

Remembering the Division of Berlin on Bernauer Straße

The memorial lies on Bernauer Strasse and extends along the street for 1.4 kilometers. It is situated on the former border strip between East and West Berlin. The Wall divided not only the city, but also the street, which acquired international fame when the Berlin Wall was built in 1961. The facades of the apartment buildings on the East Berlin side of the street formed the boundary; the front sidewalk, however, belonged to West Berlin.

The street conveys the drama surrounding the Wall's construction: the pressure in the GDR to flee, the countermeasures taken by the SED, the danger of escaping and the pain caused by division. Since 1961 Bernauer Strasse has been a site of conflict, protest and commemoration. The spectacular escapes from buildings on the street remain unforgettable. Around 2,000 of the street's residents were forced out of their homes. Each year thousands of people visited Bernauer Strasse, which had become synonymous with the Wall.

After the Wall opened in November 1989, the efforts of committed citizens led to the establishment of a memorial on Bernauer Strasse dedicated to the memory of the Berlin Wall and its victims. On view here are 220 meters of the 155-kilometer-long Berlin Wall that had surrounded West Berlin. This is the only place where the border strip has been preserved in its entire depth. At this historical site, the history of the border regime comes alive.

Documentation Center exhibition, 2017



Contact

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Opening Hours

Outdoor memorial grounds: open daily 8 a.m. – 10 p.m.

Visitor Center with introductory film

Documentation Center with permanent exhibition:
Tuesday – Sunday, 10 a.m. – 6 p.m. (closed Mondays)

Free admission

The houses as well as large parts of the memorial area are fully accessible. Further information on accessibility is available on our website.

Public Tours

Bernauer Strasse after the Wall was built (German)

Every Sunday at 3 p.m.,

Length: ca. 60 minutes, advance registration is not necessary

Touch tour for the visually impaired

Every last Saturday, 11 a.m.

Length: ca. 120 minutes, advance registration necessary

Meeting point: Visitor Center

€3.50/€2.50 per person, no charge for schoolchildren

Educational Offers

- Touch tours for the visually impaired, sign language tours and in easy-to-understand language
- Tours for children aged eight and over and language students, in more than five languages
- Seminars, talks with contemporary witnesses

All offers are available on our website.

Public Transport

S-Bahn station: Nordbahnhof

U-Bahn station: Bernauer Straße

Tram station: Gedenkstätte Berliner Mauer

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Gedenkstätte
Berliner Mauer

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Berlin – The Divided City





Window of Remembrance, exhibition grounds, 2010

Visiting the Memorial Site

A visit begins at the Visitor Center where an introductory film is shown. The building also contains a bookstore, seminar rooms and event space. The permanent exhibition on the outdoor memorial grounds focuses on the history of the Berlin Wall and the GDR border regime as it relates to the site. Using examples from Bernauer Strasse, it tells the story of flight, separation, arrests, surveillance and protest.

The Window of Remembrance gives a face to the victims of the Berlin Wall and allows for individual commemoration.

The National Monument presents the preserved border grounds as they existed in 1989. It is dedicated to the memory of the city's division and the victims of communist tyranny. From the viewing platform above the Documentation Center, the historic relics of the border can be read like a 1:1 scale model.



National Monument at the Memorial, 2018



Fleeing on Bernauer Strasse, September 1961
Photo: Alexander Waidmann
© Alexander Waidmann, ullstein bild

In the Documentation Center, the permanent exhibition *1961 | 1989. The Berlin Wall* provides historical and political background information on the city's division up to reunification.

The Chapel of Reconciliation is also located on the memorial grounds. It was built in 2000 at the site of the Reconciliation Church that was demolished in 1985.

The exhibition *Border and Ghost Stations in Divided Berlin* in the Nordbahnhof S-Bahn station offers additional information.



Demolition of the Reconciliation Church, Bernauer Strasse 1985
Photo: Krüger
© Reconciliation Parish Archive

Conrad Schumann flees, August 15, 1961
Photo: Peter Leibing
Source: Agency for Culture and Media, Hamburg State Archives

