



Austria

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Best Places to Eat

- » Alter Fuchs, Salzburg (p83)
- » Zu den Zwei Liesln, Vienna (p69)
- » kuk. Hofbäckerei, Linz (p75)
- » Chez Nico, Innsbruck (p88)

Best Places to Stay

- » Haus Reichl, Salzburg (p82)
- » Nepomuks, Innsbruck (p88)
- » Pension Hargita, Vienna (p69)
- » Hotel Daniel, Graz (p76)
- » Snowbunny's Hostel, Kitzbühel (p89)

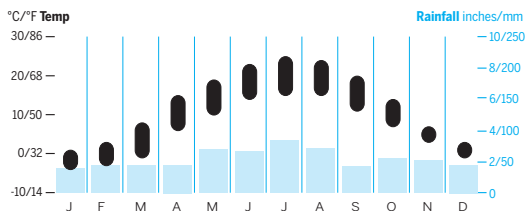
Why Go?

For such a small country, Austria has made it big. This is, after all, the land where Mozart composed, Strauss taught the world to waltz and Julie Andrews grabbed the spotlight with her twirling entrance in the *Sound of Music*. This is where the Habsburgs built their 600-year empire and where past glories still shine in the resplendent baroque palaces and coffee houses of Vienna, Innsbruck and Salzburg. This is a country of perfectionists and whatever it does – mountains, classical music, new media, castles, cake, you name it – it does exceedingly well.

Beyond its grandiose cities, Austria's allure lies outdoors. Indeed, whether you're schussing down the mythical slopes of Kitzbühel, climbing high in the Alps of Tirol or pedalling along the banks of the sprightly Danube, you'll find the kind of inspiring landscapes that no well-orchestrated symphony, singing nun or camera lens could ever quite do justice.

When to Go?

Vienna



Jul & Aug High-alpine hiking in Tirol, lake swimming in Salzkammergut and a feast of festivals.

Sep & Oct *Sturm* (new wine) in vineyards near Vienna, golden forest strolls and few crowds.

Dec & Jan Christmas markets twinkle, skiers on the Alps and Vienna waltzes into the New Year.

AT A GLANCE

- » **Currency** Euro (€)
- » **Language** German
- » **Money** ATMs widely available
- » **Visas** Not required for citizens of the EU, Australia or USA

Fast Facts

- » **Area** 83,855 sq km
- » **Capital** Vienna
- » **Country code** 43
- » **Emergency** 112

Exchange Rates

Australia	A\$1	€0.74
Canada	C\$1	€0.74
Japan	¥100	€0.87
New Zealand	NZ\$1	€0.56
UK	UK£1	€1.16
USA	US\$1	€0.72

Set Your Budget

- » **Budget hotel room** €50
- » **Two-course evening meal** €15
- » **Museum entrance** €7
- » **Beer (bottle)** €3
- » **City transport ticket** €2

Resources

- » **ÖAV** (www.alpenverein.at, in German) Austrian Alpine Club
- » **ÖBB** (www.oebb.at) Austrian Federal Railways
- » **Österreich Werbung** (www.austria.info) National tourism authority

Connections

Bang in the heart of Europe, Austria has speedy connections to its eight neighbouring countries. Trains from Vienna run to many Eastern European destinations, including Bratislava, Budapest, Prague and Warsaw; there are also connections south to Italy via Klagenfurt and north to Berlin. Salzburg is within sight of the Bavarian border, and there are many trains Munich-bound and beyond from the baroque city. Innsbruck is on the main train line connecting Austria to Switzerland, and there are a handful of trains from Bregenz to the bigger Swiss cities.

ITINERARIES

Three Days

Spend two days in Vienna, making sure to visit the Habsburg palaces and Stephansdom before cosying up in a *Kaffeehaus* (coffee house). At night check out the pumping bar scene. Be sure to take in the cutting-edge art collections of the MuseumsQuartier and graze the Naschmarkt for picnic goodies. On day three explore the Salzkammergut lakes or Salzburg.

One Week

Spend two days in Vienna, plus another day exploring the Wachau wine region, a day each in Salzburg and Innsbruck, one day exploring the Salzkammergut lakes, and finally one day in St Anton am Arlberg or Kitzbühel hiking or skiing (depending on the season).

Essential Food & Drink

- » **Make it meaty** Go for a classic Wiener schnitzel, *Tafelspitz* (boiled beef with horseradish sauce) or *Schweinbraten* (pork roast). The humble *Wurst* (sausage) comes in various guises.
- » **On the side** Lashings of potatoes, either fried (*Pommes*), roasted (*Bratkartoffeln*), in a salad (*Erdapfelsalat*) or boiled in their skins (*Quellmänner*); *Knödel* (dumplings) and *Nudeln* (flat egg noodles).
- » **Kaffee und Kuchen** Coffee and cake is Austria's sweetest tradition. Must-tries: flaky apple strudel; rich, chocolatey *Sacher Torte* and *Kaiserschmarrn* (caramelised crepes).
- » **Wine at the source** Jovial locals gather in rustic *Heurigen* (wine taverns) in the wine-producing east, identified by an evergreen branch above the door. Sip crisp Grüner Veltliner whites and spicy Blaufränkisch wines.
- » **Cheese fest** Dig into gooey *Käsnudeln* (cheese noodles) in Carinthia, *Kaspressknodel* (fried cheese dumplings) in Tirol and *Käsekrainer* (cheesy sausages) in Vienna. The hilly Bregenzeralp is studded with dairies.