



City Tourism

# Germany Welcomes Islamic Tourism Magazine

Germany welcomed *Islamic Tourism Magazine*, which was represented by Mounir El-Fishawy, who visited 6 cities and wrote the following report :

It was time to fly to Germany. I felt restless and tense, though it was a tension that reminds one always of the first time one travels abroad, in my case around 30 years ago, when I left my homeland for Beirut. As usual, I felt anxious until I settled down on my seat on the airplane, fastening my belt, and leaving my whole private life behind me, concentrating only on

my most beloved pastime - traveling the world.

I was aware that my trip was perhaps to the most punctual and precise spot on earth: Germany. This is indeed a country of punctuality, accuracy, strict obligations and dynamism. All these traits make me both infatuated and angry, however. My anger was towards the super punctuality, and I asked myself: Why not imitate the German care for accuracy - what if we all took Germany as a shining example and ideal model to follow in this respect?!

When the plane entered German air-

space, I looked out of the window to view the varied landscape: mountains, plains, valleys, dense forests, unlimited greenery. Indeed, green is the obvious colour throughout the German landscape, its charm adding to the natural beauty like a painting. But I also noticed how paved roads connect every place.

## The Beginning .. Frankfurt

Arriving at Frankfurt Airport, the German Government, our hosts, welcomed *Islamic Tourism Magazine*. Everything about the trip from hereon in had been precisely ➤

لقطة لقلعة هيدلبرغ والقصور التابعة لها.

A view of Heidelberg Fortress



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أحد فنادق «بادن بادن» التاريخية التي يعود إنشائها إلى القرن الثامن عشر.  
A Historical Hotel of 18th Century - Baden Baden.

**The small but famous city of Baden-Baden is also known as the resort of millionaires (German as well as foreign), a place where entrepreneurs and business people make deals; a meeting-point for politicians at particular times of the year; the venue for the international German horse-racing event; a city of tourism, relaxation, expensive shopping and, perhaps most of all, enjoyment of its pure atmosphere and air.**

coordinated weeks in advance.

Frankfurt Airport, with its distinguished services and facilities, allowed me to finalize all procedures (measures) easily and comfortably.

### Edina Calls

After finishing the necessary procedures and leaving the customs' area, I looked around until I heard my name announced on the tannoy. I proceeded to the Information Office, where I found the smiling welcome of a young woman, twenty some-thing, called Edina Mourad Sabanovic, a German whose father was Bosnian and mother Polish. Naturally, she spoke perfect German, English as well as Spanish, and knew a little Arabic too.

She very politely accompanied me for four days during my tour. We visited Baden-Baden, Heidelberg, Wiesbaden and Frankfurt.

### Baden-Baden

#### The City of Millionaires

The small but famous city of Baden-Baden is also known as the resort of millionaires (German as well as foreign), a place where entrepreneurs and business people make deals; a meeting-point for politicians at particular times of the year; the venue for the international German horse-racing event; a city of tourism, relaxation, expensive shopping and, perhaps most of all, enjoyment of its pure atmosphere and air.

*Brigitte Misner*, General Manager of Tourism in Baden Baden, told us that the city was rewarded the Certificate of Environmental Purity from the International Environment Assembly as well as the 5-Star Pearl Prize from the American Academy for Hospitality Sciences, the first city to receive this (the Academy has only ever rewarded this Prize - 1400 times - to hotels and airlines). Mrs Misner added that there were many Arab tourists who visited the city to enjoy its distinguished hospitality and many services, notably its health resorts, especially the famous Baden-Baden thermal baths. Arab visitors, she said, preferred always to live in chalets rather than hotels.

### Baden-Baden

#### Bodily Comfort

'Baden' in German means to take a bath. I asked: Why it is called Baden-Baden instead of just Baden? But there was no response. Then I said (just for fun): maybe due the large number of thermal baths and springs, a comment that thankfully went down well.

Mrs Misner added that the Romans discovered Baden-Baden around 2000 ➤

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years ago. Karakalla established the famous thermal baths which have developed throughout the ages (the largest thermal baths is named after him). These thermal baths are pools filled with water with varying degrees of heat, as well as sauna pools and swimming pools. The duration of bathing in these pools, which have fourteen rooms, is between 5 and 15 minutes, with the last room sterilized and furnished for deep sleep after taking a bath. After that, the visitor feels refreshed, relaxed, lively and active.

Some of the famous visitors here include former US president Bill Clinton, President Nelson Mandela of South Africa, and the tennis ace, Boris Becker.

### Heidelberg

#### The University City

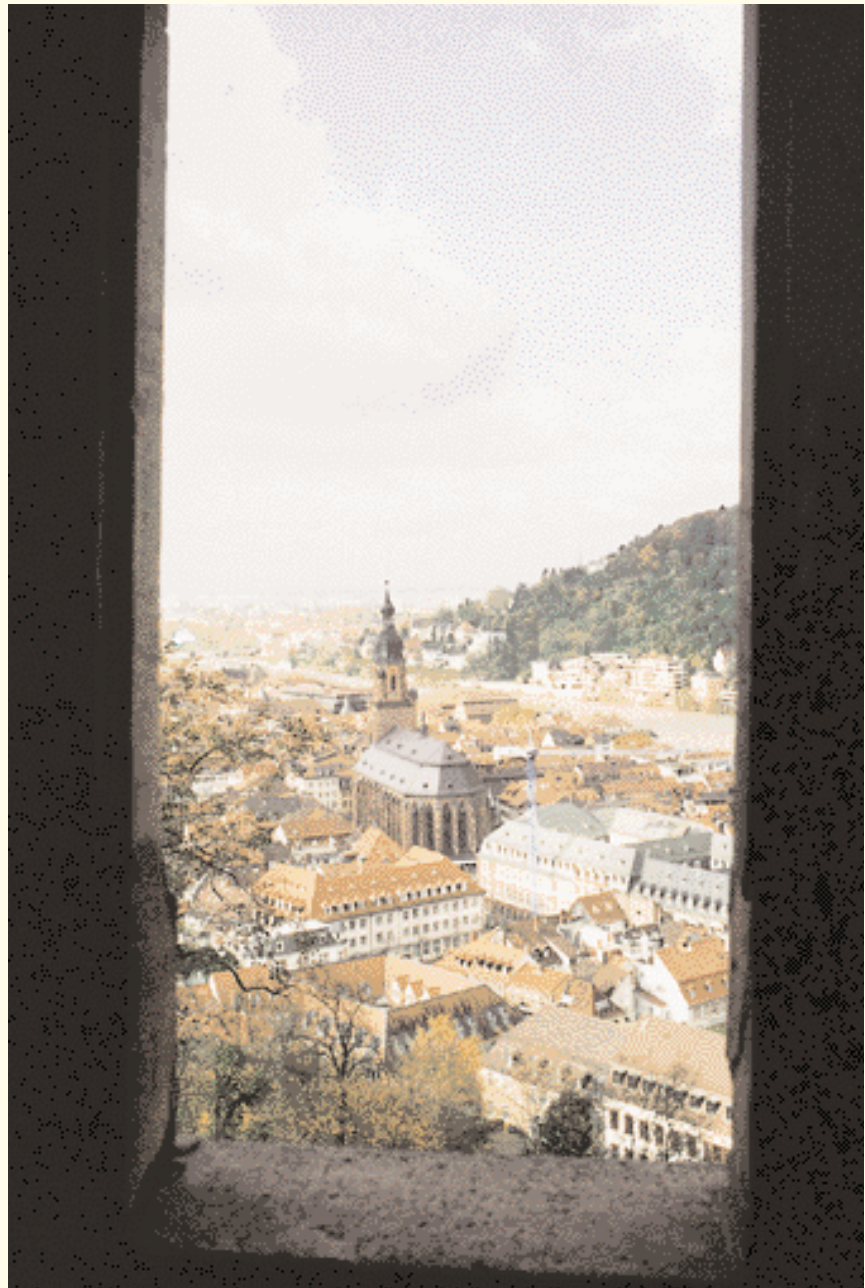
Fortunately, my arrival in Heidelberg was on Sunday (a weekend). So, without any official appointment, I enjoyed the inspiring atmosphere with my companion. I went to the city's shopping centre where the shops were closed although restaurants were teeming with people. Among others, there was a choice of Indian, Egyptian, Syrian, and Italian.

The next day, we met our guide, Vivian Beck, who spoke fluent German and English. We found out that she was in fact an Egyptian who had lived in Bab El-Louk, in Cairo. After graduation from Cairo University, she fell in love with a German and they married. From Cairo to Heidelberg, the city of students, the location of the oldest and biggest University in Germany (Heidelberg University) where 25,000 students study (51.50% of them female, and 40% foreign students of different nationalities).

It is remarkable that 13 of this university's professors have received the Nobel Prize in various fields and branches, including Albert Einstein, Goethe who lived at the time by chance in one of the city's hotels where he wrote his famous letter to his mother telling her, 'Expect me to return to you from Heidelberg either as a deep believer or an insane person'. He was living between the Cathedral chanting on one side and the screaming patients of the asylum on the other.

Among the most famous visitors to Heidelberg were the American writer, Mark Twain, the philosopher Hegel, and Friedrich Ebert, the former president of the Weimar Republik (today Weimar city).

It must be mentioned also that around 100 years ago there was a prison here following the University which was used for punishing riotous students. ➔



A view of Heidelberg City from the Fortress.

مدينة هيدلبرغ من أحد منافذ القلعة

**Heidelberg is very proud of its old fortress telling the history of its ancient kings, emperors and princes. The related palaces overlook one of the rivers (in a wonderful panoramamic view incorporating its ancient history with carved statues, and rare trees with their wondrous leaves that were transported hundreds of years ago from the Far East.**



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### Heidelberg: The Fortress City

Heidelberg is very proud of its old fortress telling the history of its ancient kings, emperors and princes. The related palaces overlook one of the rivers (in a wonderful panoramic view incorporating its ancient history with carved statues, and rare trees with their wondrous leaves that were transported hundreds of years ago from the Far East.

Visiting the you will experience the oldest restaurant in the city, called Shnockerloss, dating back to 1703.

Tourism is the main source of revenue in Heidelberg, which is itself the main tourist destination of businessmen and people concerned with specialist exhibitions that are held here throughout the year. In addition, there are the fortress festivals with bonfires every first Saturday of June, July and September.

### Story of the University

The ancient and wise Confucius said in his everlasting words: "The one who hears is not like the one who sees". However, there was more than merely seeing and watching from my trip, namely the impressions that resulted from my meetings and intensive discussions with many German officials in the various fields of politics, tourism, economy, information and media (over a period of 11 days).

Indeed, I wish it were possible to mention and write about all that I have seen, but it is pertinent here to summarize the harvest of my trip due to the limited space in this edition. The beginning of the story dates back to February 2002 during the conference of the Arab-German Civilizational Dialogue which was held in the Arab League in Cairo. That conference resulted in mutually positive verdicts relating to all things Arab. Behind much of this mutuality stood the German partners represented by the Journalism & Media Office of the German Government via Herr Peter Buehler (responsible for Africa, Morocco, Near East and Far East) and Reinhard Schwarzer, deputy head of Foreign Affairs. Both gentlemen are outstanding figures in the German media and consultants to the Chancellor, Herr Gerhard Schroeder, who relies on them.

Through our conversations in Khan El-Khalili and amidst the historical fragrance of Fatimid Cairo, these gentlemen took the initiative to invite us to Germany after seeing our magazine on the Internet. Their initiative expresses a complete and deep awareness of the media in the Arab and Islamic World.

I would also like here to mention the grand

efforts extended by my colleague and friend, Nagi Abbas, Association of Arab Journalists in Germany, regarding visit arrangements and offering all kinds of facilities.

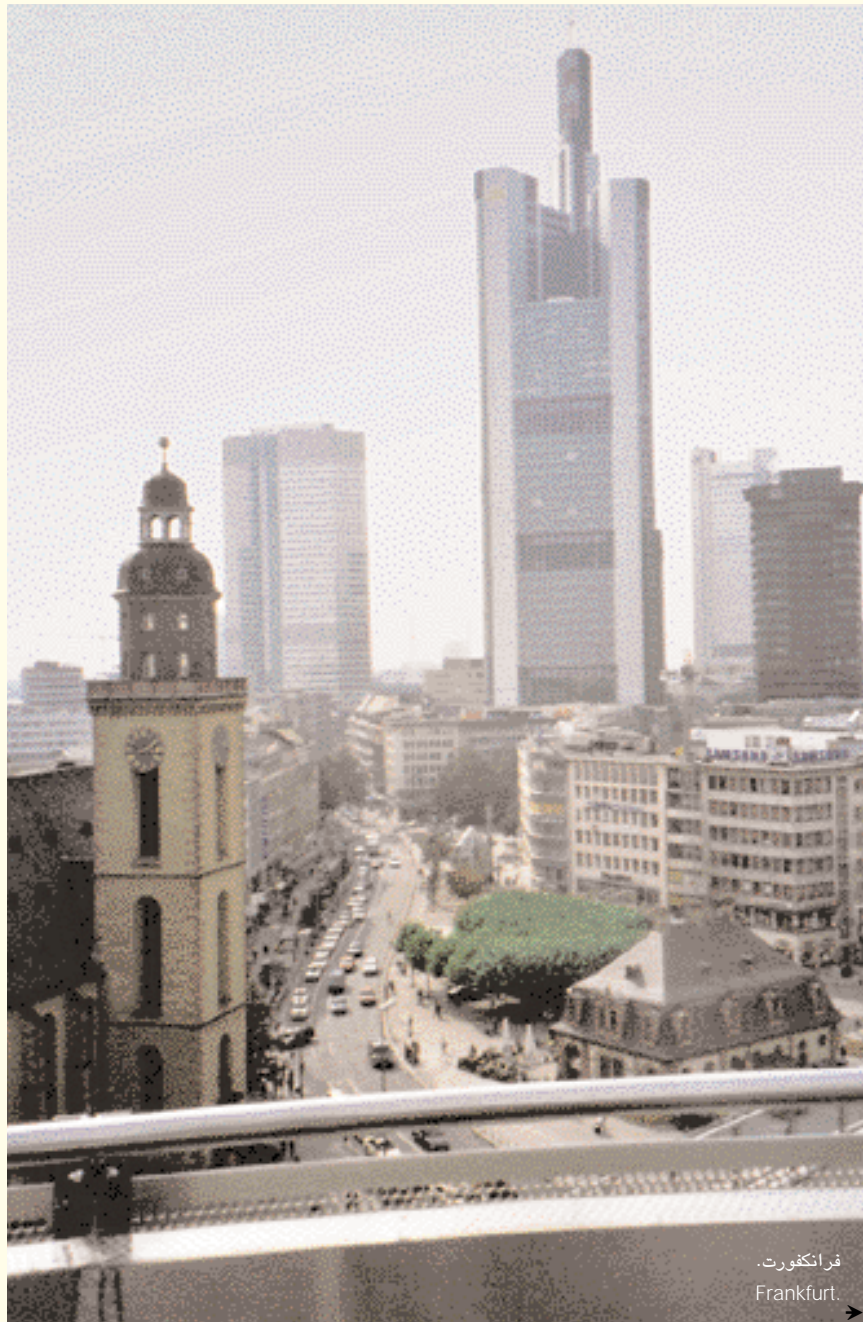
### Harvest of the Visit

Any task will rarely succeed without administrative planning, correct organization and precise coordination. Only after taking these steps will it be easy to reach the hoped for targets and ful-

fill the desired aims. Generally, all these factors are par for the course in relation to Germany and is the key to their incredible success and progress in all fields and branches.

### Tourism: A Unique World

The German Federal Authority for Tourism Industry supervises the administration of all tourist affairs in Germany - incoming and outgoing as well as local tourism. ➤



فرانكفورت.  
Frankfurt. ➤





## City Tourism



أولريش روتر مدير هيئة السياحة الألمانية أثناء استقباله لمندوب السياحة الإسلامية.  
Ulrich Rutter talks to our representative.

We moved to Berlin, the German capital, where Ulrich Rutter, of the Tourism Authority, met us. He explained that his Authority was interested in the kinds of tourism where everyone has the right to enjoy his/her free time and refresh his/her body and soul. "As officials, we are responsible for submitting all kinds of services and facilities to visitors, enabling them to find the utmost enjoyment. In that respect, we administer 33 large main tourist authorities, including airports, ports, roads, transportation, civil aviation, hotels, tour operators, taxes, insurance, fairs and customs, as well as banks. We do our best to coordinate with all the tourist establishments for mutual planning and cooperation in order to promote tourism and to reach the utmost results. In case of any obstacles or problems, we raise the issue(s) to higher officials, which are sometimes then discussed in parliament in order to be solved. As for the incoming tourism, this reached 37 million tourist nights (17 million tourists) in 1999, with external trips and tours at 67 million trips over a period of more than 4 nights.

NB : Germany's population is 75 million (including 7.30% people of foreign origin living in Germany).

### Travel Agencies and Tour Operators

Thus, it was necessary for me to visit at

least one of these 33 tourist authorities to know more about their activities and services. We met Sibylle Zeuch, the public relations manager of the German Authority for Travel Agencies and Tour Operators. She told us that members of these agencies and operators now number around 5,168 enterprises, and their part in tourism income is 70-80% in general. Also, they play a large part in consulting, giving advice, and arranging studies related to the markets distributing to all who are concerned about the tourism industry.

This authority was founded in 1950 and is the third largest tourism authority after the American ASTA and British ABTA in terms of membership. It also comprises a number of experts and committees working in the various fields of tourism: law, environment, aviation, road and transportation, insurance, taxes, as well as cooperating with other related authorities.

### Politics Plays a Part

Politics in Germany emanates from two sources : The Ministry of Foreign Affairs - taking care of foreign affairs and international relations; political parties that have political, economic and cultural activities inside



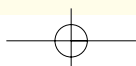
ماركوس لاكامب في حوار مع مندوب السياحة الإسلامية.  
Marcos La Camp with our representative.

and outside Germany, such as CDU Party represented by Konrad Adenauer Stiftung; SPD, represented by Friedrich Ebert Stiftung.

At the main entrance of the German Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Berlin, Herr Andreas Rathke cheerfully welcomed us, talking to us in German, English and Arabic. He accompanied us, explaining the history and nature of the building which shows remarkable efficiency that is characteristic of grand German architecture.

When we entered the Conference Hall, we were pleasantly surprised to learn that Andreas was not a public relations official but in fact the spokesman of the German Foreign Affairs Ministry. This is one of ➤

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**The Konrad Adenauer Stiftung has many cultural, economic and political activities throughout the Arab world, including in Egypt, Lebanon and some Gulf countries. Some of these activities include teaching German as a foreign language, holding seminars and symposiums, organizing conferences and training sessions in various fields. The SDP plays a similar important role. We had a conversation with Gerdt Emil Lesser who is responsible for the development politics sector in the Near East and Middle East. He confirmed that the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung had also various activities in some Arab countries, namely in the cultural, intellectual and professional training fields for more than 40 years.**

the unique features of the German official mentality which is both serious and friendly.

### Questions and Answers

Andreas Rathke and I discussed how to strengthen mutual touristic exchange between Germany on the one hand and the Arab and Islamic World on the other, as well as the necessity of issuing an Arabic newspaper in Germany. Understandably, there was no immediate response since a reply to such a proposal would be the responsibility of Peter Buehler, with whom I had a business lunch in the company of Reinhard Schwarzer and Nagi Abbas. Buehler did reply to my question with a smile: It is a question of budget - but we will try.

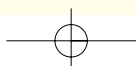
### Die Raben (Ravens) attack the CDU

We visited the CDU headquarters in Berlin from which proceeded the Konrad Adenauer Stiftung. Marcos La Camp welcomed us. He is one of the party's consultants on defence, development and human rights. As usual, the visit began with an explanation of the building. What attracted our attention in particular was the glass ceiling. Mr La Camp told us a funny story about this. Once, they were surprised by raindrops coming through the ceiling, so they called the technical experts who found out that ravens had eaten the adhesive material having found it rather delicious. This caused holes in the ceiling through which the raindrops fell.

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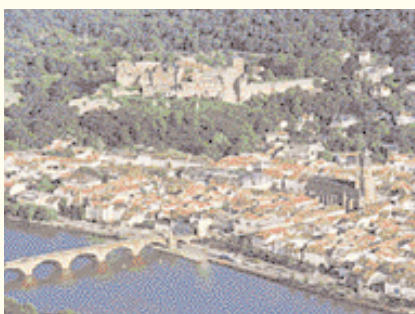


أحد مباني مدينة «بادن بادن».  
A Building in Baden-Baden.





## City Tourism



Baden Baden

مدينة بادن بادن.



Berlin welcomes you.

برلين ترحب بكم.

حمامات فريدرش باد الايرلندية  
الرومانية في بادن بادن بُعيد افتتاحها  
في ١٥ ديسمبر / كانون الأول ١٨٧٧

The Friedrichsbad Roman -  
Irish Baths at Baden-Baden  
shortly after they were opened  
on 15 December 1877.



**Heinz has visited many Arab countries and has been involved in running many wonderful projects for establishing airports, ports, dams and industrial complexes through his famous (HOCHTIEF) Enterprises. This took part in transporting the Abu Simbel Temple, building the High Dam in Aswan, and many other projects in more than a hundred countries.**

Naturally, journalism is sometimes seen as a troublesome profession. In spite of the intensive appointments, meetings and excursions from one city to another, I looked forward to a time of relaxation, and I asked for a visit to one of the mosques and Islamic centres in Frankfurt.

In the following editions of *Islamic Tourism* I will relate further stories of Islamic treasures in German universities and museums. At the end of my trip, I went to the North Sea where I visited several islands, and finally Heinzberg in Hamburg where I met one of the administrative emperors, Heinz Angenendt and his wife, Sally, who welcomed me with great hospitality and friendliness.

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more than a hundred countries.

### Between Orient and Occident

It is a pleasure to mention the deep sympathy of Angenendt and his family towards the Arabs, their unlimited infatuation and passionate love for the Arab World and her societies. I found the same feelings in both Peter Buehler and Reinhard Schwarzer. We highly appreciate their deep understanding, warm sympathy and sensibility, and consider them to be a new type of orientalist, far removed from the past archetype.

So, I asked myself: When should we (Arab & Muslim) begin to be occidentalist in the same way that others are orientalist, in order to know more about the occidental mentality, analyze it, approach its soul and intellect, touch its sensitivity and build bridges between the occidental and oriental personality and mentality, getting rid of petty hatred, helping spread peace, love and understanding, as is enjoined by both the Qur'an and the Bible - via the obedience to God. ■

## Germany in Brief

- The Federal republic of Germany is situated in the heart of Europe, surrounded by nine countries: Denmark to the north; Holland, Belgium, Luxembourg and France to the west; Switzerland and Austria to the south; Czech Republic and Poland to the East.
- The area of Germany is 357,000sq.km.
- The population totals 82.1 million (according to 1991 Census), with around 7.3 million residing foreigners. Germany is considered the second most populated European country after Russia.
- Germany is formed of 16 states, each with its own capital (mentioned between brackets below): Baden-Wuerttemberg (Stuttgart), Bavaria (Munich), Berlin-Brandenburg (Potsdam), Breamen-Hamburg-Hessen (Wiesbaden), Mecklenburg-Varpommern (Schwerin), Lower Saxony (Hanover), North of the Rhein Westfallen (Dusseldorf), Rheinland (Mainz), Saarland (Saar-Burken), Saxony (Dresden), Saxony-Anhalt (Magdenburg), Schleswig-Holstein (Kiel). Berlin, the capital, Hamburg, most important port, and Bremen are all city-states.
- The official currency now is the Euro, which is equivalent to 2 Deutschmarks. The Euro is about 100 Cents. Euro notes: 5, 10, 20, 50, 100, 500 and 1000.
- Euro coins: 1, 2, 5 Euro, and 1, 2, 5, 10, 20 and 50 Cents.
- Visa from any country within the EU is enough to gain entry to Germany. According to recent instructions, you need to apply 21 days before traveling. The EU countries until the end of 2002, are Germany, France, Italy, Holland, Belgium, Luxembourg, Portugal, Spain, Greece and Poland.
- Main cities that hold international exhibitions are Berlin, Hanover, Frankfurt and Dusseldorf. Berlin hosts the largest and most famous tourist exhibition in the world (ITB) in the first week of March every year. The website for the exhibition is: [www.itb-berlin.de](http://www.itb-berlin.de)
- The official language is Deutschesprache.
- Important rivers: Rhein, Main, Danube, Elbe, Weser and Mosel.

