BABYCCINO KIDS blog
daily inspiration for the modern family

WEEKEND GET-AWAY: BERLIN

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This week's get-away is from one of my favourite cities, Berlin, which I cannot wait to go visit with my kids. Rumour has it that it is one of the most child-friendly cities in Europe. Judith is a freelance writer who loves to travel. She is also a mother of two (a 5 and a 3-year-old) and long time resident of Berlin. She has become an expert in seeking out Berlin's child-friendly hotspots and was kind enough to share her tips with us.

EAT:

BABAR'S KINDER LITERATUR CAFE - Babar's is a children's literature cafe which is just around the corner from the Gethsemanekirche, Berlin's Prenzlauer Berg area. International parents and their children find this nice location to enjoy their lattes and fresh food, play some games and take part in events. You can find a cute playground just across the square from the café.

KIEZKIND - This is another unparalleled place located in Berlin's area around the Helmholtzplatz. In the winter, kids can gather around the heated indoor sand-box while parents can read funky magazines, enjoy cupcakes or sandwiches. To get a feeling for Kiezkind you can take a virtual tour here.

CHALET SUISSE - In the middle of Berlin's wonderful Grunewald forest you find a restaurant and biergarten that even your kids will love. Chalet Suisse offers a playground and a range of different dishes for kids. Check it out and enjoy the lush greenery out there!

CHARLOTTCHEN - The Charlottchen is almost an institution in the area of Charlottenburg near Stuttgarter Platz (called 'Stuttis')... You will find a huge wooden play area for children and good, basic, affordable food for parents. The restaurant hosts its own childrens' theater. Kids love it.

RESTAURANT APRIL - This bistro in Schoeneberg is a perfect, kid-friendly place to have breakfast and then follow up with a shopping trip in Winterfeldt-*Kiez*, as Berlin's quarters are called. Restaurant April has its very own children's corner. A perfect

morning in Berlin starts with the Restaurant April ‘Fit & vital' breakfast. This place is definetely worth checking out.

PLAY:

SCHLOSS PARK CHARLOTTENBURG - The park around the Charlottenburg castle is an escape full of greenery and has a wonderful atmosphere. It is the perfect place to spend time between shopping and sightseeing. When you walk through this amazing park, you will see the lake, some swans, a belvedere and an obelisk and find, in the back part of the park, a playground your kids will love. It is great to visit both in summer and in winter.

KINDERBAUERNHOP PINKE-PANKE - This city farm with an open playground in Berlin-Pankow is perfect for kids aged 7 to 14. In an area of about 7,500 square foot you will find more than 70 animals. Sheep and chickens will let children enjoy a rural athmosphere. The farm also offers a wide range of activities from baking bread to pottery.

LEGOLAND DISCOVERY CENTRE - On Potsdamer Platz between Mitte and Kreuzberg, you will find the Sony Center, good restaurants, movie theaters and a huge shopping mall. You will also find the Legoland Discovery Centre, a paradise for kids who adore Lego. Come in and take a tour – children can take part in a building workshop. There is even a miniture version of Berlin made out of lego blocks and a jungle tour.

MACHMIT MUSEUM FOR CHILDREN - *Mach mit* literally translates as : Join In. This children's museum in Prenzlauer Berg is a place like no other: kids learn through playing, and also experience new exciting things they would not come across in an average day. The arts and crafts activities on offer teach children to be more aware of their environment. The museum hosts changing exhibitions, from recreating old shops and teaching children about the environment.

SHOP:

HASE WEISS - This little paradise can be found in Charlottenburg: Anna Pfeiffer’s wonderful shop is a perfect mingle-mangle of furniture (the architect’s own!), phenomenal books and audiobooks, toys, clothes, minimalist doll’s houses (and their inhabitants!), colored crayons and pencils, Italian drawing sets, pretty metal robots or wooden boats. You may also find sparkling marbles and hand-knitted cardigans.

TANJA SCHWENN KINDERKLEIDER - The designer Tanja Schwenn does not only sell her own designs which are more than worth the visit to her boutique, but also a great collection of shoes. You can find Kickers, Falke, Naturino, Chérie, Giesswein, Ricosta, Robeez and Mod8. This lovely shop is just around from the Hackescher Markt in Berlin Mitte.

EMMA & CO - Yet another paradise for kids in the heart of Charlottenburg, just near Kurfuerstendamm. You can find exclusive dresses, shirts, trousers, jackets, coats, hats and handmade pillows, bags, shoes, toys and accessories. Labels come from Italy, France, Denmark and Germany, including IKKS, imps & elfs, Bellerose, Petit Bateau, Noa Noa, Maileg, Pom d’api, Chérie, American Outfitters, Los Ninos. Moms: check out Emma’s sister store ‘Bramigk und Breer' next door! A secret!

COQUIN COQUINES - Christine Brigl’s shop in Charlottenburg is magical. She sells wonderful toys (a.o. by Djeco and Rice), colorful jewellry and fashion (labels such as Noa Noa, Retour, Primigi, Pom d’Api). The clothes are sometimes retro, sometimes romantic. It is always a great selection, choosen by Christine herself.

IDEE CREATIVMARKT - You needn’t be a craft person to find inspiration here: Idee is a paradise for parents and kids when it comes to craft ideas – 1,600 square feet with everything from self-made pearls... and you can even learn new techniques or take a class in origami. Go on!

SEE:

FERNSEHTURM AM ALEXANDERPLATZ -The Fernsehturm has one of the best views over Berlin: You can see the Reichstag (Parliament building), the Brandenburg Gate and the Hauptbahnhof, Berlin’s main railway station, as well as the Olympic Stadium, the Museum Island in Mitte and Potsdam Square (Potsdamer Platz). It is one of the best things to do with children. You can even find a restaurant at the top of the tower.

ZOO BERLIN - Spending hree hours in the Berlin Zoo is one of the secrets for a complete weekend. A couple of playgrounds and restaurants offer a good rest for parents and kids.

DEUTSCHES TECHNIKMUSEUM BERLIN - (GERMAN TECHNOLOGY MUSEUM) How is jewellery manufactured? Why does an airplane fly? How does a ship function, and a railway locomotive? Scientific discoveries and natural phenomena can be watched here. At Science Center Spectrum which is the oldest modern science center in Germany, kids may try out 250 hands-on experiments from magnetism to music and sound... to learn that physics is fun.

MUSEUM FÜR NATURKUNDE - (NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM) Have you already seen the world’s largest dinosaur skeleton, the Brachiosaurus brancai? No? Come to Berlin-Mitte and do so. An area of about 6,600 square feet awaits its guests, presenting the nature of animals, ecology, and our universe.

MUSEUM FÜR KOMMUNIKATION - (COMMUNICATION MUSEUM) Find out some of the origins, the development, and the future of modern communication here! What is an answering machine? How did the Enigma function? Why do we use stamps and write letters? Why do we have radio?The museum in Berlin-Mitte provides its guests with answers and a lot of fun!

STAY:

Here are a couple of recommendation of child-friendly places to stay in Berlin:

Hotels:

Berliner Hof Hotel

Holiday Inn Berlin-Mitte

Mercure Hotel & Residenz Checkpoint Charlie

Movenpick Hotel Berlin

Appartment Rentals:

Zimmervermittlung 24

Ferien Wohnung/ Zimmer Berlin

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