



Vienna

AREA CODE 01 / POP 1.7 MILLION

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Best Places to Eat & Drink

- » Neni (p94)
- » Bitzinger Würstelstand am Albertinaplatz (p88)
- » Figlmüller (p88)
- » Café Drechsler (p96)
- » 10er Marie (p98)
- » Wein & Wasser (p97)

Best Places to Stay

- » Boutiquehotel Stadthalle (p88)
- » Pension Hargita (p86)
- » Hotel Sacher (p84)
- » Hotel Kaertnerhof (p86)

Why Go?

Few cities in the world glide so effortlessly between the present and the past like Vienna. Its splendid historical face is easily recognised: grand imperial palaces and bombastic baroque interiors, museums flanking magnificent squares.

But Vienna is also one of Europe's most dynamic urban spaces. A stone's throw from Hofburg, the MuseumsQuartier houses some of the world's most provocative contemporary art behind a striking basalt facade. Outside, a courtyard buzzes on summer evenings with throngs of Viennese drinking and chatting.

The city of Mozart is also the Vienna of Falco (Hans Hölzel), who immortalised its urban textures in song. Sushi and Austro-Asian fusion restaurants stand alongside the traditional *Beisl* (small tavern). In this Vienna, it's OK to mention poetry slam and Stephansdom in one breath.

Throw in the mass of green space within the city limits (almost half the urban expanse is given over to parkland) and the 'blue' Danube cutting a path east of the historical centre and this is a capital that is distinctly Austrian.

When to Go

In summer, you can catch some rays on the banks of the Danube and loll about drinking made-on-the-premises wine in the outdoor gardens of the *Heurigen* (wine taverns). Hiking among the Vienna woods in October yields a spectacular autumn view of the capital. In December, the city is lit up in all its festive glory – go ice skating in front of the *Rathaus* (town hall) or sip *Glühwein* (mulled wine) at one of the capital's atmospheric Christmas markets.

Planning Your Trip

If you're short on time and you only have two days, start with the **Stephansdom** (p58) in the morning. Then head to the **Hofburg** (p59), which is packed with sights. Your best approach to avoid museum and church fatigue is to mix it up – first the **Kaiserappartements** (p59) and Sisi Museum, then the Burgkapelle and the **Schatzkammer** (p62). Take a stroll outside around the **Burggarten** and grab a drink at the **Palmenhaus** (p95). Finish with a casual bite at **Café Drechsler** (p96). It's famous for its goulash.

On day two, hit the **Naschmarkt** (p94) before the crowds roll in. Then visit any of the museums in the **Museums-Quartier** (p69), followed by a stroll around Neubau. For dinner, head back to the Naschmarkt for dinner – Neni is an excellent bet. Finish the night with some bar-hopping through Wieden or some dancing at **Pratersauna** (p102).

DON'T MISS

The **Riesenrad** (p74), the world's most iconic Ferris wheel, is in the centre of the Würstelprater, Vienna's favourite old-school amusement park. Step into the gargantuan containers and spin slowly around, taking in sweeping views of the city, the neighbouring hills and the Danube.

One of Vienna's most convivial markets, the **Naschmarkt** (p94) boasts stalls and stalls of international food, a cacophony of vendors urging you to try their goodies and a slew of top-notch restaurants, many housed in modern glass cubes along the river.

Be sure to hit one of the area's **Heurigen** (wine taverns), but take note of their (notoriously unpredictable) opening hours and call in advance. Don't fret if one is closed, as another will surely be open.

Before You Arrive

Reserve your tickets for the **Spanische Hofreitschule** (Spanish Riding School; p62) at least six months in advance. Two to three months before you leave, check the calendar for concert performances at the **Staatsoper** (p100) and the **Musikverein** (p101), and secure your seats to whatever looks appealing. Last, a week before you depart, decide which day you'll visit **Schloss Schönbrunn** (p78) and book your tickets in advance online.

TRANSPORT PLANNING

For information about fares and routes around Vienna, consult www.wienerlineien.at. During clement weather, consider using Vienna's excellent city-bike scheme: www.citybikewien.at.

Where to Splurge

Pop over to off-the-beaten-path, Michelin-star-rated **Restaurant Vincent** (p90) for a classy but laid-back evening.

Plonk down those euros for a night in Vienna's most famous hotel, the **Sacher** (p96), home of its namesake *Sacher Torte*.

Coffee Decoder

- » **Brauner** Black, with a splash of milk.
- » **Melange** With milk or cream, like a cappuccino.
- » **Maria Theresia** With orange liqueur and whipped cream.

Resources

- » Austria Today (www.austriatoday.at) News and opinion.
- » Austrian Times (www.austriantimes.at) News and opinion.
- » Falter (www.falter.at, in German) Entertainment and social commentary.
- » Vienna Tourist Board (www.wien.info) Chock-full of information.