

Berlin Report

January 2026

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1. sly

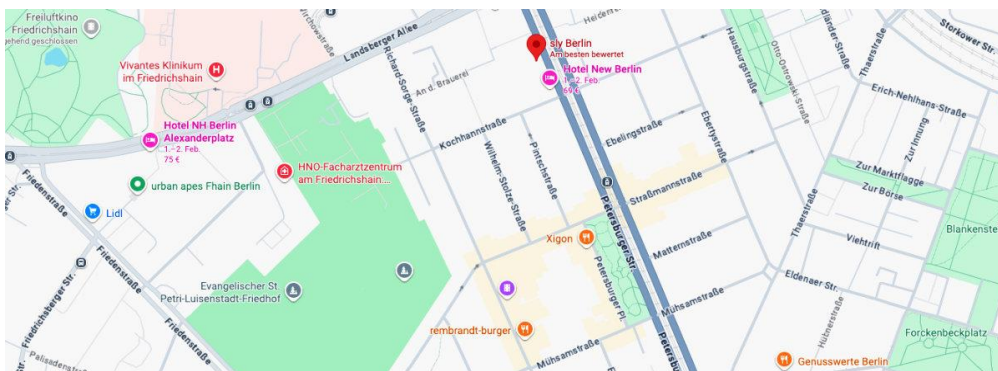
Project Overview

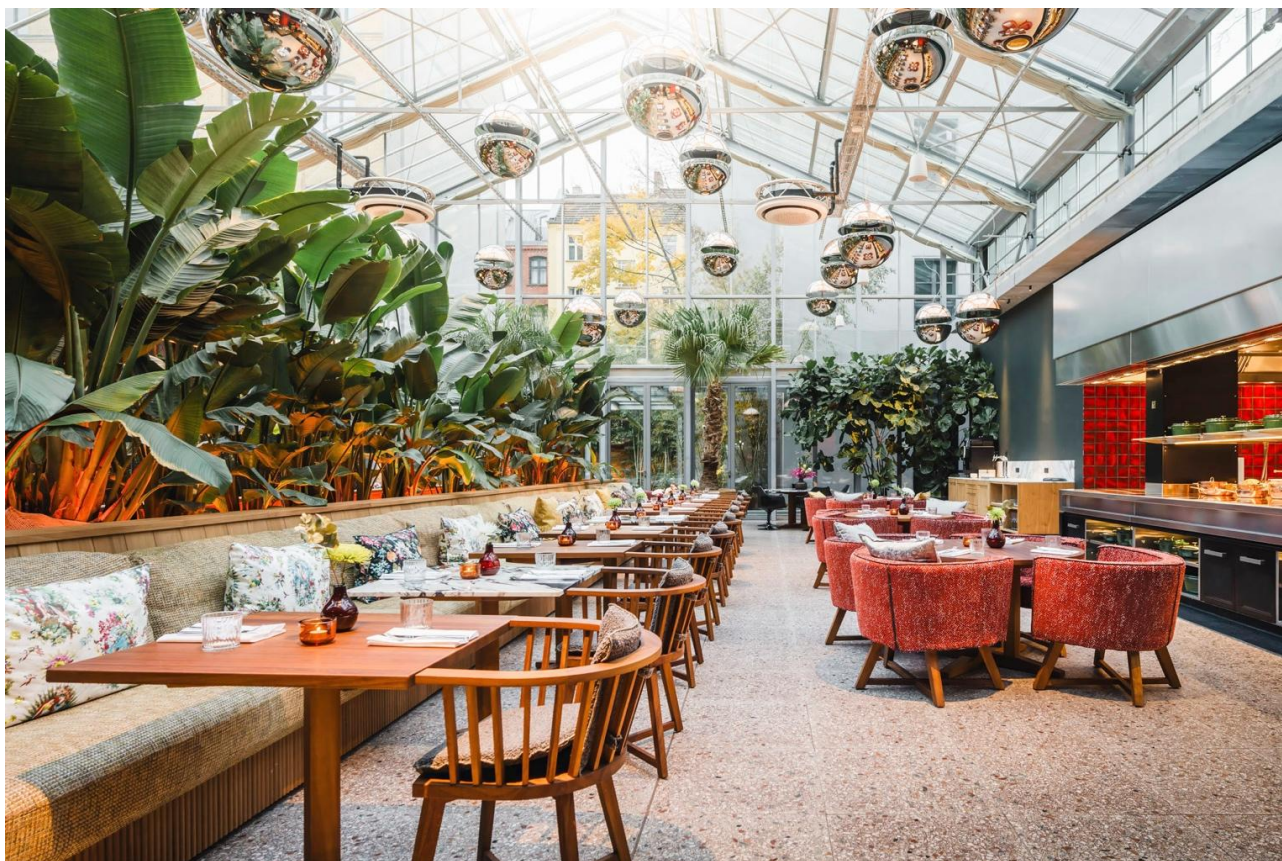
sly is a newly opened design hotel in Berlin's popular Friedrichshain district. While the word sly—meaning cunning, crafty, or mischievous—may seem an unusual choice for a hotel name, it aptly reflects the multifaceted character of the project. A modern hideaway steeped in a sense of history, the hotel skillfully integrates existing structures with new construction around three courtyards. It received the Excellence Award in the Interior Architecture category at the 2025 German Design Council Awards and has earned international acclaim, including recognition at the European Hotel Awards. From the main street, the hotel's exterior blends almost seamlessly into the surrounding apartment buildings. Black tiles along the ground-floor façade lead visitors toward the entrance, subtly guiding them inside. Beyond a compact reception desk tucked into a narrow corridor, a spacious lounge opens up, seamlessly connecting to the restaurant at the heart of the complex. Designed by Giorgio Gullotta Architekten, this expansive glass-walled hall explores contrasts: sharp angles and linear sections of the glass roof are balanced by spherical pendant lamps custom-made by Flos Bespoke. Lush greenery in a variety of scales and forms complements the red-toned sofas and the open kitchen. In the morning, light streaming down from above creates a forest-like atmosphere, while at night, pendant lamps accented with red neon glow like mirror balls, casting flickering shadows across the plants and evoking a club-like mood. A hallway connecting the buildings features a vibrant partition composed of colorful glass pieces assembled like a patchwork quilt. The 150 guest rooms are understated in design; however, the use of high-quality wood and natural stone for floors and furnishings creates interiors that feel both warm and quietly luxurious.

Project Details

1. Brand: sly
 2. Type of Business: Hotel, Restaurant
 3. Open Date: 12/12/2023
 4. Location: Petersburger Straße 16, 10249 Berlin
 5. Size: 150 rooms
 6. Interior design: Giorgio Gullotta Architekten
 7. Website: <https://www.sly-berlin.com/>
- Photos: Steve Herud, Nils Hasenau

Location MAP





Above: Restaurant SLY. Below: The area from the entrance to the reception is finished in darker tones, heightening the sense of brightness upon entering the glass-enclosed restaurant.





Above: Guest rooms do not include minibars; instead, drinks and designer accessories are available at on-site shops.

Below: The restaurant space undergoes a complete transformation after sunset.





Greenery is positioned behind translucent curtains and subtly illuminated, creating a jungle-like atmosphere.

Throughout the space, layers of contrast—light and shadow, complementary colors, variations in scale, and shifts in ceiling height—combine to create a dynamic and immersive environment.



Above: Curved accessories, including Louis Poulsen table lamps, were carefully selected.

Below: A dynamic wooden partition serves as an accent feature.



2. Diane Arbus: Konstellationen

Project Overview

After World War II, Diane Arbus first gained recognition as a fashion photographer, working primarily for magazines, before achieving widespread acclaim for her documentary-style photography. She is regarded as one of the defining photographers of the 20th century, renowned for capturing the unadorned faces of individuals who had rarely been photographed before. Even for those unfamiliar with her name, Diane Arbus's iconic photograph Identical Twins is likely instantly recognizable. An exhibition featuring 454 photographic works—including previously unpublished pieces—has opened, drawing attention not only to the photographs themselves but also to its immersive installation design and scenography. While exhibitions of this scale typically organize works chronologically or thematically, Diane Arbus: Konstellationen takes a radically different approach. Although the exhibition has a designated entrance, there are no explanatory texts, guides, or prescribed routes. Grid-like frames holding the works are mounted in a seemingly random manner, extending in all directions. Visitors wander freely—turning, doubling back, and crossing paths—each forming a personal viewing experience. Dramatic lighting casts elongated shadows across the floor and walls, drawing viewers into a labyrinthine environment. The black iron frames, reminiscent of the doors and window frames of the Gropius Bau, give the space the impression of a single, monolithic structure. The photographs, displayed at varying heights and angles, blur the viewer's awareness of looking at artworks. Instead, the figures of the subjects themselves come to the fore. Arbus traveled extensively, entering circuses, nudist camps, and festivals, instinctively pressing the shutter. This unconventional exhibition format seems to surface her gaze itself, allowing visitors to experience her way of seeing directly.

Project Details

1. Name: Diane Arbus: Konstellationen
2. Type of Business: Exhibition
3. Open Date: 16/10/2025
4. Location: Niederkirchnerstrasse 7, 10963 Berlin
5. Curator at Large: LUMA Arles, Exhibition management: Gropius Bau
6. Website: <https://www.berlinerfestspiele.de/gropius-bau/>

Location MAP

