

**WO KANN MAN ESSEN UND TRINKEN?  
(Where can you get something to eat and drink?)**

**late night shop, convenience store: der Kiosk, die Kioske  
(OTHER NAMES: Spätkauf, Späti, Trinkhalle, Büdchen)  
selling alcohol, tobacco products, everyday items, groceries, such as milk, bread,  
and vegetables, which is open late-night, weekends and holidays**

**GERMANS AND THEIR KIOSKS—A LOVE AFFAIR**

Efficient — yes; **disciplined** — **definitely**; diligent — many times. But luxurious and posh? Not so much.

After all, we *are* talking about the land of **socks and sandals**, where souvenir T-shirts purchased at the last package holiday on the Mediterranean are a legitimate way to dress in public.

Consequently, sitting on the stairs of a kiosk with a bottle — or even a can — of beer is not seen as anything graceless. On the contrary, it's down-to-earth, fun and affordable, whether you're in the mood for an alcoholic drink, a soda, a late-night snack or just a chat with an old friend.

**It's a lifesaver**

The term and the architectural concept of the pavilion have been around since the 13th century, as kiosks were common in Persia, the Indian subcontinent and the Ottoman Empire.

But in Germany, it was only in the second half of the 20th century that late-night convenience shops were created in the German Democratic Republic (GDR), allowing workers coming home from their late shifts to grab a bite or a drink.

Known as the "Spätkauf," or shortened to "Späti," the name directly translates as "late purchase." The shops were a lifesaver for many in former East Germany.

The concept of the late-night shop was later adopted in the rest of Germany, especially following the reunification of the country 30 years ago. However, outside of the former GDR, such shops are rather known as a "Kiosk," "Trinkhalle" or "Büdchen."

To this day, Spätis sell mostly alcohol and tobacco, but some of them also offer proper groceries like bread, milk and vegetables.

If you've ever spent time in Germany, you may have noticed that not only are supermarkets closed on Sundays, but in many smaller towns, grocery stores can close as early as 5 p.m. even on weekdays.

This makes the kiosk one of the only options available for people to get everyday items — not only on weekends and holidays, but sometimes even during what would elsewhere be normal business hours.