



Berlin and Memory – A Jewish Journey

with Julian Resnick and Jeremy Leigh

6th – 9th May 2010

There are few cities in Europe as powerfully evocative as Berlin. The city has become iconic for the key periods and experiences of modernity:

- Berlin – The City of Enlightenment;
- Berlin – The Roaring Capital of Weimar;
- Berlin – The Capital of the Third Reich;
- Berlin – The Frontier City of the Cold War; and
- Berlin – The Capital of the New Europe

For those with long and short memories, the name 'Berlin' evokes images of a city whose Wall fell so dramatically in 1989 heralding the end of Soviet Communism, changing the face of Europe, and, for some, symbolising the end of ideology itself. However, the truly remarkable aspect of this city lies not exclusively in its history, but rather in its ability to regenerate, rebuild and create new futures. A visit to Berlin today is a journey to a place that is rebuilding and in fact reinventing itself.

To a degree, the historical Berlin Jewish story is well known and almost self-evident – the city has witnessed the very best and the very worst of Jewish history. However, for the contemporary Jewish visitor, the challenge is to connect the symbols of those stories with the present day reality of a fast and regenerating community. In Berlin, the past very rarely stands still.

This programme is designed to introduce some of the fundamental questions confronting contemporary Jews: questions of identity, meaning and involvement as Jews in European society. We do this while enabling the participants to enjoy Berlin the modern city to the full.

Thursday May 6th

Berlin Entry Points

Afternoon Arrive Berlin, transfer to Hotel

'Entry Points': A selection of key starting points for viewing Berlin (some of Kaiser Wilhelm Church, Checkpoint Charlie, Brandenburg Gate, Holocaust Memorial)

Group Dinner*: Hackesher Hoff

Friday May 7th

Berlin, Jews and Modernity

The morning will focus on the opportunities and difficulties that the rise of the Modern Nation State presented for Germans and Jews. We will visit some of the central sites that focus in on these issues.

Walking tour of Mitte (the former Jewish area) including Judenstrasse ("the street of the Jews") and the site of the medieval community, Neuer Markt and Marienkirche; Ephraimpalais; Gross Hamburger, the grave of Moses Mendelsohn and the New Synagogue – Oranienburgerstrasse Synagogue; Leo Baeck House and former site of the Hochschule

Late lunch and free time

Depart Hotel for Shabbat Tfillot

Shabbat Evening Dinner*

Saturday May 8th

Berlin Jewry Past and Present

Shabbat offers two experiences of Berlin Jewry namely as one of the most rooted and sophisticated Jewish communities in Europe (as seen through its modern and challenging museum); and secondly through its relationship with Germany, the complicated and contradictory country of Jewish settlement for over one thousand years.

Shabbat Service (with group in the hotel or Pestalozzistrasse)

Berlin Jewish Museum. This exciting, iconic piece of modern architecture designed by Daniel Libeskind, contains one of the most exciting Jewish museums in Europe, specifically tackling the issue of Jewish – German identity through the ages.

Lunch and free time

Capital Berlin: Memory, identity and trauma (tour of the Bundestag – home of the pre-war Reichstag), Bebelplatz, Opera House)

Havdalah and Free Time

Sunday May 9th

Jews Confront German Memories

This day is devoted to visits to sites of German memory from the depths of the German-Jewish relationship, both in their own terms and also filtered through the perspectives of contemporary Jews.

Wannsee House: The beautiful lakeside villa where the 'Final Solution', the master plan for the destruction of European Jewry was finalized – discussion of questions of human behaviour, good and evil, modernity as a symbol of destruction.

Grunwald Station / Gleis 17 Memorial - Site of deportation and the mechanics of destruction.

Spiegelwand (Mirror Wall Monument): Looking to the Future and conclusions to be drawn from the programme.

Lunch and departure