

Leo the Tour Guide

Today (Saturday) was the perfect day for a walking tour of Berlin. It started off a little chilly, 58 degrees Fahrenheit, but once the sun started to shine through the clouds it turned into a gorgeous day. We met our tour guide, Leo, in front of the Brandenburg Gate. Leo was from London and lived in Berlin for over six years. He had a natural tan and was comfortably wearing a long-sleeve shirt, vest, and grey beanie. He had an authentic British accent and one could tell by the way he explained German history that he loved his job. He is my favorite tour guide thus far because he made everything so relatable and interesting. We moved from the Brandenburg Gate to the Berlin Wall to Gendarmenmarkt to the Nazi Air Force Headquarters to Hitler's Bunker and to Checkpoint Charlie. The most interesting stops to me where Hitler's Bunker and the Berlin Wall. The Berlin Wall has always fascinated me. The way Leo explained the history and the impact that the wall had on East and West Berlin citizens was outstanding. He made it relatable, as much as one could. "You're from New Orleans, right?" as he pointed to Scottie, a student in our group, who nodded his head yes. "Imagine waking up one morning and there's a fence and barbed wire cutting New Orleans in half, without knowing this would ever happen," Leo explained. He said that families were torn apart from the wall. Children could no longer see their grandparents or friends. Mothers held up their babies so that the fathers could see their child one last time. This devastated me. I started to think about my own life and what I would do if a similar situation happened to me. No other tour guide we had made me reflect on an event so deeply. But we moved on. Leo took us to Hitler's bunker and told us how Hitler and his mistress digested cyanide then shot themselves because Hitler realized he had lost the war. The Bunker was 15 feet underground and after Hitler's suicide the German government destroyed the bunker

because they didn't want it to become a shrine where Nazis could gather and worship. It is now a grass and gravel parking lot with apartments surrounding the premises. At the end of the tour we ended up on the stairs of the German Cathedral. Leo explained more history. Then, he left with a bang by telling our beloved professor, Mrs. Davis, that she had a "sexy accent" and "now we could tell everyone our tour guide hit on our professor." I won't forget Leo the tour guide.



Figure 1 Brandenburg Gate



Figure 2 Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe



Figure 3 Sargent Harper



Figure 4 Checkpoint Charlie