

GERMANY

— Berlin · Hamburg · Munich · Stuttgart · Black Forest —

“Some cities you walk through. Berlin you argue with.”

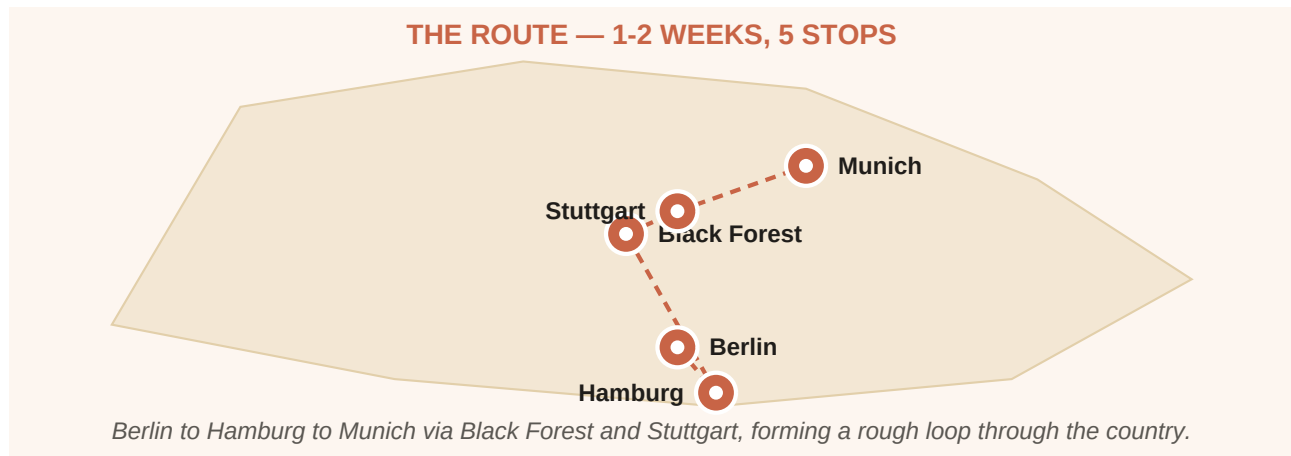


desk2destinations.com · Honesty over hype. Slow over rushed. Practical over pretty.

By Ayushi & Harshit Jain

Germany at a glance

Germany rewards slow travel. From Berlin's complicated history to Bavaria's mountains, from Hamburg's working harbour to Stuttgart's engineering genius, the country contains multitudes. We moved through five cities over two weeks and felt like we'd barely scratched the surface.



Best time	June to August; September for Black Forest and Bavaria
Visa (IN)	Schengen (Indian passport)
Currency	EUR (€)
Getting around	German trains are reliable when on time; budget 3-4 hours Berlin-Munich, 1-2 hours point-to-point. FlixBus cheap but slow.
If we did it again	Not staying longer in the Black Forest and Freiburg.

The top 10 — our personal highlights

Ten moments worth flying back for. Ranked roughly in the order they made us go “oh.”

- 1 Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe** · [Berlin](#)
2,711 concrete slabs; the walk itself is the memorial.

- 2 Neuschwanstein Castle** · [Munich area](#)
The fairytale fortress King Ludwig II never lived to see completed.

- 3 Elbphilharmonie Plaza** · [Hamburg](#)
Free viewing terrace 8 floors up; the city opens from here.

- 4 Schwarzwald Panoramastraße** · [Black Forest](#)
Scenic mountain road through forests and villages; rent a car.

- 5 English Garden Biergarten** · [Munich](#)
Larger than Central Park; beer and pretzels in afternoon sun.

- 6 Beatles Platz** · [Hamburg](#)
Five iron silhouettes at the Reeperbahn; the street that made them.

- 7 Freiburg Münster** · [Black Forest](#)
Gothic cathedral that survived WWII bombing; spire among Europe's finest.

- 8 Mercedes-Benz Museum** · [Stuttgart](#)
160 years of automotive history; surprisingly moving.

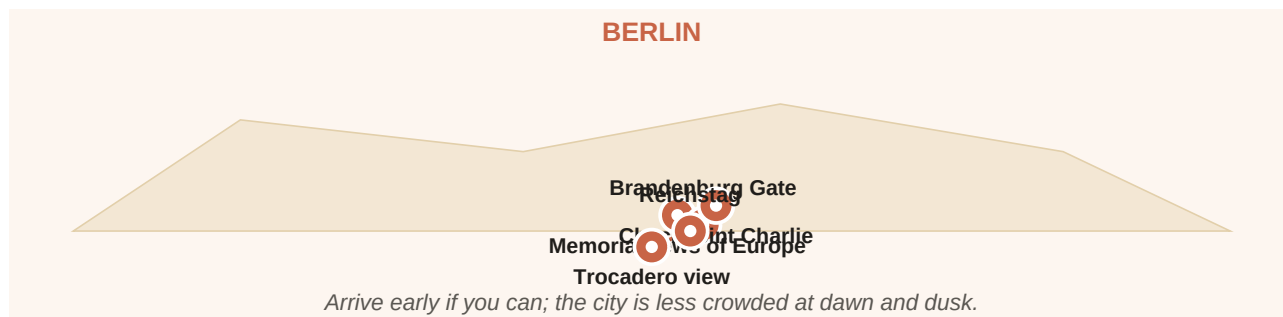
- 9 Triberger Wasserfälle** · [Black Forest](#)
Germany's highest waterfalls; 163 meters through mossy forest.

- 10 Dachau Memorial Site** · [Munich area](#)
Germany's first concentration camp; essential historical responsibility.

Berlin

Bunkers, graffiti and the weight of complicated history

Berlin is a city that doesn't hide what it is. The history is visible, debated, memorialised and walked through. Expect dark tours, excellent vegetarian food, and a pace that rewards lingering.



Top 5 here

- **Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe** — 2,711 concrete slabs; the most quietly powerful memorial in the city
- **GuruWalk Free Tour (Third Reich/Cold War)** — Pick the right tour; tip the guide generously
- **Brandenburg Gate at golden hour** — Late afternoon light, best with the Reichstag behind
- **Checkpoint Charlie and corner döner** — Skip the photo, eat the vegetarian döner kebab
- **Reichstag dome** — Free but book slots online days in advance

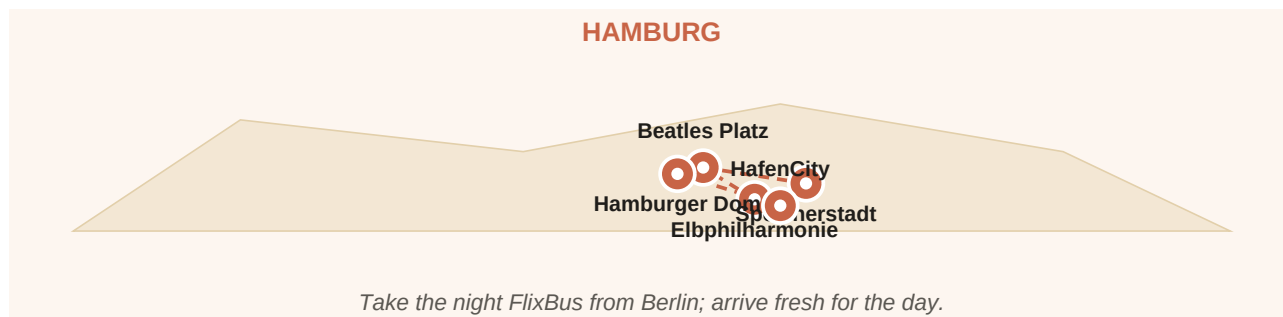
Days	2-3 days minimum; one full day for walking tour and memorials
Where we stayed	Mitte or Kreuzberg neighbourhoods; budget hostels cheap and social.
Getting around	S-Bahn and U-Bahn efficient and frequent; day pass covers city.
Where we ate	Currywurst, döner, vegetarian options abundant; coffee culture strong.
Reality check	Touristy in patches but serious about history; get lost in side streets.

→ Read the full Berlin guide on the site: desk2destinations.com/germany-berlin.html

Hamburg

Harbour city, canals and the Speicherstadt warehouse district

Hamburg is a working city that doesn't pretend to be a museum. Port cranes, red-brick warehouses, and Elbphilharmonie's free plaza are the real Hamburg. One day is enough; two is better.



Top 5 here

- **Elbphilharmonie Plaza** — Free public viewing terrace 8 floors up; ride the curved escalator
- **Beatles Platz iron silhouettes** — Five figures at the Reeperbahn; Hamburg's role in their story
- **Speicherstadt warehouses** — Red-brick UNESCO district; canal-side walks
- **Hamburger Dom funfair (seasonal)** — Germany's largest folk festival; feels like a winter mela from home
- **HafenCity waterfront** — Modern development on the port; golden hour is best

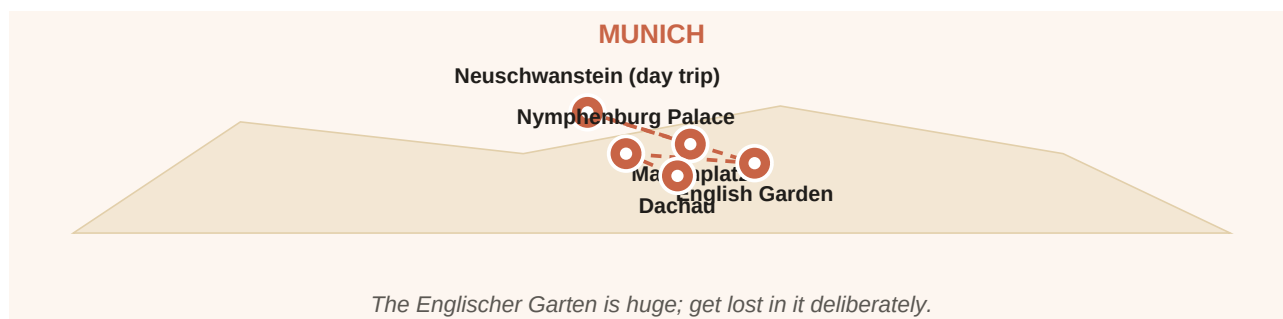
Days	1-2 days; one full day is the right amount
Where we stayed	St. Pauli or Altona for neighbourhood feel; luggage lockers at Hauptbahnhof if day-tripping.
Getting around	S-Bahn from Berlin about 3 hours; can stay overnight on FlixBus.
Where we ate	Fish sandwiches, pretzels, Radler (beer-lemonade) on a bench.
Reality check	Less touristy than Berlin; a real working harbour feel.

→ Read the full Hamburg guide on the site: desk2destinations.com/germany-hamburg.html

Munich

Bavarian castles, beer gardens and a city that feels like a country unto itself

Munich wears its regional identity confidently. Beer culture is not tourism here; it's how the city works. Neuschwanstein is the headline but the real Munich is in the beer gardens and the Alps visibility on clear days.



Top 5 here

- **Neuschwanstein Castle day trip** — Book tickets weeks ahead; 2 hours by train; genuinely breathtaking
- **Marienplatz Glockenspiel** — 43-bell carillon with 32 figures; daily at 11 a.m. and noon
- **English Garden Biergarten** — Larger than Central Park; one of four beer gardens inside it
- **Viktualienmarkt daily food market** — Operating since 1807; perfect weisswurst and mustard
- **Dachau Memorial Site** — 20 km from Munich; essential and sobering

Days 3-4 days; includes one day trip to Neuschwanstein

Where we stayed Central Munich near Marienplatz or Sendling for local feel.

Getting around Train from Hamburg 6 hours or overnight FlixBus; excellent S-Bahn within city.

Where we ate Weisswurst, pretzels, Bavarian cuisine; beer garden culture all day.

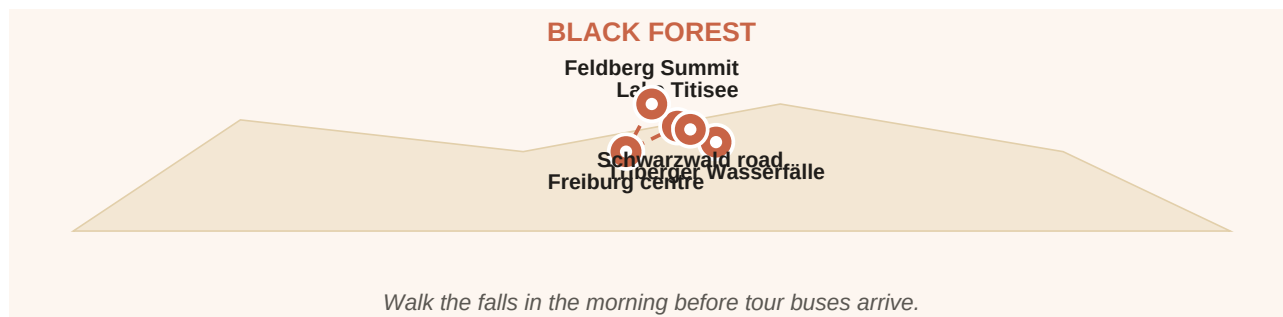
Reality check Touristy in the centre but genuine Bavarian culture underneath.

→ Read the full Munich guide on the site: desk2destinations.com/germany-munich.html

Black Forest

Waterfalls, cuckoo clocks and deep forest silence

The Black Forest (Schwarzwald) is fairy-tale landscape made real. Winding mountain roads, moss-covered waterfalls and half-timbered villages. Base yourself in Freiburg for access to day trips throughout the region.



Top 5 here

- 📍 **Triburger Wasserfälle** — Germany's highest waterfall cascade; hike in mist and moss
- 📍 **Schwarzwald Panoramastraße** — Scenic mountain route; hairpin bends and panoramic views
- 📍 **Freiburg Münster cathedral** — Gothic masterpiece; survived WWII bombing
- 📍 **Lake Titisee** — Glacial forest lake; paddleboats and summer swimmers
- 📍 **Cuckoo clock workshops (Triburg)** — Watch craftspeople; skip buying unless you love wood

Days 2-3 days; one for Triberg/waterfalls, one for panorama road

Where we stayed Freiburg as base; compact university city with character.

Getting around Rent a car for Black Forest; trains connect to Freiburg from Stuttgart/Munich.

Where we ate Black Forest cake (eat the original in Triberg), regional Swabian cuisine.

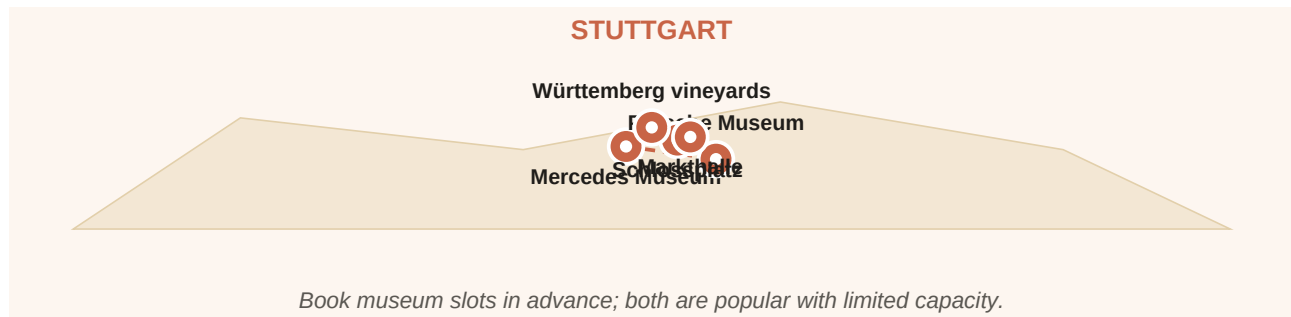
Reality check Beautiful but gets coaches in summer; go early or midweek.

→ Read the full Black Forest guide on the site: desk2destinations.com/germany-blackforest.html

Stuttgart

Mercedes, Porsche and hillside vineyards inside the city

Stuttgart wasn't on the original plan until we added it as a gap-filler. It became a favourite. Engineering museums, terraced vineyards, and a city that knows what it's good at without needing to advertise.



Top 5 here

- 📍 **Mercedes-Benz Museum** — 160 years of automotive history; entire morning minimum
- 📍 **Porsche Museum** — 80 curated cars; Le Mans winners and originals
- 📍 **Württemberg vineyard walk** — Vines visible from city centre; panoramic valley views
- 📍 **Schlossplatz** — Baroque palace square; city gathering point at golden hour
- 📍 **Markthalle Stuttgart (food market)** — Art Nouveau 1914 hall; bread that justifies moving cities

Days 1-2 days; museums take significant time

Where we stayed Central Stuttgart near Schlossplatz; easy train access.

Getting around Train from Munich 2 hours; from Black Forest 1.5 hours.

Where we ate Swabian Maultaschen, Spätzle, local wine; market food is excellent.

Reality check Quieter than other German cities; confident without fanfare.

→ Read the full Stuttgart guide on the site: desk2destinations.com/germany-stuttgart.html

Costs — where the rupees went

Mid-range, vegetarian-friendly, two travellers splitting stays. Numbers are per-person, rounded honestly. Flights vary the most.

Accommodation	Budget hostels: 20-25/night; mid-range hotels: 60-90/night	480-2160 for 2 weeks
Food	Street food and markets: 5-8/meal; restaurants: 15-25/meal	280-700 for 2 weeks
Transport	FlixBus overnight: 30-50; day trains: 40-120 per journey	150-600 for 2 weeks
Attractions	Most museums: 10-15; Neuschwanstein: 14; Elbphilharmonie free plaza	100-200 for 2 weeks
Castles/Museums	Neuschwanstein: 14; Mercedes Museum: 9; Porsche Museum: 9; Dachau: free	50-150 for 2 weeks
Food (regional)	Currywurst: 5; Bavarian pretzels: 3; Weisswurst: 6; Coffee: 2-3	included in food
Day trips	Füssen bus to Neuschwanstein: 10-15; Black Forest car rental: 40/day	150-300 for 2 weeks
Misc	SIM card/data, tips, incidentals	100-150 for 2 weeks

Total: 18,000-24,000 per person

One last thing

Buy a rail pass for multi-city travel or book FlixBus in advance for overnight journeys.

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