

# A Cycling Tour of Berlin-Mitte Jewish Life in the Centre of Berlin

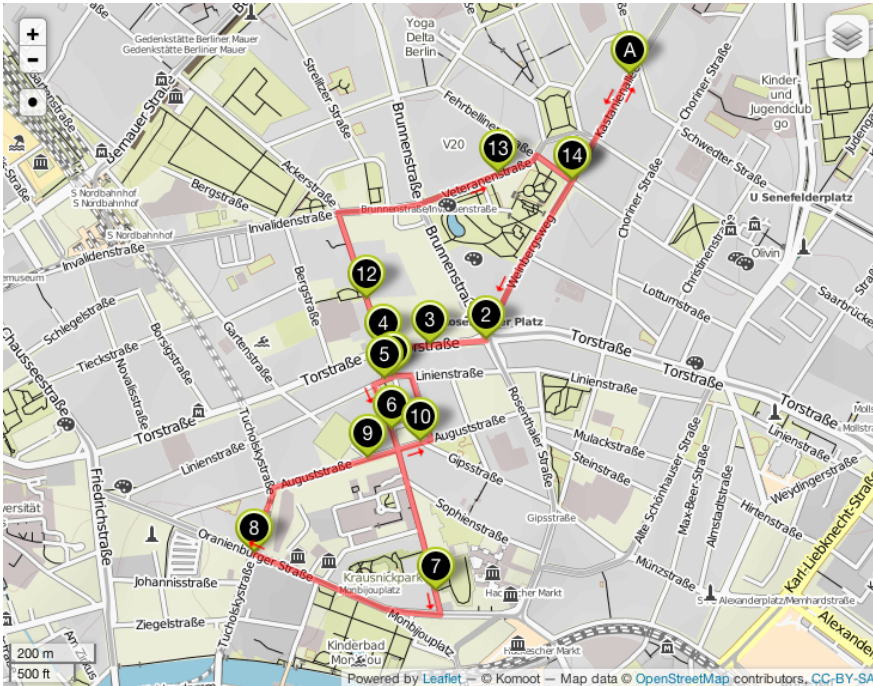


Foto: Günther Sterfen

Foto: Pierre Adenis

Foto: Philip Koschel

The tour starts at Kastanienallee 65 at the Hotel Kastanienhof. From the front door of the hotel, head left down Kastanienallee. Here, you can let go and whizz downhill as the street becomes the steep Weinbergsweg. It's fun, but be careful: there are tram tracks embedded in the street.

## Rosenthaler Platz

The Weinbergsweg opens up on to Rosenthaler Platz, which, despite its name, is not so much an open plaza but a busy and historic crossroads. This is where the Rosenthaler Tor once stood, the only gate in Berlin's medieval city wall through which Jews were allowed to pass.

For safety's sake, get off your bicycle at this pedestrian crossing and walk your bike across the street and then continue riding to your right into Torstraße, until you reach the next crossroads. Turn left into Ackerstraße and cycle a few metres to the corner of Ackerstraße/Linienstraße. Across the way is Koppenplatz, a small park in the historic Spandauer Vorstadt.

**Koppenplatz**  
The Koppenplatz is home to sculptor Karl Biedermann's memorial to the many Berlin Jews who were deported and murdered in the Holocaust. The memorial was given the title „The abandoned chair behind the empty table in front of the overturned chair.“

**Insider Tip:** Discover Top Vegan Cuisine! Situated directly on Koppenplatz is „Kopps“, a vegan restaurant offering inspiring fresh cuisine made purely with vegetable ingredients.

## Große Hamburger Straße

On the south side of Koppenplatz is Große Hamburger Straße, with many reminders of Jewish Berlin, past and present. Just continue along the street straight ahead. At the end of the street on the left-hand side stands the Moses Mendelssohn Jüdisches Gymnasium (Jewish Secondary School), right next to the site of the oldest Jewish cemetery in Berlin.

### Moses Mendelssohn Jüdisches Gymnasium

This Jewish Secondary School has a moving and terrible history. First established as a Jewish boys' school, it was used by the Nazis from 1942–1945 as a transit camp, together with the now-destroyed adjoining Jewish nursing home.

## Jewish Cemetery

Next door to the Jewish Secondary School is where the oldest Jewish cemetery in Berlin was once located before being completely destroyed by the Gestapo during the Nazi era. The site is now home to a memorial, a monument to the former nursing home and the sculpture „Jewish Victims of Fascism“ by Will and Mark Lambert.

### Oranienburger Straße

The tour continues along Große Hamburger Straße to the next crossroads. Then turn right into Oranienburger Straße. As you look up, you'll see the golden dome of the Neue Synagoge (New Synagogue). You can take a break from your tour in the

inviting three hectares of Monbijoupark on the left side of the street.

### **Neue Synagoge**

As you ride along Oranienburger Straße, you'll come to the Neue Synagoge. It was built by architect Eduard Knoblauch and opened in 1866. It was not destroyed in the Kristallnacht pogrom of 9–10 November 1938, because the police officer William Krütfeld turned against blocked the SA men. It was destroyed by a British air raid in 1943. The ruins were wonderfully restored in 1995 and were reopened to the public as the Neue Synagoge Berlin - Centrum Judaicum.

#### **Insider Tip:**

Relax in the Café Orange! A few meters to the left of the New Synagogue is the cosy Café Orange offering international cuisine.

### **Tucholskystraße**

Continue along Oranienburger Straße and then turn off at the next corner into Tucholskystraße. A very special experience awaits you at Tucholskystraße 40: the Beth-Café (Hebrew: Coffee House) offers 100% kosher Israeli and Jewish food and drinks.

### **Auguststraße**

Continue along Tucholskystraße and then turn right into Auguststraße, a pre-war centre of Jewish life in Berlin. This was the site of the former Jewish Hospital (at nos. 14–16), the Jewish girls' school at nos. 11–13 and much more.

### **Jüdische Mädchenschule**

The former Jewish School for Girls stood empty for a long time after the war, but is now used for exhibitions. It is also home to restaurants Pauly Saal and The Kosher Classroom.

Continue down Auguststraße and cycle back across Große Hamburger Straße. A few metres further, turn left into Kleine Auguststraße. At No. 10 you'll find the „Kleine Auguststraße“ Memorial, located on the site on which the synagogue burned to the ground on Kristallnacht in 1938.

### **Linienstraße**

Continue down Kleine Auguststraße until you come to Liniestraße, where you'll turn left. Here, you can relax and even cycle side by side, because Linienstraße is a designated cycle route. Here, cyclists have priority.

After a few meters, turn right into Ackerstraße. Cross Torstraße and then turn right into Invalidenstraße. You'll pass by the Ackerhalle, an old market hall, and the Elisabethkirche, which was built by Friedrich Schinkel.

### **Weinbergspark**

Now cross the very busy Brunnenstraße and continue straight into Veteranenstraße. On the right-hand side, you'll see that you have arrived back at Weinbergspark, the end of your tour. Now you've got a choice: you can ride up the hill or take a detour to Restaurant Nola, located in the heart of the Weinbergspark.

If you're ready to finish the tour, turn right from Veteranenstraße into Fehrbellinerstraße. Cycle to the next crossroads and turn left into Kastanienallee. After just a few metres, you'll arrive back at the Hotel Kastanienhof.

