

ROM

Berlin and Warsaw: Two Capitals Reborn

October 15 to 26, 2025

A ROMTravel Art and Culture Trip



Figure 1: Brandenburg Gate, Berlin Germany. © Amb-foto, Wikimedia Commons, Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 3.0 Unported, 2010.

Germany and Poland share a long and complicated history. For over 1,000 years, they have been neighbours, friends, and foes. Their capitals, Berlin and Warsaw respectively, reflect this complex past, a vibrant present, and a dynamic future. Join us for an exciting journey of iconic

experiences that define these important capitals.

Our itinerary will include six days in Berlin and five in Warsaw, plenty of time to truly immerse yourself in each city and explore – at a more unhurried pace – the wonders each presents.

Delving into each city's fascinating history, we will explore the charming gardens and magnificent palatial estates that reflect each city's royal and imperial legacies: Charlottenburg in Berlin, Sanssouci in Potsdam, and Wilanów in Warsaw. We will also take time to examine the difficult not-so-distant past of Berlin and Warsaw. They were each at the very frontlines of the two most pivotal events of the 20th century: the Second World War and the Cold War.



Figure 2: Wilanów Palace, Warsaw, Poland. © Kgbo, Wikimedia Commons, Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 4.0 International, 2019.

In Berlin, we will visit the physical remnants of the Third Reich and Hitler's concept of Greater Germania. These have been intentionally preserved for future generations, both to atone for Nazi crimes and to warn "Never Again". In Warsaw, we will bear witness to Hitler's plan for "Lebensraum" come to life. Once a beautiful cosmopolitan city and home to a thriving Jewish community, Warsaw was virtually razed under the Nazi occupation, its civilian population brutalized and decimated. Poland's Jewry, once Europe's largest at over 3

million, was exterminated. Over 40 percent of Poland's cultural heritage was plundered or destroyed by the Nazis.

We will also examine the years that followed the end of the Second World War – the Cold War years. Life behind the Iron Curtain was marked by political oppression and a stagnating economy. Berlin was divided between East and West, with the western part entirely encircled by a 155-km-long (96-miles-long) wall. Warsaw did not escape physical transformation either; its historic, pre-war cityscape was forever changed with the integration of Soviet-style Brutalist architecture.

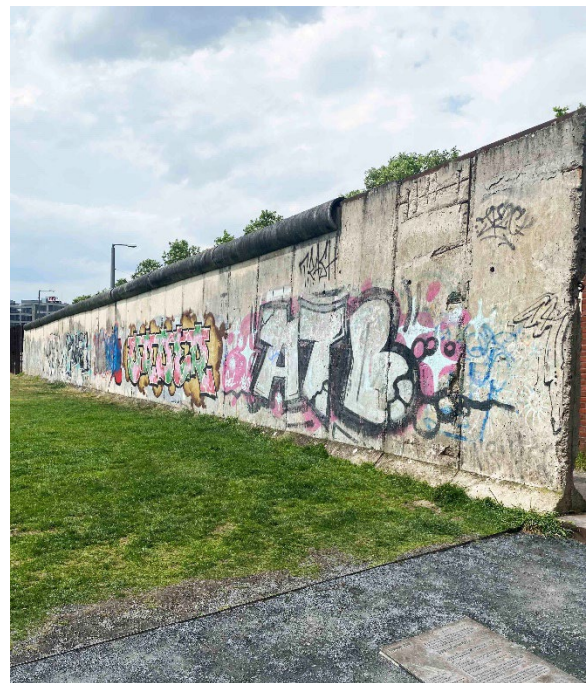


Figure 3: The Berlin Wall Memorial, Berlin, Germany. © Margaret Magdziak, 2024.

In the 1980s Poland and Germany once again found themselves at the forefront of seismic change. The founding of Solidarity and the Round Table Talks of

early 1989 in Poland resulted in the peaceful transfer of power from the communist government to the opposition. Then, in November 1989, the Berlin Wall was finally dismantled, and in October 1990, Berlin became the capital of the reunited Germany once again. The Cold War effectively came to an end.

In the 35 years since the end of the Cold War, the two capitals have undergone a remarkable renaissance. Their urban cores have been rebuilt and revitalized, and Central Europe's two largest cities are once again showing a vibrancy in the arts, culture, and finance. While diligent in preserving their past, both cities are moving boldly forward.

Perhaps most remarkable of all, Germany and Poland have become Europe's strongest political allies, staunch NATO stalwarts, and are among one another's leading partners in trade.



Figure 4: Chopin Monument, Warsaw, Poland. © Laima Gūtmane (simka..., Wikimedia Commons, Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 3.0 Unported, 2015.

ROMTravel's inaugural trip to Poland coincides with the upcoming

International Chopin Piano Competition, a prestigious competition that happens every five years. Tickets are in high demand and sell out years in advance. ROMTravel is delighted to confirm that tour participants will become part of the celebration with tickets to attend the gala laureates' concert.

On the trip, we will be accompanied by the preeminent expert on Eastern and Central European history, Prof. Piotr Wróbel, the Konstanty Reynert Chair of Polish Studies at the University of Toronto. Well-loved by his students for his accessible and witty style, and his scholarship around Polish-German and Jewish-Polish relations, Piotr will offer us invaluable insights, a unique perspective, and some great stories.

As on all ROMTravel itineraries, we will be privy to behind-the-scenes access exclusive to our group. In Berlin, we will enjoy a special presentation on the restoration of the UNESCO-listed Museum Island and meet with an eyewitness to the building and dismantling of the Berlin Wall. In Warsaw, we'll meet with the Chief Rabbi of Poland, attend curator-led private behind-the-scenes museum presentations, and enjoy a special dinner at the by-appointment-only Villa Intrata.

This unique experience will be made complete by the finest luxury accommodations and the best cuisine that each city has to offer.

Trip Itinerary and Highlights



Figure 5: Map. © Worldwide Quest International, 2024.

Day 1 Berlin: Arrivals

Individual arrivals at Berlin Brandenburg Airport (BER). Transfer to hotel. Afternoon reception. Evening welcome dinner.

Day 2 Berlin: City Orientation

Our first full day will include a guided walking tour of Berlin's central Mitte district, including Parliament Quarter and the Reichstag, Brandenburg Gate, Unter den Linden, Museum Island, Berliner Dom, Gendarmenmarkt, Tiergarten, and Alexanderplatz.

Day 3 Berlin: Royal and Imperial Past

Today, we will enjoy a full-day guided excursion to Charlottenburg Palace. With the Old Palace and the New Wing, this is the largest and most significant palace complex in Berlin and the former home of Prussian kings and German emperors.

We'll also visit the gardens at Sanssouci Palace in nearby Potsdam.

Day 4 Berlin: Museum Island

This morning, we will take a guided visit to Museum Island that will include a special presentation on the restoration of this UNESCO World Heritage site, the Neues Museum, the Humboldt Forum, and the Pergamon Panorama. Please note: you will receive a 3-day museum pass to continue exploring on your own this afternoon or in the next two days. Tonight, we will venture out to a burlesque show before returning to the hotel.



Figure 6: Humboldt Forum, Museum Island, Berlin, Germany. © Asio otus, Wikimedia Commons, Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 3.0-Unported, 2023.

Day 5 Berlin: The Rise of Nazism, Second World War, and the Holocaust

Today's full-day guided tour will examine the Topography of Terror, including the Documentation Centre, Luftwaffe HQ, Hitler's bunker site, the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe, Platform 17

Memorial at Grunewald Station, and the 1936 Olympic Stadium.

Day 6 Berlin: The Cold War, Division and Reunification

A morning guided tour today will see us visiting Tränenpalast, the Berlin Wall Memorial, including the Death Strip and Chapel of Reconciliation, East Side Gallery, and Checkpoint Charlie. Our afternoon will be at leisure, with options to visit an up-and-coming city district, explore on your own, or re-visit Museum Island.

Day 7 Berlin to Warsaw

We will leave Berlin this morning, transferring to Warsaw by train for arrival in the late afternoon. An orientational walk through the UNESCO-listed Old Town will culminate with a gourmet dinner at one of Poland's most celebrated restaurants.

Day 8 Warsaw: City Orientation and the Royal Route

Today's morning guided tour will be full of things to see, including the Royal Route, Presidential Palace, City Hall, Grand Opera, Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, Warsaw University, Madame Maria Skłodowska-Curie House and Museum, and Chopin's Monument and Palace on the Water in the Royal Łazienki Park.

After lunch, we will spend the afternoon visiting the National Museum, which will include a presentation on one of the masterpieces of Polish art, Aleksander Gierymski's "Jewess with Oranges". A

painting of great historical significance, it was looted by the Nazis and only recovered in 2011.



Figure 7: Entry Gate, Warsaw University, Warsaw, Poland. © Adrian Grycuk, Wikimedia Commons, Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 3.0 Poland, 2019.

Day 9 Warsaw: Chopin's City

Our focus today will be on one of Warsaw's most loved treasures – Fryderyk Chopin. Our morning will include a guided tour of the Chopin Museum at Ostrogski Palace, the Visitationist Church, and Holy Cross Church, where the urn containing Chopin's heart rests. This afternoon, we will enjoy a stroll through the picturesque Mariensztat district, which is adjacent to the hotel.

Tonight, we will attend the gala Prize-Winners Concert of the 19th International Frederic Chopin Piano Competition.

Day 10 Warsaw: Second World War, Nazi Occupation and Destruction and Poland's Jewry

Another full-day tour will be on our agenda, with a visit to the Warsaw Uprising Monument and the Statue of

the Little Insurgent. From there, we will continue to the former Jewish Ghetto area, where we will encounter commemorative ghetto border markers, a fragment of the wall, the Monument to the Ghetto Heroes, the Umschlagplatz, and the Memorial Route of Jewish Martyrdom and Struggle.

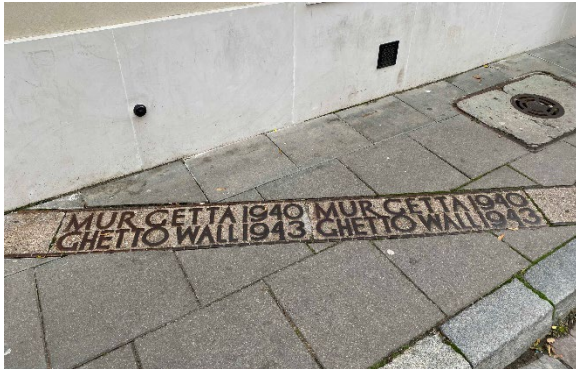


Figure 8: Commemorative ghetto border marker, Warsaw, Poland. © Margaret Magdziak, 2023.

Afterwards, we will make a special visit to the Nożyk Synagogue and will enjoy a private meeting with Poland's Chief Rabbi.

After our meeting, we will continue to Polin, the Museum of the History of Polish Jews, and a private meeting with a curator and a presentation on the museum's goals. Dinner tonight will be at the Museum's Warsze restaurant with Polish-Jewish specialties, accompanied by a Klezmer Music performance.

Day 11 Warsaw: Life Behind the Iron Curtain and Post-Communist Renaissance

Our day will begin with a visit to the Palace of Culture and Science. We'll stroll the Norblin Factory, in the once-

neglected Wola District. Now fully revitalized, it is an engaging open-air museum. From there, we will continue to Elektrownia Powiśle, a restored power plant, and then will enjoy a stop at the Varso Tower and Europejski Square.

Our evening will include a visit to Wilanów for a royal experience. We'll meet the Deputy Director of the Palace, who will guide us on a private tour of the king's summer residence, including the park, gardens, and the palace collections.

Our farewell dinner will be at the exclusive Villa Intrata and will feature traditional Polish specialties.



Figure 9: Varso Tower, Warsaw, Poland. © Anty000, Wikimedia Commons, Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 4.0 International, 2022.

Day 12 Warsaw: Departure

Transfer to airport. Individual departures from Warsaw Chopin Airport (WAW).

Hotels

Berlin, Germany

Hotel Adlon Kempinski for 6 nights

Warsaw, Poland

Hotel Bristol for 5 nights

Resource Person

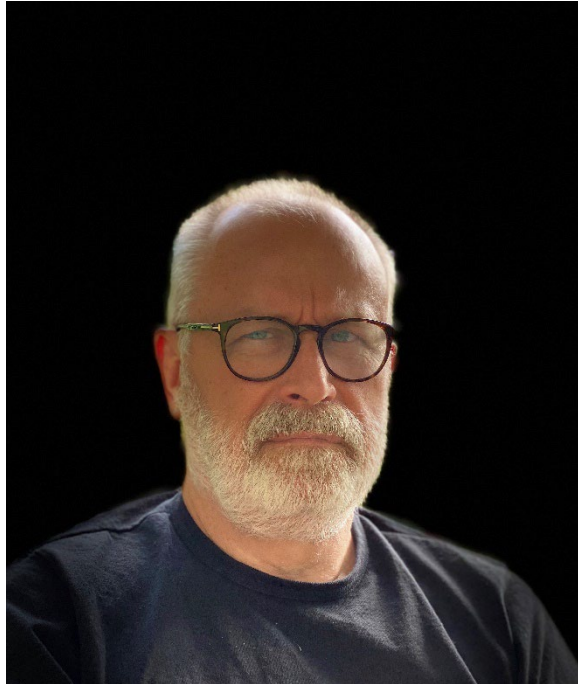


Figure 10: © Prof. Piotr Wróbel.

Piotr J. Wróbel has been Professor of History at the University of Toronto for the past thirty years where he holds the Konstanty Reynert Chair of Polish Studies. He is also on the Faculty at the Munk School of Global Affairs.

Prof. Wróbel has been a visiting scholar at the Institute of European History at Mainz, as well as at the Humboldt University of Berlin and the Institute for Polish–Jewish Studies at the University of Oxford. He is the author or co-author

of seven books and more than 75 articles on Polish, German, and Jewish history.

He is our only expert Resource Person to have been spied on by the East German security apparatus, Stasi.

ROMTravel Coordinator

Margaret Magdziak is a ROM volunteer and Co-Chair of ROMTravel. An avid traveller and a Warsaw native, she has an extensive knowledge of and affinity for the history and culture of Central and Eastern Europe. She recently led a trip to Croatia.

Trip Cost Per Person

Double Occupancy: \$ 12,595

Single Supplement: \$ 2,995

All quoted costs are in Canadian dollars.

Tour begins at Berlin Brandenburg Airport (BER). Tour ends at Warsaw Chopin Airport (WAW).

International flight costs to and from your home are not included.

Contact Information

Margaret Magdziak
ROMTravel Coordinator
Phone 416.586.8034
Email travel@rom.on.ca

Worldwide Quest International
Celeste Carrington
Phone 416.633.5666 or 1.800.387.1483
Email celeste@worldwidequest.com
TICO 2667946 and 16679

Terms and Conditions

Berlin and Warsaw: Two Capitals Reborn October 15 to 26, 2025

All participants on this trip must be fully vaccinated against COVID-19. All trip leaders, guides and drivers will also be fully vaccinated.

Living standards and practices at the destination and the standards and conditions there with respect to the provision of utilities, services and accommodation may differ from those found in Canada.

Trip Cost Per Person

All quoted costs are in Canadian dollars.

Double Occupancy: \$ 12,595

Single Supplement: \$ 2,995

Trip cost does not include international flight costs between your home and Germany/Poland. Worldwide Quest International can assist with booking flights.

Tour begins at Berlin Brandenburg Airport (BER). Tour ends at Warsaw Chopin Airport (WAW).

Trip Cost Includes

Arrival transfer from Berlin Brandenburg Airport (BER) to hotel on Day 1. One group departure transfer from hotel to Warsaw Chopin Airport (WAW) on Day 12.

Porterage of one standard sized suitcase per person at the hotels, where available.

Ground transport in private air-conditioned coach for transfers and excursions as per itinerary. Train as per itinerary.

Shared accommodation in double occupancy room with private facilities in hotels listed or similar.

Free internet access inside the hotels.

Meals: Buffet breakfast daily, 5 lunches and 6 dinners, including welcome and farewell dinners. All included lunches and dinners include water, coffee or tea, and beer or wine.

Bottled water daily on the bus.

All visits, entrance fees, speakers' fees and events as per itinerary.

All taxes and tips for all goods and services, drivers, hotel, restaurant and guiding staff related to the basic trip.

All hotel and local taxes.

Services of a Resource Person, a ROMTravel Coordinator, English-speaking local guides, and a Worldwide Quest Tour Manager.

Pre-trip orientations; post-trip reunion.

A trip handbook.

Not Included

International flight costs not included.
Fuel surcharges.

Single supplement and room upgrades.

Internet access outside the hotels.

Items of a personal nature such as laundry or phone calls for example.

Airline baggage or video camera fees, if any.

Visa fees (Canadians do not require a visa) and European Union European Travel Information and Authorisation System (ETIAS) travel authorization fees, if any.

Meals, snacks, beverages, and other services unless specified.

Additional meals and accommodations due to delays for any reason.

Emergency evacuation costs.

Trip cancellation, interruption, baggage and out of province health insurance.

Costs associated with any additional requirements for entry to Germany, Poland, or Canada (or transit points in between) to comply with COVID-19 regulations (PCR or other accepted molecular tests, antigen tests, proof of vaccination, and so forth).

Costs

All costs quoted herein are based on rates, fees and taxes as of July 2, 2024. Costs are subject to change without notice. Should trip costs increase, Worldwide Quest International (as per TICO regulations) reserves the right to increase the cost accordingly up to a maximum of 7%. Worldwide Quest

reserves the right to substitute itineraries, hotels, airlines, vehicles, or vessels due to conditions beyond their control. Any change to itinerary will not result in eligibility for a refund.

ROM Membership Requirement

Participants must be members of Royal Ontario Museum. For a full list of membership levels and benefits, visit the [ROM website](#). Only one person per room must be a member.

Deposits and Final Payment

An initial non-refundable deposit of \$1,250.00 per person is required at the time of booking. A second non-refundable deposit of \$3,000.00 is due on February 3, 2025. The balance of payment of \$8,045.00 per person, and if applicable, single supplement of \$2,995.00 are due on June 16, 2025.

Reservations

As the number of participants is limited, reservations should be made as soon as possible. In the event of over subscription, a waiting list will be maintained.

Physical Limitations or Disabilities

Any physical limitation or disability requiring special attention or treatment must be reported when reservation is made or when it occurs, if later. ROMTravel, Worldwide Quest International and/or its agents reserve the right to decline to accept or to retain anyone who may in their sole judgment require care and attention beyond that which can be provided.

Cancellations and Refunds

All cancellations must be made in writing to Worldwide Quest International. All payments are non-refundable. No refunds will be given for payments made or unused services.

For more information, read Worldwide Quest International's [Trip Cancellation and Refund Policy](#).

Travel Documentation

A passport valid for six months after the return date is required. It is the individual participant's responsibility to ensure proper visas, affidavits, COVID-19 test results, proof of vaccination and/or any other documents that may be required to enter and or to not have to quarantine at the destination or upon returning to your home. Neither Worldwide Quest International nor ROMTravel is responsible for missing or incorrect travel documents. Note that public health entry and quarantine requirements for any country may change with little notice. Entry to another country may be refused even if the required information and travel documents are complete.

ROMTravel values your Privacy

Your contact information will be published in the trip handbook unless you advise not to do so. It is for the sole use of trip participants, ROMTravel and the travel agency, and will not be shared with anyone else. For this trip, Worldwide Quest International will not publish a list of participants.

For this trip, Worldwide Quest International will not use photographic images of you for future promotional purposes.

Travel Insurance

Travel insurance is available and is highly recommended. Insurance can be purchased from many different insurance providers. It is the responsibility of each participant to ensure that they have adequate out of province medical, hospital, trip cancellation and interruption insurance and baggage insurance to cover changes in health or other circumstances prior to, or during, the trip, including coverage related to COVID-19 or other transmissible diseases. All losses suffered or additional costs incurred associated with failure to have insurance, or to have sufficient insurance, are the sole responsibility of the participant. Insurance purchased through Worldwide Quest International is underwritten by Manulife Financial. The insurance premium is non-refundable. Insurance may be purchased up to the time the initial deposit is processed, or at a later time but, if purchased later, would be subject to any changes to the premiums and/or to the participant's health or other circumstances at the time of purchase. Travellers may provide their own travel insurance or purchase travel insurance through another provider. A ROMTravel waiver of insurance will be required if the participant does not purchase insurance through Worldwide

Quest International. Proof of medical insurance is required. For coverage options and complete coverage details, limitations and exclusions, please contact Worldwide Quest International for a quote.

Royal Ontario Museum Responsibility

Neither Royal Ontario Museum nor the Department of Museum Volunteers of Royal Ontario Museum, or any member thereof, assumes any responsibility for the financing, arranging or the conducting of the trip, nor shall be liable for damages or loss to person or property that might occur in connection with this trip however arising, whether by negligence or otherwise, and whether or not a member of Royal Ontario Museum staff or the Department of Museum

ROMTravel

100 Queen's Park
Toronto, ON M5S 2C6

ROMTravel is organized by ROM's Department of Museum Volunteers to provide support for the Museum. ROM is an agency of the Government of Ontario.

Volunteers accompanies the trip. The applicant by applying to join the trip hereby agrees to this limitation of liability on the part of Royal Ontario Museum, the Department of Museum Volunteers or any member thereof.

Responsibility and Jurisdiction

The Terms and Conditions herein concerning publication of a list of participants and use of photographic images of you supersede any such Terms and Conditions set by Worldwide Quest International.

Worldwide Quest International has additional [Terms and Conditions](#), which you must accept when completing Worldwide Quest International's online registration form.

Phone 416.586.8034

Email travel@rom.on.ca

Website www.rom.on.ca

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