

Title:

The Imperial Age Is Alive When You Travel To Vienna

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Summary:

There is no city that encompasses Western European sophistication and Eastern European culture and charm quite like Vienna, Austria. Baroque edifices enchant the pristinely kempt boulevards while sleek restaurants are packed with networking business suits.

Keywords:

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Article Body:

There is no city that encompasses Western European sophistication and Eastern European culture and charm quite like Vienna, Austria. Baroque edifices enchant the pristinely kempt boulevards while sleek restaurants are packed with networking business suits. Remnants of pre-Roman history in the Danube River Valley make Vienna an intriguing center of human settlement apart from its European neighbors. Celtic and Viking history adorn the extensive museum collections while any conversation with a local will reveal a rather complex, if not completely convoluted, lineage (as anyone will find some way to connect their genealogy to the Habsburg dynasty).

Roped in by the Ringstrasse

Vienna is easily navigable for even the most turned around traveler, with the oldest and most commercial districts encircled by the grand Ringstrasse (Ring Street) and the Danube River to the North. The Innere Stadt is the first district and home to most of Vienna's historic and architectural splendors. You will find yourself immediately drawn to St. Stephen's Cathedral, a Gothic and Romanesque landmark soaring high above the surrounding square. Climb the 343 steps of the nearly claustrophobic spiral staircase to the watchman's lookout in the South Tower or head underground from the North Tower to the catacombs beneath the cathedral where 14 members of the Habsburg family are buried alongside the mausoleum of the bishops. When Vienna was the center of the Holy Roman and Austro-Hungarian Empires, the Habsburgs made monumental efforts to carve their place into Viennese history. Schloss Schönbrunn is the former summer palace of the Habsburg family and the site of the oldest zoo in the world. Tour the halls and gardens and then go next door to the famous Spanish Riding School

where the coveted Lipizzan Stallions are bred, trained and shown in elaborate performances during the winter.

The World Capital of World Class Music

The city of Mozart and Beethoven loves to remind the world of its heritage all year long. Summer, winter, spring and fall are all celebrated with unwavering zeal through a seemingly endless string of festivals. Even Mozart would be moved during the Film Festival am Rathausplatz, which is held during July and August. Remarkable films are projected onto the grand wall of the Rathausplatz (city hall) nightly, along with operatic performances from the world's best. Men and women gather here after work to enjoy cocktails and the extensive array of international cuisines and stay well into the night to dance, watch films and stroll through the adjacent park. This is just a touch of the Viennese way of life.

Coffee Dreams of Chocolate

Before you leave Vienna, it would be a mistake not to indulge in the proud coffee culture. Find a coffeehouse and order from the endless menu of roasts. Also, you may find it difficult to avoid the tourist-targeted Mozart Balls (chocolates made for the man himself), but resist temptation and venture into a true Viennese chocolaterie like the famous Demels. There is no better Viennese experience than sinking into a silky chocolate tart and sipping a creamy latte outside the Imperial Palace!

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