



THE BELVEDERE - PFINGSTBERG

The Pfingstberg

Previously known as the Eichberg and the Judenberg, the hill owes its current name to a sunny Pentecost (Whit Sunday) morning in 1804, which Queen Luise enjoyed on the elevation still covered with grapevines. Her husband, King Frederick William III, also spent a Pentecost holiday on the hill in 1817. He ordered that it be renamed Pfingstberg in memory of the queen, who had died young.

The twin-towered Belvedere building complex soars above the peak of the Pfingstberg, raising the view to a height of about 103 meters. A fantastic panorama reveals Potsdam's unique island location, while granting views as far as the Berlin Fernsehturm (Television Tower) on Alexanderplatz.

The Belvedere - Pfingstberg

Using his own plans, Frederick William IV had the Belvedere on the Pfingstberg constructed on account of its beautiful views. He received architectural stimulation for this building during his trip to Rome in 1828. Consequently, numerous Roman buildings, like the Villa Medici, the Villa d'Este in Tivoli, as well as the Casino of the Villa Farnese in Caprarola, were inspirations for this structure. Ludwig Persius was first entrusted with its construction, followed by the architects Friedrich Stüler and Ludwig Ferdinand Hesse after his death.

Construction of the Belvedere began in 1847. The two towers were created first, containing a Roman and a Moorish Gallery respectively, as well as the connecting northern gallery. This was followed by the first inner courtyard, enclosed by lateral arcades topped with colonnades. The second inner courtyard was intended to be framed by wing walls and crowning towers facing south. Construction was interrupted in 1852 for the benefit of the Orangery at Sanssouci. After the illness and death of Frederick William IV, his brother William I finally brought the building to completion in a limited manner in 1863. A smaller, triple-arched entrance hall with an open staircase, based on the model of the Casino Caprarola, now completes the building complex that was originally planned to have tremendous cascades and a fountain. A water basin that is fed by the pumping station of the dairy in the New Garden was laid out in the interior of the first courtyard and serves as a reservoir for the fountains situated below the New Garden.

Just a few decades after the building's completion, towards the end of the 19th century, the Belvedere was no longer reserved only for members of the royal family and its visitors, but was also made accessible to a wide public. Nevertheless, strict rules had to be observed. Smoking tobacco was prohibited, for example, as was bringing dogs. The Belvedere enjoyed



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increasing popularity, as proven by numerous postcards from the period around 1900. After 1918, a visit to the Pfingstberg was only possible in a limited manner, because of questions of ownership. It was renovated for the Olympic Games in 1936. The move of Soviet intelligence into the exclusive residential district between the Pfingstberg and the New Garden in the 1950s, the nearby Soviet barracks in the north of Potsdam, and the proximity to the inner German border, caused the buildings on the Pfingstberg to fall into a long slumber. Visits were undesirable, because of the view towards West Berlin over the nearby border. The view was completely obstructed after construction of the Berlin Wall in 1961. Following the death of the last castellan the building rapidly dilapidated.

Attention was first directed to the Pfingstberg again in 1988, on account of the activities of a group called the “Arbeitsgemeinschaft (AG) Pfingstberg” affiliated with the Potsdam Cultural Association of the GDR. The Temple of Pomona and the Belvedere were freed from ivy and brushwood, and the eastern section of lawn was exposed. After German Reunification the fundraising efforts of the Förderverein Pfingstberg in Potsdam e.V., established in the interim, succeeded in the procuring numerous donations for the building’s reconstruction and renovation. In 1996, the owner of the Pfingstberg, the Stiftung Preußische Schlösser und Gärten Berlin-Brandenburg (SPSG), was able to initiate the first efforts for the renovation of the building. The western observation tower was reopened in April 2001. The eastern tower, the eastern colonnade and the northern arcade were also completed in July 2003. In May 2005, with the completion of the exterior wing walls, the renovation of the historical building on the Pfingstberg came to an end. In addition to the many thousand individual donations, the complete restoration of the Belvedere was primarily made possible by large donations from Prof. Dr. Werner Otto and the Hermann Reemtsma Stiftung.

The romantically beautiful ruin brought about by decline that was set in a fairytale-like, overgrown park during the late 1980s has been transformed into a majestic manifestation, which has truly earned the name “crown above the city.” Since its reopening in 2001, more than 750.000 people visited the Belvedere and enjoyed Potsdam’s most beautiful view. Today, the Belvedere is available for diverse cultural uses, as well as private occasions, parties and public receptions.

The Temple of Pomona

In the 18th century a large private vineyard was located on the southern slope of the Pfingstberg. During the course of beautification work in 1800, its owner, the privy councilor Carl Ludwig von Oesfeld, commissioned Karl Friedrich Schinkel (1781-1841) – who was only nineteen at that time – to create a new building as a “temple de Pomona” in honor of the



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goddess of fruit trees and gardens. It was intended as a present to Oesfeld's wife. After construction on the Belvedere was brought to conclusion in 1863, albeit reduced, and the Temple of Pomona was preserved despite initial plans to tear it down, the temple was incorporated into Peter Joseph Lenné's design for the gardens. A semicircular arbor emphasizes the Temple of Pomona's asymmetric position when aligned to the Belvedere, while making a connection to it.

The Temple of Pomona, which had fallen into complete decline after 1945 and was robbed of structural components, could be reconstructed through the initiative of the "Arbeitsgemeinschaft (AG) Pfingstberg" and thanks to a donation from the Hermann Reemtsma Stiftung in 1992-93; since then it has reopened to the public. While the interior is currently used for exhibitions, during the summer season readings and fairy tales are presented on the roof of the temple, and visitors can also listen to cheerful and contemplative sounds on the lawn in front of it. The temple may be rented for private events, receptions, family celebrations and parties.

The Park Grounds

First, Lenné encircled the Belvedere and the Temple of Pomona with generous circular, semicircular and rectangular sections of lawn and a semicircular arbor, which completed the second inner courtyard of the Belvedere. This represented a clever solution for the inclusion of the Temple of Pomona in its non-axial position to the Belvedere. The hill winds down in a large serpentine and at its foot is a geometrically-planted fruit meadow that acts as a transition to the buildings along the Große Weinmeisterstraße. Traversed by many sinuous paths, the park continues to stretch down to a small woods called the Mirbachwäldchen and from there into the New Garden. The numerous viewing axes through the dense tree population open views to Peacock Island, to the Casino and Glienicke Palace, Babelsberg Palace and the Flatow Tower, as well as to the Heilig Geist Kirche (Church of the Holy Spirit), the Nikolaikirche (St. Nicholas' Church) and the Potsdam city center.

Since 1995, the gardens have been fundamentally restored by the garden administration of the Stiftung Preußische Schlösser und Gärten Berlin-Brandenburg.

Exclusive Eventlocation

The Belvedere's royal ambiance set amidst its fairytale-like natural surroundings is an experience that remains unforgettable in the memories of all its guests. The Belvedere and the Temple of Pomona, the grounds, and the Pfingstberghaus are all available for private parties and for social and business occasions, such as company anniversaries.



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The Belvedere on the Pfingstberg is an ideal place for large parties, anniversary events and festive receptions for private individuals, institutions and companies. It fascinates visitors through its Romantic, classical architecture, which conveys the feeling of royal grandeur, while providing simple grace and beauty in an uplifting setting at the same time.

The Belvedere has the capacity to hold up to 450 people. The rental fee is determined on an individual basis, depending on the number of guests and the complexity of the event.

The individual areas of the Belvedere, the arcades and galleries can be rented for smaller parties, receptions or seated dinners, too. The western arcade, decorated with high classical arches, is ideal for receptions.

Seated dinners on the roof of the entrance hall, the Pegasus Plateau offer an extraordinary ambiance for festive occasions. Banquets and formal dinners for 25 to 50 people can take place at these locations.

The Temple of Pomona is a pearl of Neoclassical architecture set amidst a landscaped park from the Romantic era. It grants panoramic views over Potsdam and the Havel River landscape from a high observation point set between archaic trees and is a marvelous location for smaller receptions and parties.

The Pfingstberghaus together with its hall is available for social, cultural and educational events for the public. Meetings, seminars, lectures, readings and concerts of up to 70 people can take place here.

The Förderverein Pfingstberg in Potsdam e.V.

The Förderverein Pfingstberg in Potsdam e.V. (a supporting association) was founded in 1990 with the aim of saving the Pfingstberg from decline and making it accessible for culture and tourism, because it is a unique site of classical Romantic architecture and garden design that is part of the world cultural heritage.

Beginning in January 1988, the team met on weekends in 14-day intervals in order to free the Temple of Pomona and the Belvedere from brushwood and vines. The lawns in front of the Temple of Pomona and on the southern and eastern side of the Belvedere were exposed, and the arbors in front of the Belvedere were recultivated. The beauty of the grounds were made visible again and also made accessible to the public.

The first Pfingstberg celebration took place in June 1989 all around the Belvedere and in front of the Temple of Pomona. Attended by more than 1000 guests and watched under the distrustful scrutiny of the GDR's secret police, this celebration continues to remain a symbol of the willingness of Potsdam's citizens to support the preservation of a city worth living in,



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starting with its historical buildings. The Pfingstberg celebration in spring gave many citizens courage for political commitment during the period following the fall of the Berlin Wall in the autumn of 1989. Matthias Platzeck, the current Minister President of the federal state of Brandenburg, was also a member of the AG Pfingstberg and belonged to the initiators and helpers of the Pfingstberg celebration. He continues to remain a member of the supporting association.

In 1992-93, the association managed to instigate a reconstruction of the Temple of Pomona through the Stiftung Preußische Schlösser und Gärten Berlin-Brandenburg (SPSG), thanks to a donation from the Hermann Reemtsma Stiftung. Following its reconstruction, the supporting association established a visitor's center at the Temple of Pomona. Thereafter, the small building was used for exhibitions, for events in the series "Culture in Nature," for providing tourist information and naturally for the purposes of acquiring further donations for the Belvedere.

The supporting association also motivated the Pfingstberg's administrator, the Stiftung Preußische Schlösser und Gärten Berlin-Brandenburg, to reconstruct large portions of the gardens. Major donations from the Hermann Reemtsma Stiftung and from Prof. Dr. Werner Otto, the mail order company founder, brought about a breakthrough that has made the reconstruction of the Belvedere possible, step by step, since 1994.

Today the Förderverein Pfingstberg collects donations for the maintenance of the historic sites. The association also supervises and arranges events at the ensemble belonging to the Stiftung Preußische Schlösser und Gärten Berlin-Brandenburg (SPSG) under the slogan "Culture in Nature," providing a lively cultural use with guided tours, open air concerts, theater and exhibitions from March to October. The historical buildings can be rented through the association for private occasions such as receptions, parties and weddings.



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Opening hours

Belvedere-Pfingstberg

April – October, daily 10 am – 6 pm

March / November,

Sat / Sun 10 am – 4 pm

Temple of Pomona

Easter – October,

Sat / Sun / Holidays 2 pm – 5 pm

Information and Requests

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[www.facebook.com /](http://www.facebook.com/pfingstbergpotsdam)

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Support Our Commitment

The Pfingstberg ensemble is operated by the Förderverein Pfingstberg in Potsdam e.V., an association of members who volunteer their time. With your donation you contribute to the preservation of the historical ensemble and support the work of the association.

Förderverein Pfingstberg e.V.

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Mittelbrandenburgische Sparkasse Potsdam