

INFORMATION

- Length ca. 21 km
- Industrial heritage sites 17
- Duration day trip, ca. 5 hours (2.5 hours cycling time)
- Starting/end point "Treptower Park" S-Bahn station
- Public transportation  
S-Bahn S8, S9, S41, S42, S85 "Treptower Park" station
- BVG ferry F11  
from Baumschulenstraße to Wilhelmstrand

Route mostly bike lanes, quiet side streets, and waterfront paths. There are lengthier cycling sections without tour stops that traverse city parks.

Digital route planner: Komoot  
GPX Track and additional information (German only): [www.industriekultur.berlin](http://www.industriekultur.berlin)

Please send comments and suggestions about this bike route to: [kontakt@industriekultur.berlin](mailto:kontakt@industriekultur.berlin)

IMPRESSUM

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[www.industriekultur.berlin/en](http://www.industriekultur.berlin/en)

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October 2021

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Berliner Zentrum Industriekultur

**HTW**  
Hochschule für Technik und Wirtschaft Berlin  
University of Applied Sciences

**BERLIN**  
Special Department for Culture and Europe

In cooperation with **Visit Berlin**

**Stiftung Deutsches Technikmuseum Berlin**

**BERLIN**  
Special Department for Economic, Energy and Public Enterprises

# Industrial Heritage in Berlin

## BIKE ROUTES

### Route 3

# WATER AND POWER



**Archenhold Observatory**  
*Celestial Cannon and the Theory of Relativity*  
—  
Alt-Treptow 1 | 12435 Berlin  
[www.planetarium.berlin/archenhold-sterntwarte](http://www.planetarium.berlin/archenhold-sterntwarte)

**Oberschöneweide Industrial Railway Service Station**  
*The Bull Train*  
—  
Nalepastraße 215–223 | 12459 Berlin

**Frister Lamp Factory**  
*From Lamp Factory to Business Center*  
—  
Wilhelminenhofstr. 87 | 12459 Berlin  
[www.leuchtenfabrik-berlin.de](http://www.leuchtenfabrik-berlin.de)

☕ Sonnendeck  
[www.sonnendeck.berlin](http://www.sonnendeck.berlin)

**Oberschöneweide Transformer Works**  
*Global Market Leader for Large Transformers in the Rathenau-Hallen*  
—  
Wilhelminenhofstr. 83–85 | 12459 Berlin  
[www.rathenau-hallen.de](http://www.rathenau-hallen.de)

**Industriesalon Schöneweide**  
*Museum and Visitor Center*  
—  
Reinbeckstr. 10 | 12459 Berlin  
[www.industriesalon.de](http://www.industriesalon.de)

☕ Café Schöneweide  
[www.cafe-schoeneweide.de](http://www.cafe-schoeneweide.de)

☕ Kranbar | [www.kranbar.de](http://www.kranbar.de)

**Protestant Church of Peace**  
*Church with Industrial Flair*  
—  
Britzer Str. 3 | 12439 Berlin  
[www.friedenskircheberlin.de](http://www.friedenskircheberlin.de)

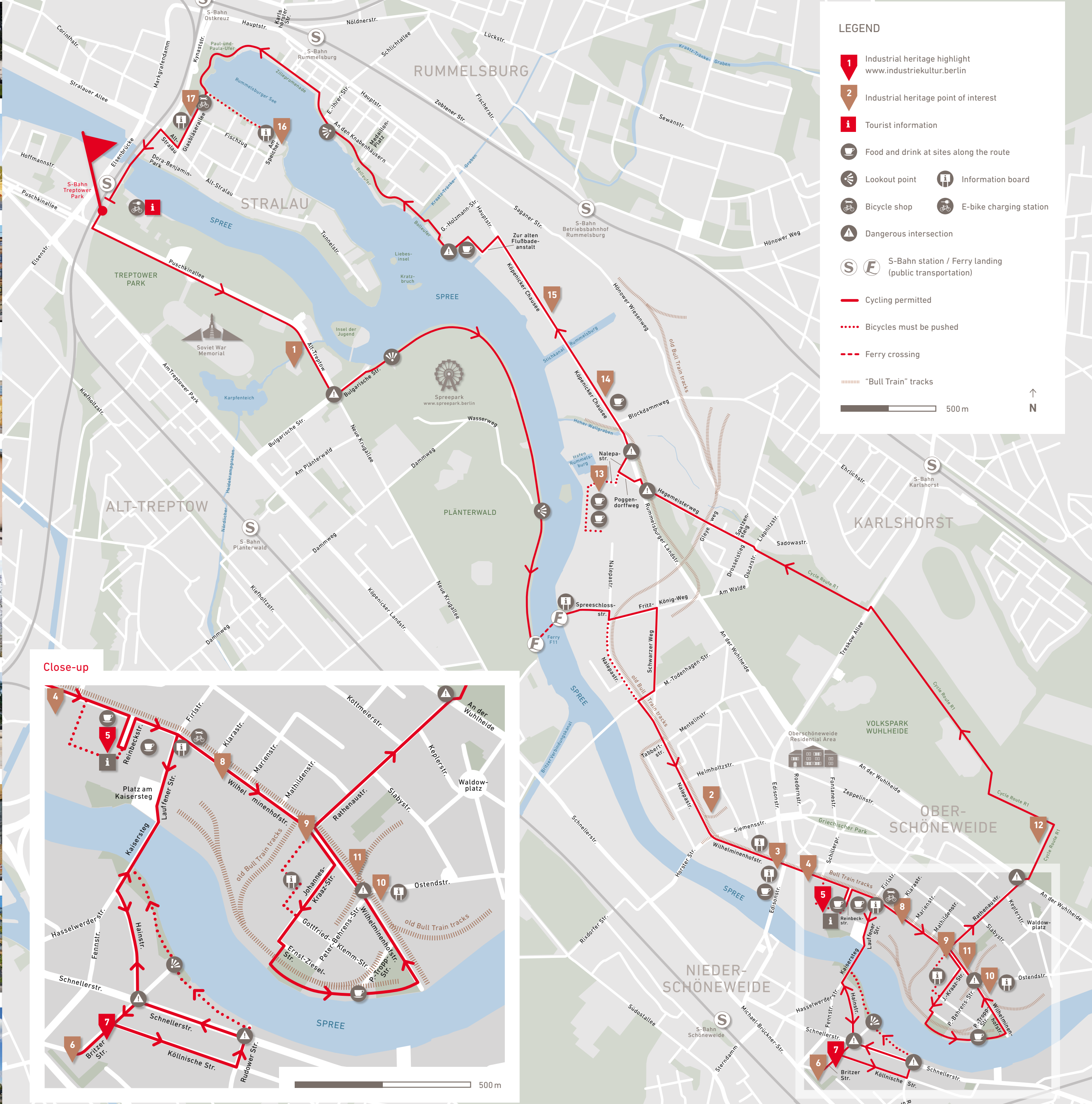
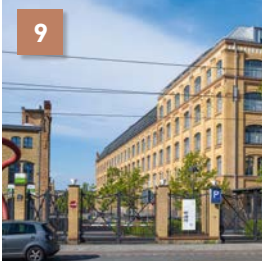
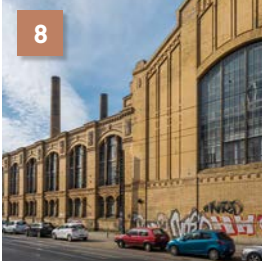
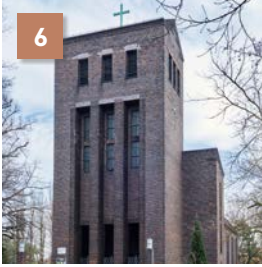
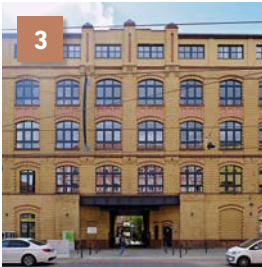
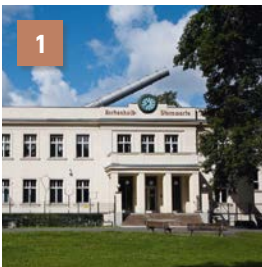
**Nazi Forced Labor Documentation Center**  
*Witness to Infinite Injustice*  
—  
Britzer Str. 5 | 12439 Berlin  
[www.ns-zwangsarbeit.de/en/](http://www.ns-zwangsarbeit.de/en/)

**Oberspree Power Station**  
*Palace of Energy*  
—  
Wilhelminenhofstr. 78 | 12459 Berlin

**Oberspree Cable Works**  
*Europe's Most Modern Industrial Complex*  
HTW Berlin  
*Old Walls, New Spirit*  
—  
Wilhelminenhofstr. 75A | 12459 Berlin  
[www.htw-berlin.de/en/](http://www.htw-berlin.de/en/)

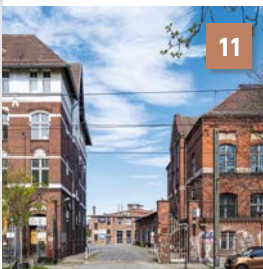
☕ Kranhaus Café | [www.kranhaus.berlin](http://www.kranhaus.berlin)  
Paul-Tropp-Straße 11 | 12459 Berlin

**Peter Behrens Building | Nationale Automobil-Gesellschaft**  
*Multi-Story Automobile Factory*  
—  
Ostendstraße 1 | 12459 Berlin

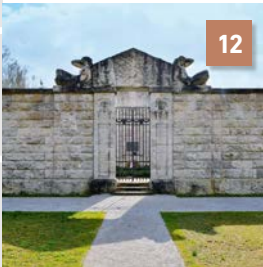


**Route 3**  
**WATER AND POWER**

**11**  
**Accumulator Works**  
*Mainstay of the Electrical Industry*  
—  
Wilhelminenhofstr. 69/70 | 12459 Berlin



**12**  
**Rathenau Family Tomb**  
*Symbol of Solidarity*  
—  
An der Wuhlheide 131a | 12459 Berlin



**13**  
**Funkhaus Berlin**  
*Center for Music and Art*  
—  
Nalepastraße 18 | 12459 Berlin  
[www.funkhaus-berlin.net](http://www.funkhaus-berlin.net)

☕ Milchbar und Zola

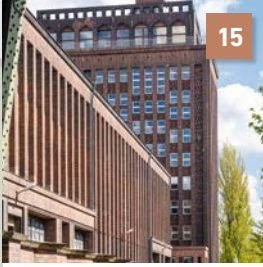


**14**  
**Gaswerksiedlung**  
*Hot Spot for Creative Work and Culture*  
—  
Köpenicker Chaussee 24–39 | 10317 Berlin  
[www.gaswerksiedlung.de](http://www.gaswerksiedlung.de)

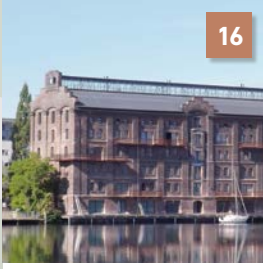
☕ Zum breiten Johannes



**15**  
**Klingenberg Power Station**  
*Symbol of Modernity and Economic Might*  
—  
Köpenicker Chaussee 42 | 10317 Berlin  
☕ Hafenküche | [www.hafenkueche.de](http://www.hafenkueche.de)



**16**  
**Palm Kernel Oil Storehouse**  
*A Reminder of the Colonial Past*  
—  
Am Speicher 11–15 | 10245 Berlin



**17**  
**Stralau Bottle Factory Workshops**  
*Co-op in a Classic Location*  
—  
Glasbläserallee 17/19 | 10245 Berlin



IMAGE CREDITS

Cover image Thomas Kierok | 1 Archenhold Observatory SPB/Foto: F.-M. Arndt | 2 Oberschöneweide Industrial Railway Service Station Nathalie Scholl | 3 Frister Lamp Factory Max Braun | 4 Oberschöneweide Transformer Works Andreas Muhs | 5 Industriesalon Schöneweide Industriesalon Schöneweide | 6 Protestant Church of Peace Max Braun | 7 Nazi Forced Labor Documentation Center Antonia Weisse/Dokumentationszentrum NS-Zwangsarbeit | 8 Oberspree Power Station Andreas FranzXaver Süß | 9 Oberspree Cable Works Andreas FranzXaver Süß | 10 Peter Behrens Building/Nationale Automobil-Gesellschaft Andreas Muhs | 11 Accumulator Works Andreas FranzXaver Süß | 12 Rathenau Family Tomb Max Braun | 13 Funkhaus Berlin Max Braun | 14 Gaswerksiedlung Andreas Muhs | 15 Klingenberg Power Station Andreas FranzXaver Süß | 16 Palm Kernel Oil Storehouse J. Zierholz | 17 Stralau Bottle Factory Workshops Udo Meinel



Route 3

WATER AND POWER



WATER AND POWER BIKE ROUTE

Industry was booming in late-19<sup>th</sup>-century Berlin. The downtown area became so cramped that companies expanded into the environs of the city. In 1895 AEG began building a three-phase electric power plant and an electric cable factory on what was then a “pleasant pasture,” or *schöne Weyde*. The site became a hub for new AEG enterprises and, as part of the Berlin “electropolis,” a driver of Europe’s electrification. Oberschöneeweide developed into a model urban quarter with gigantic factories along the Spree, neighboring residential areas, and Wuhlheide Park. New rail and shipping lines transported raw materials and finished goods. The *Bullenbahn*, or “Bull Train,” hauled heavy loads. Barges lined the Spree.

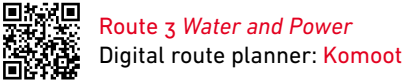
AEG commissioned leading architects to build impressive industrial facilities here on the upper Spree, just as Siemens was doing on the lower Spree on the west side of town. A new architecture with its own distinctive style arose. Flexible floor plans allowed for changing production needs to be met. After WWII these companies were nationalized as “publicly owned enterprises” (*Volkseigene Betriebe*, or VEB for short) and bundled into collectives. Five massive concerns employed 25,000 workers, making Oberschöneeweide the heart of the East German electrical industry. This strip of factories about 3 km long now features one of the largest groupings of historic monuments in Germany.

INDUSTRIAL HERITAGE IN BERLIN BIKE ROUTES

Berlin is a gigantic open-air museum of industrial heritage. Our five bike routes invite you to discover a new side of the city. Each route traces a different chapter of the city’s history:

- Route 1: Bright Lights and Cold Beer
- Route 2: Manufacturing and Munitions
- Route 3: Water and Power
- Route 4: Innovation and Elegance
- Route 5: Railroads and Runways

The routes are each 20–25 km long. There is a lot to see, so plan a whole day for them. All the routes traverse diverse urban environments and stick to relaxing waterfront paths, quiet side streets, and official bike lanes. If you feel like taking a break, there are many restaurants and cafés with a special industrial flair.



Route 3 *Water and Power*  
Digital route planner: [Komoot](#)

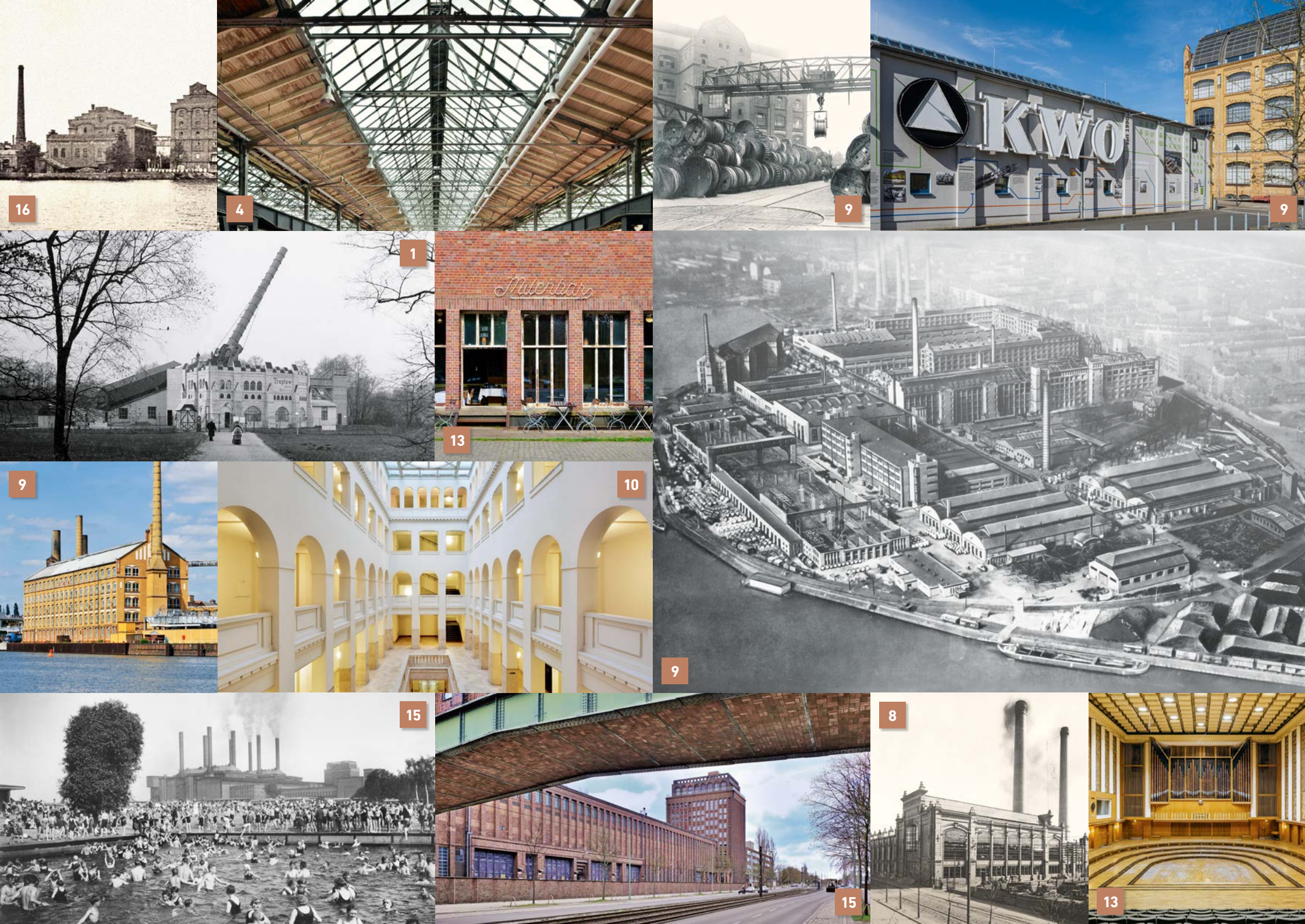
GPX Track and additional information (German only):  
[www.industriekultur.berlin](#)

INDUSTRIAL HERITAGE IN BERLIN HIGHLIGHTS

Our 18 highlights are representative of Berlin’s industrial development. They testify to the city’s exceptional rise as an “electropolis,” to hard times and many fresh starts. Beginning with the Industrial Revolution in Prussia, they illustrate Berlin’s transformation into the most modern metropolis on the Continent. Traces of the First and Second World Wars can still be seen in many places. Some of the sites also bear witness to changes entailed by the building and fall of the Berlin Wall. The highlights include museums, historical locations, and even actively operating businesses. Some are open every day, others only by appointment.

[www.industriekultur.berlin/en/](#)

The network of Berlin’s industrial heritage highlights is part of the European Route of Industrial Heritage. [www.erih.net](#)



1 Archenhold Observatory | 1896/1908  
*Celestial Cannon and the Theory of Relativity*

This was one of the main attractions at the 1896 Industrial Exposition of Berlin. Visitors raved about the observatory with the longest pointable telescope in the world. It was the only building left standing after the Expo ended; it was rebuilt in 1908. Another fascinating detail: in 1915 Albert Einstein gave his first lecture on the theory of general relativity here.

Great Industrial Exposition of Berlin | 1896

*Panorama of German Industry*

Seven million visitors arrived at the gates of Berlin in 1896 to see state-of-the-art technology. The latest inventions were exhibited at 3,780 stands. Siemens & Halske showed a gigantic dynamo. Zeiss presented high-precision optical equipment, and Röntgen demonstrated the medical application of X-rays. The Expo was set up like an amusement park, and illuminated by AEG with thousands of light bulbs. Another sensation: visitors could arrive via the first-ever electric streetcar, built by Siemens & Halske. It was a sign that the age of steam power was past, and the age of electric power had arrived.

**TIP**  
Audio walking tour of the Berlin Industrial Exposition (German only)  
[www.audiowalk-treptower-park.de](#)

2 Oberschöneeweide Industrial Railway Service Station | 1901

*The Bull Train*

Attention: the Bull is coming! From 1890 to 1996, freight trains rumbled slowly down busy Wilhelmienhofstraße and out into Berlin’s extensive rail network. The freight line served countless factories along the Spree. It was electrified in 1901, as befitted the “electropolis.” It is unclear where the name “Bull Train” (*Bullenbahn*) comes from – either because trains were initially pulled by horses and bulls, or because the heavy electric locomotives were nicknamed “bulls.” The former “Bull Train” service station is now used for streetcars.

3 Frister Lamp Factory | 1897–1916

*From Lamp Factory to Business Center*

Around 1900 this was the largest lamp factory in Europe. It produced novel electric lighting fixtures like chandeliers and table lamps. After WWII, the building was used by the VEB Institut für Nachrichtentechnik, an East German communications R&D center. It was rumored to be a “Stasi” operation, serving the needs of the Ministry for State Security. Telecommunications systems were produced for the entire Eastern Bloc. After German reunification the building became a home to artists, was sold several times, and then turned into a business center.



Oberschöneeweide Residential Area | 1919

*A Short Commute*

Industry drew people to Berlin. In the mid-1890s, residential buildings began springing up on the *schöne Weyde* (“pretty pasture”) between the factories lining the Spree and Wuhlheide Park. After WWI, individual buildings gave way to large housing complexes. The first and best known was designed by Peter Behrens.

4 Oberschöneeweide Transformer Works | 1898–1996

*Global Market Leader for Large Transformers*

Large transformers turn high voltage current from power plants into low voltage for domestic use. Demand for them spiked at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and the AEG factory expanded. New buildings mushroomed at the site: production halls, workshops, offices, and a cafeteria. Nationalized after 1945 as the Karl Liebknecht Transformer Works, it became the main supplier for the East German energy sector. AEG resumed production there in 1992 in the wake of German reunification, but stopped when the age-old company was suddenly dissolved in 1996. The Transformer Works facility, including the landmarked Rathenau-Hallen, was bought by BaseCamp in 2019. The current plan is to renovate the buildings, erect new structures, and develop an office park with cultural and recreational offerings.

5 Industriesalon Schöneeweide | 2009

*Museum and Visitor Center*

The Industriesalon opened in 2009. Its rotating exhibitions relate the history of the industrial zone and its transformation into a smart city quarter. The permanent collection focuses on the working conditions of the old Television Electronics Factory, once the largest production facility in East Berlin. Visitors can delve into Berlin’s industrial past on the “Electropolis Tour” (with a panoramic view of the city from the tower of the Peter Behrens Building), on a tour of the Transformer Works, and on a puzzlehunt. Also of note: part of the surrounding industrial area is being developed as an arts and culture center. Don’t miss the Reinbeckhallen and the Spreehalle. The Industriesalon is also actively involved in developing ideas for how Berlin’s landmarked industrial heritage can be put to modern use.

**TIP** *The Industriesalon also offers guided bike tours.*

6 Protestant Church of Peace | 1930/1952

*Church with Industrial Flair*

The west tower of the church is reminiscent of the headframe of a mine. Indeed, in 1930 its architects Fritz Schupp and Martin Kremmer also designed the famous Zollverein Mine in Essen. A masterpiece of modern technology and aesthetics, it is a symbol of the Ruhr Valley.

7 Nazi Forced Labor Documentation Center | 2006

*Witness to Infinite Injustice*

The forced labor camp built in 1943 shines a light on the darkest side of Berlin’s industrial history. Of over 3,000 such camps in Berlin, this is the only one to be preserved almost in its entirety. Companies large and small profited from the cheap labor. After 1945, the barracks were used to store paper for the Red Army and later housed East Germany’s Vaccine Institute. Many of them are still used commercially. Since 2006, part of the complex has been home to the Nazi Forced Labor Documentation Center. It fulfils its educational mission with exhibitions, an archive, and a youth center. Two permanent exhibitions, a multimedia guide, and a restored barrack provide insight into the camp’s inhumane working and living conditions. They illustrate a history of racial discrimination, fear, and merciless oppression, but they also testify to the yearning for freedom and the will to survive.

8 Oberspree Power Station | 1897

*Palace of Energy*

Opened in 1897, Europe’s first alternating current power station was a technological sensation. The cooling water came directly from the Spree. Its design was inspired by the Palais des Beaux Arts, the “Palace of the Arts” at the 1855 Paris World’s Fair. The power station brought Oberschöneeweide to the attention of engineers and urban planners. They traveled from far and wide to view this manmade marvel. The power station used state-of-the-art technology to transmit electricity over long distances with little loss, thus furnishing Berlin’s suburbs with power and light. It was also a magnet for new businesses. The first to make use of the new energy source was the AEG Cable Works. In 2013 the Knaak sculpture foundry moved into a portion of the complex. The turbine hall is now home to MaHalla, a gigantic open space for creative expression.

9 Oberspree Cable Works | 1897–1912

*Europe’s Most Modern Industrial Complex*

HTW Berlin (University of Applied Sciences) | 2009

*Old Walls, New Spirit*

Eureka! Instead of steam engines, electric motors began powering the works in 1897. Equally modern were the convertible workspaces, which could be altered to meet shifts in market demand. The wide range of goods produced here testifies to this flexibility and illustrates a span of German history. Around 1900, cables, cars, and trucks were manufactured. During WWI and WWII, it was technical equipment and munitions. After 1945, wax candles, iron stoves, and household items were produced. Under the East German regime, cable production for the international market resumed on a large scale. Cables are still made in the historic core of this gigantic complex, both classic and fiber optic varieties. But a majority of the space is now home to HTW Berlin (University of Applied Sciences). Thus, the location continues to unite manufacturing, research, and innovation. The Berlin Center for Industrial Heritage (bzi) was founded here as a joint venture with the Deutsches Technikmuseum.

**TIP** *Audio tour | [www.htw-berlin.de/campus/campus-wilhelmienhof/Audiotour](#) (German only)*

10 Peter Behrens Building | Nationale Automobil-Gesellschaft | 1917

*Multi-Story Automobile Factory*

During WWI, AEG commissioned Peter Behrens to build a cutting-edge automobile factory. Its elaborate design was meant to proclaim the unbroken power of German manufacturing. Behrens also wanted to create a symbol for the social integration of all participants in industrial society. Workers and managers met at the center of the multi-story factory in an arcade-lined atrium. Chassis assembly began on the top floor. The various production floors were connected by 18 freight elevators, with finished automobiles rolling out on the ground floor and fueled up from a gas tank in the basement. The factory initially made trucks for the German army, then cars and buses until it was closed in 1934. Telefunken then used the site to develop television technology to broadcast the 1936 Olympics. After WWII it housed the Television Electronics Factory, which produced vacuum tubes for the East German television industry; its history is documented at the Industriesalon Schöneeweide. Currently Deutsche Immobilien Entwicklungs AG is redeveloping the building and the entire Behrens waterfront as a new neighborhood. The building’s atrium was used as a shooting location for the television series *Babylon Berlin*.

Peter Behrens | 1868–1940

*Inventor of Corporate Design*

Architect and world-renowned industrial designer Peter Behrens designed just about everything for AEG: factories, the products made there, even the company logo. Everything was conceived as a coherent unit, thus making Behrens the inventor of corporate design.

11 Accumulator Works | 1899

*Mainstay of the Electrical Industry*

Only two years after the power station and AEG Cable Works went into operation in Schöneeweide, Ludwig Löwe set up the Accumulator Works. Portable batteries have been produced there ever since. Since 1904 they have been sold under the internationally recognized brand name VARTA, a German acronym that stands for “distribution, recharging, and repair of portable accumulators.” In 1922 the company was acquired by the Quandt conglomerate and developed into Europe’s

leading supplier of lead batteries for electric automobiles and airplanes. During WWII the factory produced accumulators for submarines and V2 rockets. Battery production continued seamlessly after 1945 – in East Germany as a “publicly owned enterprise,” and after 1993 under the name BAE Batterien.

12 Rathenau Family Tomb | 1903

*Symbol of Solidarity*

The growing industrial area became home to many people around 1900. AEG founder Emil Rathenau had the Forest Cemetery built for the fledgling community. His own family tomb is visible from the entrance gate. It was designed by an architect with a social bent: Alfred Messel. He built model social housing for “the common man” and became famous for his design of a Wertheim department store. The tomb contains the remains of Emil Rathenau (d. 1915), his wife Mathilde (d. 1926), and their son Erich (d. 1903). Erich took charge of the AEG Cable Works as a young man and was his father’s great hope. Yet he died on a trip to Egypt and was one of the first to be buried in the cemetery. Emil’s son Walther Rathenau (d. 1922), who served as German foreign minister, is also buried there. The Jewish politician was assassinated in the Grunewald district of Berlin, after the nationalistic press called more-or-less openly for his death.

13 Funkhaus Berlin | 1951–1956

*Center for Music and Art*

Radio became an important tool in the Cold War contest between political systems. With its modern, functional design by Bauhaus architect Franz Ehrlich, this center for East German radio powerfully conveys the optimism of the postwar years. A “radio quarter” emerged here over the next several decades, with workshops, stores, and recreational facilities for several thousand employees. The recording studios are prized for their excellent acoustics and the distinctive “Nalepa sound.” Musicians from all over the world also still enjoy the facility’s 1950s architecture and proximity to the water.

**TIP**  
*Tours through the sound studios and recording halls are available. [www.ddr-funkhaustour.de](#)*

14 Gaswerksiedlung | 1926

*Hot Spot for Creative Work and Culture*

The size and importance of the old gas works can still be judged by the apartment complex built for its employees. In 2015 the area was zoned for industrial use, which meant it could no longer be used residentially. A combined heat and power plant and new office space are projected to be built behind the complex. The 250-meter-long building, which recalls Hanseatic brick architecture, will be integrated into the new development. In 2018 creative studios and a coworking space opened there. Parties and events can be held behind the building. The neighboring Funkhaus Berlin is a magnet, as are Club Sisyphos (located in a former dog biscuit factory) and the nearby Spree riverfront. The Rummelsburg Power Station, located across the street, is also going to be integrated into Funkhaus Berlin’s location concept.

15 Klingenberg Power Station | 1927

*Symbol of Modernity and Economic Might*

When it was built in 1927, Berlin’s first large power station was the most modern in Europe and inspired a new generation of power plants. It provided 65% of Berlin’s energy, using novel techniques like grinding coal to dust before burning it. Three large steam turbines produced the electricity. A cable bridge connects the transformer house (190 meters long) to the 11-story office building. Boats delivered coal directly to the power station via a canal connected to the Spree. The river also provided the water that was heated to create the steam. The power station is named for engineer Georg Klingenberg, who built a total of 70 power plants including the Charlottenburg Power Station [site 10 on Route 4]. The Klingenberg Power Station was profiled at the 1929 World’s Fair in Barcelona and featured in advertisements for the city of Berlin in the 1930s. It survived WWII intact. An SS plan to blow it up was averted, as was a later effort to dismantle it. Since 2017 it has burned natural gas instead of lignite.

Lichtenberg River Pool | 1927

*Pools Heated by the Power Station*

The river pool was built at the same time as the Klingenberg Power Station and was just as modern. Hot water from the nearby power plant was conducted to the pool facility. The cozy temperature attracted hordes of swimmers every day. The complex featured state-of-the-art showering and changing facilities, separate recreational, sports, and wading pools, a 10-meter diving platform, and a beach area. It closed in the 1950s. The little of it that remains today is unfortunately not open to the public.

16 Palm Kernel Oil Storehouse | 1885

*A Reminder of the Colonial Past*

The only remaining building of what was once a gigantic factory complex is this storehouse (with its own dock). It was used to store palm kernels transported by ship from colonies in West Africa before they were turned into plant oil, an ingredient in margarine. The company went bankrupt in 1899. The complex was then used until the fall of the Berlin Wall as a mill, granary, and animal feed production facility. The monumental storehouse now contains maisonette loft apartments up to 1,000 square meters in size.

17 Stralau Bottle Factory Workshops | 1921

*Co-op in a Classic Location*

Bottled beer was the latest thing when the factory was built in 1889. Until 1909 hundreds of workers produced 20 million bottles a year in all shapes and colors, first by hand and later using fully automated machines. During WWI, prisoners of war made containers for poison gas grenades here. Massive damage was done to the factory during an air raid in 1945. Under East German rule, the Stralau Glass Works inhabited the historic building. Beer bottles continued to be made after German reunification, for Beck’s and other companies. The factory only closed in 1997, when a melting tank was damaged. A housing cooperative saved the industrial structure. Now it contains apartments, a hair salon, and a showroom for classic cars.

IMAGE CREDITS

Cover image Thomas Kierok | 1 Archenhold Observatory ullstein bild – Zander & Labisch | 4 Oberschöneeweide Transformer Works Andreas Muhs | 8 Oberspree Power Station SDTB, Historisches Archiv | 9 Oberspree Cable Works Historisches Archiv, Andreas FranzXaver Süß and Imagebroker/Alamy Stock Photo | 10 Peter Behrens Building /Nationale Automobil-Gesellschaft Andreas Muhs | 13 Funkhaus Berlin Max Braun, Funkhaus Berlin | 15 Klingenberg Power Station Max Braun and akg-images /TT-News Agency /SVT | 16 Palm Kernel Oil Storehouse Wikimedia Commons/ public domain