

## Spree -- From Upper Lusatia To The City Of Change

Boat ready? Check. Life jackets? Check. Food for the journey? Check. You're about to venture off at the start of the Spree River for a few days of sailing along its 400km (249mi) from Saxony to Brandenburg, and Berlin, right?

Wrong. Ain't gonna happen.

The Spree might be a long river, but less than 50% of it is navigable. The Spree starts as a small pool of sorts from its three unassuming sources in the [Upper Lusatian](#) Mountains in [Saxony](#). Not a boat in sight, my friends. You gotta wait for that.

I'm going to start this off in Eibau, where you'll find one of those sources — in this case, the [Kottmar](#) source. Eibau is quite nice, really, with its Baroque Village Church and its *Eibauer Bierzug* (yeah, that's beer) in late June.

From here I'm following the small trickle of the Spree to [Bautzen](#) that's got bilingual street signs. And, uh, English isn't it — it's Sorbian. Makes sense to put the Sorbian Museum here then, huh?

For a different look of the Spree, go to the Village Church in [Spremberg](#), where they built it above the river. Oh, I can the Czech Republic from here. But, the river that's fed by the Schwarzer Schöps, Löbauer Wasser, Wuhle, and Panko from the right & the Dahme from the left, has started to make its way towards [Brandenburg](#).

And since I'm following that — and am not ready to blow a wad of cash on Bohemian crystal — I'm going to good ol' [Cottbus](#) instead. ;-)

Cottbus is really great, and I ain't just saying that. What I'll also say is Cottbus is called Chosebuz in Sorbian, just in case you hear it — and think you're someplace else.

It's quite a cultural city with theaters and cinemas. And a historical city, as you can see from its 13th century *Spremberger Turm*, the Baroque half-timbered houses, and a 15th century Castle Church.

On top of it all, Cottbus is a festive city, which you can see during the Cottbus Film Festival held every Autumn.

Not only is the Spree navigable by now, it's pretty scenery along the [Spree Forest](#) to boot. And it's time to move on to [Fürstenwalde](#). A good place for a Medieval Fair (in October), a Christmas Market, and a Prehistory Museum.

If you've gotten back on your boat before see the *Jagdschloss*, the 15th century church (that's

right by the *Rathaus*), and the Old Lutheran Church — you'll be sorry.

The last 44km of the Spree is found in [Berlin](#), the best capital city on the planet. Why say that? Well, besides being totally biased, our posh City of Change is vibrant and active, not to mention historical and cultural.

Some come to Berlin to see the remnants of the dreaded Berlin Wall, some come to experience its theaters, festivals (oh, the Berlin Film Festival is a great one), and who would want to leave out its UNESCO site: the unique *Museumsinsel* (Museum Island)?

Not me. :-)

The Spree River officially ends at the [Havel River](#) in Spandau, whose real name is Berlin-Spandau since it's incorporation into the city. The infamous Spandau Prison is gone (it held the Spandau Seven — top guys of the [Third Reich](#)) until Rudolf Heß died in 1986. Then it's demolished piece by piece, then thrown into the [North Sea](#).

But, the 19th century prison was located near the Spandau Citadel. It's a fort built here during the Renaissance, and has all sorts of unique pieces to see — like the Jewish cemetery and its Julius Tower.

Now you might not have been able to set sail along the entire length of the Spree, but think of the charming [cities, towns and villages in Germany](#) you'd have otherwise missed if you weren't a land lubber.