



YEAR 12 HISTORY,
FINE ART AND
PHOTOGRAPHY TRIP
TO BERLIN

WITH

HIGHLANDS SCHOOL



DAY 1: LIFE IN NAZI GERMANY

On the first day of our history trip to Berlin, we explored significant sites related to the period of Nazi Germany and its political landscape.

Our first stop was the Reichstag, where we delved into the history of Germany from its unification to the end of World War I. We learned about the transition from democracy to dictatorship, and topics such as the Freikorps, Spartacists, and the rise of National Socialism were discussed.

Understanding who voted for Hitler was also an important aspect of our exploration. The Reichstag Fire of 1933, which had a profound impact on solidifying Nazi control, was also covered. Additionally, we examined the Battle for Berlin and the division of Germany during the Cold War, leading up to the eventual reunification.



Following our visit to the Reichstag, we paid our respects at the Memorial to the Murdered Members of the Reichstag.



This memorial honours the 96 members of parliament who fell victim to National Socialist persecution. It served as a poignant reminder of the atrocities committed during that time.

DAY 1: LIFE IN NAZI GERMANY

Next, we visited the Memorial to the Sinti and Roma of Europe Murdered under the NS Regime.

This memorial is dedicated to the memory of the Sinti and Roma people who were victims of the Nazi genocide, known as the Porajmos. It was a solemn and sobering experience that allowed us to reflect on the suffering endured by these communities.



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We then made our way to the Brandenburg Gate, a symbol of Berlin that has witnessed significant political changes in Germany throughout history.

Its historical significance and role as a backdrop to important events were highlighted during our visit.



Our last stop for the day was Bebelplatz, where we explored the impact of art and literature in Weimar Germany. We learned about the book burnings that took place in May 1933, marking a dark period of censorship and repression under Nazi Germany.

It was a stark reminder of the suppression of intellectual freedom during that time.

DAY 2: RESISTANCE AND TERROR IN NAZI GERMANY

On the second day, our focus shifted to the resistance movements and the terror inflicted during the Nazi era.

We began with a visit to Sachsenhausen Concentration Camp, where we gained insight into the Nazi camp system. It was a sobering experience as we learned about the horrific conditions and treatment endured by prisoners within the camp.

Next, we visited Gleis 17 Grunewald Bahnhof, a memorial dedicated to the deportation of Berlin's Jewish community. This memorial served as a poignant reminder of the atrocities committed against Jews during the Holocaust.



DAY 2: RESISTANCE AND TERROR IN NAZI GERMANY

Our last stop of the day was the Wannsee Conference House, where the infamous Wannsee Conference took place. This conference was responsible for planning the "Final Solution to the Jewish Question," and visiting this venue provided us with a deeper understanding of the systematic extermination of Jews.

DAY 2: EXPLORING GERMAN ART

On our second day in Berlin, art and photography students left the history group and went to visit a number of museums and galleries around Berlin.

The first gallery was Neue National Art Gallery, an amazing building in itself, a glass box on ground level that leads down into a beautiful large open basement with two galleries either side. The main gallery had a collection of German art starting from the early 20th century, the Weimar Republic leading us through many well known German artist's personal responses to the political and social impact of the first world war, Nazi Germany, concentration camps and the subsequent years after. On the other side was an exhibition '100 Works for Berlin' by Gerhard Richter, a mixture of photography, painting and mixed media.



DAY 2: EXPLORING GERMAN ART

We walked and had lunch in the gardens close by then into Gemaldegalerie where we were able to see a beautiful exhibition of Albrecht Durer etchings and drawings. This was a wonderful opportunity to see his work especially students studying art as the mark making and use of line was incredible. The main gallery had a massive collection of 15th century artwork extending from Raphael's to Caravaggio's, all artists we have studied in key stage three. Again an important experience for all, to see the composition, use of light and brush strokes in the flesh!

Last was the Museum of Photography which housed a large collection of Helmut Newton's work—an influential photographer from the 1970 through to 90's. It was a thought provoking gallery as most of his work was for advertising and high fashion. We had many discussions on how

the male gaze was so prevalent in his work and how this mindset is changing and evolving with more inclusive and diverse representation of the human figure.

On the top floor was a photojournalism exhibition; 'Flashes of Memory' Photography on the Holocaust. This exhibition was a powerful and confrontational one. It spans across the propaganda films of Nazi Germany, private images that soldiers took of children and families in Jewish Ghettos, through to the images and films of the liberation of prisoners in the concentration camps and how they were used as evidence in the Nuremberg trials.

When the art and photography students joined the history group we visited sculptures and memorials by Kathe Kollwitz and Peter Eisenman. They had the opportunity to take photos and draw the different architectural styles of Berlin.



DAY 3: GERMAN CULTURAL HERITAGE

Day three of our trip began with a guided tour of the Olympic Stadium, where we learned about the 1936 Berlin Olympics. We explored both the positive aspects, such as the grandeur of the event, as well as the darker side, including the discrimination and exclusion faced by Jewish athletes.

We then took a walk through the Jewish Quarter, around Oranienburgstrasse and Hackescher Markt, gaining insight into the vibrant Jewish community that existed before the Holocaust. It was a chance to understand the rich cultural heritage that was lost.

Next, we visited the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe, a solemn and thought-provoking memorial dedicated to the six million Jews who were victims of the Holocaust. It provided a space for reflection and remembrance.

Our final stop of the day was the Fuhrer Bunker, the underground complex. After a long day of walking, we all enjoyed a delicious meal at Paulaners restaurant.



- Day 3: Saturday 10th June
- The Olympic Stadium
- Trains to Life, Trains to Death
- Neue Synagogue
- Former Jewish cemetery
- The Deserted Room - Koppenplatz
- Plotensee Prison - Execution cell
- Memorial to the murdered Jews of Europe
- Site of Fuhrer Bunker
- Museum Island
- Dinner at Paulaners restaurant

DAY 4: THE GOLD WAR

On the final day of our history trip to Berlin, we focused on exploring key sites and aspects related to the Cold War era. Our first stop was the Treptow Park Soviet Memorial. This memorial commemorates the Soviet soldiers who lost their lives during the Battle of Berlin in World War II. It symbolises the Soviet Union's role in defeating Nazi Germany and serves as a reminder of the post-war division of Berlin.

Next, we visited the East Side Gallery, the longest remaining section of the Berlin Wall. This iconic site features vibrant murals painted by artists from around the world. The murals depict various themes related to freedom, unity, and the struggle against oppression. It was a powerful experience to witness the transformation of the wall into a symbol of hope and artistic expression.

Continuing our exploration of the Cold War era, we then visited the Stasi Prison at Hohenschoenhausen. Here, we learned about the role of the Ministry for State Security, commonly known as the Stasi, in East Germany. The prison provided insights into the methods of surveillance, repression, and control employed by the Stasi during this period. It was a chilling reminder of the harsh realities faced by individuals living under the East German regime.

Next on our itinerary was a visit to the DDR Museum, we had the opportunity to engage with an excellent interactive exhibition that focused on everyday life in East Germany. The museum provided a comprehensive understanding of the social, cultural, and economic aspects of life in the German Democratic Republic (GDR). It offered a unique perspective on the challenges and realities faced by individuals living in a socialist state.

Our final stop was the Berlin Wall Documentation Centre at Bernauer Strasse. This preserved section of the Berlin Wall provided an aerial view of the entire area, helping us visualise the division of Germany during the Cold War. The centre also presented detailed information about the Berlin Wall's construction, the establishment of the German Democratic Republic (GDR) and the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG), and the significant events surrounding the wall, such as the Berlin Airlift. It was a comprehensive resource that enhanced our understanding of this pivotal period in history.



DAY 4: THE GOLD WAR

In conclusion, our year 12 history trip to Berlin was a deeply educational and eye-opening experience. Over the course of four days, we explored significant historical sites related to life in Nazi Germany, resistance and terror, the Cold War, and the division of Berlin. Through these visits, we gained a greater understanding of the events, ideologies, and human experiences that shaped Germany's past. This trip will undoubtedly leave a lasting impact on our understanding of history and the importance of remembrance.



QUOTES FROM THE TRAVELERS

I loved the food and getting the opportunity to see the monuments and memorials!

One of my most memorable trips. Made friends I never would have thought.

The memorial known as 'Platform 17' was especially poignant because it was a train station used to transport Jewish people to various concentration camps. On either side of the platform it stated how many Jewish people were transported to the different concentration camps, such as Auschwitz, on different dates. Additionally, our visit to the Berlin Olympic Stadium was very interesting because Hitler ordered its construction in 1936, where it became a place rife with propaganda.

I really enjoyed everything about the Berlin trip, the history is so interesting and the landmarks are beautiful.

I really enjoyed the amazing monuments I saw on the trip!

BERLIN 2023