



Welcome to Berlin! A unique small city nestled in northern New Hampshire amidst the splendor of the White Mountains, Berlin offers visitors and residents alike a special view of life in the "North Country" of New England.

Experience Berlin's extraordinary heritage as you travel throughout the city. Visit community churches listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Picnic beside the Androscoggin River at Rotary Park and learn the history of log drives and the forest products industry. See working pulp and paper mills. Acquaint ourselves with the culturally diverse neighborhoods and architecture that continue to tell the stories of generations of talented families that have settled here in Berlin. Leisurely view the many vistas of natural beauty beckoning at each turn. Take a relaxing ride along Cates Hill and East Milan Road watching for bear, moose, deer, and other wildlife who make their homes in the nearby wilderness. Recognize the long-standing tradition of outdoor sports and recreation with a trip to the renowned Nansen Ski Jump and learn about the oldest ski club in the United States.

Explore our downtown and admire the historic, turn of the century building facades while enjoying the many offerings from the merchants of today. The Heritage Tour of Berlin has been designed to help give you and understanding of the remarkable history of New Hampshire's northernmost city.

## BERLIN'S DOWNTOWN

Berlin's first retail market was opened for business in 1835 by Thomas Green. During the mid-1800's, the population of the community and the scope of the downtown area continued to grow quite steadily, yet it was not until 1877, when H.H. Furbish established the Forest Fibre Mill, that the first building boom occurred. That same year, Furbish installed fourteen electric powered streetlights on Main Street. This made Berlin one of the first locations in New Hampshire to have such lighting. By 1890, downtown Berlin had truly taken form as wood framed stores, churches and other public buildings lined the unpaved streets and wooden boardwalks. Not long after the turn of the century, as the local mills expanded and the economy flourished, several hotels, theaters, and even a large opera house could be found in Berlin. Most of these buildings, as well as those that we built to replace the ones lost to fire, were constructed of brick and stone.



Main Street, Looking north from Green Square, Circa 1913

A Street Railway Began operation between Berlin and Gorham on July 24, 1902. This enterprise was undertaken to make the city convenient to the many people who lived in Gorham, yet worked and shopped in Berlin. There was service to Main Street and through the downtown area every twenty minutes. In 1920 alone, the railway transported over 1.6 million passengers.

Many of the building that graced the streets of the city in the early 1900s still exist today and exhibit fine examples of Berlin's outstanding architecture.

***Starting at Green Square, near the southernmost end of Main Street (a one way street), travel north and look for the following historic sites:***

**1. Holiday Center**

(27 Green Square, on the right)



Built in 1904, this was originally the City National Bank. It is a good example of a classical revival building and has had minimal alterations.

**2. Princess Theater**

(25 Green Square, on the right)



Established by a group of businessmen in 1914, this theater was designed to be a moving picture house for Paramount movies. Today, it is a twin cinema movie theater.

**3. Burgess Fountain**

(Green Square, in front of Berlin City Bank)



The fountain was presented to the city on 1905 in memory of George Ebenezer Burgess, Superintendent of the Burgess Sulfite Fibre Company and a banker. The circular watering trough served horses here in Green Square.

**4. Berlin City Bank**

(9 Main Street, on the left)



At the southern end of Main Street, This colonial revival brick and stone building was built during 1926-1927 and was the result of a merger between the Berlin National Bank and the City National Bank. It was extensively renovated in the late 1980's. Inside, the Bank has on display a nice exhibit of old photographs of Berlin.

### 5. Hodgdon Block

(40 Main Street, on the right)



Built in 1904, this block originally housed office space, a wallpaper and paint store, and a clothing store. In 1906, all but the facade was leveled by fire, resulting in \$11,547 worth of recorded damages. The structure was subsequently rebuilt, preserving the salvaged facade.

### 6. 177 Main Street

(on the left)



This recently restored building was a grocery in 1909 and later was a high fashion women's apparel store. The architectural detailing of the front has been beautifully accented.



### 7. Sheridan Building

(164) Main Street. on the right)

A handsome and sophisticated 1905 two-story, classical revival structure of gray pressed brick. It has three large arched windows with copper panels. H.C. Bates was the architect. When construction was finished and the building was opened, the first floor housed a bar and Bates' architectural office. John Sheridan, who was the project founder, was a bottler and wholesale dealer in beers and liquors.



### 8. City Hall

Built by A.N. and J.B. Filbert, Berlin City Hall was completed in 1914 and is a good example of Georgian revival architecture. It features symmetrical design, a hip roof, a cupola clock tower, ornate iron lamp standards, Corinthian columns, and a rusticated stone foundation with yellow brick walls. Inside, the stairways are complemented with solid bronze. The second floor houses the City Council Chambers, an impressive room with an original Civil War flag.

***City Hall is located at the junction of Main Street and Mason Street. At this point, turn right on mason Street. Cross the bridge that spans the Androscoggin River, and continue to Berlin's East side to visit two examples of ethnic neighborhoods.***

As Berlin developed, a large and culturally diverse group of people responded to the need for specialized tradesman. This brought new faces from many different geographical areas. In fact, it was common practice for representatives of the local mills to be at Ellis Island in New York searching for immigrant who were willing to live and work here in the North Country. Once they arrived in Berlin, many of these newcomers established ethnic neighborhoods. Markets sprung up on every street corner in these unique little villages. Each carried specialty foods of their culture and were highlighted with store signs written in their native language.

***Continue on Mason Street to East Mason Street, and take a right on Goebel Street to the German Neighborhood.***

### 9. German Neighborhood

Setting on the east side of town on Goebel Street, the German population was sought after by the Brown Company for their expertise as engineers and inventors. One of the best known Goebel Street residents was Herr Alfred

Tupper--the inventor of Tupper ware.

Now **take a left on Merrimack Street, and in one block, another left on Champlain Street to the French Neighborhood.**

### 10. French Neighborhood

French Canadians migrated south from Quebec to live in northern New Hampshire and work in the growing number of mills and logging camps. Berlin attracted a great many of these northern neighbors who were well-known for their strong work ethic and knowledge of forest based industry.

The first French settled in St. Gilles part of Berlin (Granite Street area) with others following up along School Street and 1st, 2nd and 3rd Street area. Many of the French settled in groups on the East Side and often resided in homes referred to as "blocks." These buildings were multi-storied with exterior stairwells. Often, several generations of one family could be found living under the same roof only on different floors. Many excellent examples of blocks exist today on the East Side.

**Continue north on Champlain Street for two blocks to East Mason Street, go left, and then take a right on Unity Street to the railroad depot.**

### 11. Boston And Maine Depot

(10 Unity Street, on the right)



This depot served passengers along the Coos Junction - Groveton - Jefferson - Bowman - Randolph - Gorham - Berlin rail line. Passenger rail service was discontinued to and from the depot in 1958.

**Continue north, winding up Unity, Coos, and Hutchins Streets. You will be traveling past Pulp & Paper of America's Burgess Pulp Mill. Notice the wood storage area. Bridge Street, and a right back on to Hutchins Street. Travel north for 2 miles on Hutchins Street and the East Milan Road to the next site.**

### 12. Thompson Farm; Brown Company Barns; Maynesboro Industrial Park



Moving here from Gilead, Maine, William Sessions was Berlin's first permanent settler. A bit further north of this site, in 1824, he erected Berlin's first non-Native log cabin. Other settlers soon joined Sessions along this fertile section of the river to start farms of their own. In 1827, Samuel and Benjamin Thompson bought the Sessions property and developed what is still commonly known as the Thompson Farm. The large old barns currently located here were built by the Brown Company to house both draft and Arabian horses. The surrounding fields are now the site of Berlin's Industrial Park. It was established by the Berlin Industrial Development and Park Authority in 1974, and serves as an important business center for Berlin.

**At this point, turn left and follow the loop around the Industrial Park, and travel back towards downtown Berlin. Go past the mill and the depot, and at the first traffic light, turn right on Mason Street, and right again on Main Street.**

### 13. Superior Courthouse



This handsome Colonial classical revival structure was built in 1906 by A.N. Gilbert and was designed by John Spofford of Spofford and Eastman, Architects of Boston. It is wonderfully embellished and features a portico, a central Palladian window, Ionic Pilasters, Corinthian column detailing, and a rusticated granite basement.

### 14. 234-260 Main Street



These four buildings, built between 1904 and 1910, depict the typical structural styles of the time. Originally, these buildings housed a harness shop, an undertaker, and other businesses most with residences upstairs.



### 15. Berlin Central Fire Station

The Fire Station was designed by H.C. Bates, and built in 1905 by Ward Brothers of Lowell, MA. This brick building has three arched bays and a vaguely Romanesque

projecting side tower. The station tower was used as part of a lookout network set up during the Second World War. The Fire Station, as well as a post on Cates Hill, was manned to watch for enemy aircraft. If any such aircraft was spotted, the lookout personnel could call City Hall where a relay station was set up in the basement with a direct line to the state capital in Concord. Though these lookout stations were manned throughout the war, no enemies were seen in Berlin's airspace.



### 16. Berlin Public Library

The Library was built in 1903 with a \$15,000 grant from the Andrew Carnegie Endowment Fund. A.I.

Lawrence was the architect, and Steward and Snodgrass were the builders. This classically inspired building features red brick with lighter brick quoining. It has a monumental arched entrance and windows filled with glass block. Inside, there is an exhibit of local Indian artifacts.

***Continue up Main Street to Saint Anne Catholic Church on the left. St. Anne is located on the corner of Church and Pleasant Streets.***

Berlin has many beautiful churches with unusual architectural features. As neighborhoods developed, churches were built to provide a strong link to each ethnic group's religious foundation.

[Next Page](#)

## Androscoggin Valley Chamber Of Commerce

961 Main Street Berlin, NH 03570  
(603)-752-6060 (800)-992-7480