

This is a cool city,' according to John Cusack and he's certainly not the only celeb who thinks so. From Angelina Jolie to

Robbie Williams, Berlin is where the stars come to let it all hang out (erm, including babies from hotel balconies if you're Michael Jackson!). 'I fell in love with Berlin,' says Natalie Portman after shooting *V for Vendetta* in the capital. 'It's like New York once was, full of artists and young people.'

Why it's hot right now

Berlin is a city that never sleeps. 'I really like Berlin a lot,' says Matt Damon, who stayed in town while filming *The Bourne Supremacy*. 'There's a lot of energy there.' Anything goes in Berlin and the famous flock there for the cool clubs, chic shops and exclusive restaurants.

Where to head first

The famous Brandenburg Gate, which used to separate East and West Berlin, is a great place to start. Watch a sensational sunset from the glass-topped Reichstag (Parliament House). And be sure to check out Potsdamer Platz – after the Berlin Wall went up it was a no-man's land, but now it's super-trendy – and it's exactly the kind of place where you'll spot an A-lister on vacation!

'I like Berlin a lot, there's a lot of energy there'

Where to shop

Shopaholics should head straight for Europe's largest department store, KaDeWe, or snaffle a bargain just down the road at the multi-storey Zara or H&M. Stars such as Penélope Cruz make a beeline for the trendy shopping strips of Kurfürstendamm and Friederichstrasse to browse luxe labels like Gucci and Chanel. If your heels weren't made for that much walking, stop at the Adidas Originals store in the city centre – Robbie Williams is a huge fan of this cool shopping spot!

Where to indulge

Make like George Clooney and head to The Regent's Fischers Fritz for gourmet fish and chips. For more upmarket fare, try Nicole Kidman's favourite fancy French-German cuisine at inner-city eatery, Borchardt. For a quick drink, follow Dustin Hoffman's lead and sip cocktails in the Newton Bar opposite Gendarmenmarkt. And finally, satisfy your post-party hunger pangs with a currywurst – pork sausage with curry tomato sauce – from a street stall. Even Madonna has been known to try it. And if it's good enough for Madge... 

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PHOTOGRAPHS BY CORBIS, LONELY PLANET,
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Destination: BERLIN

Chic shopping, cool clubbing and celeb spotting – Germany's capital is a cultural hotspot with a cosmopolitan lifestyle to boot!



Above: The glass dome on top of the Reichstag. Main: The Brandenburg Gate, which was built from 1788 to 1791



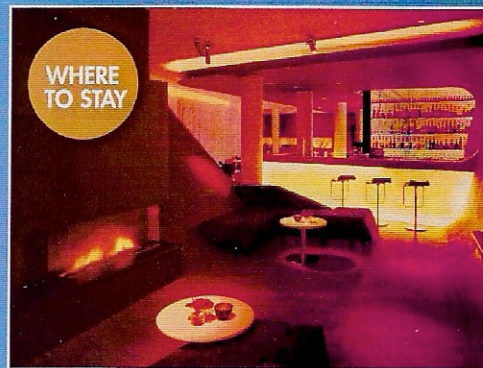
Left: **Sharon Stone** splashes some of her celebrity cash at the Gucci store. Right: The Berlin sculpture with the Kaiser Wilhelm Memorial Church in the background

BERLIN CELEBRITY HOTSPOTS

Up for some German celeb spotting? Here's where all the cool kids go...

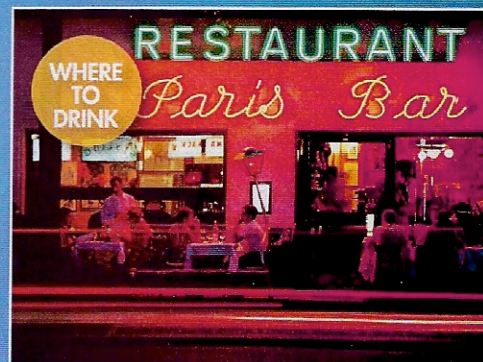


Matt Damon takes some time out from his *Bourne Supremacy* promo duties to check out the Brandenburg Gate



WHERE TO STAY

HOTEL Q!, KNESEBECKSTRASSE
This boutique hotel is the love nest of choice for Brad Pitt and Angelina Jolie's kid-free getaways. The clean, sleek lines and minimal furnishings ooze celeb style!



WHERE TO DRINK

PARIS BAR, KANTSTRASSE
Despite its simple setting, Kirsten Dunst heads straight to the popular Paris Bar for its famous cocktails – or vintage French red wine if you're John Cusack.



✈️ Ready for take-off?

Getting there: KLM Royal Dutch Airlines flies to Berlin from \$2147 (including taxes) ex-Sydney. Call Flight Centre on 133 133.

Stay like a star: The elegant Hotel Adlon has been a swanky star magnet since 1907 – it's where Nicole Kidman, Tom Hanks and Sharon Stone all stay for stunning views of the Brandenburg Gate. Doubles start from around \$500 per night. Visit www.hotel-adlon.de.

Stay for a steal: Drew Barrymore, Jodie Foster and Ronan Keating are fans of the ultra-mod Hotel Q! and, despite its super-slick appearance, the atmosphere is relaxed. Double rooms start from \$300 per night. Check out www.hotelq.de.

More info: Visit www.berlin.de.



WHERE TO PARTY

FELIX CLUBRESTAURANT, BEHRENSTRASSE 72
Watch the scene transform from fine dining to clubbing after 10pm. DJs mix it up for stars such as Will Smith and Colin Farrell.