

BUDGET TRAVELLER'S  
GERMAN WANDERLUST

48 HOURS IN

# Cologne



Must See



Bars & Cafes



Nightlife



Festivals & Events



Shopping

## Youth HotSpots in Germany

Share the moment.

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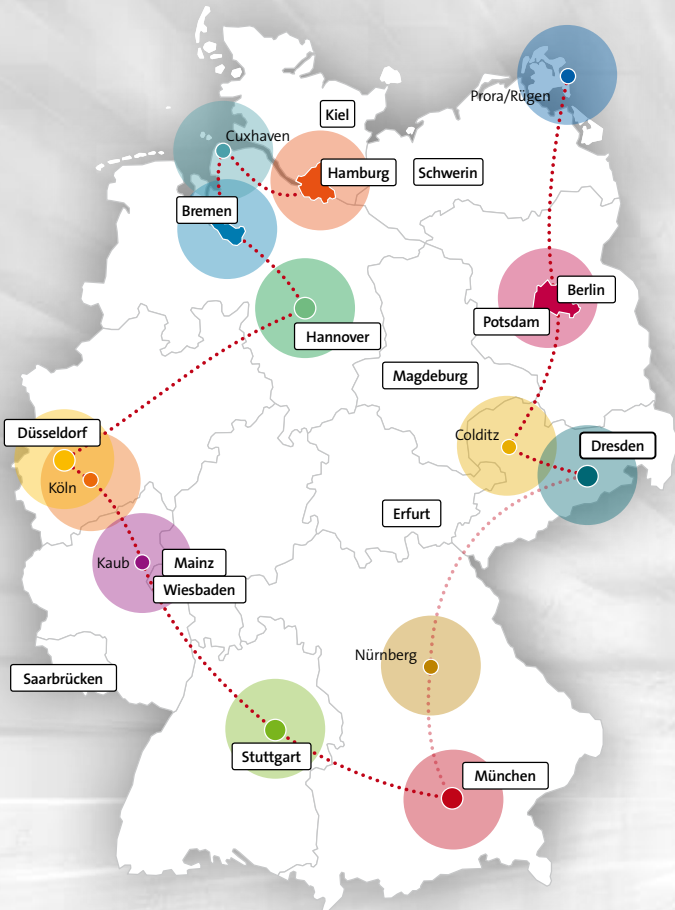
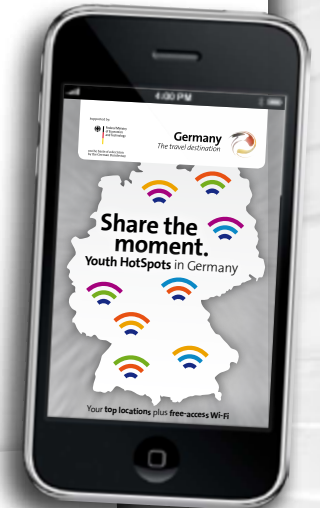


[www.germany.travel](http://www.germany.travel)

# Youth HotSpots in Germany share the moment.

**BUDGETTRAVELLER'S 48 HOUR GUIDE TO GERMANY** is a personal snapshot of some of the coolest youth hotspots [www.germany.travel/youth](http://www.germany.travel/youth) in 12 of Germany's leading cities and towns. The guide comes complete with my itinerary plus the cost associated with each activity so that you can pick and choose activities that are best suited to your interests and budget. Each itinerary was created to allow travellers the freedom to explore each place in a relaxed manner and without blowing your budget. I welcome your feedback – Share your thoughts on Facebook, Twitter & Instagram using the hashtag **#youthhotspotsgermany**.

**Get the Youth HotSpots App!**  
Your top locations plus free-access Wi-Fi  
for when you're on the move. For **iOS** and **Android**



## BudgetTraveller's biography



Kash Bhattacharya has been travelling on a budget for the last 4 years, blogging about his adventures at [BudgetTraveller.org](http://BudgetTraveller.org). He has been featured in the New York Times, Guardian, Vanity Fair and National Geographic. In July 2013, he's launching a guide to Luxury Hostels in Europe and also helped develop award-winning campaigns like **#BlogVille** for the Emilia Romagna Tourism Board, **#Blogmanay** for Unique Events and Event Scotland and **FilmTraveller\_CoteD'Azur** – a blog about film tourism in Cote D'Azur for the Cote D'Azur tourism board. You can also follow Kash on Twitter and Facebook.



Share the experience  
[youth-hostels.de](http://youth-hostels.de)



The German Wanderlust is part of the campaign 'Youth HotSpots in Germany – Share the moment.' launched by the GNTB at the 2013 ITB travel fair in Berlin to promote its year of youth tourism. For the project the GNTB has teamed up with the German Youth Hostel Association (DJH) [www.youth-hostels.de](http://www.youth-hostels.de) and transport partner Deutsche Bahn [www.bahn.com](http://www.bahn.com).

The Youth HotSpots, such as bars, cafés, must-sees and events, featured on the interactive map at [www.germany.travel/youth](http://www.germany.travel/youth) provided orientation points for Kash. Kash stayed overnight in DJH youth hostels and was travelling by train with Deutsche Bahn.



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Total cost of trip 14





## Good to know

While my trip has been sponsored, the views and thoughts represented in this article are my own.

### *Check-in Pathpoint Cologne, Backpackers Hostel*

The Pathpoint Cologne Backpackers Hostel is a perfect base to explore the city, just a few minutes walk from the train station.

The rooms are clean, comfortable and secure. Staff are welcoming and were ready to help me in terms of any information I needed. All rooms are equipped with shower, WC and individual lockers. Beds are equipped with a reading light and power point to juice your gadgets. Towels are available to hire for an extra €1. Breakfast is not included and costs €4. Wifi is available in the lobby area. My only complaint is that it's lacking in atmosphere but if you are looking for somewhere quiet and easygoing, this is an excellent option.

A bed in a 8 bed dorm starts at the €19 mark (without breakfast) while a double room here with breakfast, per night starts at the €60 mark.

DAY 1  
.....  
11 AM

1



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youth-hostels.de



# Cologne Cathedral

Built in 1248 in the heart of Cologne, 'Kölner Dom' is the fourth biggest cathedral in the world and its majestic 157m spires are probably the first thing that catches your eye as your bus or train rolls into its majestic train station.

Standing at the bottom, looking up – the hairs on the back of my neck stand up. It's a miracle in front of my eyes, considering that it survived the war when so little else did.

In the medieval times, the cathedral was a popular site for pilgrims who would gather from all corners of Europe to see the Magi's Shrine at the centre of the cathedral. Legend dictates that the remains of the three wise kings were buried here (the kings who followed the star to the stable of Bethlehem). Their bones were allegedly brought from Milan to Cologne in 1164 under Cologne's powerful Emperor Barbarossa.

Those that are brave and have the energy (I didn't!) to climb up the 509 steps of the south tower (€2,50 admission) are rewarded with great views across Cologne.

## Früh am Dom

If you're thirsty after climbing all those 509 steps, then salvation lies just across the square at the 'Früh am Dom' beer hall. Despite it's very central, touristic location, locals flood in here to quaff a few of their favourite Cologne beer – 'Kölsch'

The 'Kölsch' is served in small glasses, called 'Stangen', of 0.2l. That way the beer is always fresh and cold. Don't laugh at the deceptive size of the glass like the **Bavarians** do. The waiters are fast here and in a blink of the eye they bring you a new one once your old one is nearly finished. Sometimes the waiter (called 'Köbes' in local language) will even hand you a fresh Kölsch without being asked, so it is easy to lose track of how much you drink. The trick is to place a beer mat on top to prevent an automatic refill. It's cold, not too gassy and refreshing – the best beer of Germany in my opinion!



DAY 1  
12 PM

2



**Must See: Cologne Cathedral**



DAY 1

2 PM

3



**Bars & Cafés:**  
**Früh am Dom beer hall**





Cologne

DAY 1  
.....  
3:30 PM

4

## Picture postcard pretty Cologne

If you love walking, Cologne is the city for you. It's a very compact, pretty city with everything within a short walking distance and reminded me a lot of Edinburgh.

Walking by the Rhine in the Köln Altstadt has to be one of life's great experiences watching the boats roll by on the Rhine while the trains thunder across the Hohenzollernbrücke, rattling it's thousands of love locks.

## Pegel Köln

As the cycles zip by me on the embankment, a tall structure, what seems like a clock, piques my curiosity. I do some googling as one does and realize that I am standing in front of the famous 'Pegel Köln'— one of 20 water gauges that measures the level of water along the Rhine.

The little hand shows the meter, the bigger hand, the decimeter of the water level. Water level on my photo: 3.3 m! Flooding from the Rhine has been a major cause of concern in recent years after the devastating floods of 1993.

To give you an idea, flood protection measures are introduced in Cologne when the water level reaches 4.5m, shipping traffic is reduced at 6.2 m (High-water mark I) when ships have to reduce their speed to 20 km/h. At the level of 8.30 m, the high water mark II is reached and the ship traffic is stopped completely. Once water levels reach 10m, a disaster alarm is raised across Cologne. The floods of 1993 saw the water levels reach 11.3. However,



DAY 1  
.....  
4 PM

5

the highest ever measured level of the Rhine in Cologne was on the 27th and 28th of February 1784 when it reached a staggering 13.84 meters. The floods of February 1784 were one of the greatest natural disasters of it's time. Central Europe was blighted by extreme floods following the melting of the snow after a brutal & extremely cold winter in the Northern Hemisphere. Natural or man-made, whichever way we analyse the causes of climate change, there is no doubt it will have a significant impact on the way of life here in Cologne and impact our travels in the years to come. The clues always lie in the past...



**Must See: Pegel**



DAY 1

7 PM

6

## Evening of art at Museum Ludwig

Cologne has one of the world's best collections of museums and galleries for a city of its size. My personal favourites and ones I recommend you to visit if you are here for a short trip are the **Museum Ludwig** and the Schokoladenmuseum.

Luckily, I timed my visit to Cologne on the first Thursday of the month when locals can visit the museum (Heinrich-Böll-Platz) for free and tourists pay a reduced price of €7. As a result the museum was packed and buzzing.

You can feast over a treasure chest of pop art plus you can look forward to some outstanding temporary exhibitions. To give you an idea, when I visited they were showcasing the works of the celebrated photographer, Man Ray & Illustrator/ Cartoonist – Saul Steinberg. Within the entry price, on the evening you get access to their very own FilmForum cinema which shows art documentaries.

A great evening of art at the Museum Ludwig.



**Must See: Museum Ludwig**



**Cost** €7.50

## Em Golde Kappes

If you're looking for a true Köln beer house experience, head to Em Golde Kappes (Neusser Str. 295, simply take the subway to Florastrasse station.)

'Wer uns nicht kennt, hat Kölle verpennt!' which translates as 'Whoever doesn't know us, overslept Cologne', is the golden motto of the restaurant Em Golde Kappes in Cologne.

This apt motto is reflected in it's off the beaten track location and the huge abundance of gruff, working class men in the pub who clearly hadn't slept too much and had been spending their nights in this pub.

The gruff, anxious looks might be partly explained by the fact that when we hit the pub, we walked straight into the local equivalent of the gladiatorial ring: the middle of the local derby between Kaiserslautern – Cologne. A fiercely fought local derby? Nope. Was a disaster. Cologne were losing pretty badly.... faces in the picture, tell the story I think.

I am excited to discover that this is a Fruh brewery! Before the night got too messy, after a few Kölsches, we ordered food. It serves traditional, staple German food, very tasty and very unhealthy too. I had some wurst with fried potatoes and a nice salad to accompany the dish.

DAY 1  
8:30 PM

7



 **Nightlife: Em Golde Kappes**

## Stiefel

Afterwards, it's a bit of haze. I remember hitting a few cool bars in Cologne with Melvin (from Traveldudes) drinking lots of Kölsch. The one that stands out in my hazy memory was Stiefel in Zupilcher Strasse, an awesome bar with hardcore table fusball addicts and hardcore rock and techno tunes.

DAY 1  
LATE

8



 **Nightlife: Stiefel**



## Brunch at Theater im Bauturm

I missed breakfast at the hostel. My head is a little too weary after a night out in the town with my mate, Melvin.

If your head is feeling a little heavy too after far too many Kölsches from the night before and it's a nice sunny day, I recommend starting the day like we did at the Theater im Bauturm (Aachener Strasse 24–26). Grab one of the prized outdoors tables for a good dose of Vitamin D and add another generous dose of Vitamin C by ordering their excellent freshly squeezed orange juices. Afterwards order breakfast. You have a neatly laid out menu of choices where you can order everything from croissants to French toast to portions of Leberwurst to mini jars of Nutella and scrambled eggs.

**Cost** With orange juice, just €7.50

I go for the scrambled eggs with chives accompanied by a few rashers of bacon. Delicious stuff.



DAY 2  
.....  
11:30 AM

9

 **Bars & Cafés: Theater im Bauturm**



DAY 2  
.....  
1 PM

10



**Flohmarkt, Neustadt**

## Flohmarkt, Neustadt

It's the first day of Spring and we go for a wander to shake off the hangover. We stumble upon an interesting antique flea market near Neumarkt.

Cologne has a hive of flea-markets. Fascinating that with all the online shops on the internet and the shopping malls, people all over the world, still flock to these outdoor flea markets in the search of the old, the unique, the unloved and forgotten things we once loved. I've found across my travels in Germany and especially Cologne, in particular the locals seem to love and champion these kind of markets. The best flea markets are held at Wilhelmplatz, at the South Stadium and at the horse track.

# Schokoladenmuseum

I am looking for all kinds of hangover cures. How about chocolate?

For a truly Charlie and the Chocolate Factory experience, head for Cologne's famous Schokoladenmuseum (Am Schokoladenmuseum 1A) where you spend time learning about how chocolate is made and more importantly, eating it. Located on the River Rhine it is the only chocolate museum in the world and pulls in 650,000 visitors annually. It is the most visited museum in Cologne and one of the top 10 museums in Germany. Highlight for chocaholic visitors like me was the opportunity to dip wafer sticks into this ridiculous, massive chocolate fountain. The young ones can additionally sign up for chocolate making class. The museum also functions as a production factory where you can see how the lovely gooey stuff is made. There's a section about the history of chocolate where you can glean interesting facts like...

**Average German per capita consumption of chocolate is 9.31 kgs – that's the equivalent of 92 chocolate bars!**

German friends can take solace from the fact that the British are worse with an average per capita consumption of 9.41 kgs.

However, the Swiss are the best, topping the list at 10.31 kgs.

**Cost** Entrance fee here is €7,50 per adult.

DAY 2  
.....  
2 PM

11



**Must See: Schokoladenmuseum**





DAY 2  
4 PM

12

## Farina Haus Cologne – the world’s oldest perfume factory

After visiting a chocolate factory what is the next best thing to do in Cologne? Visit the world’s oldest perfume factory – the home of Eau de Cologne.

‘The smell was like an Italian spring morning after rain.’

That was the marketing slogan for the original Eau De Cologne. I learn this and stretch my olfactory nerves to the limit over the afternoon, learning about the essence of perfumes and cologne at the Farina-Haus Cologne (Obenmarspforten 21 )

Perfume lovers take note.

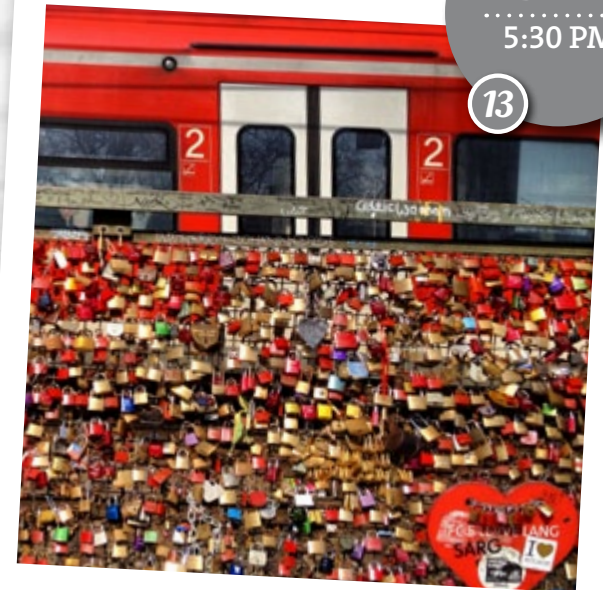
This is the real stuff not the 4711 cheap imitations you can buy in shops. A tour of the Farina-Haus is a must for all perfume lovers. Entry price is € 5 for a guided tour in English (check ahead for times) plus at the end of the tour you get a small gift bottle of the magic potion too. Brilliant!



**Must See: Farina Haus**

## Crossing the bridge of love, Hohenzollernbrücke, Cologne

The Hohenzollernbrücke is also called the Locking Bridge. If you walk to the back of the **Kölner Dom** along a straight path, you’ll find the Hohenzollernbrücke bridge to your right covered in padlocks. These locks are placed there by couples to show their undying, everlasting love to each other. The custom originated in Italy and now practically every bridge in the world seems to have taken inspiration from this amazing love ritual.



DAY 2  
5:30 PM

13

*Hohenzollernbrücke*

## *Rheinstrand and the Bootshaus Alte Liebe*

The Rheinstrand, often referred to by locals as the 'Cologne Riveira' is a secluded beach facing the Rhine River on the outskirts of Cologne. It's the perfect place to chill and look at the Cologne skyline and the passing ships.

A great place to catch the action is the old boathouse on the Rhine, the Bootshaus Alte Liebe (Rodenkirchener Leinpfad) where you can enjoy coffee, cake, Kölsch and delicious food. The feeling of being in the middle of the Rhine is something special, watching the people strolling by on the shore and admiring the passing ships up close. Time goes by very quickly. The perfect place to end my 48 hours in Cologne.

### **Top Tip**

#### Getting around

Cologne has a very good subway/tram and bus network 'KVB' (Kölner Verkehrsbetriebe); one- and three-day-passes are available. The tickets are valid for subway, tram and regional train within the VRS-network. Trips within the city limits require zone 1b tickets (€2.70, 2014: €2.80, day-ticket: €7.80). For short trips of up to 4 stops on subway, tram or bus there is also the slightly cheaper 'Kurzstrecke' (short trip ticket).

DAY 2  
.....  
7 PM

14



## *Top Tip*

# *Romance of the Rhine – Visit Kaub*

If you're looking to soak in the romance of the Rhine, stay in the lesser known town of Kaub, famous for its excellent Riesling which is farmed on the steep inclines above the town.

It also famous for the fairytale castle of Burg Pfalzgrafenstein, situated on a rock in the middle of the Rhine. Just looking at this castle in the middle of the river at sunset with barges drifting by it down the Rhine, summarized the romance of this part of the world.

I recommend a nights stay at the youth hostel here, the Jugendherberge Kaub which is one of the prettiest youth hostels you will ever stay in. A bed in a 4 bed dorm starts at € 21.50 while a double room, ensuite with breakfast starts at € 54 for two people.

**Getting there.** You reach Kaub from Cologne by taking the scenic Cologne – **Frankfurt** line (change at **Koblenz**) which allows you to soak in the beauty of the Rhine – vine-clad hills, fairytale castles straight out of a Disney movie and villages with their picturesque timber-framed houses and inns.

Check Deutsche Bahn website ([www.bahn.co.uk](http://www.bahn.co.uk)) for timetables and prices.



*The fairytale castle  
of Burg Pfalzgrafenstein*

## Cologne – Getting there and away



**DB** BAHN

**Train:** Cologne is served by two major train stations – Köln Hauptbahnhof and Köln-Deutz. Cologne is linked with Amsterdam, Brussels, and Paris by Thalys and ICE High Speed trains. Additionally, **Frankfurt** airport has a direct ICE trainservice to Cologne and it takes an hour. [www.bahn.com](http://www.bahn.com)

**Air:** Cologne Bonn Airport is a hub for the low cost airlines Germanwings and TUIfly. The airport is approximately 15 min by S-Bahn (local train) to the centre of Cologne. S-Bahn fare (ticket zone 1b) is currently **€2.70** one-way.

Big thanks to the German National Tourist Board, their partners for the ‘Youth Hotspots’ campaign – Jugendherberge: The **German Youth Hostel Association** and Deutsche Bahn for sponsoring my ‘German Wanderlust’ tour.

Also like to thank the **Cologne Tourism Board** for their kind support.

I was touring Germany as part of an effort to highlight and discover the country’s emerging ‘Youth Hotspots.’

Find out more about these hotspots at [www.germany.travel/youth](http://www.germany.travel/youth), feel free to add your own and also do download their free youth hotspots app that is now available on the Apple Store & Android Store.

### Total cost of trip

|   |                 |
|---|-----------------|
| 2 nights, Cologne Pathpoint Hostel<br>in a 4 bed dorm, with breakfast | €51.00          |
| Cologne Cathedral   | € Free          |
| 2 Kölsch’s at Früh am Dom   | €3.60           |
| Evening of art at Museum Ludwig                                       | €7.00           |
| Dinner and more Kölsch at Em Golde Kappes                             | €10.00          |
| Even more Kölsch at Stiefel   | €12.00          |
| Brunch at Theater im Bauturm  | €7.50           |
| Farina Haus Cologne   | €5.00           |
| Dinner and Kölsch at Bootshaus Alte Liebe                             | €10.00          |
| <b>Total:</b>   | <b>€ 106.10</b> |

» **Visit Cologne online**