

WHILE IN GERMANY

TIME



Germany is in the Central European Time Zone (GMT +1). Summertime (GMT +2) is in effect between the last Sunday in March and the last Sunday in October. You will be 5 - 6 hours ahead of EST depending upon the date of your travel.

STAYING IN TOUCH



GSM (Global System for Mobile Communications) phone service works throughout Germany, but requires a particular type of international cell phone and a SIM card. You can check with your phone company for availability and rates in acquiring an international phone plan. **GSM phones are also available for rental or sale at www.ayelet.com (Click Travel Information, then Cell Phone Rental)**

WEATHER



The temperature in Germany in the spring and summer will range from 54 to 79 degrees. The temperatures in the fall and winter will range from 30 to 55 degrees. If traveling in the late fall or winter, please bring boots, gloves, and a warm jacket. In the summer, bring a light jacket. While we hope to have many sunny days, we suggest that you bring an umbrella. It is better to be prepared. Dressing in layers is recommended, and checking the weather on the internet a day before your departure is always a good idea.

REMEMBER...



Even if you don't normally keep a journal, bring a note pad or diary to record your feelings and experiences. When you come home, and for years later, you'll be glad you did. Try to take pictures or video of people rather than just buildings. The photos will be more memorable when attached to faces.

MONEY

Currency Exchanges (*Geldwechsel*)

You can find currency exchange desks at any airport, most train stations (**Bahnhof**) in larger towns and cities, and all banks. Exchange Bureaus are also common throughout metro downtown areas. You can also use your ATM card (**Bankomat**) at most ATM's in Germany to withdraw Euros (there will be an English option). Call your credit card company or bank to let them know you will be using your credit card or debit card while abroad. Tell them which countries you plan to visit and the dates you plan to be away. Some banks and credit card companies will, for security purposes, automatically put a hold on cards that are used overseas.

Banks and exchanges will post two numbers - Buy and Sell. To trade a different currency into Euros, you will need to look at the rate posted under **€ - Sell**, which is always higher than the rate posted under **€ - Buy**. The Euro is circulated in denominations up to 500 Euro in coins of .10, .20, .50, 1, 2, & 5, & bank notes of 5, 10, 20, 50, 100, 200 & 500. Visit www.xe.com for current exchange rates.

SHOPPING & ETIQUETTE

SHOPPING

Germany is a great place to buy gifts and souvenirs. However, there are some cultural differences between shopping in the United States and Germany, mainly:

- Credit card acceptance is more limited, even in some mid range restaurants.
- Shopping hours are much more limited, and there is no shopping on Sunday.
- The most serious threat for visitors or tourists are pickpockets, who are known for frequenting crowded places like airports, train stations, busy train wagons or buses, and tourist attractions. For this reason, it is best to leave valuable items and documents in a hotel safe, or at home.

ETIQUETTE

- Greetings are formal: a quick, firm handshake is the traditional greeting.
- Titles are very important and denote respect. Use a person's title and their surname until invited to use their first name. You can say Herr or Frau and the person's title and their surname.
- When entering a room, shake hands with everyone individually, including children.
- The most common toast with beer is 'Prost!' ('good health').



YOUR HEALTH



Medical care in Germany is of a high standard. Travelers who are taking regular medications should carry them properly labeled and in sufficient quantity to last for the duration of their trip; they should not expect the equivalent drugs to be available. A note from your doctor is highly recommended to protect yourself as you go through customs and security at the airports. German pharmacies, "Apotheke," are abundant, even in smaller towns, and are easy to find. Pharmacies are usually open from 8 am - 6 pm and are generally closed evenings, Saturday afternoons, Sundays and holidays. Each of them has a list on the door, though, of pharmacies in the area that remain open to handle emergencies. Most pharmacists can offer advice on minor illnesses and recommend over-the-counter remedies. All medicines (even aspirin) are behind the counter, and must be asked for, even if you do not need a prescription to purchase them.

In an urgent medical situation during evenings, weekends, or holidays you can find an available doctor who will provide after hours medical assistance through the hotel or your tour escort.

Make sure to get all required vaccinations prior to your departure, and be certain that you are updated on other shots such as tetanus. You can find information on country-specific vaccination requirements from your physician. Travel insurance is strongly recommended.



BASIC WORDS IN GERMAN

Hello: Guten Tag! **Goodbye:** Auf Wiedersehen!

Please: Bitte **Thank you:** Danke

You're welcome: Gern geschehen

Yes: Ja **No:** Nein **Of course:** Natürlich

Excuse me: Entschuldigung

How are you?: Wie gehts?

Open: Geöffnet **Closed:** Geschlossen

What is your name?: Wie heisst du?

My name is...: Ich heisse...

How much?: Wie teuer ist es?

May I have the bill? Kann ich die rechnung haben?

BEFORE YOU LEAVE



PASSPORT/VISA

Make sure you have a signed, valid passport and necessary visas. You are responsible to secure any needed visas. You can check: <http://travel.state.gov> for up to date information. If you do not have a passport already, make sure you apply 2 -3 months prior to your departure date. Waiting for a visa can take up to a month in itself, so get your application in early.

Current US government regulations stipulate that passports must be valid for at least six (6) months after your return travel date or you may not be permitted to depart the United States. There are certain circumstances where you can get your passport renewed on an expedited basis, but it is an expensive process.

It's a good idea to make two copies of the first two pages of your passport. Give one copy to a friend or relative in the United States and pack the other separately from your passport. This will help speed the process of replacing your passport if it is lost or stolen.

WATER/ELECTRICITY

Though the tap water in Germany is generally safe to drink, you are safer to drink bottled water simply because your system will not be used to their water. Germans usually drink bottled water with or without carbonation. Also, tap water is not generally served at a restaurant.

The electricity is 220-volt/50 cycle AC

SECURE YOUR MAIL AND HOME



Arrange for a friendly neighbor to collect your mail, or arrange for your local post office to hold your deliveries for the duration of your stay abroad.

It is also a good idea to have someone reliable check on your home or apartment once a week while you are away.

PACKING

How much you pack depends on how long you plan to stay, and on the purpose of your trip. Clothing requirements vary depending on whether your trip is designed for business or solely as a vacation. On your tour, you will probably be moving around a lot and you won't want to pack and unpack completely. Generally, it's a good idea to travel light and expect that you will need more room in your bags when you go home than when you left to accommodate gifts & souvenirs. Please note that your touring schedule may require a later lunch than you are accustomed to. Because of this, and because touring days can often be quite active, we suggest that you bring snacks with you on your touring days to make sure that you are as comfortable as possible.

Suggestions for simplifying:

- Build your travel wardrobe around no more than two colors, one of which is black, navy, gray, or brown. Plan to wear every item more than once.
- Bring more tops, fewer bottoms. A combination of T-shirts, shirts and sweaters will work in most climates and let you change your look from day to day. Fleece works well in cooler weather.
- Use old plastic dry cleaning bags between suits and dresses to eliminate wrinkles.
- Don't pack too many shoes as they are heavy and bulky. Sneakers and fashionable comfortable shoes are highly recommended. Storing your shoes in an extra large plastic bag will keep dirt off your other clothes. If you're bringing more than one coat or pair of shoes, wear the heaviest one on the plane.
- Even during summer months, it is a good idea to bring a light jacket, shawl or wrap with you for cooler evenings and travel in the air-conditioned buses.
- Make certain to bring appropriate clothes for your visits to synagogues, cathedrals, and places of other religious significance. Plan to dress respectfully - skirts and headscarves are recommended for women and kippahs (yamulkes) and slacks are recommended for men.
- We recommend that you do not bring jewelry of high monetary or sentimental value with you on your travels. If you do choose to bring valuable jewelry, make certain to pack it in your carry-on luggage to help make certain it will not be lost en-route. Store your valuables in your hotel room safe or the hotel safe deposit box if necessary.
- Be certain to bring all necessary eyewear and eye care supplies - you may have difficulty finding the specific products you need during your travels.

- Pack toiletries in a self-sealing waterproof bag to protect your clothing.
- Bring an adapter and charger for any electronic devices you plan to use on your trip. If you carry a digital camera, cell phone, or laptop computer, you will want to be able to charge it. American plugs will not work in European outlets, so make certain you have a converter or adapter which will reduce the 220 volts to 110 volts.
- Make a list of everything in your suitcase. You'll have something to refer to if your luggage is lost and you have to describe the contents. Refer to it to make sure you don't forget anything.

Don't bring more than you can manage yourself. Most able-bodied travelers should be able to hoist their own bags. The more experienced the traveler, the less luggage he will bring!

TRAVEL INSURANCE

Travel insurance is available and highly recommended. In order to be fully covered for pre-existing conditions, you must take out insurance within 15 days of your initial deposit (which can be found on your receipt). Acting immediately will avoid many possible future problems with refunds or medical coverage. Please go to www.ayelet.com and click on the "Travel Insurance" link for complete, detailed information.

LUGGAGE



Each person traveling is allowed to check one suitcase and may also bring one personal item and one carry-on piece. The weight of each may not exceed 50 lbs. when traveling from the United States to Europe. However, if the group is traveling between European cities, the weight may not exceed 33-44 lbs, depending on the airline.

While we certainly expect all luggage to arrive with you at your destination, we strongly advise putting any medication, glasses, film, and an extra change of clothing in your carry-on as a precaution. Check weight restrictions before your departure, as the limits do change!

STILL HAVE QUESTIONS? CONTACT US!

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Ayelet Tours, Ltd.

GERMANY PACKING TIPS

DOCUMENTS

Tickets
Copy of travel insurance
Itinerary
Passport and photocopy
Cash (not too much)
Travelers Checks
Credit Cards/ATM
Phone Numbers
Reservations

SUPPLIES:

Wallet/Handbag
(Sun) Glasses
Umbrella/Rain slicker
Backpack/ Day pack

First Aid supplies

Sewing kit

Jewelry (Not expensive)

Safety pins

Flashlight

Paper/ Journal

Travel Alarm Clock

Camera/Video & Film

Plastic bags

Pen/Pencil

Addresses / Stamps

TOILETRIES

Toothbrush/paste
Mouthwash
Deodorant
Prescriptions
Hand Sanitizer
Razor & Shaving cream
Comb/Brush
Shampoo & Soap
Wash cloth
Sunscreen

Moisturizer

Medication

Cosmetics

CLOTHING

Pajamas

Bathing suit/towel

Flip flops

Hat/ Kipah/ Yamulke

Shirts (casual/dress)

Pants/shorts (casual/dress)

Comfortable walking shoes

Sandals

Socks/hose

Dresses/ skirts

Belts/ scarves

Underwear

Sweater/ sweatshirt

Raincoat with zip out lining

Gloves

