

Andrew Harper's Hideaway Report[®]

AUGUST 2015 | OUR 37TH YEAR

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TRAVELING THE WORLD IN SEARCH OF TRULY ENCHANTING PLACES

THIS MONTH

TRAVELS IN FORMER EAST GERMANY

Dynamic Berlin and graceful Dresden, plus the castles, vineyards and tranquil countryside of Saxony and Mecklenburg.

WEB EXCLUSIVES

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STYLISH HOTELS, STELLAR RESTAURANTS, WORLD-CLASS MUSEUMS

Berlin: A European Capital Reborn



Symbol of the new Germany: Norman Foster's glass dome atop the Reichstag parliament building

IN THE NEWS

Cape Town Sensation

SOUTH AFRICAN hotelier Liz Biden opened her first property, Royal Malewane safari lodge, in 2000. This was followed by Birkenhead House on the Indian Ocean and La Residence in the Cape Winelands. I enthusiastically recommend all three. Next year, her portfolio will be augmented by **The Silo**, a 28-room hotel on Cape Town's V&A Waterfront. It promises to be quite remarkable. The principal occupant of the old grain silo — which comprises 42 concrete tubes, each 108 feet high — will be the Zeitz Museum of Contemporary Art Africa. The hotel, with its restaurant, spa and champagne bar, will be directly above, commanding panoramic views of Table Mountain. In less capable hands, this extraordinarily ambitious project might prove a fiasco. I suspect, however, that it will be a triumph.

BERLIN IS CURRENTLY ONE OF THE MOST EXCITING CITIES IN THE WORLD. EVIDENCE OF ITS tumultuous history is everywhere. The Sputnik-inspired Fernsehturm (Television Tower) stands next to the Gothic St. Mary's Church. World War II bullet holes pock the colonnade of the Alte Nationalgalerie. The Stadtschloss — the seat of the Prussian kings demolished in 1950 — is being rebuilt nearby. And in Potsdamer Platz, the Sony Center incorporates the ornate wall of a prewar ballroom into its otherwise contemporary façade.

This was my fourth visit to the city since the Berlin Wall fell, but I had no trouble occupying my time almost exclusively with attractions I'd never seen before. The trouble was forcing myself to skip favorite sights. I missed the Pergamon Museum, home to the magnificent blue-tiled Ishtar Gate from ancient Babylon (the wing housing the Pergamon Altar is closed for renovations until 2019). Nor did I revisit the iconic bust of Nefertiti in the Neues Museum, or the Romanticist masterpieces in the Alte Nationalgalerie. I didn't ascend the spiraling glass dome atop the Reichstag, or take a river cruise

through the heart of downtown. Perhaps most distressing, I didn't have time to contemplate the Brandenburg Gate from a room at the Hotel Adlon Kempinski, one of my favorite city hotels in Europe.

I consoled myself with a stay at my other Berlin favorite, the **Hotel de Rome**. In an ideal location on Bebelplatz within easy walking distance of the Brandenburg Gate and Museum Island, this 146-room property is one of the few major Berlin hotels to occupy an intact prewar building. Remnants of its former life as the headquarters of the wealthy

For personalized trip-planning assistance, call (800) 375-4685 or email reservations@andrewharper.com.

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