

Berlin's leading event venue raises its game: InterContinental Berlin boosts its conference facilities with a new 4 million euro glass and steel pavilion



BERLIN, 3 NOVEMBER 2006 – The German capital now boasts a new luxury event venue: The centrally located **InterContinental Berlin** has expanded its world-class facilities by adding a free-standing glass and steel pavilion. As the city's largest 5-star conference hotel, the Intercontinental Berlin has for many years been the venue for the prestigious Bundespresse Ball. This latest move reinforces its position as the leading player in Berlin's premium MICE sector. Construction work was completed in October 2006, after just six months. The new facility will offer a stunning environment for high-profile events with up to 400 guests.

Hamburg-based DIFA Deutsche Immobilien Fonds AG has invested some EUR 3.5 million in this unique development. Acting on behalf of its open-ended real estate funds, DIFA has built up a notable portfolio of hotels over the last few years in major business centres both in Germany and across Europe. The InterContinental Berlin has been part of the DIFA-Fonds Nr. 1 portfolio since 2000.

Sophisticated technology allows the pavilion to be used as a conference room, lunch and dinner facility or exhibition area. It is linked to the hotel via a walkway. The high-precision glass and steel construction allows for maximum transparency, which is further enhanced by an innovative approach to lighting. Its clean, crisp design is the work of Berlin-based architects Bassenge Heinrich Puhan-Schulz.

“The new pavilion provides a spacious venue that makes a real statement. It sets a new benchmark and is the perfect addition to our existing convention facilities,” says a delighted **Willy Weiland**, Director of Operations. “We are now perfectly positioned within Berlin’s expanding MICE market.” His hotel, with its 584 rooms and suites, achieved a total turnover of around EUR 37 million in 2005. Of this, some 50 per cent came from its restaurant and conventions operations. Weiland expects revenues to grow by a further 11 per cent to EUR 41 million in the current year.

A new dimension in events management

The new building boosts the InterContinental Berlin’s event facilities by 750 square metres to a total of **5,750 square metres**. With its 37 naturally lit, air-conditioned conference rooms and its famous 1,500 square metre Potsdam ballroom – the largest of any 5-star hotel in the German capital – the luxurious InterContinental Berlin offers unrivalled options for hosting events to the highest standard. Its excellent reputation is underpinned by state-of-the-art conference technology, highly professional MICE management and personalised service.

In addition, the **Catering's Best by InterContinental** service offers a wide choice of spectacular locations in and around Berlin for break-out events to remember. The choice of cuisine ranges from exotic finger food through creative buffets to a six-course fine dining menu. Whether catering for 5 or 5,000, with its highly qualified service staff the organisational team can create distinctive events to suit every occasion.

The future's bright for the "Destination Berlin" hotel alliance

The additional event space created by the new pavilion will doubtless increase demand among leading event organisers for the **Destination Berlin** hotel alliance.

Back in 2000, the InterContinental Berlin identified a significant increase in demand for high-capacity accommodation and conference facilities in central Berlin. Its response was to set up the **Destination Berlin** hotel alliance along with three other leading hotel operators in the Budapester Strasse area, whereby the *InterContinental Berlin*, *Dorint Sofitel Schweizerhof Berlin*, *Palace Berlin* and *Crowne Plaza Berlin* all pooled their conference and convention capacity. With **1,700 rooms and suites** and **90 conference rooms** offering a total of some **11,000 square metres**, this unique alliance of local hotels delivers impressive scale.

Alongside its "one stop shop" ability to provide organisers of major conferences from both Germany and beyond with a single contact person for all its hotels, **Destination Berlin** can boast the latest technical facilities and maximum convenience. **Destination Berlin** is notable for its outstanding location in the very heart of Berlin: the shops of Kurfürstendamm are just a few minutes' walk away, while the airport is a 15-minute taxi ride. The hotel alliance also makes the German capital even more attractive as a conference destination.

World-class security

The InterContinental Berlin's commitment to world-class security is especially significant, allowing it to host high-profile events in what is a very public location. Society events such as the "Rose Ball", with its guest list of the rich and famous, and key meetings like the international Afghanistan conference, can be held in a stylish but protected environment.

Sophisticated security management is a key element of the hotel's philosophy across all areas. For state visits, for example, a separate covered entrance with appropriate protection is available. The 200 square metre presidential suite, first used by former US President Bill Clinton in 1998, is equipped with bulletproof windows, doors and walls. Dedicated air conditioning and internal CCTV systems provide the kind of reassurance that high-ranking politicians, business leaders and celebrities from around the world have come to expect. A similar combination of luxury and comprehensive security is also a feature of the 70 rooms and suites that comprise the exclusive **Club InterContinental**. This "hotel within a hotel" boasts personalised service, special entrance security and dedicated check-in facilities.

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