



# DDR

*museum*

## PRESS KIT

BERLIN'S INTERACTIVE MUSEUM

# WELCOME TO THE DDR MUSEUM

Dear journalists,

A warm welcome to the DDR Museum. This press kit is intended to provide you with key information and to serve as an invitation: get an impression of our museum by visiting and experiencing the exhibition yourself.


In addition to interviews about the DDR Museum, we are happy to be your contact point for topics specific to the GDR and to support you in your interest in a subject that really matters to us.

If you would like to learn more about the museum, feel free to get in touch.

Your



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Spokesperson

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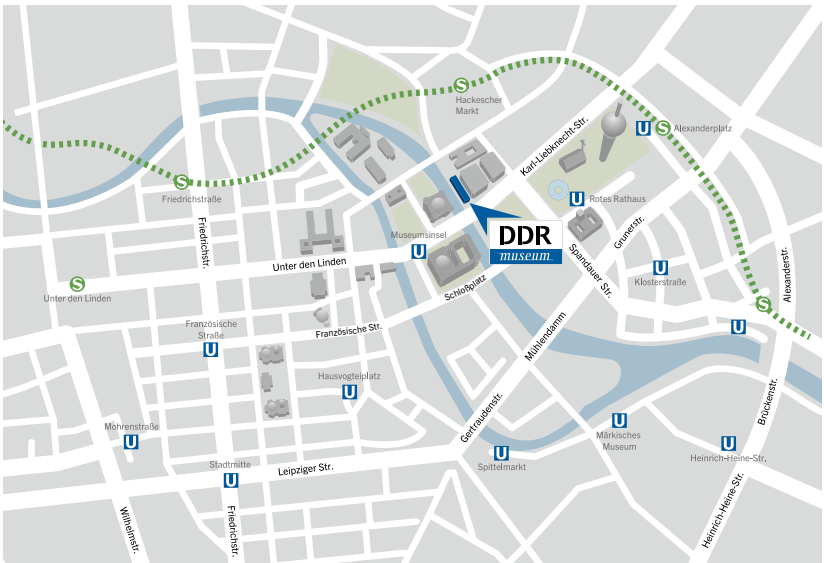
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# BERLIN'S INTERACTIVE MUSEUM

## ADDRESS

DDR Museum  
Karl-Liebknecht-Str. 1  
10178 Berlin-Mitte

Right on the river Spree,  
opposite Berlin Cathedral



## AT A GLANCE

Lively, interactive and thrilling—these are the ways in which the DDR Museum presents the GDR in all of its multiple facets. Visitors are taken on an interactive journey through time into the socialist past: take a seat in the worldwide unique Trabant driving simulation, and discover the rooms of an originally furnished WBS 70-prefabricated building apartment. Touching and trying out the exhibits is explicitly allowed and even encouraged.

## DOWNLOADS

### Graphic material

You can download printable press pictures of the DDR Museum for your articles from our website:  
[www.ddr-museum.de/en/media](http://www.ddr-museum.de/en/media)

### Photos and recordings

We organise photo and recording inquiries promptly and in a straightforward way:  
[+49 30 847 123 7-47](tel:+4930847123747)

### Online object database

In our online object database, you can find many pictures of original GDR objects from our collection of more than 300,000 items. For a small fee, we are happy to provide you with photos in a suitable resolution and format.  
[www.ddr-museum.de/en/objects](http://www.ddr-museum.de/en/objects)

## UNIQUE IN MANY WAYS

Since its opening in 2006, the DDR Museum has become one of the most-visited museums in Berlin. A number of features make it unique:

### A UNIQUE APPROACH

The DDR Museum is so much more than simply viewing objects behind glass. Visitors have to actively participate to experience the exhibition. They can touch objects, open drawers and closets. On their exhilarating journey back in time, they will find themselves discovering and feeling a range of different things in every corner of the museum. They land in the East German socialist past, where they get to know the realities of everyday life in a communist dictatorship. Experiencing history hands-on, our visitors are invited to question clichés and expand their knowledge about a bygone state.

### A UNIQUE SOURCE OF FUNDING

As an entirely private company, the DDR Museum does not receive any state subsidies or other sources of funding. Financing its activities entirely by admission fees, this experiment has turned out to be successful. Maintaining the commercial viability of the museum, the management carefully reinvests profits into the museum's facilities and exhibitions. Due to an increasing number of visitors, we extended the permanent exhibition in 2010 whereby the DDR Museum was again nominated for the European Museum of the Year Award in 2012 (first nomination in 2008). In 2016, the third part of the permanent exhibition, an originally furnished WBS 70-prefabricated building apartment, opened to the public.

### A UNIQUE FOCUS

The DDR Museum is the only institution of its kind to provide a holistic and interactive account of the conditions that prevailed in the East German dictatorship. From everyday life to political, military and economic structures, the museum conveys life in a dictatorship. Therefore, the exhibition shows history from the perspective of the population and focuses on the everyday consequences of the decisions made by the Socialist Unity Party of Germany (SED). From this perspective, »history from below« does not only show how people lived, shopped, ate and occupied themselves, but also how they were forced to negotiate a difficult path through the competing demands of loyalty to the state and the precepts of their own conscience. This cultural-historical approach is close to those who experienced this part of history and goes far beyond a mere presentation of historical facts.

## FROM THE IDEA TO THE PRESENT

APRIL 2004

birth of the idea and start of planning

15 JULY 2006



opening of the permanent exhibition

JANUARY 2008



first nomination for the European Museum of the Year Award

DECEMBER 2009

The DDR Museum welcomes its millionth visitor.

## 1. MIO

10 OCTOBER 2010

opening of the second part of the permanent exhibition

DECEMBER 2011



second nomination for the European Museum of the Year Award

9 NOVEMBER 2012

Google  
CULTURAL  
INSTITUTE

release of the online exhibition »Years of Change« in cooperation with the Google Cultural Institute

13 DECEMBER 2013



opening of the worldwide unique Trabant driving simulation

29 OCTOBER 2014

## BÜROKRATOPOLY

release of the educational board game »Bürokratopoly«, including teaching material and launch of the website [www.buerokratopoly.de](http://www.buerokratopoly.de); December 2014: award »Geschichte erinnern – Geschichte gestalten« from the Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung in recognition of the game's contribution to the commemoration of the Peaceful Revolution and the fall of the Berlin Wall.

7 AUGUST 2016



opening of the third part of the permanent exhibition, showing an originally furnished prefabricated building apartment

4 AUGUST 2018

ninetiesberlin  
alte münze  
multimedia  
exhibition

opening of the multimedia exhibition »nineties berlin« at the Alte Münze, created and produced by the team of the DDR Museum

9 AUGUST 2019

The DDR Museum welcomes its six millionth visitor.

## 6. MIO

1 JANUARY 2020

Since 2012 the DDR Museum has been welcoming well over half a million visitors annually and thus belongs to the 10 most visited museums and memorials in Berlin.

## TOP 10

1 SEPTEMBER 2021

## DDR MOTORRAD

Opening of the motorbike exhibition of the DDR Museum in the historic viaduct arches between the Alexanderplatz and Hackescher Markt train stations

1 APRIL 2023



Reopening after three and a half months of closure and partial redesign of the DDR Museum following considerable water damage.



# A HANDS-ON EXPERIENCE OF HISTORY

The staging and concept of the permanent exhibition place particular emphasis on interactivity. Visitors are invited to learn about everyday life in the GDR and to expand their knowledge in an engaging way. The exhibition is not chronologically, but rather thematically divided into some 50 topics. In each of these thematic areas, visitors can discover exciting exhibits and interactive installations that tell stories about life in the GDR.

Visitors descend from the entrance floor to the first part of the exhibition and are greeted by a six-metre wide original Berlin Wall and wall diorama. Next to the Berlin Wall are the new thematic areas »German Division« and »GDR Compact« with numerous modules, new interactive elements and information.

Behind this section is our prefabricated housing estate on a scale of 1:20. Whilst this part of the exhibition appears grey, dreary and monotonous at first glance, upon closer inspection it showcases aspects of lively everyday culture in the GDR. The prefabricated buildings are both room dividers and showcase cabinets. Opening drawers and cabinets allows insight into the private lives of GDR citizens. As visitors enter the second part of the exhibition, they reach the »semicircle of power« and see that the Party was at the centre of everything. This centre is surrounded by a semicircle of different topics, such as »Politics«, »Military« and »Economy«. Visitors can open doors, hatches and drawers and, thus, gain a detailed look behind the façade of state power.

In the third and final part of the permanent exhibition, a completely furnished and authentic prefabricated flat shows aspects of private life in the GDR. A child's and teenager's room, a bedroom, a living room, a kitchen, a bathroom, a Stasi surveillance room as well as a garage can be freely explored and experienced.

Screens with descriptive texts introduce the respective thematic areas in six languages. Additional renovation work planned for the future will allow content to be communicated to visitors from all over the world in a simpler and more informative way than before.







# OUR COLLECTION

The collection of the museum currently comprises about 300,000 objects, which are inventoried in order to make them accessible to external researchers, other cultural institutions and for research purposes. Most of the objects come from private individuals who donated their »prized possessions« to the museum. Thousands of different donors have preserved objects for posterity in this way.

You can find over 12,000 digitalised objects from the collection in the online object database:  
[www.ddr-museum.de/en/objects](http://www.ddr-museum.de/en/objects)

## FACTS & FIGURES

number of objects: **c. 300,000**  
 number of donors: **c. 10,000**  
 most difficult acquisition: **1 megabyte chip, Germania Speeder (skateboard)**  
 most common donation: **medal »Activist of Socialist Labour«**  
 largest objects: **segments of the Berlin Wall, Barkas vans**

The collection of the DDR Museum is not open to the public. However, to give insights into the diverse collection, there is a monthly changing display of the object of the month in the foyer of the DDR Museum. The foyer can be visited free of charge.



Ronald Paris »In Praise of Communism« 1968, Mural  
 (\*12 August 1933 † 17 September 2021)

This artwork is an expression of an intellectual debate that reached its peak in the 1960s and is still highly relevant today. It reflects the attempt by socialist intellectuals around the world to counter »real existing

socialism« with a communist utopia. Originally created for the conference hall of the House of Statistics in Berlin, the work was saved when the building was due to be demolished in 2010. The DDR Museum took over the painting and invested about €20,000 into its restoration. The painter himself unveiled the restored work in 2010 and it has since found a permanent place in the museum.



# FUTURISTIC TECHNOLOGY

Our concept »hands-on experience of history« does not only refer to the exhibits which visitors are encouraged to touch, handle and enjoy, but also to the exhibition technology. We use state-of-the-art multimedia technology to guarantee the best possible museum experience: futuristic technology such as a digital mirror, an interactive table, transparent screens, various multi-touchscreen applications, motion sensors, digital windows, bone conduction speakers, 2D-animations and magnet-contacts all complement traditional elements such as dioramas, cabinets, games and objects. This combination of tradition and innovation creates a unique and refreshing museum experience.

## FACTS & FIGURES

- |                            |                   |
|----------------------------|-------------------|
| 1 Trabi driving simulation | 6 dioramas        |
| 1 multi-touch table        | 26 touch screens  |
| 1 digital mirror           | 23 audio stations |
| 4 digital windows          | 56 monitors       |
| 4 interactive telephones   |                   |

## TRABANT DRIVING SIMULATION

In cooperation with the Fraunhofer Heinrich-Hertz-Institut, the DDR Museum developed a highly-authentic simulator, reproducing the sights, sounds and functions (ignition, accelerator, brake, steering) of an original Trabant P 601. Visitors can drive around a realistic 3D reproduction of a Berlin housing estate projected onto the front windscreen.

Costs: **40,000 €**  
 Implementation time: **12 months**  
**60,000 m²** housing estate  
**114** Trabant cars in original colours





## EDUCATIONAL SERVICES



### EDUCATIONAL SERVICES

Not only focusing on a contemporary way to create an exhibition, the DDR Museum places great importance on the high-quality educational services, including guided tours of the exhibition, city tours and talks with contemporary witnesses. We offer tours and other services in twelve languages.

The conference room was set up for school groups wanting to prepare or talk about their visit to the exhibition. Up to 50 people have the opportunity to carry out research, seminars, lessons, discussions with contemporary witnesses or film screenings at the same time. A media library and a well-stocked specialised library are available on site.

### FURTHER INFORMATION

[www.ddr-museum.de/en/your-visit/lehrer-gruppen](http://www.ddr-museum.de/en/your-visit/lehrer-gruppen)

### ASSOCIATION AND EVENTS

The DDR Museum Berlin association, initiated by the management of the DDR Museum, has set itself the goal of making history accessible to the wider public. The association works independently. It is open to those interested and relies on donations.

In addition to special events of the DDR Museum, the association mainly organises a free series of events which take place every fortnight. These events with renowned historians from various research institutions, contemporary talks, book premieres, film screenings, readings, discussions, concerts, theatre shows and special exhibitions lead to a lively engagement with the history of the GDR.

### CURRENT EVENTS

[www.ddr-museum.de/en/museum/veranstaltungen](http://www.ddr-museum.de/en/museum/veranstaltungen)

## LISTENING TO HISTORY

### A GUIDED TOURS IN THE DDR MUSEUM

#### 1 Introduction 60 MIN

Here, experienced guides give visitors a brief insight into the most important topics related to everyday life in the GDR, from »work« to »economy«.

#### 2 Overview tour 90 MIN

In addition to an overview, the tour offers the opportunity to deepen knowledge of individual topics, such as »public life«, »party and state« or »life in a tower block building«.

#### 3 In-depth tour 120 MIN

During this tour, numerous topics of the permanent exhibition are explained and illustrated in detail to the visitors. The group can set individual priorities.

### B COMBINED TOURS

#### 1 Party and State 120 MIN

The DDR Museum is located in the former centre of East German power. A one-hour museum tour is followed by a further hour visiting the site of the former Palace of the Republic, the State Council Building and the Headquarters of the Socialist Unity Party.

#### 2 The Karl-Marx-Allee 180 MIN

A one-hour tour of the DDR Museum is followed by a two-hour tour of East Germany's most prestigious boulevard. Designed to embody the victory of Socialism, the Stalin-era flats actually provided the starting point of the worker's uprising on 17 June, 1953.

### C CITY TOURS

#### 1 The Berlin Wall 120 MIN

During a two-hour tour the group will explore the former death strip between West and East Berlin, located between Eberswalder Straße and Bernauer Straße.

#### 2 Opposition in the GDR 120 MIN

This tour leads groups through Prenzlauer Berg and shows what kinds of opposition existed, for example those of artists, intellectuals, punks and members of the church. This resistance eventually led to the Peaceful Revolution in the 1980s.

#### 3 Everyday life in the Capital of the GDR 120 MIN

This tour shows everyday life in the GDR capital and takes the group to authentic places, such as the Marienkirche, the TV tower, the Centrum Warenhaus on Alexanderplatz, the Red Town Hall, the Nikolaiviertel district and the former Palace of the Republic.

#### 4 Berlin-Mitte 240 MIN

This four-hour tour through the centre of Berlin takes visitors to the boulevard Unter den Linden, the Brandenburg Gate, Checkpoint Charlie, the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe and other locations significant to the history of Berlin in the twentieth century.

### D TALKS AND WORKSHOPS

#### 1 Talking with contemporary witnesses

Talks with contemporary witnesses of the GDR offer a first-hand account of everyday life in East Germany. Audiences can ask questions and gain a vivid appreciation of the special quality of life in East Germany. We provide witnesses who can speak about almost any aspect of life in the GDR including everyday life, school life, work, oppositional activities and imprisonment by the Stasi.

#### 2 Workshops

Students learn best when they are active themselves. In our workshops, they work out the differences between democracy and dictatorship on their own. We offer workshops on the following topics:

- Ideology and propaganda
- Popular uprising of June 17, 1953



# OUR PUBLICATIONS

## DDR MUSEUM VERLAG

The DDR Museum Verlag publishes the museum's own publications, specialised literature of the historians in-house, as well as works by selected authors who are dedicated to the topic of the GDR.

### ONLINE

[www.ddr-museum.de/en/publishing](http://www.ddr-museum.de/en/publishing)

### ORDER REVIEW COPY

E-MAIL [verlag@ddr-museum.de](mailto:verlag@ddr-museum.de)

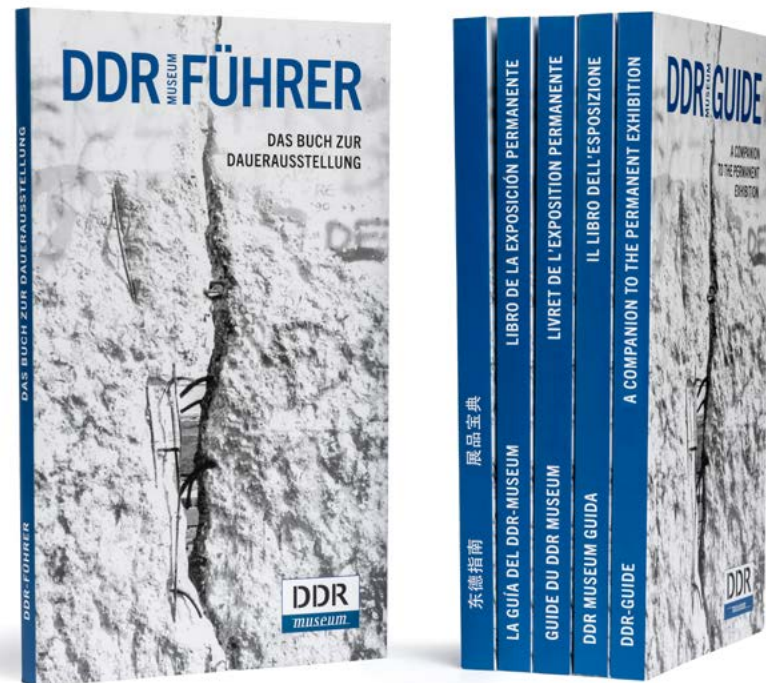
### BOOKS AND EBOOKS IN OUR ONLINE SHOP

[onlineshop.ddr-museum.de](http://onlineshop.ddr-museum.de)

## A companion to the permanent exhibition

The Wall and the Iron Curtain shielded the GDR from the Western world. Inside, the state security service or »Stasi« guarded over 16 million people on behalf of the Socialist Unity Party. But what was life like under socialism? Did it consist only of Spreewald gherkins, nudists and prefabricated tower block buildings? Was everyday life characterised by social security and full employment or by a shortage economy and queuing?

The DDR Guide is the book accompanying the permanent exhibition of the DDR Museum and at the same time the entertaining standard work on life in the GDR. Readers can expect 66 exciting chapters, written by the experts of the DDR Museum. Over 200 photos and graphics illustrate everyday life in the GDR in a vivid way and describe many of the exhibits of the permanent exhibition. An overview plan of the exhibition, a list of abbreviations and numerous graphics complete the varied range of information. The book is available in German, English, Spanish, French, Italian and (modern) Chinese.



## MUSEUM GUIDE

Marotz, Sören / Sieber, Elke / Wollé, Stefan:

**DDR-Guide. A Companion to the Permanent Exhibition.**

**English** 978-3-939801-20-7

**German** 978-3-939801-19-1

**French** 978-3-939801-41-2

**Spanish** 978-3-939801-43-6

**Italian** 978-3-939801-42-9

**Chinese** 978-3-939801-38-2

Paperback, gatefold brochure,  
12.5 × 21 cm, 200 Pages

## MUSEUM GUIDE EBOOKS

The »DDR-Guide. A Companion to the Permanent Exhibition« is also available as an eBook in six different languages. You can find it in all popular eBook shops as well as in the online shop of the DDR Museum:  
[onlineshop.ddr-museum.de](http://onlineshop.ddr-museum.de)

**English** 978-3-939801-26-9

**German** 978-3-939801-21-4

**French** 978-3-939801-29-0

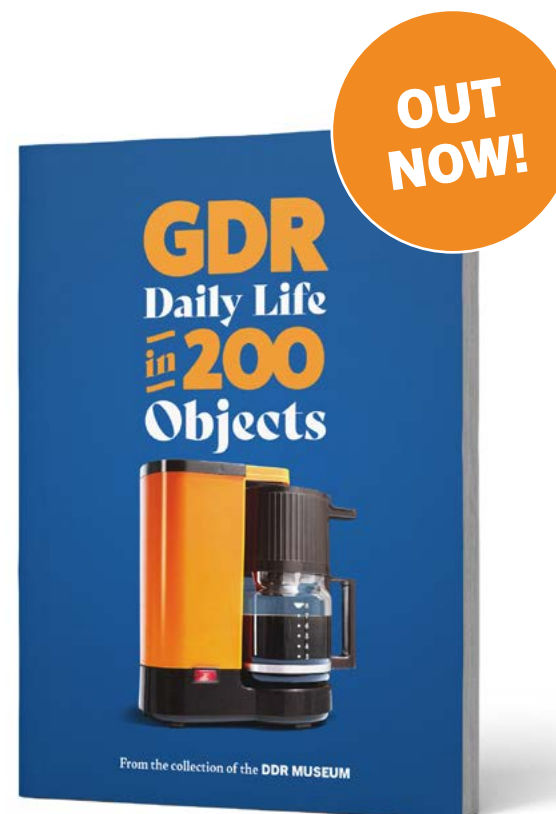
**Spanish** 978-3-939801-33-7

**Italian** 978-3-939801-32-0

**Chinese** 978-3-939801-38-2







### GDR Daily Life in 200 Objects

Objects of everyday life and consumption had a higher value in GDR society than today. They were used for a long time and repaired more often—the GDR was a kind of »society of keepers«. In part, the material heritage of the SED state enjoys an almost cult-like veneration today. The objects presented here reveal a cross-section of 40 years of everyday life in the GDR. There is a story behind each of these everyday objects.

The sometimes-inconspicuous exhibits—from the K109 coffee machine to the refrigerator to the mantelpiece clock—provide an insight into the everyday life of the people of the vanished state. In this book, we bring the past into the present. Detailed photographs by Thorsten Heideck and Adrian Serini and texts written by historian and GDR expert Dr Stefan Wolle offer a broad spectrum of life in the GDR.

### GDR in Objects

The series »GDR in Objects« shows approximately 3,000 objects from the collection of the DDR Museum that have been academically reviewed for this purpose. They all come from the collection of the DDR Museum, which with over 300,000 artefacts is the world's largest museum collection on the subject of the GDR.

Authors Dr Stefan Wolle and Quirin Graf Adelman offer both informative and educational insights into everyday life in, as well as the economic and product history of, the bygone state. Comprising three high-quality illustrated volumes, »GDR in Objects« offers an all-embracing insight into the world of objects of the German Democratic Republic.

#### NON-FICTION

Adelmann, Quirin Graf / Godin, Gordon von (Hrsg.):  
**GDR in Objects 1949–1990: Daily Life, Home, Consumption**  
ISBN 978-3-939801-46-7

Adelmann, Quirin Graf / Godin, Gordon von (Hrsg.):  
**GDR in Objects 1949–1990: Leisure, Culture, Travel**  
ISBN 978-3-939801-48-1

Adelmann, Quirin Graf / Godin, Gordon von (Hrsg.):  
**GDR in Objects 1949–1990: Work, Economy, Politics**  
in Planung

Limited hardback editions, bilingual German/English  
24 × 34 cm, 400 Pages

#### NON-FICTION

Adelmann, Quirin Graf /  
Godin, Gordon von (Hrsg.):  
**GDR Daily Life in 200 Objects**  
ISBN 978-3-939801-53-5

Adelmann, Quirin Graf /  
Godin, Gordon von (Hrsg.):  
**DDR Alltag in 200 Objekten**  
(German edition)  
ISBN 978-3-939801-51-1

Paperback, gatefold brochure,  
German or English version  
17.5 × 24 cm, 256 Pages





# OUR VISITORS

The DDR Museum has set itself the aim of disseminating a lively interest in history amongst all sections of society. Our exhibition is designed to make history accessible to the wider public, regardless of their level of knowledge. All exhibition texts are written in German and English. Additional services are available in twelve languages.

Since the opening of the DDR Museum in 2006, the number of visitors has risen. This means that, since 2012, well over half a million Berliners as well as tourists from Germany and abroad have experienced »hands-on history« each year.

Due to the large number of interactive exhibition elements, the museum is suitable for every age group, even for primary school students. Target group-specific guided tours, games and workshops also introduce younger generations to German history.

**Sophie** Google: 06/2022 ★★★★★  
»The DDR museum is an excellent museum with great interactivity, good learning and well designed exhibits. A must do for anyone visiting Berlin who wants to see and touch examples of its past being the capital of the GDR.«

**firoozeh nafisy** Google: 10/2022 ★★★★★  
»Highly recommend! The best museum I have visited in my life. [...] They made a great job of making [history] so exciting and adventurous. Hats off to the directors and all the staff.«



Stand 09/2021

**NeilGJ888** TripAdvisor: 05/2022 ★★★★★  
»I don't usually review attractions, but am making an exception for the DDR Museum, as I was genuinely impressed with how it interpreted and presented life in the former East Germany. [...] I spent two hours in the museum, and could have been there longer.«

**APhipps90** TripAdvisor: 09/2022 ★★★★★  
»It's a very well thought out museum! Not only is the content and subject matter interesting and engaging but the layout and the design adds another layer of enjoyment to it. You can watch, listen, interact etc, etc, etc. There's something for everyone of every background and age group.«

**Beatrizm115** TripAdvisor: 09/2022 ★★★★★  
»Interactive fun museum. So so cool, one of the best museums I visited in terms of interactivity, there are a lot of games you can play, you can explore an apartment of the GDR [...]. My friend and I had so much fun! For me a must when in Berlin!«

**YOUR CONTACT**  
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Spokesperson  
  
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✉ **E-MAIL** presse@ddr-museum.de

**Graphic material**  
You can download printable press pictures of the DDR Museum for your articles from our website: [www.ddr-museum.de/de/presse](http://www.ddr-museum.de/de/presse)

**Photos and recordings**  
We organise photo and recording inquiries promptly and in a straightforward way:  
+49 30 847 123 7-47

# THE DDR MUSEUM: FACTS AND FIGURES

<b>OPERATOR</b>	DDR Museum Berlin GmbH
<b>OPENED</b>	Part 1: 15 July, 2006 Part 2: 10 October, 2010 Part 3: 27 August, 2016
<b>CEO</b>	Quirin Graf Adelmann v. A.
<b>DIRECTOR</b>	Gordon Freiherr von Godin
<b>ACADEMIC DIRECTOR</b>	Dr. Stefan Wolle
<b>AWARDS</b>	Nominated for the European Museum of the Year Award 2008 and 2012
<b>PERMANENT EXHIBITION SPACE</b>	930 m <sup>2</sup>
<b>LANGUAGES</b>	Exhibitions in German and English, introductory texts in six languages, additional services in twelve languages
<b>ADDRESS</b>	DDR Museum Karl-Liebknecht-Str. 1 10178 Berlin-Mitte
<b>OPENING HOURS</b>	Monday – Sunday: 9 am – 9 pm 365 days a year
<b>SOCIAL MEDIA</b>	<a href="https://www.facebook.com/ddrmuseum">www.facebook.com/ddrmuseum</a> <a href="https://www.twitter.com/ddrmuseum">www.twitter.com/ddrmuseum</a> <a href="https://www.instagram.com/ddrmuseum">www.instagram.com/ddrmuseum</a> <a href="https://www.youtube.com/ddrmuseum">www.youtube.com/ddrmuseum</a> <a href="https://www.tiktok.com/@ddrmuseum">www.tiktok.com/@ddrmuseum</a> <a href="https://www.pinterest.com/ddrmuseum">www.pinterest.com/ddrmuseum</a> <a href="https://www.linkedin.com/company/ddr-museum">www.linkedin.com/company/ddr-museum</a>