

# World War II in Germany: Understanding History

This tour provides history students with in-depth knowledge of the events and background to WWII and the reconciliation afterwards. There are many educational visits to significant sites with an expert guide providing a great insight into this tragic time that led to the deaths of almost 50 million people.

## Itinerary at a Glance

- Arrive in Munich, the traditional centre of German separatism, for a brief city tour
- Travel south into the majestic Alps and Berchtesgaden to visit Hitler's Eagle's Nest and the Documentation Centre in Obersalzberg
- A specialist guided tour of Dachau concentration camp
- Visit the castle of Neuschwanstein; King Ludwig's magnificent castle
- A guided tour of Nuremberg and a visit here to the Documentation Centre Nazi Party Rally Grounds and the Faszination und Gewalt (Fascination and Terror) exhibition
- Tour Dresden and the places associated with the devastation of the bombing raid on the city
- A tour of Berlin's main sights including; the Brandenburg Gate, Berlin Wall, Soviet War memorial, Wilhelmstrasse and the famous Checkpoint Charlie museum
- Visits to Wannsee Villa, Holocaust museum, the Jewish Museum and the Topography of Terror
- A visit to the concentration camp at Sachsenhausen.
- A guided tour at the VW Motor Museum and Autostadt

## Full Itinerary

### Day One: Arrival in Munich

Met by the specialist tour manager upon arrival Munich, transfer to an Informative city tour of Munich, which was the traditional centre of German separatism and was the scene of Adolf Hitler's failed 1923 push to overthrow the German Weimar Republic. As well as the modern main areas of Munich, the emphasis will be on viewing Nazi sites like the destroyed Brown House and Feldherrnhalle, the site of many SS rallies. A free afternoon to explore Munich.

### Day Two: The Alps

Travel south into the majestic Alps and Berchtesgaden. Visit Hitler's Eagle's Nest, first taking a breathtaking bus journey up the Kehlstein road and then a luxurious brass elevator up through the rock into Kehlsteinhaus (the Eagle's Nest). The site is a unique combination of historic architecture and a stunning alpine setting. The Eagle's Nest was designed as a birthday present for Adolf Hitler's 50th birthday by Martin Bormann on behalf of the NSDAP (Nazi Party). Then on to the Documentation Centre in Obersalzberg, which became the second seat of government next to Berlin. The exhibition documents the history of the Obersalzberg and links the local historical aspects with a portrayal of the central phenomena of the National Socialist dictatorship.

### Day Three: Dachau

A specialist guided tour of Dachau. The Significance of Dachau will never be erased from German history. It stands for all concentration camps which the Nazis established in their territory, more than 200,000 people died there. Travel south to visit the castle of Neuschwanstein which managed to escape the war unscathed. Built in the neo-late Romanesque style with its turrets and mock medievalism, it is a real fairy-tale fantasy come true between 1869 and 1886 for the Bavarian King Ludwig II. The woodcarving in Ludwig's bedroom took 14 carpenters four and a half years to complete.

### Day Four: Stuttgart

A city tour of Stuttgart, including a visit to the Porsche museum, then a factory tour which follows production from the drawing board, right through to the rigorous testing of each new engine and the paint shop. Travel to Oberkochen to a company that was at the forefront of technology in the 1930s., Carl Zeiss, for a visit and tour of the museum. Finally onto Rothenburg-ob-der-Tauber, a beautiful medieval town that has been rebuilt following the devastation of WWII.

**Day Five: Rothenburg**

To Nuremberg for a guided tour of this city made infamous for the Nazi rallies and then the War Trials after the war. A key visit here is to the Documentation Centre Nazi Party Rally Grounds. The upper level houses an exhibition entitled Faszination und Gewalt (Fascination and Terror) dealing with the causes, relationships and consequences of National Socialist tyranny. Topics directly associated with Nuremberg form the major focus of the exhibition, which is organized into 19 chronologically structured exhibition areas, including: history of the Nazi Party Rallies, Buildings at the Party Rally Grounds, the 'Nuremberg Laws' of 1935, the 1945/46 Nuremberg Trials, the difficulty of dealing sensitively with the National Socialist architectural legacy after 1945.

**Day Six: To Dresden**

Dresden, perhaps the city that had the most destruction during WWII from aerial bombing. This was a terrible atrocity carried out by the allied forces. In one night the bombing raid reduced the city to flaming ruins and an estimated one-third of its inhabitants, possibly as many as a half a million, perished in what was perhaps the worst single event of WWII. It is testimony to how easily war can erode moral standards. In the first months of the war, British Bomber Command was anxious to avoid the risk of killing civilians and constrained itself to leaflet dropping and attacks on naval targets. After Dunkirk, the heavy bombings remained the only means by which Britain could fight the Nazis in continental Europe and so the tactics changed.

**Day Seven: To Berlin**

Berlin, a city that suffered after the war being split into different areas controlled by the Russians, Americans, British and French. Take an afternoon city tour of the main sights including: the Brandenburg Gate, Berlin Wall, Soviet War memorial, Wilhelmstrasse and the famous Checkpoint Charlie museum.

**Day Eight: Berlin**

Visit to the Wannsee Villa; Holocaust museum. On 20th January 1942 the meeting here was concerned with the organization and Implementation of "The Final Solution", the decision to deport the Jews of Europe to the East and murder them. In 1947 the minutes of the Conference recorded by Adolf Eichmann were found in the files of the German Foreign Office. Visit to the Jewish Museum and the Topography of Terror Museum an exhibition at the site of the former HQ of the dreaded SS and the Gestapo. View Berlin from the top of the Reichstag's new glass dome.

**Day Nine: To Sachsenhausen and Wolfsburg**

A morning visit to what was the dreadful camp at Sachsenhausen. The design of the grounds was conceived by the SS architects as the ideal concentration camp setting, giving architectural expression to the SS worldview and symbolically subjugating the prisoners to the absolute power of the SS. More than 200.000 people were imprisoned here between 1936 and 1945. Tens of thousands of people died of starvation, disease, forced labor, mistreatment, or extermination operations of the SS. Travel to Wolfsburg for the VW Motor Museum and Autostadt and a guided tour and explanation on the history, products and future direction of the company and all its brands: Bugatti. Lamborghini. Bentley. VW, Skoda and Maybach.

**Day Ten: Wewelsburg**

Travel to Wewelsburg and the War Memorial Museum, the SS training centre for an educational tour.

**Day Eleven: Frankfurt**

A morning city tour of the rebuilt Frankfurt old City centre, then some free time for shopping before transferring to the airport and the flight home.