

Beethoven – a walk through Vienna

Retrace the footsteps of Ludwig van Beethoven (born December 16, 1770 Bonn – died March 26, 1827 Vienna) in Vienna. At the age of 16 he travels from Bonn to Vienna for the first time to study under Mozart. Having barely arrived in the city, he has to leave again to hold vigil at his mother's deathbed. Aged 22, he returns to Vienna as a student of Haydn (Mozart has since died), this time staying for good.

Discover the Beethoven Museum, his former residences, memorial sites, the places that witnessed his greatest triumphs and crushing lows, Gustav Klimt's Beethoven Frieze, statues, burial sites and even a cozy Beethoven Heuriger wine tavern.

A SELF-GUIDED CITY WALK BY TITA BÜTTNER.

Ask your hotel or the Tourist Information Office on Albertinaplatz (09:00-17:00), at Vienna Main Station (09:00-19:00) or at Vienna Airport (09:00-22:00) for a **free city map** (also available online at www.vienna.info) and the Vienna Tourist Board's Events guide which gives a run-down of what's on.

The **Vienna City Card**. The **official Vienna Card** will be a useful companion on your Beethoven walk: card holders can make the most of more than 210 discounts and concessions at museums and attractions, theaters, concerts, shops, cafes, restaurants and Heuriger wine taverns across Vienna – as well as unlimited free travel on the capital's underground, bus and tram network (alternative: Big Bus Vienna's hop-on hop-off services) from EUR 17.

WALKING TIME (NOT INCLUDING TIME SPENT LOOKING AROUND MUSEUMS AND OTHER PLACES OF INTEREST): APPROXIMATELY 1 HOUR 30 MINUTES.

TRAVEL TIME (TRAM NUMBER 37): APPROX. 30 MINS.

Your walk gets underway at Stephansplatz (U1 and U3). Dr.-Ignaz-Seipel-Platz is just short walk away (via Lugeck and Bäckerstrasse) Looking around, you will see the Universitätskirche church (Jesuitenkirche 1627), the seminary where the 11-year-old Franz Schubert learned his trade as a Hofsängerknabe chorister between 1808 and 1813, and the

Austrian Academy of Sciences

1st district, Dr. Ignaz-Seipel-Platz 2, www.oeaw.ac.at

The opulent ballroom in this building (open weekdays 09:00-17:00, event schedule permitting – check website) has witnessed numerous sensational musical events over the years, including **Joseph Haydn's** last public appearance.

On March 28, 1808 a special performance of *The Creation* was staged here to celebrate his 76th birthday. The event drew everybody who was anybody in Viennese high society. Also in attendance, the 38-year old **Ludwig van Beethoven** bowed reverentially in front of his former mentor. Just five years later Beethoven celebrated his own triumphant success here – the premiere of his Seventh Symphony and his orchestral work “Wellington’s Victory”, or the “Battle of Vitoria”, which he conducted himself. In this unusual concert Johann Nepomuk Mälzel’s “mechanical ear trumpets” caused a sensation.

Now follow Bäckerstrasse towards Stubenring. Depending on your preference, you can either walk to Karlsplatz or take the number 2 tram.

*On foot, the route cuts across **Stadtspark** with its famous statues of **Anton Bruckner, Franz Lehar, Robert Stolz, Franz Schubert** and most-famously the Waltz King **Johann Strauss**. When Beethoven died, little Schani (Viennese dialect for Johann) was just three years old. But it would only be a few years before he would be regaling audiences with performances of works by Wagner and Liszt – as well as Beethoven.*

From Stadtspark, head along Lothringerstrasse as far as the

Beethovenpark and memorial/Wiener Konzerthaus

3rd district, Lothringerstrasse 20, www.konzerthaus.at, Vienna City Card

Created by Caspar Zumbusch, the memorial was unveiled in 1880. It was made possible thanks to the support of a fellow musician: **Franz Liszt** (1811 Raiding - 1886 Bayreuth). A committed Beethoven fan, he used the takings from his last public concert on March 16, 1877 (marking the 50th anniversary of Beethoven’s death) to complete the memorial. A contemporary account described the 66-year-old Liszt’s concert in glowing terms:

“... even the two public rehearsals for the concert were fit to bursting and brought in a tidy little sum for the charitable arrangements... What joy to have the power to have such a hold and captivate people so, from his youth to old age, undiminished, irresistible! ... He charmed the audience and supported the noble intention to erect a monument to Beethoven in Vienna in a fantastic way. We owe him a great deal of thanks...”

The stony-faced Beethoven looks out towards the **Wiener Konzerthaus**, where a cast of the statue can also be found in the foyer and works by the great master can frequently be found on the program.

Now walk along Schwarzenbergstrasse to the corner of Seilerstätte and Krugerstrasse until you reach

House of Music

1st district, Seilerstätte 30, 10:00-22:00 daily, www.hdm.at, Vienna City Card

A unique and fascinating sound experience awaits you here on four floors – from simple noises to the music of the future... There are exhibits dedicated to **Haydn, Mozart, Schubert, Strauss, Mahler, Schoenberg** and, of course, **Beethoven**. A large-scale map of the city brings to life just how often the great composer changed his residence in Vienna (around 70 times in his 35 years in the city!). It also has examples of his scores, a cast of his face taken during his lifetime, his death mask, handwritten documents, stage set designs for Fidelio and an ear trumpet exhibit that clearly demonstrates the devastating impact of his progressive hearing loss. In June and July 2020 the Inside Beethoven! – The Walk-Through Ensemble sound installation gives fans the chance to stroll around a set stage and pass among the musicians and walk through - in every sense of the word - works by Beethoven. There are also two temporary exhibitions in the courtyard, as well as an event to celebrate 20 years of the House of Music with concerts and a Beethoven trail on June 15, 2020.

Walk to Kärntner Strasse via Krugerstrasse down into the pedestrian underpass beneath the Ringstrasse and Karlsplatz. Take the exit marked "Secession".

Secession

1st district, Friedrichstrasse 12, Tue-Sun 10:00-18:00, www.secession.at, Vienna City Card

Built between 1897 and 1898 by the architect Joseph Olbrich, this building is immediately identifiable from quite some distance thanks to its striking gold dome of leaves (leading the locals to fondly refer to it as the "cabbage"). Gustav Klimt's work is not only on show at the Belvedere (where The Kiss is displayed) – it can also be found here at the secession: his 34-meter-long and two-meter-high **Beethoven Frieze**, a homage to Beethoven and his ninth symphony was created for the Beethoven exhibition of 1902.

Just a few meters farther on, heading out of town along Linke Wienzeile, you soon come to

Theater an der Wien

6th district, Linke Wienzeile 6, www.theater-wien.at

This theater enjoyed a strong early reputation as an important venue for operas, operettas, vocal works, plays and concerts of all descriptions. Several of Beethoven's works made their debuts here, including his violin concerto and **Fidelio** – his only opera. In 1803/04, when working on his opera, the composer lived at the venue for extended periods.

His friend Ignaz Seyfried reported:

"He liked to go to the opera and see productions multiple times, particularly at the Theater an der Wien which was flourishing so beautifully at the time. Also out of sheer convenience as all he really had to do was walk out of his room and take his place in the arena. In his household a truly admirable confusion ... books and music strewn in every corner, there the remains of a cold snack – here sealed or half-empty bottles – there on top of the piano on scrawled sheets the material for a magnificent, still embryonic, symphony [...]."

The former main entrance to the theater can be found at Millöckergasse 8, a side street next to theater. It was here that **Emanuel Schikaneder** created a striking monument in the form of the **Papageno Gate**. History remembers him not only as the builder and first director of the Theater an der Wien, but also as the librettist behind Mozart's Magic Flute, in which he was the first to play the role of Papageno. It was Schikaneder that commissioned Beethoven to write Fidelio.

After years as a venue for musicals, the Theater an der Wien went back to its roots when it became an **opera house** again in 2006: with a focus on Mozart, the Baroque period and contemporary opera.

In 2020 it will be commemorating Beethoven with a world premiere (Egmont by Christian Jost and Christoph Klimke, from Feb 17), and a new production of Fidelio (opening Mar 16) conducted by Christoph Walz.

*Hungry? Now would be the perfect time for a short detour to **Ludwig van, a nearby restaurant**: it was in this heritage-listed building on Laimgrubengasse 22, a few steps uptown, that Beethoven had a courtyard-facing apartment between October 1822 and March 1823 (plaque). He worked on a number of compositions here including the Missa Solemnis, his Ninth Symphony and the Piano Sonata in C minor, Op. 111. This upscale Viennese restaurant offers an innovative mix of classic and modern cuisine for discerning guests (www.ludwigvan.wien, tel. +43 1 587 13 20, reservation recommended).*

Back to **Naschmarkt**, which you need to cross on your way to Kettenbrückengasse 6. This is the address of the building containing the **apartment that Schubert died** in (open Wed and Thu 10:00-13:00, 14:00-18:00) At this point you can take a walk among the Naschmarkt stands, which are laden with exotic and aromatic wares, visit one of the hip restaurants or bars and enjoy the views of the beautiful art nouveau buildings.

*TIP: If the weather refuses to play along, or you are pushed for time, then you can cut your walk short and take the underground to the **Pasqualati House** instead. To do so, simply head back to the Karlsplatz underpass and take the U2 to Schottentor. The exit is just a few steps away from the Pasqualati House (located opposite the main university).*

But if you prefer to continue through the old town on foot, walk past the **Secession** passing the entrance to the underpass and continue along Friedrichstrasse until you get to Nibelungengasse. This street leads to the **Academy of Fine Arts**

Schiller, Goethe and Mozart statues

You will find a monument dedicated to the poet **Friedrich Schiller** (1759-1805) in the small park at the entrance to the Academy of Fine Arts. The bronze sculpture looks out directly towards the monument to his fellow poet and contemporary Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749-1832) at Opernring. Both artists had an exceptional influence on Beethoven's works: Schiller's Ode to Joy inspired the world famous climax of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony. And Goethe provided the creative impetus for several songs as well as the Egmont overture. In a letter to Goethe, Beethoven wrote:

"...this wonderful Egmont, that I, having read it as warmly, have felt it through you and put music to it, in turn..."

A short distance from the Goethe memorial, at the entrance to the **Burggarten** is the Mozart memorial. Beethoven greatly admired W. A. Mozart (1756-1791). The 16-year-old Ludwig traveled from

Bonn to Vienna to study under Mozart. But after just a few weeks he was compelled to return home to sit in vigil at his dying mother's bedside. By the time he returned to the city at the age of 22, Mozart had died and he took up his "apprenticeship" with Haydn instead.

Cross the Burggarten towards the exit leading to the Albertina and you will find yourself on

Albertinaplatz

This part of the old town is not only home to the Albertina gallery with its fantastic art exhibition and Habsburg state rooms, and the Hrdlicka memorial, the tourist information office, Café Tirolerhof and Café Mozart, but also marks the location where the **Kärntnertor Theater** stood until 1870. It was this venue that hosted the triumphant world premiere of his Ninth Symphony on May 7, 1824. By now quite deaf, Beethoven was unable to hear its rapturous reception. It was not until he turned to bow to the audience that he registered their thunderous applause.

Walking a few steps along Augustinergasse will take you to the

Austrian Theatre Museum at Palais Lobkowitz

1st district, Lobkowitzplatz 2, 10:00-18:00 daily, closed Tue, www.theatermuseum.at, Vienna City Card

This museum shows a constantly changing line-up of theater, opera and opera related exhibitions. The first floor contains the **Eroica Saal**, in which Beethoven conducted the private Vienna premiere of his Third Symphony (The Eroica) for his patron Prince Josef Franz Maximilian von Lobkowitz. Musical life in Vienna has a generous allowance paid by Prince von Lobkowitz, Prince Kinsky and Archduke Rudolph to thank for the fact that Beethoven remained in the city.

Walk along Augustinerstrasse towards Josefsplatz.

Next to the entrance to the **Spanish Riding School** you will find the doors to the Grosser Redoutensaal and the Kleiner Redoutensaal – both part of the Hofburg complex. Unfortunately neither of these rooms are open to the public. At the start of the Congress of Vienna in January 1814, with numerous high-ranking statesmen and guests of honor in attendance, Beethoven celebrated a sensational success at the **Grosser Redoutensaal** with his Symphony Number 7 in A major and his "Battle Symphony" which is performed only rarely today. His friend Schindler reported: "The outbreaks of joy during the Symphony in A minor and the Battle of Vitoria exceed anything that anyone could have hoped to have experienced in a concert hall." But now almost profoundly deaf, the 44-year-old Beethoven was unable to hear the audience's elation.

You should take a little time to enjoy **Michaelerplatz** which you reach next. It is one of the city's most beautiful squares, where the **old Burgtheater** once stood. Great composers such as **Gluck**, **Haydn** and **Mozart** all celebrated memorable premieres of their works there. It is where, on March 29, 1795 the 24-year-old Beethoven captivated the audience with his first public appearance. "A new concerto

on the pianoforte, played by the master Ludwig von Beethoven and created by him," read the notes in the program.

Walk through the Michaelertor gate, past the Sisi Museum and the Spanish Riding School. At the entrance to the Weltmuseum, you will also find the way into the

Collection of Ancient Musical Instruments

Neue Burg, Mon, Tue, Thu, Sat, Sun 10:00-18:00, Fri 10:00-21:00, www.khm.at, Vienna City Card.

If you are passionate about historical musical instruments and love an imperial ambiance, you will be in your element here. With a multimedia guide in tow, you can browse the collection and find out more about the history of music throughout the ages. Some of the instruments are labeled to indicate that they can be played by visitors. The grand Marmorsaal is given over to Beethoven: it contains two famous Beethoven portraits and a bust of the master as well as a pair of fortepianos and two wind instruments with a connection to the great composer. Numerous period instruments bring the musical world of Beethoven's day to life.

Once back on Michaelerplatz, turn on to Herrengasse.

After a quick pit stop at the time-honored **Café Central** (a popular café once frequented by various writers and creative figures including Karl Kraus, Peter Altenberg and Adolf Loos) and wander through the eye-catching, store-lined Palais Ferstl arcade, you will emerge on **Freyung**. It was here on this square at Palais Kinsky that Prince Ferdinand Kinsky – who paid the majority of Beethoven's allowance – lived.

After a look at the courtyard head to Mölker Bastei via Schottengasse where you will find the...

Pasqualati House

1st district, Mölker Bastei 8, Tue-Sun, public hols. 10:00-13:00 and 14:00-18:00, closed on Jan 1, May 1, Dec 25, and public hols. falling on a Monday; www.wienmuseum.at, Vienna City Card (please ring for assistance if the gate is closed)

This **Beethoven memorial** site is located on the fourth floor. Many of Beethoven's personal effects are on display here and visitors can listen to his music on headphones. The old wooden floors creak under visitors' feet and the views of the Ringstrasse and University are particularly impressive.

Baron von Pasqualati, the owner of the building provided cheap rooms for his friend Beethoven to use, which he returned to on multiple occasions between 1804 and 1814. The view that Beethoven would have had in his day spread beyond the city walls to the suburbs and on to the Vienna Woods in the distance. It is said that this vista inspired many of the great master's most important works. And it was at this address that he worked on Fidelio, several symphonies, a violin concerto and works for piano including Für Elise, which he is believed to have dedicated to Therese von Malfatti in a gesture of unrequited love.

*From the Pasqualati House it is just a stone's throw to the Schottentor underground and tram stop where you will take the 37 tram as far as Schwarzspanierstrasse (this street adjoins the famous Berggasse, home to the **Sigmund Freud** museum (09:00-18:00 daily, www.freud-museum.at, Vienna City Card).*

A plaque at **Schwarzspanierstrasse 15** provides the only indication that the building that Beethoven died in was once located on this site. The apartment that Beethoven moved into at this spot in October 1825 was very spacious and light. It was located on the second floor and had views of the old town. When Beethoven fell seriously ill he was taken care of by good friends such as Malfatti, Pasqualati and Schindler. Gerhard von Breuning, the 14-year-old son of Beethoven's old school friend Stefan von Breuning, liked to visit often after school. The interesting and frequently animated conversations with the master were conducted by means of conversation books. Gerhard von Breuning went on to become a respected doctor and published his recollections of these exchanges.

Right up until a short time before his death Beethoven continued to entertain hopes of realizing his many musical plans: *"There is still so much I want to write. Now the Tenth Symphony, and I wanted to compose a requiem, and the music for Faust, and a book of piano studies too..."* But on the afternoon of March 26, 1827 with an unusually violent thunderstorm raging outside, Ludwig van Beethoven closed his eyes for the very last time.

The opulent funeral procession was followed by around 20,000 Viennese – an impressive crowd particularly given the fact that Vienna only had a population of around 200,000 in total at the time. The great writer **Franz Grillparzer**, with whom Beethoven planned to work, penned a moving funeral oration: *"He was an artist, but also a man, a man in every sense, in the highest sense..."*

Beethoven's burial took place at **Währinger Ortsfriedhof**. However, the cemetery was closed in 1873 and later became the **Schubertpark**. Schubert's last wish was to be buried next to his great idol Beethoven – which came to pass. The original grave location and headstones can be found along the wall in the back of the park. Beethoven and Schubert were later laid to rest in graves of honor, or **Ehrengräber**, at **Vienna's Central Cemetery** (see extra tour).

(To reach the original burial sites continue in the direction you were traveling, this time on tram 40 or 41 as far as the Martinstrasse stop). Or you can continue your journey in the 37 tram. At the Canisiusgasse stop you will find...

Schubert's place of birth

9th district, Nussdorfer Strasse 54, Tue-Sun, public hols 10:00-13:00 and 14:00-18:00, www.wienmuseum.at, Vienna City Card

When little Franzl entered the world on January 31, 1797 as the twelfth child in a family of teachers in the dark smoky kitchen of a two-room, second-floor apartment, the 27-year-old Beethoven had already been living in Vienna for five years. In his short life **Franz Schubert** composed some magnificent works: nine symphonies, 16 operas, chamber pieces, sonatas, dances, masses and around 600 *lieder*. *"Truly, in this Schubert there dwells a divine spark..."*, Beethoven is reputed to have said a short time before his death. Schubert attended the burial of his idol as a torchbearer. Just a year later – on November 19, 1828 – Schubert died at the age of just 31.

Continue on the 37 tram as far as the Hohe Warte stop, where you will find Heiligenstädter Park. Half way between the entrance down towards Grinzing Strasse is the impressive

Beethoven statue

By all accounts, the way he is depicted here is an accurate representation of his appearance when he used to walk around Heiligenstadt (the name of this suburb of Vienna) and the surrounding vineyards – with his wild hair, sheets of music under his arm and his conversation book always in easy reach in his coat pocket, humming loudly to himself, sometimes gesticulating wildly, struggling with advancing deafness and always with a head full of music. It was at this part of the park that a spa with healing waters stood during Beethoven's lifetime, a place that the artist hoped would ease his suffering. Which explains why he spent several summers in this particular suburb.

*Leave the park via the Grinzing Strasse entrance, turn left and continue along the street. Number 70 is the building that **Albert Einstein** lived in from 1927 to 1931. A few steps farther on, at number 64 is the*

Grillparzer Haus

19th district, Grinzing Strasse 64 (not open to visitors)

It was at this address that Beethoven took rooms in the summer of 1808. Then aged 18, the writer **Franz Grillparzer**, who lived here and would later become a friend of Beethoven's, recorded the following memorable incident:

"... When he played it was heard all over the house. In order to hear it better, my mother often opened the door to the kitchen, which was closer to his lodgings. Once she went out into the vestibule...By chance, Beethoven happened to stop just at that moment and came out of his door into the corridor. When he saw my mother, he hurried back in, came out with his hat on and stormed out and – never played again all summer."

Go back to Grinzing Strasse as far as the church and walk up Armbrusterstrasse as far as Probusgasse where you come to the

Beethoven Museum – Vienna's main Beethoven museum site

19th district, Probusgasse 6, Tue-Sun, public hols. 10:00-13:00 and 14:00-18:00, closed Jan 1, May 1, Dec 25 and public hols. falling on a Monday; www.wienmuseum.at, Vienna City Card

The original 40-square-meter Beethoven apartment in Heiligenstadt has been extended to create a 265-square-meter Beethoven Museum. A fascinating, modern exhibition leads through 14 rooms. The themed areas cover various topics including the history of the building, Beethoven's move from Bonn to Vienna, his stay here in Heiligenstadt – a popular spa town at the time – his relationship with nature, composing, earning money, performance practices of Beethoven's time and his legacy.

Like many Viennese, Beethoven would relocate to the suburbs in summer to escape the heat of the city. Extended walks gave him strength, as well as hope of finding respite from – or even a cure for – the physical and mental torments that plagued him. The importance of nature for Beethoven is evidence by a remark found among the sketches to his Sixth Symphony, The Pastoral Symphony: "... -

Sinfonia caratteristica. He who has ever obtained an idea of life in the country can imagine for himself what the composer intended without lots of titles. Also without description one will recognize the whole more as feeling than tone painting. The Pastoral Symphony is not painting, but that in which feelings are expressed which enjoyment of the countryside brings out in man, where some feelings of country life are described."

It was here at the present-day location of the Beethoven Museum that Beethoven is believed to have written the Heiligenstadt Testament. In fact, it is a **letter to his brothers**, which **he never sent** (it was only discovered after his death): a piece of writing that reveals the depths of his despair, as Ludwig van Beethoven, just 32 years old, is confronted with the fact that his deafness is incurable. Beethoven's letter is very moving.

"O you men who think or say that I am malevolent, stubborn or misanthropic, how greatly do you wrong me... reflect now that for six years I have been a hopeless case... Born with an ardent and lively temperament...I was compelled early to isolate myself, to live in loneliness. ... and yet it was impossible for me to say to men speak louder, shout, for I am deaf... ...but little more and I would have put an end to my life. ...O men, when some day you read these words, reflect that you did me wrong and let the unfortunate one comfort himself and find one of his kind who despite all obstacles of nature yet did all that was in his power to be accepted among worthy artists and men."

Despite all his physical and mental suffering, he went on to write great symphonies and other unique works for a further 25 years, cocooned in his deafness.

Carry on along Probusgasse towards Pfarrplatz, passing – or heading directly to – various cozy Heuriger (traditional wine taverns also known as "Buschenschanken" where typically Viennese food and drink is served). On Pfarrplatz you will find the **Mayer am Pfarrplatz** wine tavern located in a charming house where Beethoven lived and composed for a short time in 1817. A glass of wine at one of the Heuriger is as fitting an end to the tour as a walk along the nearby Beethovengang through Vienna's vineyards...

Separate tour: Central Cemetery

11th district, Simmeringer Hauptstrasse 234, May-Aug 07:00-19:00, March, April, September, October 07:00-18:00, November-February 08:00-17:00, www.wien.gv.at

Take the number 71 tram directly to the main entrance (Tor 2) of the Central Cemetery. Guides with maps showing the location of the famous graves can be obtained from the intendant or in the site office.

Virtually no other cemetery can claim to have so many famous graves: the composers Ludwig van Beethoven, Franz Schubert, Johann Strauss I, Johann Strauss II, his brothers Eduard and Josef, Josef Lanner, Carl Michael Ziehrer, Johannes Brahms, Christoph Willibald Gluck, Arnold Schoenberg, Robert Stolz, Emmerich Kálmán, Hugo Wolf, Franz von Suppè and Karl Millöcker are all buried here. There is also a memorial to the most famous Austrian of them all, the musical genius Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart. Popular Austrian actors Hans Moser and Paul Hörbiger, film legends Curd Jürgens and Theo Lingen, pop stars Falco and Udo Jürgens, the poet Johann Nestroy and the writers Arthur

Schnitzler and Friedrich Torberg are just some of the other high-profile individuals to have been laid to rest at the 2.7 square kilometer site.

Vienna's Central Cemetery is a world of its own – and even features **horse-drawn carriage tours** in the summer months. From mid-March until November 1, carriages are available from the stand at Tor 2 from 10:00 until around 17:00 every day except Tuesdays. The tour takes in various graves of famous Viennese personalities (including that of Beethoven), while also focusing on the beautiful natural surroundings (30 or 60-minute tour, call +43 (0)699 181 540 22 for reservations).

There is a branch of **Konditorei Oberlax** at the Central Cemetery where you can enjoy coffee and cake after your tour.

Concert tip: RESOUND Beethoven The Orchester Wiener Akademie has been giving period performances of works from the Viennese-classical through to the late Romantic eras at the sites where they were first played since 2015. As a revolutionary and pioneer, Ludwig van Beethoven features prominently. (www.wienerakademie.at).

Beethoven 2020: 250th anniversary of the birth of a musical genius. Visit www.wien.info/en/music-stage-shows/beethoven-2020 for details of Beethoven-related events in the city (exhibitions, concerts etc.).

*Author Tita Büttner is a native of Vienna and lived abroad for many years. She has worked in fashion, marketing and tourism, and today is a freelance journalist.
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