Finland, the Russian Federation, Latvia and Lithuania.

RAIL: Train/ferry routes from London are from London Victoria via Dover and Ostend, or London Liverpool Street to Hook of Holland via Harwich. Travel time to Cologne/Bonn is around 10 hours.

The channel tunnel: Eurostar (web site: <http://www.eurostar.co.uk>) is a service provided by the railways of Belgium, the UK and France, operating direct high-speed trains from London (Waterloo International) to Paris (Gare du Nord) and to Brussels (Midi/Zuid). There is now a through railway fare to Cologne (£82 return) by Eurostar to Brussels with a connecting train to Cologne. The ticket, available from the German Railways (Deutsche Bahn) is only issued if the trip to Germany includes a Saturday night. There are excellent connections between the Federal Republic of Germany and other main European cities. In 1998, Deutsche Bahn extended their international network eastwards and it now connects with 13 European countries, including Hungary, Slovenia and Croatia. For more information, contact Deutsche Bahn in the UK at 6-8 Oakhill Grove, Suite 23, Surbiton, Surrey KT6 6DU (tel: (0870) 243 5363; fax: (020) 8339 4700; web site: <http://www.bahn.de>). A number of scenic rail journeys begin in Germany and go to Austria or Switzerland, such as the routes through the Black Forest: Frankfurt/M-Offenburg-Singen-Schaffhausen and Würzburg-Zürich.

ROAD: Germany is connected to all surrounding countries by a first-class network of motorways and trunk roads. For regular coach services from the UK to Berlin, Cologne, Frankfurt/M, Dortmund, Hannover, Munich and other destinations in the Federal Republic of Germany contact: Eurolines (tel: (020) 7730 8235 or (01582) 404 511; fax: (01582) 400 694); for credit card bookings at least 7 days' notice is required. Agents in the UK are National Express (tel: (0990) 80 80 80; fax: (121) 456 1397; web site: <http://www.nationalexpress.co.uk>); or Transline (tel: (01375) 390 039; fax: (01375) 394 488; e-mail: coaches@harris-travel.com; web site: <http://www.harris-travel.com>).

In every major city there are Mitfahrerzentralen (car sharing agencies, see Yellow Pages) which offer shared car travelling to all European cities on the basis of shared costs; an agency fee is charged. See Travel - Internal section for information on documentation and traffic regulations.

Travel - Internal

AIR: Internal services are operated by Lufthansa and several regional airlines. Frankfurt/M is the focal point of internal air services and all airports in the Federal Republic of Germany can be reached in an average of 50 minutes flying time. There are several airports in the country apart

from those listed above which offer internal air services. Helgoland, Sylt and some other Friesian Islands are served by seasonal services operated by regional airlines or air taxi services. Connections by air are run daily from Berlin, Bremen, Cologne/Bonn, Düsseldorf, Frankfurt/M, Hamburg, Hannover, Munich, Nuremberg, Stuttgart and Westerland/Sylt (summer only). The majority of western airports offer daily flights to Leipzig and several flights a week to Dresden.

SEA/RIVER: Regular scheduled boat services operate on most rivers, lakes and coastal waters, including the Danube, Main, Moselle, Rhine, Neckar and the Weser, and also on Ammer See, Chiemsee, Königssee and Lake Constance. Ferry services are operated on Kiel Fjord and from Cuxhaven to Helgoland and to the East and North Friesian Islands as well as to Scandinavian destinations. Besides these scheduled services, special excursions are available on all navigable waters. The KD German Rhine Line covers the Rhine, Main and Moselle rivers, and has comfortable ships which operate daily from April to late October. Tours with entertainment on board and excursions are arranged as well as cruises between The Netherlands and Switzerland and on the Moselle. In conjunction with the 'White Fleet' Dresden, the KD also organises cabin cruises on the Elbe between Dresden and Hamburg. The 'White Fleet' offers 30 scheduled services and short trips around Berlin. Further routes include the rivers Saale and Elbe, several lakes and the Mecklenburger Lake District. Hapag-Lloyd operates cruises of 7-21 days from Bremerhaven, Hamburg and Kiel in summer. Lake Constance (Europe's third-largest inland lake) is served by regular steamers, pleasure boats and car ferries between the German, Swiss and Austrian shores. The Bodensee Pass gives 50% reductions to visitors throughout the Lake Constance area. This includes scheduled ferry services offered by the German, Swiss and Austrian railways as well as some bus, local train and mountain railway routes. The pass is valid for either 7 or 15 days. Children up to 6 years of age travel free. In addition to the pass, there is a Family Ticket which is available free of charge and allows children between 6-16 years of age free travel; unmarried young persons between 16-26 years of age pay half. In both cases they have to be accompanied by a parent. The Family Ticket is only valid on boats together with the Bodensee Pass.

RAIL: Several InterCity and one ICE connections are on offer running every 1-2 hours on the following routes: Berlin-Frankfurt/M-Karlsruhe, Berlin-Cologne-Basel, Munich-Frankfurt/M-Berlin (ICE) and Hamburg-Berlin-Dresden with direct links to Prague. The ICE-Business-Sprinter runs non-stop on the following routes: Frankfurt/M-Hannover, Wiesbaden-Hannover, Frankfurt/M-Hamburg, Wiesbaden-Hamburg, Mannheim-Hamburg, Karlsruhe-Hamburg and Frankfurt/M-Munich. Seats on these services have to be booked in advance; yearly ticket holders can use the Sprinters without surcharge. Generally, reservations are advised on all services. Children under 6 years of age travel free of charge; those aged 6-11 pay half fare; young people aged 12-26 pay 75% of the standard fare. For latest information leaflets, contact German Rail (see Travel - International section) or the German National Tourist Office.

German National Railways (Deutsche Bahn) operates some 32,684 passenger trains each day over a 40,800km (25,500-mile) network and many international through services. Work on the 3200km (2000-mile) fast-train network has already started and should be completed by 2010. The network does not radiate around the capital as the federal structure provides an integrated system to serve the many regional centres. InterCity Express, InterCity, EuroCity and InterRegio departure and arrival times are co-ordinated with each other. More than 50 cities, including Berlin, Leipzig, Erfurt and Dresden, are served hourly by InterCity trains; regional centres are connected every two hours (west Germany), or every 2-4 hours in the eastern part of the country, through the InterRegio system. Details of up-to-date prices, and where tickets can be bought, are available from German Rail or the Tourist Office.

With a railway network as complex, modern and sophisticated as that in the western part of the Federal Republic of Germany, it is obviously impossible to give all the details of the main routes, facilities, timetables, fares and reductions which are available. The following section gives brief descriptions of the major special fares and tickets which are currently on offer. Some of these

can only be obtained in Germany. Other new schemes, or modifications to existing ones, may be introduced in the future.

The introduction of the new high-speed InterCity Express, travelling at 280kph (175mph), reduced travel times between the major centres immensely. The service is operating hourly only on some connections at the moment; a supplement is payable. The extensive InterCity network (300 trains per day) connects the major centres at hourly intervals, and ensures swift interchange between trains. A supplement is charged for first- or second-class on InterCity and EuroCity trains. Smaller towns are linked by the 26 InterRegio lines at 2-hour intervals. Supplementing the system of these longer-distance trains are several commuter networks in larger cities.

Facilities and services: Buffet cars with some seating for light refreshments and drinks are provided on InterRegio (IR) trains. Most InterCity and EuroCity trains carry a 48-seat restaurant, offering a menu and drinks throughout the journey. The newer generation InterCity Express trains combine both of the above-mentioned facilities, offering a selection of snacks and menu in their restaurant cars. First-class passengers are provided with 'at-your-seat' service. The InterCity Express also provides a service car with conference compartment, card telephones and fully equipped office (photocopier, fax, etc). Sleeping cars: Many have showers, and air-conditioning is provided on most long-distance overnight trains. Beds can be booked in advance. Some trains provide couchettes instead. Sleeping-car attendants serve refreshments. Seat reservations should be made for all long-distance trains well in advance. When reserving a seat on InterCity, EuroCity and InterCity Express trains, specify Grossraumwagen, which is a carriage with adjustable seats and without compartments, or Abteilwagen, which is made up of compartments. Bicycle hire: At approximately 260 stations in areas suited for cycle tours, the DB operates a bicycle hire service (ticket holders have special reduced rates). Mountain railways: Cable cars, chairlifts or cogwheel railways serve all popular mountain sites.

Rail passes: The following is a selection of rail passes available on German railways. Details may change and travellers are advised to check with Deutsche Bahn or the German National Tourist Office. Some passes can only be purchased outside Germany (see Note below).

Saverticket: Available for a return journey on one weekend or within one month.

Supersaverticket: Available for a return journey on a Saturday or within one month (not valid Friday, Sunday and during peak days).

Happy Weekend Ticket: Available for up to 5 persons travelling together at a weekend, from Saturday until Monday (0200).

Euro Domino: These tickets enable holders to make flexible travel arrangements and are valid in 27 European countries including the ferry service from Brindisi (Italy) to Igoumenitsa (Greece). They have to be bought in the country of residence for which a valid passport or other form of ID has to be shown. First- and second-class tickets are available for travellers over 26 years of age; for passengers under 26, only second-class is available (at £94 for 3 days, £102 for 5 days and £124 for 8 days). The tickets for travellers over 26 years of age are also valid for any 3 (at £188 first-class, £125 second-class), 5 (at £205 first-class, £136 second-class) or 8 days (at £247 first-class, £170 second-class) within a month. They also entitle holders to a discount of 25% on rail travel in the country of origin or in all countries which comply with the system. Discounted Euro Domino tickets are on offer for persons under 26 years of age. Children between 6-11 years get a 50% discount, children under six travel free. The German variety of the ED-ticket is valid on the complete network of the DB; all InterCity trains, including the InterCity Express, can be used without paying a supplement. Motorail is exempt. Where seat reservation is required, a reduced fee is charged; the usual rates apply for couchette and sleeping-cars.

Inter: -Rail: Available to all, but for those aged over 26, tickets are approximately 40% more expensive. Four different tickets are available. Europe is split into eight zones (A-H) and the pass is valid for an unlimited number of train journeys in the zones chosen, which now include Bulgaria, Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro), the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Romania. The Global Pass is valid for one month in all eight zones (32 countries, including Morocco, Turkey and the ferry connection Brindisi-Patras). Other tickets cover just one zone (2-7 countries, 15 days validity), two zones (6-10 countries, one month validity) and three zones (9-15 countries, one month validity). Reductions of 50% are offered in the country of residence for travel to the border and back as well as transit journeys. The Inter-Rail ticket is only available for second-class travel and does not include the use of certain services such as the X2000 in Sweden, the Pendolino in Italy or the AVE in Spain.

BahnCard: The BahnCard ticket offers half-price rail travel with a choice of first- or second-class travel and is valid for one year. It costs £184 for first class or £92 for second class. In addition, there are reduced versions for married couples, families, senior citizens, young people and children.

Rail Europe Senior (RES): Card: This offers considerable savings on rail travel for senior citizens over 60 on international (cross-border) journeys. The card is available from major railway stations, for a small fee, on presentation of a Senior Citizen's Railcard.

Euro-Mini-Group: A return ticket for groups of 2-5 people with at least one person under 16 years of age and one adult among them. This ticket is valid for two months and gives a 25% reduction for adults and 50% for children.

Good Evening Ticket: This ticket is available only in Germany. It offers travel on nearly all routes within Germany for a flat fare between 1900-0200 daily except Christmas, Easter and other major travelling dates. The ticket has to be bought at the station of departure.

Motorail: The German Railway has a fully integrated motorail network, connecting with the rest of the European motorail network. Trains run mostly during the summer and at other holiday periods; most have sleeper, couchette and restaurant/buffet cars.

Note: There are certain discount rail passes that can only be purchased outside Germany. The Wunder Flexipass, available through worldwide travel agencies and Rail Europe, entitles travellers to four days of unlimited first-class travel plus one day's car rental within a 21-day period. The following rail passes can only be purchased through German Rail offices and travel agencies outside Europe: German Railpass (valid for 5, 10 or 15 days for either first- or second-class travel); German Rail Youthpass (second-class travel for travellers under 26 years of age); and German Rail Twinpass (for two persons travelling together, first- or second-class, for 5, 10 or 15 days).

ROAD: Traffic drives on the right. The western part of the Federal Republic of Germany is covered by a modern network of motorways (Autobahnen) extending over 10,500km (6563 miles). There are over 487,000km (303,000 miles) of roads in all, and every part of the country can be reached by motorists. Use of the network is free at present, but the introduction of a road toll is being discussed. Lead-free petrol is obtainable everywhere. The breakdown service of the German Automobile Association (ADAC) is available throughout the country, though in the eastern part of the country, the Auto Club Europa (ACE) and the Allgemeiner Deutscher Motorsportverband (ADMV) also provide a service. Help is given free of charge to members of affiliated motoring organisations, such as the AA, and only parts have to be paid for. Breakdown services, including a helicopter rescue service, are operated by the ADAC. In the event of a

breakdown, use emergency telephones located along the motorway. When using these telephones ask expressly for road service assistance ('Strassenwachthilfe'). In almost all cases, the number to dial for emergency services is 110 (in some of the eastern states it is still 155; if in doubt dial the fire brigade, 112). The German National Tourist Office publishes the booklet *Autobahn-Service* giving information on all the facilities and services available on the motorways throughout the country.

Note: Although motorways in eastern Germany are of a reasonable standard, many secondary roads are still being improved to match West German standards. **Bus:** Buses serve villages and small towns, especially those without railway stations. Operated by the Post, German Railways or private firms, they only tend to run between or to small places and there are few long-distance services. *Europabus/Deutsche Touring* runs services on special scenic routes such as the Romantic Road (Wiesbaden/Frankfurt to Munich/Füssen) and the Castle Road between Mannheim/Heidelberg to Rothenburg and Nuremberg.

Taxi: These are available everywhere. Watch out for waiting-period charges and surcharges. All taxis are metered.

Car hire: Self-drive cars are available at most towns and at over 40 railway stations. Chauffeur-driven cars are available in all large towns. Rates depend on the type of car. Some firms offer weekly rates including unlimited mileage. VAT at 16% is payable on all rental charges. On request, cars will be supplied at airports, stations and hotels. It may be difficult to use credit cards at petrol stations.

Several airlines, including Lufthansa, offer 'Fly-drive'. Contact the National Tourist Office for details.

Motoring organisations: The Allgemeiner Deutscher Automobil Club (ADAC) based in Munich and the Automobilclub von Deutschland (AvD) based in Frankfurt/M have offices at all major frontier crossings and in the larger towns. They will be able to assist foreign motorists, particularly those belonging to affiliated motoring organisations. They also publish maps and guidebooks, which are available at their offices. German Automobile Association (ADAC) operates an emergency service to relay radio messages to motorists. In both winter and summer there are constant radio reports on road conditions and traffic.

Regulations: Traffic signs are international. Speed limits in western Germany are 50kph (31mph) in built-up areas and 100kph (62mph) on all roads outside built-up areas. Motorways (Autobahnen) and dual carriageways have a recommended speed limit of 130kph (81mph). Speed limits in eastern Germany vary according to the condition of the road. Although officially the same as in western Germany since January 1993, some motorways and dual carriageways still carry a 100kph (62mph) speed limit. Children under 12 must travel in a special child seat in the back. Seat belts must be worn in the front and back. All visitors' cars must display vehicle nationality plates. Fines can be imposed for running out of petrol on a motorway. The warning triangle and a first-aid box are compulsory. The nationwide alcohol limit is 0.5%. Disabled drivers should be warned that, although Germany is well-organised for disabled travellers, an orange badge as used in the UK will not entitle the disabled motorist to park freely in Germany.

Documentation: Foreign travellers may drive their cars for up to one year if in possession of a national licence or International Driving Permit and car registration papers. Insurance is legally required. EU nationals taking their own cars are strongly advised to obtain a Green Card. Without it, insurance cover is limited to the minimum legal cover; the Green Card tops this up to the level of cover provided by the car owner's domestic policy.

URBAN: A high standard of public transport services is available in all towns. All urban areas have highly efficient and well established bus services. These are supplemented in a number of larger cities by underground and suburban railway trains. In many towns, block tickets for several journeys can be purchased at reduced rates and unlimited daily travel tickets are available. In many larger cities tickets for a local transport journey have to be purchased from ticket machines before you board the suburban train (S-Bahn), underground (U-Bahn), bus or tram. There are numerous sophisticated vending machines which service all the main boarding points and a wide range of relevant maps and leaflets is available to travellers. Although there is often no conductor on trams and underground trains, inspections are frequent and passengers without valid tickets will be fined on the spot. Timetables and brochures are available at stations.

Berlin: The city's excellent public transport includes an extensive network of buses, underground and S-Bahn which is supplemented by the regional services of the Deutsche Reichsbahn (lines R1-14). In the eastern part of the city, tram services and the ferries of the Berliner Verkehrs-Betriebe, BVG (Berlin Public Transport), in conjunction with east Berlin's 'White Fleet', provide further services. The underground lines 1 and 9 run a 24-hour service Friday night to Saturday and Saturday night to Sunday. The Berlin-Ticket is valid for 24 hours for unlimited travel on bus, underground, S-Bahn and the BVG ferries. The special BVG-excursion coaches are exempt. Holders of the Combined Day-Ticket enjoy unlimited travel with bus, underground and S-Bahn as well as on the complete ferry network of either organisation. A special Weekly Ticket with a validity of 7 days can only be obtained at Zoo station. Further details are available from the information desks of the BVG.

Note: Pedestrians should be aware that it is an offence to cross a road when the pedestrian crossing lights are red, even if there is no traffic on the road. On-the-spot fines for offenders are common.

(1): The following chart gives approximate journey times (in hours and minutes) from Berlin to other major cities and towns in the Federal Republic of Germany.

Air	Road	Rail	
Hamburg	0.45	4.00	4.45
Cologne	1.05	7.00	4.30-7.20
Frankfurt/M	1.10	6.30	4.30-7.00
Munich	1.20	7.00	10.10
Dresden	-	2.30	3.00
Leipzig	-	2.00	2.30
Erfurt	-	4.30	5.00
Rostock	-	2.30	3.00

(2): The following chart gives approximate journey times (in hours and minutes) from Bonn to other major cities and towns in the Federal Republic of Germany.

	Air	Road	Rail	River	
Hamburg	0.55	4.00	4.30	-	
Hannover	-	3.00	3.15	-	
Frankfurt/M	0.40	2.20	2.00	a	
Düsseldorf	-	1.00	0.45	-	
Cologne	0.20	0.15	0.40	-	
Stuttgart	0.50	4.00	3.30	-	
Munich	1.00	7.00	6.00	-	
Berlin	1.05	8.00	8.00	-	
Leipzig	-	7.00	9.00	-	

Dresden 1.45 8.00 13.00 -

[a]: There is a hydrofoil service (not daily) between Cologne and Mainz via Koblenz and Bonn which takes about 3 hours 30 minutes.

[b]: Cologne and Bonn share the same airport; see the Air section in Travel - International for details.

Note: All the above times are average times by the fastest and most direct route, by motorways in the case of road journeys, and by the quickest hydrofoil service for the time by river. The slow boat from Bonn to Cologne, for instance, takes three hours.

8 ACCOMMODATION

HOTELS: There is a good selection of hotels in the Federal Republic of Germany and comprehensive guides can be found at the German National Tourist Office. They can also provide the German Hotel Association Guide, published by the Deutscher Hotel- und Gaststättenverband (DEHOGA), Postfach 20 04 55, 53134 Bonn (tel: (228) 820 080; fax: (228) 820 0846; e-mail: info@dehoga.de; web site: <http://www.dehoga.de>). Approximately 50% of establishments offering accommodation in Germany belong to the association, which can supply further information on accommodation in Germany.

A special accommodation guide for the disabled Hilfe für Behinderte is available through **Bundesverband Selbsthilfe Körperbehinderter e.V (BSK), Postfach 20, 74236 Krautheim** (tel: (6294) 68110; fax: (6294) 95383; e-mail: bsk.ev@t-online.de; web site: <http://www.bsk-ev.de>). Some hotels are situated in old castles, palaces and monasteries. Alongside these are modern, comfortable hotels and well-planned and purpose-built premises. Examples of accommodation for a family on holiday is a country inn offering bed, breakfast and meals. More demanding visitors are also well catered for with medium to luxury hotels. The German hotel trade is extremely well-equipped with facilities from swimming pools and saunas to exercise gyms. When touring the country with no fixed itinerary, it is obviously often difficult to make reservations in advance. Watch out for Zimmer frei (vacancies) notices by the roadside, or go to the local Tourist Office (usually called Verkehrsamt). Visitors should try to get to the town where they want to stay the night by 1600, particularly in summer. Grading: Hotels are not graded as such, but every establishment offering accommodation falls into a particular category which stipulates rigid criteria regarding facilities offered. The categories are as follows:

Hotel: Must be accessible to all persons; must provide accommodation and at least one restaurant for guests and non-guests. It must also have a number of rooms for common use by all residents such as a lounge etc. 27% of establishments fall into this category.

A 'Gasthof' (inn) must provide the same facilities as a hotel except for the common rooms such as a lounge, etc. 30% of establishments fall into this category.

A 'Pension' must provide accommodation and food only for guests. It does not have to provide a restaurant for non-residents nor does it have to provide any common rooms. 16% of establishments fall into this category.

Hotel garni: Provides accommodation and breakfast only for guests. 27% of establishments fall into this category.

HISTORIC HOLIDAYS: Information about holidays in castles, stately mansions and historic hostelries may be obtained by contacting the National Tourist Office or by writing to European Castle, Hotels and Restaurants, Postfach 1111, 67142 Deidesheim (tel: (6326) 70000; fax: (6326) 700 022 or 700 077 (brochure requests); e-mail: service@castle.de; web site: <http://www.european-castle.com>).

SELF-CATERING: All-in self-catering deals are available that include sea travel to a German or other Channel port, and accommodation at the resort. The latter might be in anything from a farmhouse to a castle. Details are available from the German National Tourist Office.

FARMHOUSES: The booklet *Urlaub auf dem Bauernhof* (Holidays on the Farm) is published in conjunction with the German Agricultural Society and can be obtained from DLG-Verlag, Eschborner Landstrasse 122, 60489 Frankfurt/M. (tel: (69) 24 78 84 66; fax: (69) 24 78 84 84; e-mail: dlg-verlag@dlg-frankfurt.de; web site: <http://www.dlg-verlag.de> or <http://www.landtourismus.de>); Agrartour GmbH offers agricultural studies. For more information, contact Agrartour GmbH, Eschborner Landstrasse 122, 60489 Frankfurt/M. (tel: (69) 24 78 83 05; fax: (69) 24 78 84 95; for e-mail and web site addresses, see DLG-Verlag above.) Regional guides on most tourist regions can also be obtained from the German National Tourist Office. All aforementioned booklets are published in German only. A basic knowledge of German will be required for such a holiday. A catalogue with addresses for the whole of the country, including 2000 addresses in the eastern part, can be ordered from Landschriften-Verlag GmbH, Landferien Tourist Center, Zentrale für den Landurlaub, Heerstrasse 73, 53111 Bonn (tel: (228) 963 020; fax: (228) 963 0233; e-mail: info@bauernhofurlaub.com; web site: <http://www.bauernhofurlaub.com>). It costs EUR10.00 and is published annually in December.

YOUTH HOSTELS: There are 640 youth hostels throughout both eastern and western Germany. They are open to members of any Youth Hostel Association affiliated to the International Youth Hostel Association. Membership can be obtained from the YHA or Deutsches Jugendherbergswerk (German Youth Hostel Organisation), Bismarckstrasse 8, 32756 Detmold (tel: (5231) 74010; fax: (5231) 740 174; e-mail: service@djh.de; web site: <http://www.djh.de>). Reservation is advised during the high season (and throughout the year in major cities).

CAMPING/CARAVANNING: There are well over 2500 campsites in the Federal Republic of Germany. They are generally open from April to October, but 400 sites, mostly in winter sports areas, stay open in the winter and have all necessary facilities. (Campsites in the eastern part of the country are of a very basic standard.) The permission of the proprietor and/or the local police must always be sought before camp is pitched anywhere other than a recognised campsite. It is not normally possible to make advance reservations on campsites. A free map/folder giving details of several hundred selected campsites throughout the country is available from the German National Tourist Board. The German Camping Club publishes a camping guide of the best sites in Germany; contact Deutscher Camping-Club (DCC), Mandlstrasse 28, 80802 Munich (tel: (89) 380 1420; fax: (89) 334 737). The AA Guide to Camping and Caravanning on the Continent lists nearly 2000 European campsites, including a large section on Germany.

Berlin

Situated at the crossroads of Europe, the scenery of the Federal Republic of Germany is enormously varied and includes sandy beaches, towering mountains, forests, lakes and settlements ranging from medieval villages to some of Europe's greatest cities. Every region offers different foods and a wide range of wines and local beers.

The country is divided into 16 states (Bundesländer). The north includes the North Sea coast and the East Frisian Islands, Schleswig-Holstein, the city-states of Hamburg and Bremen, as well as the Weser Valley, Lüneburg Heath and the Harz Mountains. The central western area of the

country consists of the Rhineland region, the industrial sprawl of the Ruhr, the varied landscapes of Westphalia, the wine region Rhineland-Palatinate, the Saarland and the state of Hesse with its German 'fairytale road'. The Black Forest can be found in the south and is part of the state of Baden-Württemberg. Areas of touristic interest in this state include the Neckar Valley, Swabia and Lake Constance. Munich (München) is the capital of Bavaria. The main tourist regions are the Bavarian Forest to the east with the first German national park near the border with the Czech Republic, Franconia to the north, Upper Bavaria and the Alps to the south and the Allgäu region. Bavaria is the most popular tourist destination for nationals and visitors. The Baltic coast with its resorts is the most popular holiday region in the east, followed by the Thuringian Forest, the northern lake district, Saxon Hills, the Harz Mountains and the Zittauer Gebirge.

Berlin is the largest city in Germany. It is also the country's capital and the seat of Government. The recently renovated new German Parliament (Reichstag), a striking building designed by the British architect Norman Foster, testifies to the construction boom currently taking place in the German capital. Berlin's location at the heart of Central Europe and the disappearance of the Iron Curtain are sure to mean that its importance in Europe can only increase, while its location within Germany is liable to shift the country's centre of gravity eastwards. Since November 1989 when the Wall came down, nearly 100 streets have been reconnected, disused 'ghost' stations on the underground and overground suburban railways have sprung back to life and the watchtowers, dogs and barbed wire that divided the city, the country and indeed the continent for 28 years have virtually disappeared; nevertheless the two parts of the city remain very different places. Although this is largely due to the economic contrast between East and West, the two halves of the city have never been of a uniform character. The east contains the densely populated, urban proletarian quarters of Mitte, Pankow, Prenzlauer Berg and Friedrichshain which inspired the theatre of Erwin Piscator and Bertolt Brecht, although west Berlin also had its working-class quarters like Wedding, Neuköln and Kreuzberg (the latter is known for its pubs and the high proportion of Turkish nationals whose shops dominate the streets). In comparison, the green and leafy areas of Charlottenburg and Zehlendorf exude a more bourgeois atmosphere. After the city was occupied by the four post-war victorious powers, the two halves diverged even more as West Berliners broke away from their past and embraced the idea of a new, intensely Western, Americanised city. At the same time their fellow citizens in the east chose instead to retain what remained of the old Berlin. It is for this reason that the eastern half of the city arguably gives a more accurate image of what Berlin was like in the 1920s and 30s. To find quarters that retain a vestige of pre-war atmosphere, visitors must move away from the city centre's awkward juxtaposition of ponderous Prussian monuments and monolithic post-war social-realist architecture. Alexanderplatz, immortalised in Alfred Döblin's 1929 novel *Berlin Alexanderplatz*, was one of the main centres of the old 1920s Berlin as well as of post-war East Berlin. It is now re-emerging as an important focal point in the newly united city. The railway station Bahnhof Berlin Alexanderplatz (built in 1882) was re-opened in May 1998 after extensive renovation and modernisation. It connects to 110 train stations throughout the country and is also served by Berlin's U-Bahn. Relentless modernisation, however, has changed the character of the Alexanderplatz, which is now a bustling if faceless area of cafés, hotels and the 365m-high (1190ft) Television Tower (Fernsehturm) which dominates the skyline of the city. The oldest church in Berlin, the Nikolai Church (13th century), lent its name to the surrounding district, the Nikolaiviertel. This part of the city is an example for well-planned city restoration; it suffered tremendously during the war and was rebuilt partly with historic details, partly with modern façades, on the occasion of the 750th Anniversary of Berlin. Sweeping westwards away from Alexanderplatz is Unter den Linden, which Frederick the Great saw as the centrepiece of his royal capital and which changed from one of the premier thoroughfares of the old unified city to the showpiece of the German Democratic Republic, lined with restored monumental buildings and diplomatic delegations to the former capital of the GDR. However, for nearly 30 years it was in fact a dead-end, a monumental avenue cut off by the Wall. At its western end, the Brandenburg Gate (Brandenburger Tor) has been the supreme symbol of the city of Berlin (and even of elusive

German nationhood) since its completion in 1791. Situated just within the old boundaries of East Berlin, the view of the Brandenburg Gate from the West was for nearly 30 years obscured by the Wall which ran directly in front of it and as such it became an eloquent symbol of post-war European division. Now it is accessible from both East and West and is perhaps the most potent evocation of the peaceful revolution of 1989. The deceptively benign-looking Berlin Wall has all but gone and walkers and cyclists now roam along what was so recently known as the Todesstreifen or Death Strip. Quite a few tourists were able to buy 'their own' piece of the Wall; other parts can now be seen in several museums.

Berlin is not just an industrial city but also a cultural and scientific capital with several universities. It houses three opera houses, 53 theatres and more than 100 cinemas. It is worth noting that most foreign films are dubbed into German; look for the 'O.m.U.' indicator for the original language versions shown with German subtitles. East Berlin has a rich array of museums, most of which can be found on Museumsinsel (Museum Island) in a fork of the River Spree. The most famous is the Pergamon Museum which houses works of classical antiquity such as the Pergamon Altar and art of the Near East, Islam and the Orient. Among the many museums in the west are the Ägyptisches Museum (Egyptian Museum) at Charlottenburg, which contains the world-famous bust of Queen Nefertiti; the museums at Dahlem housing the major part of the Prussian State art collections; and the Berlin Museum in the old Supreme Court Building in Kreuzberg. The restored Martin-Gropius-Bau houses changing art exhibitions and the Berlin Gallery, with exhibits of the Jewish collection of the Berlin Museum and 20th-century paintings. Nearby is the Prinz Albrecht Area which is to become an international monument and memorial, as the building of the Gestapo, later the Reichssicherheitshauptamt, stood here. The exhibition entitled Topography of Terror documents this part of the history. The planned Kulturforum is to be constructed next to the National Gallery (designed by Mies van der Rohe), the Philharmonic, the Chamber Music Hall and other museums and will be developed as a cultural centre for the city.

One of the major cultural attractions of the eastern part of Berlin is the Deutsche Staatsoper staging highly impressive performances in a superbly refurbished classical setting. However, with the demise of the German Democratic Republic, subsidies are no longer guaranteed and the Opera's future is uncertain as ticket prices are forced to conform to market rates. Nevertheless, Berlin's cultural scene will no doubt continue to draw visitors from all over the world. It is arguably Berlin's finest concert hall and is part of the Schauspielhaus Berlin, designed by the famous architect Karl Friedrich Schinkel. At 1200, 1500 and 1900, visitors can enjoy the carillon of the tower of the French Cathedral. The German Cathedral on the Gendarmenmarkt now contains the fascinating exhibition Fragen an die Deutsche Geschichte (Questioning German History). Other attractions are as diverse as the Berlin Festival in September, the Jazz Festival in the autumn, the Berlinale in February, the Philharmonic Concerts and the thriving 'alternative' theatre.

Venturing west from the Opera along Unter den Linden and through the Tiergarten the visitor will eventually arrive at the heart of West Berlin, the Kurfürstendamm, popularly referred to as the 'Ku'damm'. As with so many features of this once divided city it is all too easy to attribute symbolic significance to the 'Ku'damm', for in a sense it is the embodiment of the glitzy materialistic West and of the differences created by the two systems which co-existed in Berlin for 40 years. Pulsating with traffic and people 24 hours a day and lined with cafés and shops, despite unification it still seems a thousand miles away from the bleak Alexanderplatz in the other half of the city. After taking time to sit in a café for a while and watch the crowds go by, strolling eastwards along the Ku'damm one will come to the Kaiser-Wilhelm-Gedächtniskirche. Preserved as a ruin after the destruction of the Second World War it is a stark reminder of the city's suffering from bombardment and its post-war rebirth. Not far from here is the Europa Center, containing shops, nightlife and a rooftop café with a splendid view of the whole city and the world-renowned department store, the KaDeWe (short for Kaufhaus des Westens). Other **attractions of the western half of the city include:** the Siegessäule (Victory Column), built at the order of Kaiser Wilhelm I two years after victory in the Franco-Prussian War of 1871; and

the Tiergarten, an English-style park in the heart of the city. The Reichstag, reconstructed after 1945, has recently been modernised. Schloss Charlottenburg, the splendid Baroque and Rococo palace of Frederick the Great, was the former summer home of the king outside Berlin. The Palace Park is ideal for long walks. The Gedenkstätte Plötzensee is a memorial to more than 2500 members of the Resistance who were executed here and generally to the German resistance during the Nazi regime.

Since the 1920s, when the city immortalised by Christopher Isherwood in *Goodbye to Berlin* enjoyed a reputation for decadence and radicalism which attracted people from all over Europe, Berlin has been known for its vibrant, flamboyant nightlife. This was fostered after the forming of the Federal Republic as, cut off from the rest of the country, West Berlin continued to attract and nurture an alternative culture, a radical political awareness and an adventurous creativity. Several alternative projects have gained increasing attention, among them the old UFA-Factory with cinema, circus, café, bakers and more, and the Ökodorf e.V. (centre and meeting place for people involved in ecological activities). Another of those is the first women-only hotel, Artemisia, in Europe. Although Sally Bowles and her like may no longer be found revelling through the night in a smoke-filled cabaret on the Tauentzien, Berlin is still a city that is open 24 hours a day with an unrivalled range of nightclubs, bars, restaurants, cabarets and Kneipen (pubs), catering for every taste and budget. There are excellent twice-monthly listings guides, *Prinz, Tip and Zitty*, as well as *Oxmox* (monthly), giving details of everything going on in the city, including east Berlin. Published on alternate weeks, they are available from any news kiosk. Diversion from the city life can be easily found as the city boundaries include numerous recreational areas, such as the Pfaueninsel (peacock island), now a nature reserve; the Spandau and Tegel Forests and the Grunewald. The People's Park Friederichshain in the eastern part of the city is simultaneously the largest and oldest park in east Berlin.

March of Brandenburg

Graphically described by the 19th-century German writer Theodor Fontane, the area of the March of Brandenburg that surrounds Berlin is a region of birch and pine forests and open horizons. The picturesque Spreewald lies south of Berlin and offers numerous waterways to be explored by boat and tranquil hamlets such as Bückchen to be discovered. Flat-bottomed barge is still the main means of transport in the heart of this region, as it has been for centuries. At Lehde there is a museum of original houses and farm buildings, complete with interiors. There are also several examples of the culture of the Sorbs, a resident Slavic minority.

Potsdam: Potsdam, although lacking many of its former attractions, has preserved several 18th-century buildings. The city also boasts three extensive parks, the Neuer Garten with the marble palace (closed for modernisation) and Schloss Cecilienhof (the Potsdam Conference took place here), the Babelsberg (park designed by the Prince of Pückler-Muskau) and naturally Sanssouci containing a gilded tea-house, and Sanssouci Palace, built on the instructions of Frederick the Great by Knobelsdorff. This, the favourite palace of Frederick the Great, is definitely a must for every visitor. The picture gallery next door to the palace contains many old masters. The Dutch Quarter of the city should also not be missed.

Traces of Frederick the Great are also to be found at Rheinsberg, which was immortalised by Kurt Tucholsky's tale of the same name. The interior of the beautifully situated castle is still undergoing restoration, but visits are possible. One of the towers houses a Tucholsky Memorial. The Cavalier House has been home to a music academy since 1991 which concentrates on period music and the music played at the court of Crown Prince Frederick. The Schorfheide is an area of forest north of Berlin. Beavers, otters and eagles have claimed this picturesque area as their own. In the centre of this landscape of birches and pines lies the Werbellin Lake. Any visit to the region should also include a visit to the former Cistercian Monastery of Chorin, where summer concerts are staged.

The Rhineland

The Rhineland is Germany's oldest cultural centre. Names such as Cologne, Aachen and Mainz are synonymous with soaring Gothic architecture and with the history and lives of many of the great names of Western Europe. However, the area consists of more than a mere series of riverside towns. Here too are the vast plains of the Lower Rhine farmlands, the crater lakes of the Eifel Hills, the Bergische Land with its lakes and Altenberg Cathedral and the Siebengebirge. Visitors are attracted to the Rhineland and the Moselle Valley not only for their beauty and romanticism, but also for the convivial atmosphere engendered by wine and song, after all 'Rhineland is Wineland'. Like most of its tributaries, the Rhine is lined with vineyards wherever the slopes face the sun. Alternating with the vineyards are extensive orchards which, in spring, are heavy with blossom. The Ahr Valley in the Eifel region is particularly famous for its lush scenery and its red wine; nearby is the famous Nürburgring racing circuit. Trier, the oldest German town close to the Luxembourg border, is situated on the River Moselle. The city houses the most important Roman ruins north of the Alps. Following the River Moselle eastwards towards Koblenz are several towns well-known among wine connoisseurs - Bernkastel-Kues, Kröv, Beilstein and Cochem. The Rhine Valley between Cologne and Mainz is world famous for its wines and wine festivals during the autumn. Eltz Castle is located deep in the woods near the Elzbach River. The Rhine Gorge's numerous castles include Stolzenfels, Marksburg Castle, Rheinfels at St Goar and the Schönburg Castle at Oberwesel. Along the Cologne-Mainz route, the KD German Rhine Line operates boats between Good Friday and the end of October enabling the passenger to enjoy the view of both sides of the river with vineyards and picturesque villages lining the banks.

The main cities on the Rhine, from north to south, are as follows:

Düsseldorf: Düsseldorf is one of the great cities of the German industrialised north, an important commercial and cultural centre and the capital of the state of North Rhine-Westphalia (Nordrhein-Westfalen); the city in fact developed over 700 years from a small fishing village at the mouth of the Düssel River to become the country's leading foreign trade centre. The city is extremely prosperous with a fine opera house as well as many concert halls, galleries and art exhibitions. There are over 20 theatres and 17 museums, including the State Art Gallery of North Rhine-Westphalia, the Kunsthalle (City Exhibition Hall) and the late Baroque Benrath Palace. The major exhibition centre is to the north of Hofgarten, which has been staging trade fairs since the time of Napoleon. The heart of the city is the Königsallee or 'Kö', a wide boulevard bisected by a waterway and lined with trees, cafés, fashionable shops and modern shopping arcades. Nearby are the botanical gardens, the Hofgarten, the Baroque Jägerhof Castle and the state legislature. Other attractions include the remains of the 13th-century castle, St Lambertus Church, the rebuilt 16th-century Town Hall, Benrath Palace in southern Düsseldorf and the many gardens and lakes both in the city and in the suburbs.

Cologne: Cologne (Köln) is an old Roman city and an important cultural and commercial centre holding many trade fairs each year. Attractions include the Cathedral of St Peter and St Mary (13th-19th century); the golden reliquary of the Three Magi; the Romanesque churches of St Pantaleon, St George, St Apostein, St Gereon and St Kunibert, the Gothic churches of St Andreas and the Minoritenkirche and Antoniterkirche; the medieval city wall and the Roman-Germanic Museum. Several examples of Roman art have been preserved, among them the Dionysus mosaic, the Praetorium, the sewage system and the catacombs. The Wallraf-Richartz Museum (paintings) is located in a controversial modern building next to the main railway station and the river. Worth a visit is the Schnütgen Museum (medieval ecclesiastical art); the zoo; and the Rhine Park with 'dancing fountains'. The city is a major starting point for boat trips on the Rhine. It also has a famous carnival. The Altstadt (old town) has been lovingly reconstructed and can be enjoyed on foot as can the extensive pedestrian shopping zone.

Near the town of Brühl, just southwest of Cologne, is the popular theme park, Phantasialand.

Aachen: Aachen(Aix-la-Chapelle), a beautiful spa town and the old capital city of the empire of Charlemagne, is not actually on the Rhine, being situated about 50km (30 miles) west of Cologne. It is actually located at the border of three countries - the Federal Republic of Germany, Belgium and The Netherlands - and a short distance from the city is a point where a person can stand in all three countries at once. Attractions in Aachen include the Cathedral (Kaiserdom); Charlemagne's marble throne; the Octagonal Chapel; the Town Hall built between 1333 and 1370 on the ruins of the imperial palace, with Coronation Hall and Charlemagne frescoes; Suermond Museum (paintings, sculptures); and the elegant fountains of sulphurous water, bearing witness to the spa statues of the city. In July, an international riding, jumping and driving tournament occurs.

The 2000-year-old university town and former federal capital Bonn remained the administrative capital until the end of 2000, when the whole administration moved to Berlin. The Bundesrat (upper house) and some administration temporarily remains in Bonn. South of the actual city is the former spa of Bad Godesberg, which is now part of Bonn. It is also the embassy district and offers a good selection of international restaurants and shops. Attractions include the Cathedral (11th-13th centuries) and cloisters; Kreuzberg Chapel, approached by a flight of 'holy steps'; **Schwarzrheindorf Church (two storied: 1151);** Town Hall (1737) and market square; art collections in the Godesberg (1210); Redoute (1792); Poppelsdorf Palace (1715-40) and botanical garden; the Beethoven Museum in the house where the great composer was born and much general theatrical and musical activity associated with his life; Pützchens Market (September); the University (1725) and Hofgarten. Excursions can be made from Bonn to the Siebengebirge, the Ahr Valley, Brühl Castle and the Nürburgring. The city also has many parkland areas, such as the Kottenforst, Venusberg and Rhine Promenade. In keeping with old tradition, the beginning of May sees the festival of The Rhine in Flames.

Koblenz: Koblenz is situated at the confluence of the Rhine and the Moselle. From the Ehrenbreitstein Fortress (1816-32) visitors have a spectacular view over the Deutsches Eck Monument to German unity (of 1870) and the Rhine and Moselle rivers. Other attractions include Monastery Church (12th-13th centuries); former Electors' Palace; Collegiate Church of St Florin (12th century with a 14th-century chancel); and Church of Our Lady (12th century with a 15th-century chancel). Ehrenbreitstein also houses a Beethoven Museum.

Rüdesheim: Rüdesheim, on the Rhine south of Koblenz, is famous for its Drosselgasse, a famous narrow lane with many little wine bars and pubs, some serving the delicious Rüdesheimer Kaffee (brandy coffee). A cable car from Rüdesheim takes visitors up to the beautiful Niederwald Castle, a starting point for walks in the Taunus range. It is also a popular starting point for many of the Rhine cruises. Almost midway between Rüdesheim and Koblenz is the Rhine's symbol, Lorelei Rock, which has provided the inspiration for many songs and legends.

Trier on the Moselle: Trier on the Moselle is, as its name indicates, not on the Rhine but on its tributary, the Moselle. It is situated on the Luxembourg frontier about 100km (60 miles) southwest of Koblenz. It is the oldest city in Germany, a Roman imperial capital in the 3rd and 4th centuries AD and has been declared a UNESCO World Heritage site. Attractions include The Porta Nigra (city gate, 2nd century); Roman Imperial Baths; Basilica; Amphitheatre; Cathedral (4th century); Gothic Church of Our Lady; Simeonsstift with 11th-century cloisters; Church of St Matthew (Apostle's grave); Church of St Paulinus (designed by Balthasar Neumann); Regional Museum; Episcopal Museum; Municipal Museum; Municipal Library (with notable manuscripts); and the house where Karl Marx was born.

Mainz: Mainz is the capital of the Rhineland-Palatinate, a university town and episcopal see dating back 2000 years, situated on the rivers Rhine and Main. Attractions include the international museum of printing (Gutenberg Museum); the 1000-year-old Cathedral; Electors'

Palace; Roman Jupiter Column (AD67); 'Sparkling Hock' Museum; Citadel with monument to General Nero Claudius Drusus; old half-timbered houses; Mainzer Fassenacht (carnival); and the Wine Market (late August and early September). The sunny slopes of the Rhinegau Hills are the centre of one of the world's most famous wine-producing regions.

North Germany

Undiscovered by many holidaymakers, the northern region, although relatively flat, offers pleasant scenery with gently rolling hills, lake country and fine sandy beaches and dunes in the state of Schleswig-Holstein. Hamburg is the second-largest city in the Federal Republic of Germany with a population of 1.8 million people. It is a city-state, forming with Lübeck, Bremen and Rostock the ancient Hanseatic League of ports, and Hamburgers have always been proud of their independence. An overall impression can be gained on a sightseeing tour, starting at the Hauptbahnhof (main station). The Baroque Church of St Michael (der Michel), the Town Hall with its distinctive green roof, the elegant Hanseviertel, the Alster Arcades and the Alster Lake, the biggest lake inside a city in Europe, are the city's principal sights. Museums of interest include the domed Hamburg Art Gallery (Kunsthalle), the Historical Museum, the Decorative Arts and Crafts Museum and the Altonaer Museum. Hamburg is equally well-endowed with theatres including the Hamburg State Opera (Hamburgische Staatsoper), the German Theatre (Deutsches Schauspielhaus) and the Ohnsorgtheater, which performs plays in the Low German dialect (Plattdeutsch). In the heart of the city is the Planten un Blomen park near the Congress Centrum Hamburg, which is renowned for its fountain displays during the summer; in the evenings at 2200 the display is accompanied by a sound and light show. During a daytime visit to the park, the Television Tower should not be missed. For a small charge, visitors can take the lift to the top platform and enjoy a view of the city, the harbour, the northern districts and the surrounding countryside. Just below is a restaurant which turns full circle in the course of an hour enabling every vantage point to be enjoyed at the diners' leisure. Not far from the Television Tower, next to the Feldstrasse underground station, the large Dom funfair takes place several times a year. From Feldstrasse it is not far to the famous St Pauli district which includes the notorious Reeperbahn. After dark this area comes alive - though it might be different if the FC St Pauli football team is playing at home - with neon lights, music, crowds, theatres (it is here that the German production of Cats was staged) and door staff trying to attract people into their establishments. After a long night out, revellers congregate at the Fischmarkt, which opens at 6.30am, where freshly-caught fish, fruit, vegetables and plants are on sale. A trip through the Harbour is recommended and a wide range of tours is available. Hamburg enjoys unrivalled shopping facilities with pedestrian shopping streets, elegant arcades, fine department stores and street cafés concentrated in the area between the main railway station and the Gänsemarkt. Refuge from a hectic day's shopping can be sought by hiring a rowing boat or a paddle boat (a deposit has to be left) and exploring the Alster and the intricate network of canals (Hamburg has more bridges than Venice) which extend throughout the city. On Sundays a stroll on the banks of the River Elbe is a favourite pastime or a visit to the Museum Harbour at Övelgönne. The numerous cafés and restaurants make sure that nobody overdoes the walking.

Bremen: Bremen, also a city-state with over half a million inhabitants, is the oldest German maritime city, having been a market town since AD965. The oldest buildings are clustered around the market like the Gothic Town Hall (1405-1410). In front of it stands the Roland, the statue of a medieval knight and symbol of the city. The extensive pedestrian zone includes a sculpture of the Bremer Stadtmusikanten (Musicians of Bremen), made famous in the fairy tale by Grimm. Also part of this is the Schnoorviertel, a district which has retained its medieval charm with narrow cobbled streets, now housing art galleries and exclusive shops. In Schleswig-Holstein is Germany's 'Little Switzerland' and the dukedom of Lauenburg, an area of quiet meadows and wooded hills. Glistening among them are the blue waters of innumerable lakes and fjords reaching deep into the interior of this state. A trip could also include visits to tiny undiscovered

towns such as Ratzeburg and Mölln or to one of a string of Baltic resorts such as Timmendorfer Strand, Grömitz, Damp 2000 and Schönhagen, whose golden, sandy beaches attract crowds of visitors every summer. Lübeck, whose picturesque oval-shaped old town, ringed by water, still has many reminders of the city's political and commercial golden age in the Middle Ages, claims the title of the most beautiful town of northern Germany. The historic town centre has recently been pedestrianised. The Holsten Gate, the Rathaus and the many examples of northern red-brick town houses are part of the historic heritage. The famous novel *The Buddenbrooks* by Thomas Mann was set here. Buddenbrook House contains the Heinrich and Thomas Mann Centre, giving information on the life and works of both authors. Flensburg, the most northerly town in the Federal Republic of Germany, has architecture dating back to the 16th century and for many years of its history was part of Denmark. Just south of Flensburg is Kappeln an der Schlei, a picturesque small town between the Fjord and the Baltic. Every hour during the summer the traffic comes to a halt when the rotating bridge allows sail and fishing boats to pass. At the beginning of the season in May the Heringstage lure visitors to taste the town's speciality: herring. Along the Schlei lies the old Viking town of Haithabu - the interesting museum is well worth a visit. Further south, still on Schleswig-Holstein's east coast, is the state's capital Kiel. It is a modern city with a large university and is located on the Nord-Ostsee (Kiel) Canal which connects the North Sea with the Baltic. Annually in June, yachting and sailing enthusiasts flock to the Kiel Week. Currently the main yachting centre of the Federal Republic of Germany, it offers excellent facilities. The western coast of Schleswig-Holstein is constantly pounded by waves and large systems of dykes protect the country from the worst. Sea breezes, a wealth of bird species and nature reserves make the North Frisian Islands of Sylt, Föhr and Amrum a favourite for nature holidays. Ferries connect with the numerous Halligen, small flat islets off the coast.

East Friesland: East Friesland consists of a wide plain interspersed by ranges of tree-covered hills known for their health resorts and modern spa facilities, as well as their fine sandy beaches. The car-free East Frisian Islands also offer relaxed health holidays. Sea air and scenery along the coast guarantee a happy and restful holiday atmosphere. In contrast is Lower Saxony with its large nature reserve between the rivers Elbe and Aller. The countryside comprises moorlands with wide expanses of heather, grazing sheep, clumps of green birch trees and junipers. Of interest in this area are the half-timbered houses of Celle and Lüneburg. Further west is the town of Oldenburg, the economic and cultural centre of the region between the Ems and the Weser; to the north is the spa town of Wilhelmshaven, which has as its speciality relaxing and therapeutic mud baths. It is also the starting point for many tours along the East Friesland coast and the off-lying islands.

Westphalia: Westphalia extends from the Rhine to the Weser Valley. For many, Westphalia conjures up images of the industrial Ruhr Valley, but the region is also one of outstanding natural beauty, historical interest and moated castles. Areas of particular interest include the Teutoburger Forest with its nature reserves; Münsterland, with the ancient episcopal See of Münster (whose attractions include the Gothic Town Hall where the Peace of Westphalia, which brought to an end the horrors of the Thirty Years' War, was signed in 1648); and the Sauerland Region, a peaceful area of lakes, forests and hills, providing good skiing in the winter and beautiful walking country at any time of the year.

South of Münster is the industrial area of the Ruhr. Made up of several large cities all merging into each other to form one enormous conurbation, the Ruhrgebiet is, despite its heavily industrial character, a vibrant centre of culture with many museums, theatres, art galleries and opera houses and the area also has a large number of parks providing refuge from the industrial landscape. The older buildings, surviving or restored, as well as other occasional examples are reminders of the days when the cities were only small towns, separated by fields and open rolling countryside. **The main cities of the Ruhr are (going west to east):** Krefeld; Duisburg, Germany's largest internal port; Mülheim; Essen, in the heart of the region; Bochum; and Dortmund, centre of Germany's brewing industry. South of the Ruhr and bordering the beautiful

Siegerland and Sauerland regions is Wuppertal, which, stretched out along its own valley, is home to a unique suspension railway urban transit system, the Schwebelbahn. The state capital of Lower Saxony, Hanover, hosts the renowned Hanover Trade Fair. The 'Big City in the Park' is also an important internal crossroads with interesting sights. Attractions include the Herrenhausen Castle and the Baroque Royal Gardens of the Duke Georg von Calenberg. The annual music and theatre festival, which is performed on open-air stages within the garden, attracts many visitors each summer. The city also has a 14th-century market church, the Marienkirche, several museums and a 15th-century town hall with the famous gable. There are also numerous museums, especially the Sprengel Museum near the Masch Lake is becoming an important centre for modern art. From Jun 1-Oct 31 2000, Hanover is hosting the EXPO 2000 World Exposition, whose key theme is 'Humankind-Nature-Technology'. For information on tickets **and programme details, contact EXPO 2000 Hanover GmbH, D-30510 Hanover (tel: (511) 840 4148; fax: (511) 840 4180; e-mail: info@expo2000.de; web site: <http://www.expo2000.de>).**

Romantic Germany can be found in the Weser Valley, where there are fairytale towns such as Hameln (Hamlyn) is famed for the tale of the Pied Piper. A play about the infamous piper is re-enacted during the summer months every Sunday at noon. The town has several buildings in Weser Renaissance style. Here is also the romantic area of the Weserbergland with numerous hill ranges and deep forests.

Central Germany

East of the Rhineland-Palatinate lies the state of Hesse, the capital city of which is Wiesbaden. The northern part of Hesse - Kurhessen-Waldeck - boasts lakes, forests and state-recognised health resorts. Hesse is also known for its many rural villages with half-timbered houses and their old customs are observed to this day. The German Fairy Tale Road leads through some of these towns. Schwalmstadt, the home of 'Little Red Riding Hood', is a town where people still wear traditional costumes to church on Sunday and at folk festivals. In the Reinhardswald, Sababurg - now a castle-hotel - inspired the Brothers Grimm to write the 'Sleeping Beauty' story. The Lahn, a tributary of the Rhine, is much visited for romantic scenery in Nassau, Wetzlar, Limburg and at the Schaumburg Castle. Also on this river is the old university town of Marburg which attracts visitors from all over the world.

Wiesbaden: Wiesbaden is the capital of the state of Hesse. It is an international spa and congress centre in the Taunus and on the Rhine; the spas specialise in the treatment of rheumatism. Attractions include the Kurhaus and casino; the Wilhelmstrasse, with elegant shops and cafés; Hesse State Theatre; the Neroberg (245m/804ft, with high-rack railway); the Greek Chapel; international riding and jumping championships in the grounds of Biebrich Palace at Whitsun; boat trips on the Rhine; and woodland walks.

Darmstadt: Darmstadt is situated a few miles to the east of the Rhine. Attractions include the Palace (16th and 17th centuries); Prince George Palace (18th century) with porcelain collection; Regional Museum; Luisenplatz with Ludwigsäule; artists' colony on Mathildenhöhe; 'Wedding Tower' and Russian Chapel; National Theatre on the Marienplatz; and Kranichstein Hunting Lodge with hunting museum and hotel.

The city of Frankfurt-am-Main is a major financial, commercial and industrial centre situated at the crossroads of Germany. Its soaring skyline has led to the nickname of 'Mainhattan'. Although almost all of the city was destroyed in 1944, many of the buildings in the Old Town have been carefully restored. The Römer, the town hall and crowning place of the German emperors since 1562, has been rebuilt from scratch. Some ancient buildings survived the war, including part of the cathedral and the 13th-century chapel that once adjoined Frederick Barbarossa's Palace. In the City Museum there is a perfect scale model of the old town and also the astonishing city silver. The stark Paulus Church was home to the first German parliament in 1848. Other

attractions elsewhere in the city include the zoo; the birthplace of Goethe; the Opera House; the suburbs of Sachsenhausen and Hoechst, both formerly towns in their own right; and the Messe, the exhibition halls complex. Art enthusiasts should pay a visit to the Städel Art Institute for its large collection of European paintings. For natural history the Senckenberg Nature Museum is worth a visit.

Further south is the rolling hill country of the Odenwald, a region rich in legend and folklore and renowned for its hiking facilities. The western slopes are traversed by the Bergstrasse. The region is noted for its particularly mild climate which permits the cultivation of a wide range of flowers and fruit. The Odenwald can be explored by way of two routes; the Nibelungenstrasse and the Siegfriedstrasse. Places worth visiting include Erbach, which has a Baroque palace and a medieval watchtower; Michelstadt with its half-timbered Town Hall and basilica; the resort of Lindenfels; and the spa town of Bad König. Northwest of Frankfurt and north of Wiesbaden is the wooded hill country of the Taunus, a ski centre during the winter. Resorts here include the old town of Oberursel, the spa town of Bad Homburg and, nearby, the preserved Roman fort of Saalburg, situated on the line which marked the old frontier of the Roman Empire.

Northeast of Frankfurt is the Baroque town of Fulda, gateway to the Rhön region. Some of the buildings here date back to the 9th century. Further north is Kassel, home of the Grimm Brothers Museum and the Wilhelmshöhe Palace with its magnificent grounds.

The Southwest

The two southern states of the Federal Republic of Germany are also the largest; Bavaria and Baden-Württemberg.

In the north of Baden-Württemberg is the Neckar Valley. The most famous place on the river is Germany's oldest university town, Heidelberg, which is dominated by the ruins of its famous 14th-century castle. For many, the city personifies the era of Romanticism. Other attractions include the 'Giant Cask' in the cellar holding 220,000 litres (48,422 gallons); Apothecaries' Museum; Church of the Holy Ghost; St Peter's Church; Karlstor (gate); and wine taverns. The castle there remains partly Renaissance, partly Gothic and Baroque in style; serenade concerts are played during the summer in the courtyard. Vineyards are located along the Neckar Valley, around castles such as Gutenberg, Hornberg and Hirschhorn, which offer splendid views across the landscape. To the east of Heidelberg, another scenic route begins, the 280km-long (175-mile) Castle Road going to Nuremberg in Bavaria. This route follows the river, branching off at Heilbronn and continuing east to medieval places such as Rothenburg and Ansbach in Bavaria. Further to the south is the Swabian Jura, the limestone plateau between the Black Forest and Europe's longest river, the Danube. Places to visit include the Hohenzollern Castle near Hechingen, Beuren Abbey and the Bären Caves. Picturesque towns are Urach and Kirchheim-unter-Teck. Albert Einstein's birthplace, Ulm, houses the world's tallest cathedral spire (161m/528ft). Following the road from Ulm one reaches Reutlingen and Blaubeuren with a fine abbey which is well worth a visit. Another remarkable Baroque church can be found at Zwiefalten. In the southwestern corner of the state, the Rhine acts as a natural border between France and Germany and there lies the Black Forest (Schwarzwald). Walking enthusiasts will enjoy the air filtered by the large pine tree forests, the mountainous scenery and the beautifully situated lakes in the south such as Titisee and Schluchsee. The Black Forest is well known for its mineral springs whose healing powers were first recognised by the Romans. Its chief spa, Baden-Baden, was the summer capital of Europe during the last century. Travellers still flock to this delightful town to 'take the waters', which may be inhaled as a vapour, bathed in or simply drunk. Fortified by the water's therapeutic powers, one can take advantage of the town's many sporting facilities. For the less energetic, the evening could be spent playing roulette or baccarat in a casino which Marlene Dietrich herself regarded as the most elegant in the world. Other attractions include the Baroque Kleines Theater, National Art Gallery, ruins of the Roman Baths, the Margravia Palace (museum), 15th-century Collegiate Church, Russian Church, Romanesque Chapel, parks and gardens, Lichtentaler Allee, tennis, riding, 18-hole golf course, winter sports,

international horseracing weeks at Iffezheim and a modern congress hall. There are also many charming villages and resorts in the surrounding area that are well worth visiting, principally Freudenstadt, which claims to have more hours of sunshine than any other German town, and the climatic spa of Triberg, with its 162m-high (531ft) waterfalls and swimming pool surrounded by evergreens.

The other main towns and cities in the region not mentioned above are as follows:

Mannheim: Mannheim is a commercial, industrial and cultural centre on the confluence of the rivers Rhine and Neckar. Attractions include the former Electors' Palace, now the university; Municipal Art Gallery; Reiss Museum in the old arsenal; the old Town Hall and Market Square; and the National (Schiller) Theatre.

Saarbrücken: Saarbrücken is mainly a modern industrial city, the capital of the Saarland, situated on the French and Luxembourg frontiers. Saarbrücken is a modern industrial city. Attractions include the Church of St Ludwig and Ludwigsplatz (1762-75); the Collegiate Church of St Annual (13th and 14th centuries); a palace with grounds and a Gothic church; and a Franco-German garden with a miniature town (Gulliver's Miniature World).

Stuttgart: Stuttgart is the capital of Baden-Württemberg. Often referred to as 'the largest village in Europe', Stuttgart is a green and open city surrounded by trees and vineyards with only a quarter of its area built on. Two of its major industries are the manufacture of Mercedes cars and the publishing industry. Attractions include the modern Staatsgalerie; the Prinzenbau and Alte Kanzlei on the Schillerplatz; the Neues Schloss, a vast palace which served as the residence for the kings of Württemberg and has been painstakingly restored after 1945; Württemberg Regional Museum; Daimler-Benz Automobile Museum; 15th-century Collegiate Church; TV Tower (193m/633ft high); Killesberg Park; Ludwigsburg Palace; Wilhelma Zoo; botanical gardens; theatre (ballet); and mineral-water swimming pools. The Stuttgart Ballet and the Stuttgart Chamber Orchestra are renowned the world over.

Freiburg: Freiburg is the gateway to the Black Forest, an archepiscopal see and an old university town. The Gothic Cathedral (12th-15th centuries) has a magnificent tower (116m/380ft) and is accepted as an architectural masterpiece. Other attractions include the historic red Kaufhaus on the Cathedral Square (1550); Augustinian Museum; Germany's oldest inn, Zum Roten Bären; and many excellent wine taverns. The city is noted for its trout and game dishes and because of several ecological experiments it was named the Green Capital of Germany. The nearby Schauinsland Mountain (1284m/4213ft) can be reached by cable-car. Nearby Todtnauberg in the Upper Black Forest is the highest situated resort in the Black Forest (1006m/3300ft) and a perfect observation point is the Belchen summit nearby. The highest mountain is the Feldberg whose slopes are frequented during the winter season by skiers and other winter sports enthusiasts.

Constance (Konstanz): Constance (Konstanz) is a German university and cathedral town on the Bodensee (Lake Constance) which marks the border between Austria, Switzerland and the Federal Republic of Germany. Constance (Konstanz) is a frontier anomaly, a German town on the Swiss side of the lake, completely surrounded by Swiss territory except for a strip on the waterfront. Attractions include the Konzilsgebäude (14th century); Renaissance Town Hall (16th century); historic old Insel Hotel (14th century); Barbarossa-Haus (12th century); Hus-Haus (15th century); and the old town fortifications Rheintorturm, Pulverturm and Schnetztor. The town has theatres, concert halls, a casino and hosts an international music festival as well as the Seenachtfest, a lake festival. Reichenau, an island with a famous monastery and the island of Mainau, with stilted buildings, make an interesting day trip.

The Bavarian town of Lindau is a former free imperial city on an island in Lake Constance. It has a medieval town centre and an old Town Hall (1422-35). Other attractions include Brigand's Tower, Mang Tower (old lighthouse), Cavazzen House (art collection), Heidenmauer (wall), St

Peter's with Holbein frescoes; harbour entry (new lighthouse); international casino; and boat trips. Opposite the town of Constance (Konstanz) is Meersburg, an old town with two castles. Here is also the German Newspaper Museum which covers the history of the German-language press on its three floors. The museum is only open during the summer. As an area Lake Constance is the focal point of a delightful holiday district, rich in art treasures and facilities for outdoor activities.

Ulm: Ulm is famous above all for its soaring Gothic Cathedral (768 steps in the 161m/528ft tower; choir stalls by J. Syrlin). Other attractions include the beautiful Town Hall with famous ornamental clock; Corn Exchange (1594); Schuhhaus (1536); Schwörhaus (1613); old fishermen's quarter with city wall and Metzgerturn (butchers' tower); Wiblingen Monastery, Baroque library; Museum of Bread; and the Municipal Museum with local works of art.

Heilbronn: Heilbronn is a former imperial city, surrounded by vineyards and situated on the Castle Road. The Renaissance Town Hall has an outside staircase, clock, gable and artistic clock. Other attractions include the 16th-century Käthchen House and the Gothic Kilian Church with the 62m-high (203ft) tower (1513-29). The town is also a good base for excursions into the Neckar Valley.

Tübingen: Tübingen, south of Stuttgart, is a world-famous romantic university town on the River Neckar. The old town centre is undamaged. Attractions include the Castle of the Count Palatine (1078); late Gothic Collegiate Church (1470) with royal burial place; Market Square with Town Hall (1453); picturesque Neckar front; Hölderlin Tower; site of former student prison (1514); old and new lecture theatres (Aula) of the university; and memorials to Johannes Kepler, Hegel, Schelling, Hölderlin, Mörike, Hauff and Uhland who studied at the theological seminar of the university.

Bavaria

Bavaria consists of four main tourist areas: the Bavarian Forest and East Bavaria; Swabia and the Allgäu in the southwest; Upper Bavaria with the German part of the Alps in the south; and Franconia, the northern region of Bavaria. The various landscapes feature towering mountains, lakes, forests and many resorts.

The Bavarian capital, Munich (München), is the third-largest German city with 1.2 million inhabitants and a major international artistic and business centre. The 800-year-old city is renowned for its numerous interesting museums and several fine Baroque and Renaissance churches. The Alte Pinakothek is home to the largest collection of Rubens paintings in the world; directly opposite is the Neue Pinakothek with a collection of modern paintings. The German Museum (natural science and technology) with planetarium and a life-size coal mine is also interesting for children. Worth a visit is the Lenbach Gallery in the impressive villa of the Munich 'Painter Viscount'. Only a short walk away is the Glyptothek on the Königsplatz, housing Greek and Roman sculptures. Other attractions include the Royal Palace and Royal Treasury; Bavarian National Museum and others; the Church of Our Lady; the Theatinerkirche and Asamkirche; and the Church of St Michael. The Marienplatz is surrounded by the New and Old Town Hall and the restored Mariensäule. Every day at 1100 a large group watches the carillon depicting the Schäfflertanz. The site of the 1972 Olympic Games, the facilities are now used by the residents of the city. The Olympia Park with its stadium and the 300m (1000ft) tower are now used as a recreational area. Munich is also the setting for the most famous of all German events, the Oktoberfest beer festival. This has its origins in 1810 when Crown Prince Ludwig of Bavaria married Princess Therese von Sachsen-Hildburghausen. The people liked the festival so much that it became a regular feature and now takes place annually for two weeks - the first Sunday in October is always the last day of the festival. The nine Munich breweries all have their own beer tents, serving their beer exclusively. The city has many famous beer cellars, including the

Hofbräuhaus and the Mathäser Bierstadt, the largest in the world. The district of Schwabing has been the city's artists' colony since the 1920s and is still recommended for its good shopping, cafés, small theatres and stalls along the Leopoldstrasse. An escape from the city is offered by the Englischer Garten, one of the largest parks in Europe. Right in the middle stands the Chinese Tower surrounded by traditional beer gardens. The many theatres include the National Theatre (opera house), the Rococo theatre built by Cuvilliés and the Schauspielhaus (playhouse). The Nymphenburg Palace is home to a portrait gallery and a famous collection of china. The Fasching (carnival) season reaches its peak during February with several balls and other festivities; but the Auer Dult, a funfair and flea market, takes place three times a year.

Augsburg: Augsburg, founded in AD15 by the Romans, lies northwest of Munich and was once the financial centre of Europe. It is also the city where the Fuggers, a famous medieval aristocratic family and great patrons of the arts, resided. Here, in 1555, the Peace Treaty was signed which halted the German religious conflicts during the Reformation. It also boasts the oldest council housing in the world, dating back to 1519. Other attractions include the Cathedral (807 Romanesque/1320 Gothic) with 12th-century stained-glass windows and 11th-century bronze door; St Anna's Church (16th-century Luther memorial); Town Hall (1615); Perlach Tower; Baroque fountains (16/17th centuries); Arsenal; City Gates (14-16th centuries); Schaezler Palace and Rococo banquet hall (18th century) with German Baroque gallery and an Old German gallery with paintings by Holbein and Dürer; Maximilian Museum; Roman Museum; and Mozart House.

Bamberg: Bamberg is an old imperial town and bishopric, built on seven hills, with many medieval and Baroque buildings. Attractions include the Imperial Cathedral (13th century) with famous 'Bamberger Reiter' sculpture, reliefs, royal tombs and Veit Stoss altar; the old Town Hall; picturesque fishermen's dwellings ('Little Venice'); Old Royal Palace, New Palace (picture gallery) and rose garden; and Michaelsberg Monastery.

Bayreuth: Bayreuth is mainly famous for its Wagner Opera Festival which takes place every year from late July to August. Other attractions, many of which are connected with the life and works of the composer, include the Festival Theatre (1872-1876), Villa Wahnfried (Wagner's home, now a museum), Wagner Memorial ('Chiming Museum'), Freemasons' Museum, Wagner's grave in the Court Gardens; the Old and the New Palace, the former residence of the Margraves; Opera House (largest European Baroque stage); Eremitage (park); and the parish church. The city is also a convenient base for excursions into the Fichtel Mountains, Oberpfälzer Woods and the 'Franconian Switzerland'.

A former ducal capital, Coburg is towered over by Coburg Castle (13th-16th centuries), one of the largest fortress sites in Germany. A one-time refuge of Martin Luther, it now houses valuable collections of art, weaponry and copperplate engravings are housed within. Ehrenburg Palace overlooks the palace square and faces the Coburg State Theatre which provides a centre for cultural events. Other attractions include St Maurice's Church (14th-16th century), the Natural Science Museum and Doll Museum. Nearby countryside offers Banz Monastery, the game park at Tambach Castle and the Rodach Thermal Spa.

Nuremberg: Nuremberg (Nürnberg) is a mainly modern city which has, nevertheless, managed to retain much of its medieval centre. The Church of St Lawrence and the Church of St Sebald are built in the typical red sandstone of the region. Attractions include the Imperial Castle with the old stables today used as a Youth Hostel; the City Wall (over 5km/3 miles long) with 46 watchtowers; Dürer's House; Museum of Toys; Fembohaus (municipal museum); Germanic National Museum; Museum of Transport: Old Nürnberg, a guild hall; Town Hall; the 'Schöne Brunnen' Fountain with mechanical clock; Church of Our Lady and the zoo (dolphin pool). The international toy fair and the famous Christmas Fair, Christkindlmarkt, also attract many visitors.

Passau: Passau is situated at the confluence of the Danube, Inn and Ilz rivers. Attractions include the Baroque Cathedral with the world's largest church organ; Bishop's Palace with Rococo staircase; Oberhaus and Niederhaus fortresses (13th-14th centuries); and Inn quay with Italian architecture.

Regensburg: Regensburg is about 80km (50 miles) northeast of Munich, a city which can trace its roots back to the 1st century AD. Attractions of the old episcopal city include the Cathedral (with its famous 'Regensburger Domspatzen' choir); St Emmeram's Church (with many crypts and tombs); the 'Scottish Church' (with its Romanesque portal); Old Chapel; Palace Niedermünster (excavations); Porta Praetoria (North Gate); 12th-century stone bridge; Old Town Hall with the Imperial Chamber; fine patrician residences; Palace of the Princes of Thurn and Taxis; and museums.

The old Franconian imperial town Rothenburg o.d.T. is famous for its well-preserved medieval atmosphere. It is possible to walk along its two miles of encircling walls with over 30 gates and towers, overlooking the magnificent patrician houses. Other attractions include the Town Hall (16th-17th centuries); Church of St Jacob with altar by Riemenschneider (circa 1500); the Plönlein; Meistertrunk Clock; extensive network of footpaths; and traditional medieval inns. The northern Bavarian town Würzburg, about halfway between Frankfurt/M and Nuremberg, nestles between vineyards famous for their Bocksbeutel (specially formed bottle). The Festung Marienberg (fortress) offers a spectacular view over the city and its numerous spires. Walking across the 15th-century Old Main Bridge, with statues of the Franconian apostles of Lilian, Totnan and Kolonat, the view is dominated by the imposing Romanesque Cathedral. Attractions include the Mainfränkisches Museum, housed in the former arsenal with examples of the work of Riemenschneider (1460-1531), and the Marienkirche, built in AD706 and one of the oldest churches in the country. The Baroque Castle-Palace (Residenz), designed by Balthasar Neumann taking Versailles as a model, is supposedly one of the most elaborate buildings in the country. Candlelit Mozart concerts take place during the summer months in the Emperor's Hall and the Hofgarten. The grand staircase with the painting by Tiepolo here is regarded as one of the finest examples of the Baroque style in Europe. The Käppele, another Baroque building, was also designed by Balthasar Neumann. The town library and tourist information found a home in the Haus zum Falken (Falcon House), which has an impressive Rococo façade. Relaxation and diversion from sightseeing are provided by the numerous wine bars - the Stachel (thorn) was built in 1413 - cafés and restaurants. Nearly the whole of the city centre is a pedestrian zone, only disturbed by the passage of trams.

In the Upper Bavaria region the best-known places include Garmisch-Partenkirchen, Berchtesgaden, Mittenwald and Oberammergau, home of the Passion Play. One of the most spectacular feats of architecture that epitomises the fairytale landscape of Bavaria is Neuschwanstein Castle, built by Ludwig II of Bavaria. Constructed on the ridge of a mountain valley surrounded by snow capped peaks, it is a vision from fairyland while at night it changes into the perfect home for Count Dracula.

The vast Bavarian Forest can be found in the eastern part of Bavaria bordering the Czech Republic and site of the first national park. This still unspoiled and peaceful region offers much for those who enjoy outdoor activities and especially walking. Old historic towns such as the three-river town of Passau and the 2000-year-old Regensburg provide interesting contrasts to the nature reserves and the German National Park. Numerous art treasures can be found in the northern part of Bavaria - the Franconia region. Its main attractions include medieval and historic old towns such as Coburg, home of Prince Albert (consort of Queen Victoria); the cathedral town of Bamberg; Bayreuth, which stages an annual Wagner Opera Festival; and Würzburg, with its world-famous Baroque palace, set on the River Main amongst the Franconian vineyards. Nuremberg (Nürnberg), the main city in this region, is a modern metropolis and yet the centre of the town has retained its traditional style. The many valleys, forests, lakes and castles of the Swiss Franconian area and the Fichtel Mountains, combined with the nature reserves in the Altmühl Valley, make Franconia an ideal holiday centre.

ROMANTIC ROAD: ROMANTIC ROAD: Connecting the northern area of Bavaria with the south is the most famous of all the German scenic roads - the Romantic Road. The towns along the way give visitors an excellent insight into the region's history, art and culture. Places of particular interest are the aforementioned Würzburg; medieval Rothenburg, Dinkelsbühl and Nördlingen; Augsburg, founded in 15BC by the Romans; the pilgrimage church Wieskirche in the meadows; Steingaden Abbey; and the most popular site of Neuschwanstein Castle near the village of Schwangau.

Mecklenburg-West Pomerania

The state of Mecklenburg-West Pomerania contains the longest stretch of the Baltic coast in Germany. The northeast city of Neubrandenburg on Lake Tollense is an example of a well-preserved medieval city with a city wall, moat and towers. The city centre is surrounded by a circular city wall with four city gates, three moats and several Wiekhäuser (fortifications). The university and old Hanseatic town of Rostock lies on the Baltic coast. The university was founded in 1419 and was the first university in Northern Europe. Attractions in the city include the elegant burghers' houses in Thälmann Square, the 15th-century Town Hall, the late Gothic St Mary's Church with its 15th-century astronomical clock and Baroque organ and the district of Warnemünde with its fishing harbour. The city was somewhat of a showpiece for the regime of the former GDR and has monumental housing complexes which are now the source of many of the city's problems. Greifswald, a small university town east of Rostock, has original 15th-century burghers' houses and part of a medieval fishing village. Birthplace of the famous German painter Caspar David Friedrich, the city's appearance was radically altered in the post-war period through the construction of new residential areas and industrial zones. The 'White Fleet' of passenger boats serves all the coastal ports, and calls at Hiddensee Island, an island with no cars and a large protected bird colony. The island of Rügen, with its nature reserve and famous chalk cliffs, is the largest island in Germany and is a popular holiday destination. From here there are connecting ferries to Lithuania in the eastern Baltic region.

Schwerin: Schwerin was founded in 1160 and is still a charming town today. Schwerin Castle, on the lake of the same name and surrounded by a terraced garden crossed by a canal, was for many decades the residence of the Dukes of Mecklenburg and is one of the finest examples of German Gothic architecture. In the historic old quarter of the city is the well-preserved Gothic Cathedral, the Town Hall and an interesting museum with collections of French, German and Dutch paintings from the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries.

Saxony, Saxony-Anhalt and Thuringia

Magdeburg: Magdeburg, an industrial town to the southwest of Berlin, contains the Statue of the Magdeburg Knight, a Cathedral dating from AD955 and the Monastery of Our Lady. The attractive town of Quedlinburg, 55km (34 miles) southwest of Magdeburg, has many 16th-century half-timbered houses such as the Finkenherd and a Renaissance Town Hall that have been restored to their original condition. Among the towering scenery of the Harz Mountains, a region ideal for walking and winter sports holidays and dotted with villages noted for their attractive carved timber-fronted houses, lies the town of Wernigerode whose castle and 16th-century Town Hall endow it with a fairytale air. There is a museum of church relics here. On a walk the visitor can see half-timbered houses of six centuries, among them the Crooked House. The Harz is also one of the most beautiful hiking areas in Germany; since December 1989, hikers have been able to enjoy the Brocken (highest point of the Harz) again. Stolberg is often described as the 'Pearl of the South Harz region' and contains characteristic half-timbered houses and a Town Hall dating back to 1492 which contains no inner staircase. Just to the south lies the city of Halle, where Martin Luther often preached in the Marienkirche in the Market Square.

Handel was born here in 1685, and is commemorated by an annual festival. One of the most famous Reformation towns is nearby Wittenberg, where Martin Luther nailed his '95 Theses Against Indulgences' to the door of the castle church in 1517. Numerous magnificent buildings from the 16th-century, Luther's House, the Melancton House, the Castle Church and the buildings of the former University bear witness to the town's historical significance. South of Halle lies the historic town of Naumburg with its beautiful late Romanesque/early Gothic Cathedral of St Peter and St Paul. A trip from here into the old Hanseatic towns of Salzwedel, Stendal and Tangermünde to see the medieval fortifications is especially recommended.

Thuringia: Thuringia lies between Saxony and Hesse. The wooded heights and slate mountains of the Thuringian Forest make this region an ideal area for walking. The most famous route for hiking is the Rennsteig which stretches for over 168km (105 miles). The entire region of the Rennsteig is a protected zone and is therefore immune to any industrial or urban development. The walker will come across many rare plants and birds such as the capercaillie and the black grouse. A flourishing craft industry and winter sports facilities centred in Suhl are further attractions which draw visitors to the region. Eisenach, the birthplace of Johann Sebastian Bach, contains the oldest Town Gate in Thuringia and the Romanesque Nikolai Church. The town is dominated by the Wartburg Castle where Martin Luther sought refuge and translated the New Testament into German. The small town of Rudolstadt was known for its cultural life during the Renaissance, hosting plays of the Weimar Court Theatre, directed by Goethe, and founding a renowned court orchestra in 1635 which attracted many of the best classical musicians. It is now a popular stop along Thuringia's Classic Road. Arnstadt, where the young Johann Sebastian Bach was an organist in Arnstadt church, is often described as the gateway to the Thuringia Forest, with its lush hiking trails and magnificent views.

The southern 1000-year-old town of Weimar was home of many great men, including Luther, Bach, Liszt, Wagner and Schiller. A great cultural centre of the past, the city experienced its golden age in the 18th and 19th century. Johann Wolfgang von Goethe lived here for 50 years and was a major influence as a civil servant, theatre director and poet. Goethe's house is now the National Museum. Literature enthusiasts should not miss the Goethe and Schiller Archive. Bach was Court Organist and Court Concertmaster, Liszt and Richard Strauss were both directors of music. There is documentation of their private and public lives kept in hotels and museums in the town. A few kilometres from Weimar, a gruesome museum commemorates the site of Buchenwald concentration camp. Other noteworthy sites in the region are Gera with its Renaissance Town Hall and fine Burghers' Houses, the old university town of Jena, the castle ruins at Friedrichsroda, the imperial city Nordhausen with its late Gothic Cathedral and Renaissance Town Hall and the picturesque town of Mühlhausen. Erfurt is the cultural centre of Thuringia. Formerly a rich trading centre, its well-preserved, medieval city centre contains a wealth of churches, cloisters and old merchants' houses. The university, one of the first in northern Europe, was founded in 1392. Martin Luther lived in the city's Augustinian monastery as a monk, and exhibits relating to his life can be viewed here. Erfurt's museums contain valuable collections of medieval treasures.

Saxony, too, has much to offer the visitor. To the southeast of Halle lies Leipzig, a city with a fascinating history. Lenin printed the first issues of his Marxist newspaper here. Lessing, Jean-Paul Sartre and Goethe all studied at the university. Leipzig is a town of music and books; 38 publishers have their houses here. It is the birthplace of Wagner; Mendelssohn was director of music and Bach was choirmaster at St Thomas' Church between 1723 and 1750 (St Thomas' Church has been completely restored, as has the 16th-century Town Hall). Johann Sebastian Bach's church choir still exists and is of an excellent standard, as is the city's Gewandhaus Orchestra. The old University (1407), the famous Auerbach's Cellar and the Kaffeebaum, the most famous of the city's cafés, are further attractions in the city. Today Leipzig is known throughout the world for its international trade fairs.

To the southeast of Leipzig, in Southern Saxony, are Meissen and Dresden. Meissen is the oldest china manufacturing town in Europe, famous for its fine Meissen china. Visitors may tour the

factory. When wandering through the narrow streets and alleyways of the city the visitor will feel transported back to a former age. The Albrechtsburg Cathedral (1485) and the Bishop's Castle tower above the city. Meissen is also the centre of a wine-growing region.

With over half a million inhabitants Dresden is one of the largest towns in southeast Germany. Its heyday was in the 17th and 18th centuries when August the Strong and subsequently his son August III ruled Saxony. The most famous building in the city is the restored Zwinger Palace, which contains many old masters in its picture gallery, among them the Sistine Madonna by Raphael. Dresden was often referred to as 'Florence on the Elbe' until allied bombings destroyed so much of the Baroque magnificence of the city in the World War II. However, some of the finest buildings, such as the Catholic Hofkirche, the Palace Church, the Semper Opera and the Green Vault treasure chamber of the Saxon Princes, either survived the bombings or have been restored in the intervening period, while the ruins of the Frauenkirche are a constant reminder of the horror unleashed on the city in 1945. Other attractions include the Arsenal, which has a vast collection of armour and weapons from the Middle Ages to the present day, the fountains in the Pragerstrasse, the old market, the Philharmonic Orchestra and the Kreuz Choir.

The Erzgebirge region near Dresden forms the border with the Czech Republic. Its mountainous wooded landscape makes it ideal for walkers in the summer and skiers in the winter. Sächsische Schweiz (Saxon Switzerland), the sandstone mountain range with its unique cliff formations, is visited every year by tourists from all over Germany and is to become a national park. Chemnitz (formerly Karl-Marx-Stadt) is the main town in the region. It was heavily destroyed during the war and only a few of the historic buildings remain. These are the Old Town Hall (16th century) and the 800-year-old Red Tower; others are Freiberg, Kuchwald, with its open-air theatre, and Seiten with its toy museum. Zwickau is the birthplace of Robert Schumann and is home to a late Gothic Cathedral, a Town Hall dating back to 1403 and numerous old burghers' houses.

The Dresden and Cottbus districts contain the minority Sorbs, descendants of a Slavic people who settled there in the 6th century. Sorb-language newspapers and broadcasts combine with teaching in local schools to retain the Sorb culture.

9 SPORT & ACTIVITIES

The Federal Republic of Germany has extensive sports facilities with a sports field or stadium in all larger towns. League football matches take place on Friday, Saturday and Sunday.

International matches also take place regularly: the national team were world champions in 1990, a title they previously won in 1954 and 1974, as well as having been runners-up in 1966 (to England), 1982 and 1986 and quarter finalists in 1998.

Walking: Walking: The Harz Mountains, Black Forest and the Bavarian Forest are some of the best areas for walking. The network of marked trails amounts to some 132,000km (82,500 miles). The District of Templin in the March of Brandenburg provides 480km (300 miles) of paths. The German Alps Club (Deutscher Alpenverein) maintains several huts in the Alps and the other ranges. It also organises tours and courses in rock climbing. The Saxon Hills between Dresden and Bad Schandau, with more than 1000 prepared routes, provide good training for aspiring climbers. Excellent facilities can also be found in Oberhof.

Winter sports: Winter Sports: Resorts are mainly in the Suhl area in the south of the country. The main resort is Oberhof, which offers excellent ski-jumping and tobogganing. Ice hockey and skating are both popular. In Bavaria, skiing is available at resorts such as Garmisch-Partenkirchen, Berchtesgaden, Oberstdorf, Inzell, Reit im Winkl, as well as in the southern mountains. Other areas are the Harz Mountains, the Black Forest and the Bavarian Forest. The season runs from November to April. Curling is especially popular in Upper Bavaria.

Cycling: Cycling: This is increasingly popular and cycling paths ensure that even in cities cycling is a safe form of transport. Bicycles can be hired from certain railway stations, a list of which is available through the German National Railways (Deutsche Bahn) (see also Travel-International/Internal section) or the German National Tourist Office (see address section). Further information is available from the German Cycling Club (Allgemeiner Deutscher Fahrrad-Club) e.V. (ADFC), Postfach 107747, 28077 Bremen (tel: (421) 346 290; fax: (421) 346 2950; e-mail: contact@adfc.de; web site: <http://www.adfc.de>).

Watersports: Watersports: The northern coastline and the extensive rivers and lakes provide sailing, swimming and both sea and river fishing. A fishing permit is needed (costing approximately EUR10 a day). Fishing is particularly good on inland waterways; fishing and sailing are also popular at the Bay of Lietzow on the Baltic coast. The Baltic coast has many beaches.

Equestrianism: Equestrianism: Hotels with horseriding facilities are located in all tourist regions. Racecourses can be found at Baden-Baden, Hamburg, Munich and Frankfurt/M.

Wine tasting: Wine tasting: German wine country has many small vineyards which welcome visitors. The main wine-growing regions are around the rivers Rhine, Moselle and Neckar in the west of the country and, further east, near the Saale, Unstrut and Elbe rivers. For motorists there is a signposted 'wine road' (Weinstrasse) running through each area. The majority of German wines are white and light, with such varieties as Riesling and Silvaner. Wines are officially classified by the Government as either Tafelwein/Landwein (table wine/country wine) or Qualitätswein (higher quality wine from a specified area). Qualitätswein mit Prädikat is the highest category. Within this last category, the wine is classed according to ripeness and quality: Kabinett for example is a light, low-alcohol wine made from fully ripened grapes, while Trockenbeerenauslese is a sweet wine made from grapes which have shrivelled almost to raisins. For a list of private vineyards open to the public, contact the German National Tourist Office (see address section) or the German Wine Institute, Gutenbergplatz 3-5, 55116 Mainz (tel: (6131) 28290; fax: (6131) 282 920; e-mail: info@deutscheweine.de; web site: <http://www.deutscheweine.de>).

Spas: Spas: Germany has over 300 spas and health resorts which offer a wide range of traditional and modern treatments. All are strictly regulated by the Government, and promise beneficial results for such conditions as rheumatism, respiratory problems, nervous disorders or stress. Spa stays are very popular with German people, not only because they are a national tradition, but because they offer holistic treatment combined with relaxation. Under medical supervision, visitors can take the waters or undergo treatments involving mud and peat for example. Many spas are situated on the North Sea and Baltic coasts. For further information about spa stays, contact the Deutscher Bäderverband (for address, see Health section).

Language courses: Language Courses: There are many opportunities to pursue courses in German language and culture. Often these are subsidised by the Government. For further information contact the Goethe Institut, 50 Princes Gate, Exhibition Road, London SW7 2PH (tel: (020) 7596 4000; fax: (020) 7594 0240; e-mail: mail@london.goethe.org; web site: <http://www.goethe.de/london>).

10 SOCIAL PROFILE

Food & Drink: The main meal of the day in Germany tends to be lunch with a light snack eaten at about seven in the evening. Breakfast served in homes and hotels usually consists of a boiled egg, bread rolls with jam, honey, cold cuts and cheese slices. Available from snack bars, butcher

shops, bakers and cafés are grilled, fried or boiled sausages (Wurst) with a crusty bread roll or potato salad (costing approximately EUR5, depending on facilities). There are also bread rolls filled with all kinds of sausage slices, hot meat filling (such as Leberkäse), pickled herring, gherkins and onion rings or cheese. In bakeries, Strudel with the traditional apple filling, a variety of fruits and fromage frais, is available. There is also an astonishingly wide variety of breads. A set menu meal (available from EUR10) in a simple Gasthof or café usually includes three courses: soup is the most popular starter. The main meal consists of vegetables or a salad, potatoes, meat and gravy. For puddings there is often a sweet such as a blancmange, fruit or ice cream. Restaurants often serve either beer or wine. Cakes and pastries are normally reserved for the afternoon with Kaffee und Kuchen ('coffee and cakes') taken at home or in a café. Cafés serving Kaffee und Kuchen are not only to be found in cities, towns and villages but also at or near popular excursion and tourist spots. International speciality restaurants such as Chinese, Greek, Turkish and others can be found everywhere in the western part of the country. Waiter or waitress service is normal although self-service restaurants are available. Bakeries and dairy shops specialise in lighter meals if preferred. Local regional specialities cover an enormous range:

Frankfurt and Hesse: Rippchen mit Sauerkraut (spare ribs) and of course Frankfurter sausages and Ochsenbrust with green sauce, Zwiebelkuchen (onion flan) and Frankfurter Kranz cream cake.

Westphalia and Northern Rhineland: Rheinischer Sauerbraten (beef marinated in onions, sultanas, pimento, etc), Reibekuchen (potato fritters), Pfeffer-Potthast (spiced beef with bay leaves) and Moselhecht (Moselle pike with creamy cheese sauce). Westphalia is also famous for its smoked ham, sausages and bread such as Pumpernickel.

Stuttgart and Baden: Schlachtplatte (sauerkraut, liver sausage and boiled pork). A variety of pastas are served such as Maultaschen (a type of ravioli) and Spätzle (noodles), as well as Eingemachtes Kalbfleisch (veal stew with white sauce and capers) and Schwarzwälder Kirschtorte (Black Forest gâteau).

Munich and Bavaria: Leberkäs (pork and beef loaf), as well as a variety of dumplings, Spanferkel (suckling pig), the famous Weisswurst (white sausages), Strudel, Leberknödelsuppe (liver dumplings soup), Nürnberger Lebkuchen (gingerbread) and from the same town grilled Rostbratwurst sausages.

Hamburg and Northern Germany: Hamburger Aalsuppe (eel/lobster/crayfish soup), Labskaus (hotpot with fried eggs), Rote Grütze mit Sahne oder Vanillesosse (fruit compote served with cream or custard), smoked eel, Rumtopf (fruit marinated in rum), Lübeck marzipan, Heidschnuckenbraten (Lüneburg Heath mutton), fish with green sauce, Bauernfrühstück (omelette with fried potatoes, tomatoes and onions) and bread rolls filled with fish or prawns as a snack.

Bremen: Kohl und Pinkel (kale and sausages), Matjes Hering (white herring), eel soup and Hannoversches Blindhuhn (hotpot with bacon, potatoes, vegetables and fruit).

Berlin: Eisbein mit Sauerkraut (leg of pork) and mashed potatoes, Bouletten (hamburgers), Kartoffelpuffer (potato fritters), Eierpfannkuchen (pancakes), Berliner Pfannkuchen (doughnut), and Berliner Weisse mit Schuss (beer with a dash of something - usually raspberry syrup).

March of Brandenburg: Teltower Rübchen (swedes), Mohnprielen and Mohnstriezel (pastries with poppy seeds), Morchelgerichte (mushroom dishes), Oder crabs, Eberswalder Spritzkuchen (doughnuts), Schwarzsauer mit Backpflaumen und Klößen (black pudding with prunes and

dumplings). Saxony: Leipziger Allerlei (vegetables in white sauce), Dresdner Stollen (German christmas cake) and Speckkuchen (bacon flan).

Saxony-Anhalt: Lehm und Stroh (sauerkraut with mushy peas), Köhlersuppe (croutons, suet, onions and mushrooms), Speckkuchen mit Eiern und Kümmel (bacon flan with eggs and caraway seeds). Zerbster Brägenwurst (sausage) with Bitterbier. Baumkuchen (literally tree cake, the thin layers of pastry are like the rings of trees).

Thuringia: Thüringer Rostbratwürste (grilled sausages), Hefepflinsen (pancakes with raisins) with sugar or jam. Apple, plum, poppy seed, fromage frais or onion crumbles. There are numerous mushroom dishes, which are called Schwämm.

Mecklenburg-West Pomerania: Plum'n un Klüt (plums and dumplings), Spickbost (smoked goose breast).

Drink: Bars can either have table service and/or counter service, although customers will often find that the drinks bought are simply marked down on a beer mat to be paid for on leaving. The legal age for drinking alcohol in a bar or café is 18. Minors are allowed to go into a bar if accompanied by an adult but they will not be served alcohol. Opening hours depend on the proprietor but generally bars in major towns and resorts are open all day and close around midnight or later. Exceptions are Berlin and Hamburg where every pub can open for 24 hours. The national drink is beer in its many forms. Regional flavours vary from light pilsner-type lagers to heavy stouts. Two of particular note are Bayrisches G'fornes (frozen beer) and Weizenbier from Bavaria and Mumme (bittersweet beer without hops) to be found in Hannover. German wines are among the finest in the world. Some of the most famous are grown in the Rhine and the Moselle Valley but also in the Ahr region, Nahe, Franconia and Baden area. Try Äppelwoi (cider) in Frankfurt/M, Cannstatter (white wine) in Stuttgart, Kirschwasser (cherry schnapps) in Baden, and Würzburger (dry white wine) in Würzburg.

Nightlife: In all larger towns and cities in western Germany and also in the major eastern cities visitors will have the choice between theatre, opera (Hamburgische Staatsoper, Deutsche Oper Berlin and the National Theatre in Munich are some of the most famous names), nightclubs, bars with live music and discos catering for every taste. Berlin, in particular, is famous for its large selection of after-hours venues. Traditional folk music is found mostly in rural areas. There are Bierkellers in the south and wine is drunk in small wine cellars in the Rhineland Palatinate, Franconia and Baden region.

Shopping: Special purchases include precision optical equipment such as binoculars and cameras, porcelain, handmade crystal, silver, steelware, Solingen knives, leatherwear, sports equipment, toys from Nuremberg and Bavarian Loden cloth. Special purchases in eastern Germany include musical instruments, wooden carved toys from the Erzgebirge Mountains, and Meissen china (the workshops in Meissen are open to the public). Shopping hours: Shops can regulate their own opening hours within these times 0600-2000 Monday to Friday; 0600-1600 Saturday. Smaller shops may close 1300-1500 for lunch. All shops, except a few bakeries, are closed on Sunday.

Special Events: Hundreds of annual festivals and special events are celebrated throughout the country. This year, several events are being organised all over the country on the following themes: The Romanesque - Central Europe around the Year 1000; and 300 Years of the Kingdom of Prussia. Full details can be obtained from the Deutsche Zentrale für Tourismus e.V (German National Tourist Board; see address section). The following list is a selection of events celebrated in 2001:

Jan 16-28 2001 Verdi Festival (to mark the 100th anniversary of Giuseppe Verdi's death), Munich. Feb 7-18 51st International Film Festival, Berlin. Mar 17-Apr 6 Thüringia Bach Weeks, Erfurt. Mar 10-11 Easter Egg Market, Maulbronn. Apr 6-19 Ballet Festival Week, Munich. Apr 20-Jun 20 2nd Berlin Biennial Festival of Contemporary Art. May 3-12 77th Bach Festival, Greifswald. May 6-Aug 5 Prussia 1701 - A European Story (exhibition), Charlottenburg Castle, Berlin. May 18-19 33rd Merseburg Palace Festival (historic parade and fireworks). Jun 1-4 Mozart Festival, Berlin. Jun 2-4 Medieval Wine Growers' Festival, Baden-Baden. Jun 29-Jul 1 9th Düsseldorf Jazz Festival. Jul Love Parade, Berlin. Jul 6-15 Concerts along the 'Romantic Road', Thüringia, Saxony and Saxony-Anhalt. Jul 6-Sep 1 Castle Festival (open-air plays, concerts and musical), Heidelberg. Jul 20-Aug 19 Open-Air Cinema Festival, Rheinpark, Düsseldorf. Aug 3-5 International Berlin Beer Festival. Sep 30 Berlin Marathon. Sep-Oct 51st Berlin Festival. Sep 22-Oct 7 Oktoberfest, Munich. Oct 3 Festival of Germany (street festival with nationwide participation), Berlin. Nov 1-4 Jazzfestival, Berlin. Nov-Dec Christmas Markets (nationwide); Winterdom (large funfair, including circus), Hamburg.

Social Conventions: Handshaking is customary. Normal courtesies should be observed and it is common to be offered food and refreshments when visiting someone's home. When eating a meal it is considered impolite to leave the left hand on your lap when using the right hand for soup etc. The left hand should rest lightly on the table. Before eating it is normal to say Guten Appetit to the other people at the table to which the correct reply is Ebenfalls. It is customary to present the hostess with unwrapped flowers (according to tradition, one should always give an uneven number and it is worth noting that red roses are exclusively a lover's gift). Courtesy dictates that when entering a shop, restaurant or similar venue, 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 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 considered rude. Casual wear is widely acceptable, but more formal dress is required for some restaurants, the opera, theatre, casinos and important social functions. Evening wear is worn when requested. Smoking is prohibited where notified and on public transport and in some public buildings. Visitors should be prepared for an early start to the day with shops, businesses, schools, etc opening at 0800 or earlier. It is very common practice to take a mid-afternoon stroll on Sunday, so that town and city centres at this time are often very animated places, in stark comparison with Saturday afternoons when, owing to early closing of the shops, town centres can seem almost deserted. Tipping: Service charge on hotel bills. Restaurant bills in the west include 10% service charge, it is customary to round up to the nearest figure. It is also customary to tip taxi drivers, hairdressers and cloakroom attendants.

11 BUSINESS PROFILE

Economy: From the ruins of the Third Reich, both parts of divided post-war Germany emerged over the next two decades as the economic powerhouses of their respective European blocs. The unified German economy is now the third largest in the world. The bulk of this production is in the West (the pre-unification Federal Republic), where it is still referred to as the 'Wirtschaftswunder' (economic miracle). The Western economy is essentially industrial, with large chemical and car manufacturing plants, mechanical, electrical and electronic engineering, and rapidly growing advanced technology and service sectors in computing, biotechnology, information processing and media. The East's (former Democratic Republic's) economy never dominated COMECON - the Soviet bloc Council for Mutual Economic Assistance - in the way that the West's did the EU, although it did achieve the highest growth and per capita income within the bloc. However, reunification illustrated starkly how far it had fallen behind the West. After initial difficulties, and much pessimistic forecasting, the Eastern economy was absorbed fairly

painlessly into the West albeit at a considerable financial cost. Among the benefits was a head start for German companies entering the new markets of eastern Europe. Nonetheless, Germany's most important trading partners are its fellow members of the EU, plus the USA, Switzerland and Japan. Trade with China is on a similar scale to that with several eastern European nations. The huge expenditure incurred as a result of unification had a knock-on effect on the speed of the German pursuit of economic and political union in Europe as the Government needed to ensure that Germany met the economic criteria (budget deficit, total debt) for entry into European Monetary Union and the introduction of the single currency. But both the cost of unification and the rate of unemployment (currently 9%) have exposed weaknesses in the German economy, particularly the inflexibility of the labour market and inadequate investment in new technology. The continuing vigour of the German economy suggests that these problems are being tackled.

Business: Business people are expected to dress smartly. English is spoken by many local business people, but it is an advantage to have a working knowledge of German, or an interpreter. Appointments should be made well in advance, particularly in the summer. Appointments may be suggested slightly earlier in the day than is often the custom in the UK. Once made, appointment times should be strictly adhered to. Some firms may close early Friday afternoon. Always use titles such as Herr Doktor or Frau Doktor when addressing business contacts. Punctuality is essential for business visits. Office hours: 0800-1600 Monday to Friday.

BUSINESS IN EASTERN GERMANY: 50 years of central planning have left the economy of what is now the eastern half of the Federal Republic of Germany in a weak state with numerous uneconomic companies, a lack of essential investment in up-to-date technology and distorted markets (see Economy section above). However, together with the EU Commission, the German Government is attempting to encourage investment in the eastern half of the country in order to expedite the reconstruction (Wiederaufbau) of the economy there and to raise material conditions to the same high standards as western Germany. To this end the Government has set up investment incentives which, they stress, are available on equal terms to both German and foreign investors alike and the European Recovery Programme Fund (formerly the Marshall Fund) has been extended to cover what was previously the German Democratic Republic. Information about the various schemes is available from the Department of Trade and Industry in London or from the various banks administering the incentive programmes for the Federal Government. They are as follows:

European Recovery Programme: (Berliner Industrie Bank), Hohenzollerndamm 134, 14199 Berlin (tel: (30) 897 980; fax: (30) 89 79 89 00; e-mail: marketing@weberbank; web site: <http://www.weberbank.de>).

Bank for Reconstruction: (Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau), Palmengartenstrasse 5-9, 60325 Frankfurt/M. (tel: (69) 74310; fax: (69) 74 31 29 44; web site: <http://www.kfw.de>). European Recovery Programme credits for modernisation, effluent treatment and clean-air programmes plus its own investment credit scheme.

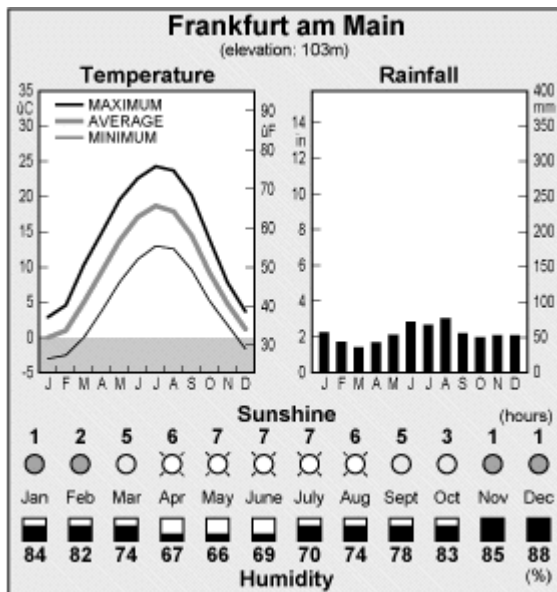
German Equalisation Bank: (Deutsche Ausgleichsbank), Wielandstrasse 4, 53173 Bonn (tel: (228) 8310; fax: (228) 831 2255; e-mail: dtabonn@t-online.de; web site: <http://www.dta.de>). European Recovery Programme credits for start-ups, waste management and energy-saving programmes plus its own investment credit scheme. Consulates in the Federal Republic of Germany can also advise potential investors (see address section).

Commercial Information: The following organisations can offer advice: German-British Chamber of Industry and Commerce, Mecklenburg House, 16 Buckingham Gate, London SW1E 6LB (tel: (020) 7976 4100; fax: (020) 7976 4101; e-mail: mail@ahk-london.co.uk; web site:

<http://www.ahk-london.co.uk>). This organisation also has branch offices in most major Western European capitals; or Deutscher Industrie- und Handelstag (Association of German Chambers of Industry and Commerce), Adenauerallee 148, 53113 Bonn (tel: (228) 1040; fax: (228) 104 1001; web site: <http://www.diht.de>). The organisation is affiliated with 83 Chambers of Industry and Commerce. There are also Chambers of Industry and Commerce in all major German towns and a regional Chamber of Commerce for each of the states.

Conferences/Conventions: The western part of Germany can offer a highly developed and well-equipped network of conference destinations. For information, contact the German Convention Bureau (Deutsches Kongressbüro) (web site: <http://www.gcb.de>), which has branches in Frankfurt/M, Berlin and New York. Frankfurt/M: Münchner Strasse 48, 60329 Frankfurt/M. (tel: (69) 242 9300; fax: (69) 24 29 30 26; e-mail: info@gcb.de); Berlin: Breitestrasse 29, 10178 Berlin (tel: 20 30 80; fax: 20 30 81000; e-mail: info@gcb.de). New York: 1640 Hempstead Turnpike, East Meadow, New York, NY 11554 (tel: (516) 794 1632; fax: (516) 794 8487; e-mail: 74161.53@compuserve.com). Founded in 1973, the Bureau is a non-profitmaking organisation sponsored by Germany's major convention cities, hotels, travel agents and carriers, as well as the country's leading travel and tourist associations, including the German National Tourist Board, Lufthansa and the German Railways.

12 CLIMATE



Temperate throughout the country with warm summers and cold winters, but prolonged periods of frost or snow are rare. Rain falls throughout the year.

Required clothing: European clothes with light- to medium-weights in summer, medium- to heavy-weights in winter. Waterproofing is needed throughout the year.

13 HISTORY AND GOVERNMENT

History: The rich and complex history of what is now Germany is inseparable from that of Central and Western Europe from the 5th century onwards. It is often said that the Germanic tribes destroyed the Roman Empire, but the Visigoths, Ostrogoths and Franks who settled in Western Europe after the deposition of the Emperor Romulus in AD476 were anxious to perpetuate, at least in some of its aspects, a system which they both admired and found administratively convenient. Indeed, it was a Frank, Charlemagne, who revived the Roman Empire in the West in AD800, thus being the first to unite what is now Germany together with the area of France and northern Italy, albeit only for the 40 years of his own reign and that of his son, Louis the Pious. The division of Charlemagne's Empire was confirmed by the Treaty of Verdun (AD843), as a result of which much of what is now Germany passed to Louis' son, Louis the German. During the next 80 years, Germany fragmented into five large duchies (Saxony, Bavaria, Franconia, Lorraine and Swabia), whose dukes managed to establish a de facto hereditary tenure. The 10th century witnessed a growth in the power of central authority under the leadership of the House of Saxony, while in the 11th century and early 12th century, under the Salian dynasty, the power of the crown was in many ways at its height. In 1152, following a disputed succession and a civil war, the dynamic Frederick Barbarossa acceded to the throne: he is one of the most significant figures in German history. Frederick, his son Henry VI and his grandson Frederick II made prodigious attempts to revive the reality of royal power in Germany and Italy, but the task proved impossible and by the late 13th century the country was seething with civil war. This period saw the emergence for the first time of the House of Habsburg. Temporarily deposed by other dynasties during the next 150 years, Albert V of Habsburg re-established his clan's ascendancy in 1438. The Habsburgs were to rule the empire, with only a brief interruption, until 1806. By this time Germany had dissolved into a patchwork of over 300 states, some no more than a town or castle, and increasingly the Habsburg Emperors derived their power and influence from their extensive family lands. In 1519, Charles V became Emperor, uniting by his dynastic connections Spain, the Low Countries, Naples, Sicily, Burgundy, the Holy Roman Empire and all the Spanish possessions in the New World. Germany, in common with much of the rest of Europe, was riven by the Reformation at this time, despite Charles V's attempts to impose a religious solution by force. The impossibility of holding together such a large empire was recognised by Charles himself, and on his abdication in 1556 the imperial office and the Habsburg lands passed to his brother Ferdinand I. Sporadic warfare against the Turks continued, but a more serious catastrophe was the complex Thirty Years War (1618-1648), during which many of Europe's disputes were fought out on German soil. One of the results of the Peace of Westphalia in 1648 was the emergence of the previously minor state of Brandenburg-Prussia as a major power; the territorial gains were built upon by a series of cunning and ruthless rulers and, by the early 18th century, the new kingdom was the scourge of other European states, the Habsburg Empire not least. Frederick the Great is the king most strongly associated with the growth of Prussian militarism. By the time the moribund Holy Roman Empire - not inaccurately described by a contemporary as being 'neither holy, nor Roman, nor an empire' - was formally abolished by Napoleon in 1806 (by which time the Habsburgs had already assumed the title of Emperor of Austria), much of its northern and eastern parts had already been absorbed by Prussia. After 1815 the German Confederation was established with 39 states. German unification continued apace throughout the century, the most significant figure being Count (later Prince) von Bismarck, Chancellor under Emperor Wilhelm I. Various wars, both offensive and defensive, were fought with other European states, the most notable being the Franco-Prussian War (1870-71), and an increasingly complex web of treaties and diplomacy (including the Dual and Triple Alliances of 1878 and 1892) grew up, which for a time contained the equally increasingly ambitious policies of the major European states and their empires. It was a revolt in Serbia which finally shattered the illusion of European security, precipitating a complex chain of events which led to the First World War. After 1918 a democratic constitution was

adopted, but political instability and severe economic problems assisted the rise of the National Socialists under Adolf Hitler during the 1930s. Hitler sought to reverse the perceived humiliation imposed by the 1919 Versailles Treaty (the political settlement at the end of the First World War) by initiating a major rearmament programme which no other European power seemed inclined to challenge. Hitler then set about creating the Third Reich, first by merger (Anschluss) with Austria, then annexation of the Czech Sudetenland, followed by the then Czechoslovakia itself. When Hitler threatened Poland, Britain and France then drew the line: from there, it was a short route to the Second World War. After six years of global warfare, at an estimated cost of 60 million lives, the German army was defeated in 1945 by the allied armies of the USA, the USSR, Britain and others. This produced the post-war division of Europe into Western and Soviet spheres of influence. Germany was divided into two parts: the eastern, Soviet-controlled portion became the German Democratic Republic; the western part emerged to become the Federal Republic of Germany. The city of Berlin, which lay within the GDR, was itself divided into allied and Soviet-controlled zones. East Berlin became the capital of the GDR while the isolated West Berlin was attached to the Federal Republic. The Federal Republic was established in September 1949, under the supervision of the three Western allied powers - the USA, Britain and France. Federal politics adopted the familiar pattern of Social Democratic (SPD) and centre-right Christian Democrat (CDU) parties typical of most of Western Europe. The dominant political figure of the era was Konrad Adenauer, Chancellor between 1949 and 1963. Adenauer and his Economics Minister Ludwig Erhard were the principal architects of the country's phenomenal economic growth after 1945. A major foundation of this was the European Coal and Steel Community, under which the Federal Republic and France, together with several smaller neighbours, established a free trade area in these products. This was the basis of the European Economic Community, which was formally established by the 1957 Rome Treaty. The Christian Democrats remained in power until 1972, at which point the SPD took control of the Bundestag under the leadership of Willi Brandt. Brandt resigned in 1974 and was replaced by Helmut Schmidt. Brandt initiated the Ostpolitik under which peaceful co-operation became the centrepiece of relations with the GDR; it was conceived as an alternative to the sterility of the Cold War. The Soviets had sponsored the creation of the GDR in October 1949 and granted formal independence to the country five years later. During the 1950s, the GDR embarked on a full-scale programme of socialist development complete with wholesale agricultural reform and breakneck industrial construction. Popular discontent with some of the policies culminated in a series of uprisings throughout the decade - notably in 1953 - which were put down forcefully. Political power in the GDR was vested in the sole hands of the Sozialistische Einheitspartei Deutschlands (SED - Socialist Unity Party), an amalgam of leftist and pre-war anti-fascist parties dominated by the Communist Party. Walter Ulbricht was succeeded as Party First Secretary in 1971 by Erich Honecker, who remained in the post almost until the end of the GDR. As with West Germany, relations with the 'other' Germany dominated the political agenda in the GDR. Ostpolitik was continued by Brandt's successor, Helmut Schmidt, and by the Government which took office after the SPD lost its overall majority at the 1980 election. This was a coalition of the SPD and the small centrist Free Democrats, then led by Hans-Dietrich Genscher, who became West Germany's Foreign Minister for the next 12 years. The coalition collapsed in 1982 after which the Free Democrats promptly switched sides and teamed up with the right-wing Christian Democrats (CDU) under Helmut Kohl. Kohl was to become the most electorally successful Chancellor in post-war German history, winning four consecutive polls before his eventual defeat in 1998. He will also be remembered for presiding over German unification, which dramatic process began in 1985 with the accession of Gorbachev in Moscow and steadily gathered momentum until its climax at the end of 1989. Amid massive daily demonstrations in the GDR's major cities, the Politburo, the Berlin Wall and the SED leadership fell in turn between the beginning of November 1989 and the end of the year. The GDR then briefly acquired its only non-communist government led by the liberal democrat Manfred Gerlach. The first free election for a national GDR leadership was held in March 1990, and victory went to the centre-right Alliance for Germany coalition led by Lothar de Mazière and firmly backed by Chancellor Kohl and the CDU. The Party for

Democratic Socialism - the SED as was - took a respectable third place, behind the Social Democrats. The final decision on unification was not, of course, exclusively one for the Germans: the agreement of the wartime Allies was required. The West presented no problems: Washington was enthusiastic, while Paris and London were lukewarm but in no way obstructive. Real difficulty was expected, however, from the Soviet Union, whose nuclear delivery systems and 300,000 plus troops in the GDR were a cornerstone of Soviet defence strategy. But the Soviet leadership recognised that they could do little to prevent it and that their best course was to secure the best possible terms. The new Germany, with nearly 80 million people and twice the GNP of the EU's next largest member, dominates the Union economically. And it is probably only a matter of time before the anomaly between Germany's relatively limited influence of the international stage and its economic clout is closed: already German decisions have had a decisive effect on events in the Balkans. The political complexion of united Germany's government was decided at national elections on December 3, 1990. As expected, Chancellor Kohl's CDU-controlled alliance won a comfortable majority in the Bundestag. The major problem facing Kohl's third administration was the state of the Eastern economy. Although it was a huge drain on the exchequer's resources, the implementation of the government's policy (see Economy for detail) has, in retrospect, been largely vindicated as average incomes in the East have steadily risen towards the level of those in the West. On the political front, Kohl, the CDU and its allies were greatly assisted by the lack of either unity or of coherent, distinctive policies on the part of the Social Democrat opposition. It was not until Kohl's final term - following his victory with a reduced majority in 1994 - that a new leadership emerged within the SDP capable of challenging the veteran Chancellor. Prominent among these were would-be Chancellor Gerhard Schröder and party chair Oskar Lafontaine, both younger men who cut their political teeth in the 1960s and had a very different view of Germany's future from Kohl's generation with its experiences rooted in the Second World War. The shift in the popular move away from the CDU became apparent from 1995 onwards as the SPD took control over almost all the Land administrations. The party also made concerted efforts to improve its relations with two of Germany's smaller parties, the Greens and the former East German communists - reincarnated as the Party of Democratic Socialism under lawyer Gregor Gysi. At the next general election held in September 1998, the SPD won a 7% majority over its rival and immediately opened negotiations with the Greens to form a 'red-green' coalition government. The Free Democrats, who had historically joined with either of the two major parties to form a government, were excluded. After 17 years as Chancellor and 25 years as party leader, Kohl stood down. Schröder immediately declared his intention to seek continuity in both economic and foreign policy and has so far kept to that pledge. The Greens, entering government for the first time, have secured important posts under the Schröder administration, notably Foreign Minister (held by Joschka Fischer) and one of Germany's two seats on the EU Commission. The Schröder government has had a difficult time in office: its unpopularity throughout the country has been reflected in a series of heavy defeats in Land and local elections during 1999 and 2000.

Government: The present constitution dates from May 1949, the Federal Republic of Germany being formally established 4 months later. The country is a parliamentary democracy with a bicameral legislature (Bundesrat and Bundestag, with 68 and 663 members respectively). Executive authority lies with the Federal Government, led by the Federal Chancellor. The Federal President is the constitutional head of state. Each of the states has its own legislature with power to pass laws on all matters not expressly reserved for the competence of the Federal Government. The former German Democratic Republic has been absorbed into this system, adding 5 Länder to the total.

14 OVERVIEW

Country Overview: The Federal Republic of Germany shares frontiers with Austria, Belgium, the Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Luxembourg, The Netherlands, Poland and Switzerland.

The scenery is enormously varied and includes sandy beaches, towering mountains, forests, lakes and settlements ranging from medieval villages to some of Europe's greatest cities.

Berlin is the largest city in Germany. It is not just an industrial base but also a cultural and scientific capital with several universities. It houses three opera houses, 53 theatres and more than 100 cinemas.

Since the 1920s, Berlin has been known for its vibrant nightlife. It is still a city that is open 24 hours a day with an unrivalled range of nightclubs, bars, restaurants, cabarets and Kneipen (pubs), catering for every taste and budget.

In Bavaria, skiing is available at resorts such as Garmisch-Partenkirchen, Berchtesgaden, Oberstdorf, Inzell, Reit im Winkl, as well as in the southern mountains.

Foodwise, Germany is best known for sausages such as bratwurst and its beer.

In all larger towns and cities in western Germany, and increasingly in the major eastern cities, visitors will have the choice between theatre, opera, nightclubs, bars with live music and discos.