

SHOPPING

top picks

- **garbage upcycling design** (p144)
- **Wie Wien** (p144)
- **Hot Dogs** (p146)
- **Austrian Delights** (p132)
- **Staud's** (p148)
- **Oberlaa** (p131)
- **Holzer Galerie** (p146)
- **Art Up** (p132)

SHOPPING

Don't even think about visiting Vienna without hitting the shops. The boutique scene – particularly along Kirchengasse, Neubaugasse and Lindengasse in Neubau – is exploding with affordable, young designers' spaces selling quality creations you'll never see on anyone else – for a partial list of shops check out www.7tm.at. Neubau's northern edge also brims with the city's idiosyncratic *Altwaren* (old wares) shops (rummaging through secondhand treasures and trash is de rigeur) and *Jugendstil* (art nouveau) showrooms filled with both furniture and jewellery, though the supreme is the famous *Flohmarkt* (see the boxed text, p142), adjacent to the Naschmarkt. At this huge Saturday flea market crammed with bargain hunters, the dusty contents of suburban attics mix with genuinely valuable and handsome old pieces to make for a quintessentially Viennese shopping experience. Another such experience is bidding on authentic antique furniture, jewellery and art at famed local auction house Dorotheum (see p141). For excellent gallery-hopping or shopping for period and contemporary art, antique guns, porcelain and armour, hit the streets between the Dorotheum and Albertinaplatz.

In the tiny Innere Stadt Hoher Markt area and Bauernmarkt and around you'll find more fashion and small boutiques, many selling locally designed clothes, accessories or food, such as designers' cooperative Art Up (p132). Outside the Ring, your best bets for a pleasant afternoon's shopping are Mariahilf and Neubau – particularly Neubaugasse and Westbahnstrasse – and Josefstädter Strasse, where you'll find plenty of quirky one-offs and interesting boutiques.

Kärntner Strasse and Mariahilfer Strasse are the prime high streets, with international heavyweights and little you can't find at home, but off the main drag you'll discover a few winners selling local specialities such as porcelain, ceramics, handmade dolls, wrought-iron work and leather goods.

Reviews in this chapter are grouped by neighbourhood, and ordered by the type of product on sale.

PRACTICALITIES

Opening Hours

Most shops are open between 9am and 6.30pm Monday to Friday and until 5pm on Saturday. Some have extended hours on Thursday or Friday until around 8pm or 9pm; some shops open on Sunday afternoon. Opening hours are included for listings in this chapter only where they differ from standard business hours.

Consumer Taxes

Mehrwertsteuer (MWST; value-added tax) is set at 20% for most goods. Prices are displayed inclusive of all taxes, even (usually) service charges in hotels and restaurants.

All non-EU visitors are entitled to a refund of the MWST on purchases over €75.01. To claim the tax, a tax-refund cheque must be filled out by the shop at the time of purchase (you'll need to show your passport), which must then be stamped by border officials when you leave the EU. Vienna airport has a counter for payment of instant refunds. Check www.globalrefund.com for more details about how to obtain a refund – it is best claimed upon departing the EU, as

otherwise you'll have to track down an international refund office or make a claim by post. After a handling fee is deducted, refunds normally amount to 13% of the purchase price.

Bargaining

Bargaining is a no-no in shops, although you can certainly haggle when buying second-hand. It's a must at the *Flohmarkt* (see p142).

CENTRAL VIENNA

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