Leipzig’s for me!
Whether you arrive in Leipzig by air, rail or from the motorway, you’ll soon discover that the city centre can be quickly reached.

Leipzig has a very compact centre just one square kilometre in size. Sights like St Thomas’s Church, Auerbachs Keller tavern, the Gewandhaus concert hall and the university are close together and can all be easily explored on foot.

“For centuries, Leipzig has been a rich source of inspiration and impetus for industry, commerce and the arts in Europe. Plenty of sights in the city still testify to Leipzig’s proud heritage. Yet it’s by no means stuck in the past! The unique atmosphere with tradition existing in harmony with progress reflects the city’s vibrancy at the dawn of the 21st century.

“Leipzig is now acknowledged as one of the most dynamic cities in Europe. Come to Leipzig and see for yourself! You’ll receive a warm welcome in the city of Johann Sebastian Bach, the Leipzig Fair and the University of Leipzig.”

Leipzig Central Station. This striking building with its impressive arches and skilfully integrated shopping mall provides a spacious welcome.

Visit St Nicholas’s Church – the cradle of the popular movement that swept aside the Iron Curtain in 1989.

St Thomas’s Church with the statue of J.S. Bach.
Leipzig’s history as a flourishing city of commerce as well as its civic pride and cosmopolitan outlook remain visible thanks to the painstaking restoration of its old exhibition buildings and magnificent arcades. Visitors are fascinated by the sight of time-honoured buildings cheek by jowl with modern architecture.

Yet Leipzig’s countenance is also shaped by its fin-de-siècle buildings. About 12,500 of them have been preserved, preserving a unique architectural heritage. Most of them have been refurbished and carefully modernised.

Mind you, Leipzig is also regarded as eastern Germany’s shopping capital thanks to the mall at Leipzig Central Station, the attractive new central shopping areas, and the trendy retail outlets south of the city centre.
Leipzig arose 850 years ago at the crossroads of two major European trade routes: the east–west Via Regia and the north–south Via Imperii.

The city’s development was shaped for centuries by the flows of goods, people and ideas coming together. In 1165, the town was chartered and its markets held twice annually were granted protection. These markets were raised to the rank of imperial fairs by Emperor Maximilian I in 1497 – and Leipzig became the hub of commerce in central Europe.

Martin Luther’s 95 Theses nailed to the church door in nearby Wittenberg sparked not just the Reformation but also a boom in printing and publishing in Leipzig. For one and a half centuries, Leipzig was Germany’s publishing stronghold, and in the 18th century the local book fair eclipsed its rival in Frankfurt. In 1825, the German Booksellers’ and Publishers’ Association was founded in Leipzig, while the Germany Library opened there in 1912. Esteemed publishers such as Baedeker, Breitkopf & Härtel, Reclam and Insel were all based in the city. However, Leipzig’s reputation as a free city declined when the Nazis seized power in 1933. On 4 December 1943, large sections of the city centre were destroyed in an air raid.

Under the East German regime, Leipzig was more or less severed from development in West Germany for four decades, and the only door which remained open to the outside world was the Leipzig Fair.

However, Leipzig’s cosmopolitan tradition managed to survive.
It was no coincidence that the Monday demonstrations in autumn 1989 which ultimately toppled the East German government began on the streets of Leipzig.

The people of Leipzig have preserved many of the virtues which made it famous: they are open-minded, enquiring, ambitious (perhaps sometimes a little overambitious!) and flexible – and they are determined to return Leipzig to the premier league of German cities.

The old trade routes Via Regia and Via Imperii, at whose intersection the commercial city of Leipzig arose.

The fateful Monday demonstration on 9 October 1989.

The new campus on Augustusplatz – the interaction between the University Church and the University of Leipzig. Left: 3-D visualisation. Right: The section built in 2010 and a monument to the Peaceful Revolution, which began in Leipzig.

In the late 19th century, Augustusplatz was the heart of the city.

Left:
The concept of modern trade fairs was devised in Leipzig. The photo shows a view of Petersstrasse during the Leipzig Fair in around 1900.

The power of music

From Bach to Chailly:
Leipzig is a vibrant city of the arts

The festival 'Bach – Reflections in Jazz': in Leipzig, even the classics are reinvented
Leipzig breathes culture. In this city of Bach, Mendelssohn and Schumann, the venues associated with the great composers are livelier than ever before, their musical legacy being maintained to world-class standards week after week at for instance St Thomas’s Church and the Gewandhaus concert hall. The Gewandhaus Orchestra and its chief conductor, Riccardo Chailly, are rightly revered in the classical music scene, while Leipzig Opera House has regained its lustre with Chailly as its general music director.

Johann Sebastian Bach spent 27 years in Leipzig as the choirmaster and organist of St Thomas’s – and every year, the Leipzig Bach Festival attracts thousands of music-lovers from all over the world come to hear performances of his works at historical venues.

Other international cultural highlights include the International Leipzig Festival for Documentary and Animated Film and the euro-scene festival of contemporary European theatre, both of which are held every autumn.
“In my view, Leipzig is unparalleled as a city of culture. It’s where the statue of Bach stands. We still walk across the very same paving stones on which our predecessors in St Thomas’s Boys Choir trod in Bach’s day – although that’s something we take for granted.

“It’s wonderful to see how the historical buildings are being refurbished. There’s the Gewandhaus, St Thomas’s Church, St Thomas’s Boys Choir; there are so many great things like Leipzig Opera House and the ballet. Leipzig has such a varied arts scene. It’s absolutely fantastic – and it’s all linked together. Even the Wave Gothic Festival of dark music every Whitsun reaches the whole city.

“What I particularly like about Leipzig is that it’s not pretentious but completely down to earth. What’s more, Leipzig is a totally young city.”

Emmanuel Jesse
Member of St Thomas’s Boys Choir

Apart from high culture, a lively independent scene has evolved in Leipzig, including art house cinemas and indie theatres, especially in the heavily student-populated south of the city. In addition, the young, independent music fair PopUp has now been held for over a decade at the alternative arts centres Werk II and naTo, and is regarded throughout Germany as the acknowledged rival of the more established PopKomm. Meanwhile, the art galleries at the converted cotton mill in the borough of Plagwitz have become a major attraction on the international art scene.
Leipzig is a dynamic city – yet it’s also a compact place to live and work. And between the daily bustle and proverbial Saxon hospitality, living in Leipzig is a truly vibrant experience. Hundreds of restaurants, bars and cafés meet various tastes – from traditional local recipes to exclusive cuisine, from trendy pubs to sushi bars.

When the weather’s fine, a colourful clientele can be seen at the pavement cafés on Münzgasse, Gottschedstrasse and Barfussgässchen near the Market Square – and on hot days, the city centres is pervaded by a Mediterranean atmosphere. Comedy clubs and variety theatres are a source of great entertainment, fantastic shows go down a storm with spellbound audiences, and in the clubs and discos the punters crowd the dance floor until the small hours.

What’s more, there’s no official closing time in Leipzig!
Leipzig lives for Bach: thousands of Leipzigers and their guests pack out the city centre at the annual Bach Festival.

The Moritzbastei – a student club and arts centre opened within the historical fortifications in 1982.

SPIZZ on the Market Square – a small but superb venue.
People coming to Leipzig for the first time are often surprised at how green it is! In fact a swathe of floodplain woodlands 950 hectares in size cuts right across the city – and it’s at the top of the popularity scale among those in search of relaxation.

Yet the people of Leipzig are also passionately fond of Clara Zetkin Park adjacent to the city centre and Connewitz Game Park containing 36 indigenous animal species.

However, the most popular attraction in the city is the spectacular Leipzig Zoo. Pongoland contains the biggest anthropoid ape enclosure in the world. The African savannah with free-roaming giraffes, zebras and antelopes can even be seen from the neighbouring Rosental Park. Other attractions include the Ganesha Mandir elephant temple while Gondwanaland – the unique tropical experience world – is currently taking shape and will open on 1st July 2011.
South of Leipzig, a huge area is being transformed into Leipzig New Lakeland. Disused opencast mines are being flooded to create a network of 13 lakes with a total surface area exceeding 70 square kilometres while new woodlands have been planted. Lake Cospuden, boasting long beaches, piers and a marina, and beloved for its maritime atmosphere, has been open since the year 2000. The golf course there is becoming increasingly popular, while the area also contains plenty of pleasant footpaths and delightful restaurants.

Sailing on Lake Cospuden.
High feel-good factor

Affordable dream homes: Leipzig’s great for young families

Leipzig is the city where out-of-the-ordinary housing wishes comes true! Exclusive villas both near the city centre and amidst green surroundings are still available. Beautifully refurbished loft apartments and courtyard houses line the River White Elster in west Leipzig. Finding plenty of space to live, work hard and enjoy life is no problem at all in Leipzig!

Students at Leipzig International School, where English is the language of teaching and communication.
Of course, quality of life includes more than ever before first-rate childcare – and families and children enjoy the highest priority in Leipzig. The city’s crèches, nursery schools and after-school clubs look after about 33,000 children. There are even a number of bilingual nursery schools where alongside German a foreign language like English, French or Spanish is spoken. Furthermore, there’s a choice of over 120 primary and grammar state schools along with another 22 independently run schools.

Regular teaching is augmented by numerous cultural extracurricular activities for those interested. They range from music and movement at Johann Sebastian Bach School of Music to the top-level children’s choirs at the Gewandhaus concert hall, Leipzig Opera House and MDR as well as St Thomas’s Boys Choir.

Internationality in Leipzig is epitomised by Leipzig International School, which is currently attended by 560 pupils from more than 40 nations. The curriculum is modelled on schools in the UK and the USA, with emphasis on internationally compatible education and qualifications.
Full speed ahead!
Schkeuditz interchange – Leipzig’s core area for logistics.
Leipzig can easily be reached by road, rail and air. The city centre is just a 15-minute-train ride away from Leipzig/Halle Airport. And those travelling to the city by rail arrive directly in the city centre.

One of the main infrastructure projects has been the improvement of the motorway network around Leipzig. Leipzig enjoys direct links to the A9 (Munich–Berlin), the A38 (Leipzig–Göttingen) and the A38 (Dresden–Magdeburg). The A38 also affords access to and from northern and western Germany thanks to connection to the A2, and is currently being extended from Dresden to Prague as the A17. Leipzig hence has first-class motorway links to the main European highways.
A century-old dream is finally coming true with the construction of the city-centre tunnel. The tunnel will close the gap on the north–south axis between Leipzig Central Station and Bavarian Station and enable faster direct access to the city centre from the surrounding areas of industry and countryside. The tunnel will revitalise the city and the surrounding region – to make for even faster progress!

The city-centre tunnel will boost Leipzig’s attractiveness as a north–south axis.
Installation of state-of-the-art solar panels at DHL's cargo hub.
Leipzig/Halle Airport is one of Europe’s most modern commercial airports and has successfully established itself on the market as an international freight hub. With its efficient, trimodal infrastructure and large reserves of land, clients can plan and invest at the airport with confidence. Moreover, being central Germany’s gateway to the global centres of business and tourism, the airport is also a crucial factor in the region’s attractiveness – and prestigious multinationals have already set up shop in its immediate vicinity. More than 4,600 people are currently employed at the airport – and this figure is set to rise in the years to come.

DHL has built Europe’s biggest air freight hub in Leipzig.

Dierk Näther
CEO of Flughafen Leipzig/Halle GmbH, the airport’s operating company

“A Lufthansa A380 on the western taxiway spanning the A14 motorway.
Major players

Leipzig’s economy is buoyed by growth sectors
Leipzig is the powerhouse of the central German economy. With a population of half a million, the city’s profile rose considerably in connection with the rapid structural transformation of its economy. For example, the Leipzig Fair’s brand-new exhibition centre was opened in 1996. One of the most advanced trade show and conference centres in Europe, it was built in record time within just three years in north Leipzig.

And more recently, major investments have caused a sensation with Porsche and BMW both bringing multi-million projects to Leipzig. Every day, BMW’s car factory produces up to 730 of its 3 Series cars and also 300 1 Series vehicles (which are exclusively built in Leipzig). Meanwhile, the Porsche plant in Leipzig has been assembling the Cayenne SUV since 2002, which was joined in 2009 by the Gran Turismo. And as a result of other investments by suppliers and contractors, another competitive industrial core is emerging which is now active on the world’s markets.

“The economy of a city or region works best when there’s a healthy mix of large and small, skilled trades and industry, research and manufacturing. In this respect, a great deal has been achieved in Leipzig in recent years and the city’s on the right track. The major flagship projects are of course particularly important in Leipzig’s development, as they shape its economic image for outsiders, especially investors and the media. Moreover, they’re a major source of work for smaller local companies. I’m delighted that BMW’s car plant in Leipzig will continue to send a clear signal by substantially investing in the city. And I’m certain that the other growth industries will help permanently strengthen Leipzig’s economic muscle. That will be good for firms of all sizes in the city.”

Manfred Erlacher
Director of BMW’s Leipzig car plant

Leipzig’s economy is buoyed by growth sectors
Ever since the German Post Office chose Leipzig to site the international air hub for its cargo subsidiary DHL, the logistics sector has boomed in and around Leipzig. The international express mail corporation opened its third global aviation hub after Hong Kong and Wilmington (USA) at Leipzig/Halle Airport. By 2012 it will have created 3,500 new jobs internally while an additional 7,000 new jobs are anticipated among local suppliers and service providers.
Grand pianos built by Blüthner can be found in concert halls all over the world. The company was founded in Leipzig in 1853 and continues to operate successfully in the city’s district of Grosspösna.

Dr Holger Födisch
CEO
Dr. Födisch Umweltmesstechnik AG

“In addition to its historical atmosphere, Leipzig also has extraordinary potential in terms of its economic development. Apart from its high level of innovation, Leipzig and its surroundings are home to plenty of well-trained skilled workers. We’ve been developing and building instruments for environmental measurement for nearly 20 years and in doing so have helped raise Leipzig’s international profile in this sector, too.”

With Games Convention, Europe’s biggest computer games exhibition, beginning its triumphal march in Leipzig, Games Convention Online (GCO) is Leipziger Messe’s latest contribution to the sector.
“The world of the media and communication is changing dramatically. The things we learned yesterday are already obsolete today. To be able to overcome these challenges, the media, marketing departments and advertising companies need highly qualified staff. In Leipzig, a traditional centre of the media, the Leipzig School of Media runs practical master’s degree programmes teaching cross-media skills in order to help the business sector deal successfully with digital transformation. Apart from these courses, the LSoM also organises seminars, workshops and in-house training sessions. The LSoM’s strategy combines the competencies of the University of Leipzig and Leipzig University of Applied Sciences, strengthens Leipzig’s position as a media stronghold, and makes the LSoM an institution for further training in the media and communication industry known throughout Germany and far beyond.”

Michael Geffken
Managing Director
Leipzig School of Media
Another major player to invest in Leipzig is Amazon. The international online retailer supplies customers from its Leipzig warehouse and has created more than 400 jobs.

“Alongside flagship investments like BMW, Porsche and DHL, Leipzig’s economy above all relies on local medium-sized companies. Despite the relatively small size of these firms and in some cases their tight financial situation, they have survived the crisis and stabilised their activities. They have defied all the problems on the market on the road to independence, not to mention problems associated with foundation, restructuring and even entering the global market. Over the past 20 years, they have developed into the core of the regional economy, accounting for the lion’s share of jobs and apprenticeships. One example of this is Messeprojekt GmbH and its subsidiary INUMA GmbH. With 170 full-time staff and a network of more than 200 firms in the region, we build trade show booths on behalf of Leipziger Messe for clients from Germany and abroad. Our most prestigious assignment was to build the stand for Mercedes exceeding 12,000 square metres in size at IAA Commercial Vehicles – the biggest international exhibition in the industry.”

Hartmut Bunsen
CEO
Fairnet GmbH

Leipzig is also in an excellent position in the vital energy sector. Verbundnetz Gas AG (VNG) is the leading natural gas service provider in eastern Germany.

Market-leader Stadtwerke Leipzig is an innovative power utility and international energy contractor. Another institution in Leipzig enjoying strong growth is the European Energy Exchange (EEX).
“Sometimes people ask me whether I regret coming to Leipzig as the Director-General of MDR. ‘No, never!’ I always reply. To me, my years in Leipzig have been the happiest and most interesting period of my career. Being appointed to set up a broadcasting corporation like MDR in a city at the centre of global political interest was a unique opportunity. This was a chance my generation hadn’t had before. Now we can say that we were there. I’m convinced that Leipzig will one day rank alongside other media centres like Hamburg, Munich, Cologne and Berlin. The necessary requirements are already met by the city and its surroundings. And they’re joined by the witty, charming locals, who cope splendidly with all the new challenges they face. Ultimately, it’s this mentality which has made Leipzig my new home.”

Prof. Udo Reiter
Director-General of MDR – Central German Broadcasting

Another Leipzig success story. Unister GmbH operates and markets well-known internet portals. More than 6.3 million internet users visit its websites every month such as urlaubstours.de (holidays), hotelreservierung.de and auto.de.
Magnet for researchers
Leipzig’s research community enjoys
an excellent reputation

The library at the University of Leipzig, the second-oldest in Germany, is known as the Albertinum.
With Alma Mater Lipsiensis having been founded in 1409, making the University of Leipzig the second-oldest university in Germany, Leipzig has a scholarly tradition stretching back more than 600 years. Nowadays, the University of Leipzig is one of the most popular universities in eastern Germany. Over the past 10 years, the number of students enrolled in the city has almost tripled to around 38,500.

Apart from the University of Leipzig, there are six other colleges and universities and a host of non-university research centres in the city. In 1993, the long-standing HHL Graduate School of Management was converted into a private university. Nowadays, it regularly ranks in the top places of university league tables.

Leipzig Telecoms College (HfTL) provides modern, practical training in its accredited degree programmes in communications engineering, IT and computer science for telecoms. Being integrated within a network of universities in Europe, the USA and Asia guarantees the high quality of its research and teaching.
Leipzig University of Applied Sciences tackles forward-looking research projects in areas such as environmental protection and renewable energies. Meanwhile the Academy of Visual Arts enjoys huge interest as the cradle of the globally successful ‘New Leipzig School’. 

“The people here have made the city their own. They use the opportunities it harbours and show impressive enthusiasm – be it sunbathing while boating along Leipzig’s canals, applauding those taking up the rear during the annual marathon, endless standing ovations for the Rolling Stones, or observing the construction of Porsche and BMW!

“This commitment to their city is shared by young and old alike. There are cities to visit; Leipzig is a city to live in!

“Leipzig up and coming.” “Leipzig on the move.” “Leipzig lives!” These slogans reflect not just the external changes in Leipzig but also the joie de vivre and quality of life of the people living there. I came to Leipzig about 13 years ago and have experienced every aspect of its development at first hand. The people of Leipzig love their city, soak up its atmosphere – and pass on their contentment to visitors. Although Leipzig isn’t one of the standard world metropolises, it has a wealth of cultural and sporting activities – and it’s here! It’s a city full of innovation, expertise and heritage whose rhythm is shaped equally by robot-assisted heart surgery and the ambience of coffeehouses coupled with a spirit of investment and research. The tremendous progress made in medicine in Leipzig over the past 10 years building on its past tradition has attracted international attention.


Prof Friedrich-Wilhelm Mohr
Medical Director of Leipzig Heart Centre
The modern BioCity was opened in 2004 at the site of the old Leipzig Fair—and houses synergies between research and production.

BioCity Leipzig testifies to the close cooperation between the City of Leipzig, the University of Leipzig and the government of Saxony. The university section of the BBZ Biotechnology-Biomedicine Centre, it houses an incubator for new firms and entrepreneurs.

Six departments from the University of Leipzig and pioneering companies work together here on research, development and manufacturing.

Lecture hall of the Institute of Anatomy of Leipzig University Hospital.

The reading room of the German National Library in Leipzig, which contains 13.5 million items.
Other research centres are right next door, including three Max Planck Institutes. One feather in Leipzig’s cap is the arrival of the Fraunhofer Institute for Cell Therapy and Immunology, which explores specific solutions at the interfaces between medicine, bioscience and engineering.

Another new Fraunhofer Society institute is the MOEZ Central and Eastern Europe Centre.

The DBFZ German Biomass Research Centre contributes to Leipzig’s prominent position in the energy sector. It conducts research and consulting in areas such as the protection of fossil resources, reducing dependence on energy imports, and strengthening economic activity, especially in rural areas. And it focuses on themes such as bio energy systems, biofuels and thermochemical process engineering.
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