

Alexander von Humboldt - A scavenger hunt through Berlin

Your Name:

Age:

City/Country:

Dear scavenger hunters,

on the occasion of the 250th birthday of Alexander von Humboldt (*14.9.1769 † 6.5.1859), we would like to take you on an exciting scavenger hunt through his hometown Berlin. Follow his tracks through Berlin Mitte and learn a lot about his life and work. **With some tasks you get a letter for your later solution word.**

Your tour starts at Gendarmenmarkt, your final destination is the me Collectors Room at Auguststraße 68, where you will get a nice surprise if you mention the solution word. And now it starts. Have fun!

From the subway station Oranienburger Straße there are only three stops to the station Stadtmitte. From there it is only a short walk to the Gendarmenmarkt.

Station 1: Gendarmenmarkt

Go to the information board between German Cathedral (Deutscher Dom) and the Berlin Concert Hall (Konzerthaus Berlin).

Here you can learn a lot about the history of the Gendarmenmarkt, which was built in 1688 as an extension of the Friedrichstadt. Many French immigrants settled around the market. Humboldt's mother also came from a Huguenot family who lived in a winter quarter in Jägerstraße. From there they could look directly onto the square where some buildings connected to France are located, e.g. a magnificent church. **What is the name of the building?**

_____ 6 _____

Station 2: Jägerstraße 22

*Go east to Jägerstrasse 22. The street borders directly onto the Gendarmenmarkt. This is probably where baby Alexander was born. The building was purchased by Alexander's grandfather in 1749 and initially served as the family's winter quarters. Only when Alexander was in his youth did he live there permanently for several years together with his brother Wilhelm. Unfortunately, the former family home was demolished in 1930 and replaced by a new building. **What is in the building today?***

B _____ 3 _____ - B _____ 11 _____

___ S S _____

Although Humboldt came from a family that attached great importance to education, it was only after he was 16 that he became interested in natural science and philosophy. Markus Herz, an enlightened philosopher and experimental physicist, made it possible for him to enter the secret "Society of the Friends of the Enlightenment". Berlin gentlemen met in the Berlin Salon for readings and discussions.

In memory of the Humboldt family, a commemorative plaque was erected at the house.

Which metal alloy is the plaque made of?

_____8

Now go back to Markgrafenstraße, follow it and cross Französische Straße, then turn right into Behrenstraße.

You will reach a square steeped in history. The Humboldts cofounded Berlin's first university here, a place of knowledge and enlightenment. Later, on 10 May 1933, the square was misused by the National Socialists as a central place for burning books. For both historical events you can find monuments on this square. **What is the square called?**

_____7

Station 3: Humboldt University of Berlin

Coming from Behrenstrasse, the first part of Humboldt University is on the left. It was founded in 1809 under a different name. **What was the former name of the university?** Mark with crosses.

- a) Capital Berlin University
- b) Berlin University of the Arts and Sciences
- c) University of Berlin

Only since 1949 has the university been called "Humboldt University of Berlin" (Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin).

The logo shows the two namesakes of the university, next to Alexander von Humboldt you can see:

- a.) his uncle Maximilian
- b.) his brother Wilhelm
- c.) his cousin Heinrich



Now proceed to the street „Unter den Linden“.

On the opposite side of the street you can see the second part of the university. On the left and right in front of the courtyard of honour of the main building you will find statues of the two Humboldts. Go there and take a close look at both of them. **Do you recognize which material they were made of?**

___¹⁰ ___ ___ ___ ___

The statue of Alexander von Humboldt was erected in 1883 by the German sculptor Reinhold Begas. To allude to Humboldt's expeditions, the artist added two objects to the statue. **What objects are we talking about?**

P ___ ___ ___ & ___⁵ ___ ___ ___

If you now enter the courtyard of honour of the university you can see many plants and statues. Take a close look at them. **Can you name the two largest trees in the courtyard?**

G ___⁴ ___² ___ ___ T R E E & ___ ___ ___ ___ ___⁹ ___ ___ ___ ___

Now continue in the direction of Alexanderplatz and Fernsehturm until you come to the next station on the same side, today's Maxim Gorki Theater. In Humboldt's time there was no theatre there, but the Berlin Singakademie.

Station 4: The Berlin “Singakademie” (today Maxim Gorki Theater)

As a researcher and scientist, Alexander von Humboldt already impressed his fellow men during his lifetime. He travelled from Europe to the Andes and Asia. Following his curiosity, his interest was not limited to individual topics, but included botany, geology, art and history.

After Humboldt returned from his research trips in July 1819, he wanted to make Berlin a worldwide centre of research and science. He began to give his legendary Kosmos lectures at Berlin University. The enthusiasm of the listeners was carried through the city in lightning speed, newspapers and word of mouth drew attention to this unique lecture series. Soon the space was not sufficient and so he held his lectures in the largest lecture hall of the city: More than 1,000 people found a place in the Berlin „Singakademie“. And here are the next questions:

For which audience did Alexander von Humboldt give the lectures in the Singakademie?
Circles in the right answer.

a) Students b) Lecturers and civil servants c) All interested Berlin people

How many individual lectures belong to his Kosmos lecture series? *Circle in the right answer.*

12

62

95

120

We're moving on. Follow the road Am Festungsgraben and turn right into Hinter dem Gießhaus. Pass the “Zeughaus” and cross the “Schlossbrücke” bridge.

On the right, opposite side of the street you can see the Berlin Castle. At the end of 2019, the Humboldt Forum will open there, presenting collections of non-European cultures.

Now, go left along the canal and for a little moment - like Humboldt did 300 years ago - settle down in the "Lustgarten" and study animals and plants.

Alexander von Humboldt was christened and laid out in the building with the large dome.

What is it called?

— — — — — ¹² — — — — — ¹³ — — — — —

Humboldt probably walked our way a lot. It was his way to work, since he was chamberlain to Ludwig IV at the Prussian court and the elector in Berlin resided in the castle. As chamberlain he had many advantages and the freedom to participate in events, to give lectures and to meet with scientists and scholars of the city.

Humboldt lived nearby for 14 years after travelling America and Europe between 1799 and 1827. The residential area was then called "Neuer Packhof". Later, the houses for the construction of today's Museum Island were demolished.

Now we continue along the fortress moat, up the stairs, along the copper moat past the Pergamon Museum construction site and the Magnus House, the site of the first German Physical Society. Turn right over the bridge at the Bode Museum and then directly left down the stairs along the Spree to Tucholskystrasse. From there, turn right down to Oranienburgerstrasse and then left to house no. 56.

Station 5: Oranienburger Straße 56

In the last years of his life, Alexander von Humboldt lived in an inconspicuous town house on Oranienburger Straße. He used the rooms at the same time as a library, study and to welcome people from all over the world. 17 years after the lecture series at the Berlin "Singakademie", he wrote his great literary work "KOSMOS" in his comfortable apartment.

Between house numbers 56 and 72 there is a plaque with information about Humboldt. Find it and answer the following questions:

From when to when did Alexander von Humboldt live? _____

How many years did he live on Oranienburger Straße? _____

Humboldt maintained correspondence with many important personalities of his time. Among others with Johann Wolfgang von Goethe. Treasures of how many letters Alexander von Humboldt received annually in the Oranienburger Straße. Circle in the right answer.

120

500

1500

2000

Across the street is the "Postfuhramt". Alexander von Humboldt is also immortalized in the portraits above. **Can you find him? At which place?** _____

Now, you go to the last station on Auguststraße 68! Cross the street and go at Oranienburgerstraße No. 32 into the Heckmannhöfe and through both courtyards until Auguststraße, then turn right.

Station 6: Wunderkammer Olbricht in the me Collectors Room

In the me Collectors Room you will find not only the Kosmos book but also the so-called Humboldt Cup, which came into the possession of Alexander von Humboldt in 1795 and probably stood on his desk for several years. Around 1800 he gave the trophy away to his close friend Reinhardt von Haeften. The trophy remained in the possession of the family until 2013, and after its sale it was transferred to the Wunderkammer Olbricht. *Enter the Wunderkammer and find the extraordinary trophy!*

What showcase is he in? _____ What materials does the Humboldt Cup consist of?

Ivory Coconut Wood Silver White Gold Amber

On the trophy you can see elaborate carvings. Do you recognize the three different scenes on the relief? Sketch a recognizable situation:

We did it! You've come to the end of your scavenger hunt. Go down the stairs to the counter and name the solution word!

— — — — —
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13

me Collectors Room Berlin/
Stiftung Olbricht

Auguststraße 68
10117 Berlin

Fon +4930860085-10
Fax -120

info@me-berlin.com
www.me-berlin.com

Opening hours

Wed - Mon, 12 – 6 pm

Admission

regular 8 €
reduced & group 4 €
combined dayticket with KW
Institute for Contemporary Art 10 €/8 €

Guided tours

120€/Gruppe
(plus groupticket 4 €/person)

Closing days

Please visit our website.

How to get there

U Weinmeisterstraße (U8)
U Oranienburger Tor (U6)
S Oranienburger Straße (S1, S2, M1, M5)
S Hackescher Markt (S3, S5, S7, S75)