

# In Berlin

Interior designer Rachael Gowdridge shares the coolest places around the German capital, home to one of her latest projects



## At a glance

Berlin is creative, a bit rough around the edges, and all the more interesting for it.

## The backstory

Berlin has become an important place for my studio recently as we've been developing our hotel project The Dean Berlin (shown left), but I'd already been visiting for years as one of my best friends lives in the city. Seeing it through her lens gave me a real feel for it beyond the obvious places. It's incredibly energising creatively – the architecture, art scene and independent spirit all feed into how I approach design.

## Art trail

My favourite art space in Berlin is König Galerie (1). It's set inside a former brutalist church in Kreuzberg, which makes the whole experience quite striking – huge concrete volumes, dramatic light and these vast exhibition spaces. The programme is always strong, but it's really the building that stays with you. Another memorable address in Berlin is the Boros Collection (2) – a private collection of contemporary art, set inside a former bunker. You can only visit on a guided tour, which gives it a very intimate feel. Moving through the raw concrete spaces, with contemporary art layered into them, feels completely different to a typical gallery.

## Design spot

I'm really drawn to Fotografiska Berlin (3), which sits within the reworked Tacheles building. It's a good example of how Berlin approaches historic structures; nothing feels overdone. The photography is always interesting, but it's also about the atmosphere. The bar at the top is a highlight, with surprisingly calm views across the city.

## Where to eat

We discovered Bottega Seppel (4) while working on our hotel project in Charlottenburg. It quickly became a favourite: the interiors, atmosphere, food and wine are all exceptional, with that rare balance of refinement and warmth. If the evening runs late, it's worth finishing with a

cocktail at Rum Trader, a tiny, legendary bar nearby that feels wonderfully frozen in time.

## Where to shop

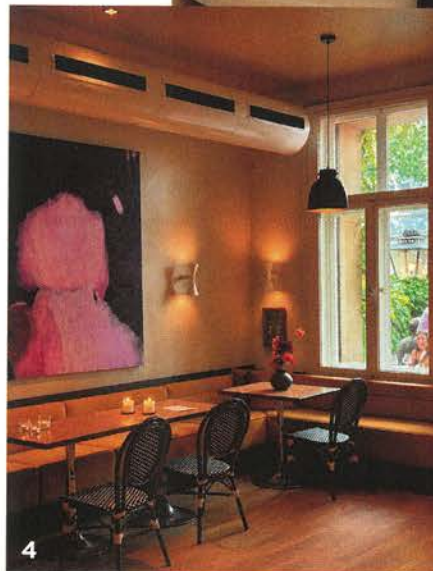
I love browsing the books in Bücherbogen am Savignyplatz. It sits beneath the S-Bahn arches and is one of those places you could easily miss. The selection is brilliant – architecture and design books you don't often come across elsewhere. It's the kind of shop you dip into quickly and end up staying far longer than you meant to.

## The great outdoors

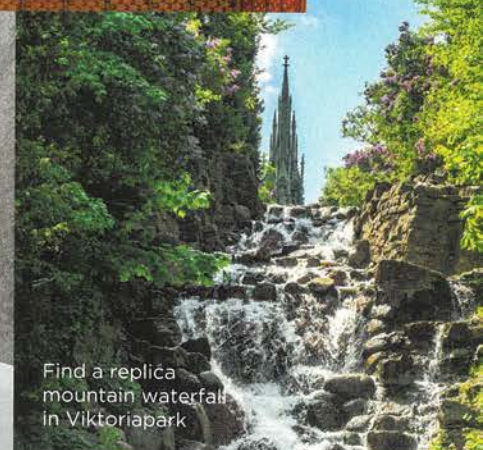
Tempelhofer Feld is unique. The former airport runway has become this huge open park where people cycle, garden or just sit and watch the sunset. The scale is what makes it – it feels almost endless, right in the middle of the city. There's something quite freeing about it.

## One (lesser known) thing

What people often don't realise is how close Berlin is to nature. The city is surrounded by lakes and woodland, and it's completely normal to head out of the city for a swim or a boat day at the weekend. It gives Berlin a very different pace: you get the intensity of a metropolis, but also a real sense of escape.



The sculptural golden metal facade of the Berliner Philharmonie building built by Hans Scharoun



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