



# Vienna

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## Includes ➔

Sights .....	60
Activities .....	85
Tours .....	85
Festivals & Events .....	86
Sleeping .....	87
Eating .....	91
Drinking & Nightlife ....	98
Entertainment .....	104
Shopping .....	108

## Best Places to Eat with a Drink

- ➔ Halle (p93)
- ➔ Griechenbeisl (p92)
- ➔ Café Drechsler (p101)
- ➔ Café Sperl (p101)
- ➔ Motto am Fluss (p91)

## Best Places to Stay

- ➔ Schweizer Pension (p87)
- ➔ Radisson Blu Style Hotel (p88)
- ➔ 25hours Hotel (p89)
- ➔ my MOJO vie (p89)
- ➔ DO & CO (p88)

## Why Go?

Few cities in the world glide as effortlessly between the present and the past as 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. In this Vienna, it's OK to mention poetry slam and Stephansdom in one breath.

Throw in an abundance of green space within the city limits and the 'blue' Danube cutting a path east of the historical centre and this is a capital that is distinctly Austrian.

## When to Go

- ➔ Vienna has such a strong range of sights and activities that anytime – summer or winter – is a good time to go.
- ➔ July, August and holidays such as Easter, Christmas and New Year are the most crowded.
- ➔ Crowds are down in spring and autumn, but weather can be changeable.
- ➔ In summer catch some rays on 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 go ice skating in front of the Rathaus (town hall) or sip *Glühwein* (mulled wine) at one of the capital's atmospheric Christmas markets.

## Vienna For Free

Simply walk or catch a tram around the Ringstrasse, or stroll through the Innere Stadt. The best of the Ringstrasse is around the Parlament and University Main Building; beyond these also check out the Altes AKH and Bethaus, especially the Christmas market, and the charming Servitenviertel. The northern side-aisle of Stephansdom (p60) is free, and the **Justizpalast** (Map p74; ☎521 52-0; www.ogh.gv.at; 01, Schmerlingplatz 11; ☎7.30am-4pm Mon-Fri; M Volkstheater, ☎D, 1, 2 Burgring) is great for a visit if you're not on trial (views are good from the canteen). The Hofburg (p65) is the most magnificent of the free highlights. Most churches are free and the Rathaus (p73) has free guided tours.

### DON'T MISS

The Riesenrad (p85), 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 (p97) 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

- **Six months ahead** Reserve your tickets for the Spanish Riding School, Spanische Hofreitschule (p66).
- **Two to three months ahead** Check the calendar for concert performances at the Staatsoper (p104) and the Musikverein (p104), and secure your seats to whatever looks appealing.
- **Four weeks ahead** Book your hotel of choice to make sure you get a room in a busy period.
- **One week ahead** Decide which day you'll visit Schloss Schönbrunn (p82) and book your tickets in advance online.

## TRANSPORT PLANNING

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

## Fast Facts

- Number of districts: 23
- Percentage foreigners: 20%
- Green space: over 50%

## Best Views

Climb the Südturm (p61) of Stephansdom for stunning views over Vienna from the small platform.

Relax with a Zombie on the terrace of Dachboden (p100) by moonlight, with views to the Innere Stadt.

## Resources

- **Vienna Tourist Board** ([www.wien.info](http://www.wien.info)) First port of call for any visitor.
- **Falter** ([www.falter.at](http://www.falter.at)) Weekly entertainment, eating and drinking guide, with political commentary to boot. Listings are Friday to Thursday (€3.20 from newsagents, kiosks and sellers around town).
- **Austria Today** ([www.austriatoday.at](http://www.austriatoday.at)) News and opinion.
- **Austrian Times** ([www.austrian-times.at](http://www.austrian-times.at)) News and opinion.