



GRAND PHILHARMONIC CHOIR EUROPEAN TOUR

Optional Extension (July 12-18)

Monday, July 12

7:30am - Departure Vienna airport. Transfer via Prague to Dresden (450 km).

Dresden is the capital of the [German](#) federal state of [Saxony](#) (Freistaat Sachsen). Located on the Elbe River, it is an industrial, governmental, and cultural centre, known worldwide for the Bruehl's Terrace and its historic landmarks in the Old Town (Altstadt).

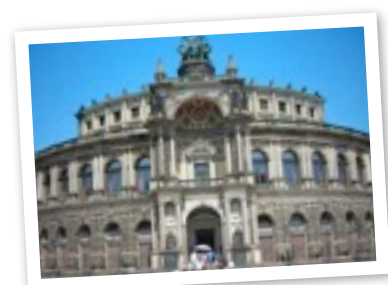


75% of the historical centre of Dresden was destroyed in a terrible fire-bombing 1945 by allied forces in February 1945. The date is deeply etched in the history of the city and is still remembered each year in commemorative processions and ceremonies. In addition to the destruction of many priceless art treasures that made the city world famous, more than 30,000 people died in the bombing. The exact number is unknown because the city was filled with unidentified refugees and many were burnt beyond recognition in the firestorm. The historical centre has been restored to its former glory; however, some parts are still under reconstruction.



3:00pm - Arrival at the hotel **KIPPING** Winkelmannstrasse 6, Dresden Tel. +49 351 478 500 reception@hotel/kippling.de, www.hotel-kippling.de

Free afternoon and evening in the centre. Dresden is a beautiful, free-spirited city, especially in summer, when you can appreciate the serene setting of the historic centre, which is quite compact and walkable.



Tuesday, July 13

9:00am - Official sightseeing tour of Dresden – admire breathtaking views of the Elbe river from the Bruehl Terrace and marvel at the Baroque splendor of the **Zwinger** palace, creation of Augustus the Strong with its famous art collection. Be sure to see the **Altmarkt**, a very popular and famous square in the old town. The **Semper Oper** is one of the most beautiful and acoustically perfect opera houses in the world. The Dresden Staatskapelle is one of the world's leading orchestras. Its history saw many operas of Wagner and Strauss having their first nights there.

See the rebuilt **Frauenkirche** – the reconstructed Church of Our Lady was completely destroyed during WWII and has now been reopened. The City of Coventry, which was raided by the Luftwaffe in WWII, donated the golden cross for the dome of the church.

Hofkirche – church of the royal court

Albertinum museum - a wonderful collection ranging from romantic painters to Van Gogh.

In the afternoon optional visits to **Zwinger, Albertinum Weber museum, Dresden Neustadt, Kassematten under the Brühlische Terasse, Grosser Garden.**



Wednesday, July 14

9:00am – Departure for **Leipzig**, which is the largest city in the German federal state of Saxony. Leipzig acquired the nickname Klein Paris (“Little Paris”) in the 19th century. Some of the greatest figures in German music, literature and science (Bach, Goethe, Leibniz, Mendelssohn, Nietzsche, Schiller, Schumann and Wagner) lived in the city at various times.

The city is also the home of the Nikolaikirche (Church of St. Nicholas) – the starting point of peaceful demonstrations against the communist regime, which led to German Unification.

1:00pm – Official sightseeing tour of Leipzig. One of the favourite tourist attractions in Leipzig is the **Old City Town Hall**, located on the charming main square of the city. Old City Hall contains a museum of city history, which possesses the original of the only confirmed painting of Bach produced in his lifetime.



St. Thomas's Church dominates Thomaskirchhof square. Today it is used as a concert hall as well as a place of worship. Above all it is known as the home of the St. Thomas's Boys choir and its renowned choir master, Johann Sebastian Bach. He worked in Leipzig from 1723 until his death in 1750 and was musical director for the church as well as the other main churches in Leipzig, in addition to serving as music director for City Hall and the University which in effect made him musical director for the whole city. His grave is to be found in the church.

Auerbach's Keller has been around since medieval times. It is among the oldest continuously operated pubs in Germany. The barrel cellar is the background to a scene in one of Germany's most famous plays, “Faust” by Goethe, who himself used to drink his wine there.

4:00pm - Check in to the hotel **NOVOTEL LEIPZIG CITY**, Goethestrasse 11, Leipzig, Tel: +49 341 9958 930, mail: H1784@accor.com, www.novotel.com



Free evening in Leipzig.

Thursday, July 15

Free day in Leipzig optional visit to **Museum of Fine Arts, Schiller House, Mendelssohn House, Schumann House**. Mendelssohn's concert hall, the **Gewandhaus**, is still active today near Leipzig's market place. It was founded in 1743 and is the home of Europe's longest-established orchestra. **Museum at the Round Corner** – an interesting museum documenting the Stasi (DDR secret police) headquarters in Leipzig.

Friday, July 16



9:00am – Departure for Berlin. Berlin is the capital of Germany and one of the 16 states of the Federal Republic of Germany. Berlin is the largest city in Germany and has a population of 4.5 million within its metropolitan area. Berlin is best known for its historical associations, for its street art and for its numerous museums, palaces, cultural venues and many other sites of historic interest. Although badly damaged in the final years of World War II and broken apart by the infamous Berlin Wall during the Cold War, Berlin has been completely reconstructed, especially with the reunification push after the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989. It is now possible to see many different historic periods within the city center, from a few surviving medieval buildings near Alexanderplatz, to the and steel structures in Potsdamer Platz.

2:00pm – Check in to the hotel **NOVOTEL BERLIN MITTE**, Fischerinsel 12, 101 79 Berlin, Tel: +49 30 20674 111, mail: h3278@accor.com, www.novotel.com



3.30pm – Official sightseeing tour of Berlin. We cover all the main sights in the city centre, including the **Philharmonie, Berlin Wall**, the site of **Hitler's bunker**, the **Brandenburg Gate**, the **Reichstag Dome** – new home of the Bundestag, **Museum Island** and **Pleasure Garden, Potsdamer Platz, Unter den Linden, Berlin Cathedral, Humboldt University, State Opera** and many other places. We finish our sightseeing at **Gendarmemarkt**, the most beautiful square in Berlin, a short walk from the **Checkpoint Charlie Museum**.

Free evening in the centre.



Saturday, July 17

Free day in Berlin.

Options: Visit to

Museumsinsel, literally “Museum Island” which is well known for **Pergamon Museum**, which houses an extensive collection of ancient Greek, ancient Middle-Eastern and Islamic art and architecture.

Altes Museum, Alte Nationalgalerie with mainly German paintings of the 19th century and **Bode Museum** with its fantastically presented sculpture collection and Byzantine art.

Deutsches Historisches Museum – German historical museum covering everything from pre-history right up to the present day.

Neue Nationalgalerie – Art from the 20th Century

Gemäldegalerie – Thousands of European paintings from the 13th to the 18th century. Works by Dürer, Raffael, Tizian, Caravaggio, Rembrandt and Rubens.

Mauermuseum (Wall Museum) at Checkpoint Charlie – the biggest of its kind in Europe.

Topography of Terror – This open-air museum documents the terror applied by the Nazi regime.

Musikinstrumenten-Museum – has an amazingly wide range of historic and unusual instruments on display.

As Berlin is a city of art, it is quite easy to find an art gallery on your way. You can also visit some historically interesting and architecturally remarkable churches:

Berliner Dom – The biggest and most impressive church in Berlin, built at the turn of the 20th century as an expression of imperial power, located next to the museum island.

Marienkirche - located near Alexanderplatz. This is not only the highest church tower in Berlin, but also one of the oldest churches left in the historical centre of Berlin.

Nikolaikirche – the oldest church in Berlin, dating back to the beginning of 13th century.

You can also visit **Reichstag** – The German Parliament building, near the Brandenburg gate with a spectacular new glass dome, which offers a great view of Berlin, Berlin's vibrant cultural scene has a lot to offer. No matter what your preference is, you're guaranteed to find something to suit your taste and interests.

Sunday, July 18

Departure for the airport after breakfast. 9:00am – Depart Berlin via Duesseldorf to Toronto.

2:30pm – Arrival at Pearson Int. Airport. Welcome home!