

Vienna, Intl.



A Journal on the City's People, Places and Culture

ISSUE 6

2026

www.vienna.info



Vienna Bites, Hot René, Céline and Jesse, Reinsperger, Beisl, EXPORT, Wolfram, Holzinger, da Vinci, Domenig, Villa Beer, Lashings of Lipstick, Eurovision Song Contest

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Insider

Dear readers ... and dear Eurovision Song Contest fans,



Photo: © Vienna Tourist Board/Peter Rigaud

Vienna is always worth the trip. But especially so in May 2026. After JJ's victory in 2025, the Eurovision Song Contest (ESC) will take place here in the Austrian capital for the third time. With Vienna and the ESC, what belongs together comes together: the cosmopolitan capital of music and the biggest music show in the world. Vienna and Europe will be "United by Music" once again in 2026. Since Vienna's announcement as the host city in August 2025, we've been working tirelessly to build on the incredibly successful ESC we hosted in 2015.

Back then – following Conchita Wurst's stunning win with Rise Like A Phoenix in Copenhagen – we raised the bar as a host city. In a survey of all on-site reporters, an impressive 79% rated the Eurovision Song Contest in Vienna "better" or "much better" than previous events. The city scored top marks across the board, and for hospitality, accessibility, and audience atmosphere in particular. And of course we're aiming to top that in 2026. One thing I can promise you: like then, the entire city will come alive to celebrate a festival of human spirit

and create lasting memories as a host to remember. (ESC 2026 story on page 66)

But the ESC isn't the only highlight of 2026: events throughout the year will be shaped by the theme of "Vienna Bites. Cuisine, Culture, Character". Our goal is to take this as our starting point to honor "Viennese Cuisine" – uniquely, the only cuisine named after a city. And one which spans a full spectrum from sausage stands to Michelin-starred restaurants. The Viennese Beisl – the name for the city's down-to-earth taverns – is also unique the world over. In this issue of Vienna, Intl., you'll find lots of stories that center on our chosen theme for 2026. They cover everything from typical Viennese Beisls to the capital's "hottest" sausage stand (operator), unique sparkling wines and imperial table culture, as well as some of the producers and manufacturers from back then that are still going strong today. The history of Viennese cuisine is also a history of women: in the second half of the 19th century, numerous female cooks from Bohemia found employment in Vienna's bourgeois homes and noble palaces. Their hearty and rich dishes continue to influence Viennese cuisine to this day. Unfortunately, these culinary superstars were gradually written out of history as the 20th century went on. But we're bringing them back into the spotlight: visit the website for the theme year at viennabites.vienna.info for the bigger picture.

This issue of Vienna, Intl. also highlights many of the strong and successful women who are shaping the city today. Burgtheater and Tatort star Stefanie Reinsperger talks about her Vienna. We also visited the exceptional artist VALIE EXPORT in her Vienna studio, and our profile of Florentina Holzinger gives a fascinating insight into one of the most influential and radical choreographers and performance artists of our time. Elsewhere in this issue, comedian Denice Bourbon, wine-maker Jutta Ambrositsch, and Eva-Maria Weiss, a project leader for the new U5 subway line, share their stories.

And fittingly for a magazine all about a modern, livable capital, there is also space set aside for the topic of sustainability. On page 100, we explain how (vitaly) important trees are for a major city. Only a handful of people are aware of the city's sustainable and eco-conscious approach

that involves making hot buildings livable through cooling water (page 106). We also look at how art in Vienna is made accessible and inclusive in our story on page 112. And finally, on page 116, we address a need that affects us all: the trip to the WC. Vienna has plenty of public restrooms, many of which are truly impressive.

And it's likely that lots of people will be particularly grateful for our "Tour de Toilette" when Vienna is turned into Europe's biggest open-air party location during the Eurovision Song Contest 2026.

I look forward to seeing you!

NORBERT KETTNER
*Managing Director,
Vienna Tourist Board*



Food & Drink

Vienna Bites. Always. But never more so than in 2026, when hot sausages “ferment” a revolution in contemporary Viennese Beisl taverns with a splash of sparkling wine.

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Ten Questions for “Hot René”

René Kachlir runs the hottest of all the city’s sausage stands. Which, by the way, were recently added to UNESCO’s intangible cultural heritage list.

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Beisl Boom in Vienna

Vienna’s traditional Beisl restaurants have plenty of surprises in store – thanks to a number of exciting new and innovative concepts. We took a look. And sampled their wares.

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The Lettuce That Came in From the Cold

Planting veggies in winter without heated greenhouses? The Augarten city farm shows the eco-friendly way forward and reveals just how diverse the world of winter veg can be.

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Bring Out the Bubbly!

Lots of Viennese winemakers produce excellent sparkling wines – aka Sekts. So what better opportunity to pop those corks and profile five exceptional Viennese variations on the theme.

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Vienna’s Live Cultures

The city is developing a taste for fermented food! Quite literally. Selected Viennese restaurants are showing the contemporary side to this centuries-old skill.



Photo: © Vienna Tourist Board/Paul Bauer



Ten Questions for “Hot René”

(Interview)
Maria SCHALLER

(Photo)
Paul BAUER

Everyone in Vienna knows René Kachlir as “der scharfe René” (Hot René). For 20 years now, he has run the spiciest sausage stand in the city on Schwarzenbergplatz. As chair of the Wiener Würstelstände sausage stand association, Kachlir was instrumental in securing “intangible UNESCO cultural heritage” status for these Viennese institutions in 2024.

① **How did you become “Hot René”?**

After I'd seen the world, I bought the sausage stand with my brother in 2005. We wanted to give it our own unique signature. The core idea was always: there'll be sausages with chili sauces and chili powders – and an open-ended heat scale.

② **What helps when it gets too spicy for someone?**

Time. I don't offer anything, no milk, no bread. Nobody's died yet. But I do check people out beforehand. The biggest show-offs handle the least heat. A 17-year-old girl once ate the hottest thing I have – without batting an eyelid.

③ **Why do Vienna's sausage stands have cultural heritage status?**

Because they're incredibly important for Vienna, its urban fabric, and its way of life. Without them, Vienna wouldn't be Vienna.

④ **What makes a good sausage?**

Back in the day they just chucked everything in; but now, really decent ingredients go into them. The quality has risen a lot overall. You have to put a lot of love into it. And I always slice the sausage very evenly. What works in a Michelin-starred kitchen works on a paper plate too.

⑤ **Your favorite sausage?**

For a long time, it was the Käsekrainer with my curry sauce; these days it's the fine Duroc bratwurst. After 20 years, it just doesn't taste as good anywhere else.

⑥ **Can a sausage be vegan too?**

There are some really decent ones now. They used to taste like window putty. We don't offer them for practical reasons – the sausage stand just isn't big enough.

⑦ **What do you do with all the stories that guests share at your stand?**

What happens at the sausage stand stays at the sausage stand.

⑧ **Do you have a lot of regular customers?**

More than just a couple. It's like a big family. Every new guest could be tomorrow's regular.

⑨ **The most beautiful spots in Vienna?**

I love strolling around the city center, enjoying the parks and waterways.

⑩ **What makes Vienna livable for you?**

The people. It's always been multicultural here. And that's what makes Vienna what it is.

Würstelstand Zum scharfen René
Schwarzenbergplatz 16, 1010 Vienna
→ vomscharfenrene.at



Food that makes you happy at Zum Roten Bären

Beisl Boom in Vienna

New and surprising concepts are breathing fresh life into the much-loved Viennese Beisl – the preferred term here for the city’s typical taverns. We set off to find out which ones are fueling the resurgence of Beisl culture in the capital. And we made sure that we sampled their wares, too.

(Text)
Susanne KAPELLER

(Photos)
Gabriel HYDEN

The Beisl is as much a part of Vienna as the coffeehouse and the Heuriger wine tavern. In the capital’s Beisl, down-to-earth Viennese cuisine reigns supreme – unpretentious and without any airs and graces. It is here that the capital’s unique fare continues to thrive in all its rich variety. Of course, Beisls have Wiener Schnitzel, but there’s so much more to Viennese cuisine than that. A classic “Wiener Beisl” has a spacious bar and service area where the wine is on chill and the beer poured. Mostly featuring wood paneling decor and simple tables and chairs, they attract a mixed clientele. In the kitchen, tradition holds sway, and often offal dishes have pride of place on the menu.

Lately, the city has witnessed the emergence of some pretty surprising Beisl concepts – which is another way for Vienna to showcase its contemporary culinary credentials. Old taverns are being taken over by a crop of younger owners, sensitively renovated, and taken forward into a new chapter with a refreshing dynamism. But what remains unchanged is that all-authentic Beisl ambience. Even if the food might be a bit different to how it used to be.



Till Wörner (right) serves up a surprise with his vegetarian dishes at Rosi.

Beisl for Vegetarians

The biggest surprise a Viennese Beisl can offer is vegetarian cuisine. And that's exactly what Till Wörner does at his Beisl, Rosi, which is named after his grandmother. Beisls famously serve a very meat-heavy selection of Viennese dishes. So some tourists are a bit surprised when they stop by Rosi after visiting nearby Schönbrunn Palace. Why exactly did chef Wörner hit upon the idea of running a vegetarian Beisl? "When we came up with the idea for the venue, my girlfriend was vegan," he says. "Austria grows great vegetables too, and we want to show what you can cook with them. From a culinary perspective, cooking with vegetables is exciting." Inspired by the season, the dishes come in small portions. "We also have lots of ideas when it comes to preservation. And we draw from our cellar stock when we cook," says Wörner, outlining his unique culinary approach. The former Steirereck chef brought a wealth of product knowledge from



The plates at Rosi are meant for sharing.

his time at the top-ranking restaurant. But his stuffed ravioli (Maultaschen) just like Oma used to make had to be given pride of place on the menu as the only meat dish. The extensive drinks menu offers plenty of natural wines, non-alcoholic options, and homemade creations. Rosi is also redefining what a modern Beisl can look like: here, the wood paneling was painted white. The old Bretschneider bar is, as typical for a Beisl, a real eye-catcher here too.

Offal, Game, and Wine

Gasthaus Stern provides a culinary counterpoint to Rosi. Located in the outer district of Simmering, it serves refined Viennese cuisine with a focus on offal and game. Something that has earned it a name and following throughout the city. Owner Christian



Authentic Beisl charm at Gasthaus Stern

Werner has run the place for 18 years and built its reputation over time. Many guests come specifically for the cuisine. Werner: "Stern is all about offal, game, and wine. We're a meeting point for foodies who appreciate offal dishes in particular." In the past, Werner did the cooking, but today that honor falls to head chef Peter Zinter. Both hunters, they share the same culinary philosophy. And Werner curates the wine list, which has over 600 varieties to choose from.



Owner Christian Werner (left) serves offal, game, and wine at Gasthaus Stern.



The menu features dishes like Alpencalamari fritti (fried calf tripe) and Styrian scallops (breaded bull testicles). Calf sweetbreads, jellied calf's foot, Riesling Beuschel (veal ragout made with heart and lungs), venison pockets, pheasant breast, and Viennese escargots are just a few more specialties. Even the liver dumpling in the soup tastes so fluffy here as hardly anywhere else. It is mama's recipe, after all. But how did the focus on offal come about in the first place? "Through my parents' former business, which was near the meat market in St. Marx. They cooked a lot with offal. Plus, cooking with offal is very Viennese. And through 'Stern', I struck upon a niche," says Christian Werner. And offal cuisine, with the nose-to-tail approach of using every part of the animal, is also a very sustainable concept.

Art in the Beisl

Zum Roten Bären isn't a classic Beisl either, as even a quick glance at the menu might suggest. The "Red Bear", to give it its English name, is wild, quirky, and eccentric – which makes it all the more lovable. In 2013, the Beisl was founded by three friends. One of them – Johannes Bodingbauer – still cooks in the kitchen today. What matters to Bodingbauer when cooking: "The art of cooking is important to me. And regional products. We have two farmers as our main suppliers and they provide really good products. We source our meat from Höllerschmid." And you can taste it. Changes every two weeks, the dishes on the evening menu are pure soul food. The classic menu features perennial favorites such as schnitzel and cordon bleu, as well as dishes made from oyster mushrooms from Vienna's Hut & Stiel mushroom farm. "We've also experimented a lot to find the best breadcrumbs for the schnitzel," says the head chef.

The color red in the name is reflected in the interior of the salon. The quirky history of the restaurant is captured in collages on one wall – and art is everywhere, with works by photographer Rita Nowak and the artist collective Gelitin. Bodingbauer muses: "Art and images are the Rote Bär." At Rote Bär, fun comes first, and the music can be a bit louder too.



Zum Roten Bären: where art has a big role to play, alongside Viennese cuisine.

Michelin-Star Cuisine

And in Vienna, there's even Michelin-star-winning cuisine in a Beisl setting. You could be forgiven for thinking that Pramerl & the Wolf was just another Viennese restaurant. Guests sit in a cozy atmosphere with an old wooden bar and paneled walls, with only a few tables. Erstwhile newcomer to the trade Wolfgang Zankl-Sertl, a former management consultant, serves modern cuisine that's earned his



Michelin-starred chef Wolfgang Zankl-Sertl at Pramerl & the Wolf



The Bretschneider bar is a typical Beisl eye-catcher – and the same goes for the one at Pramerl & the Wolf.



Carrots and beets in Maltaise sauce are served with Austrian-style brioche cubes (Buchteln) at the Michelin-starred restaurant.

Beisl a Michelin star. Its relaxed and understated approach gives patrons another way to experience top-rated Viennese cuisine. Diners grab their own cutlery from a drawer, and there's no menu – the chef asks at the start about food intolerances, whether you eat meat, or what you don't like. His dishes are often staples of Viennese cuisine such as mini Krapfen donut balls or – depending on your view – large Backerbsen soup pearls.

More Beisl Tips

In a quick rundown, we present a few more special, surprising Beisl concepts in Vienna that are particularly worth a visit:

Simon Schubert and Julian Lechner are bringing Viennese cuisine into the present at Reznicek, serving it at an international level. The cordon bleu by chef Julian Lechner is famous all over the city, and the same goes for the offal dishes, as well as the wines curated by Simon Schubert.

At Gasthaus Jagetsberger on Märzstrasse, it might look like the old days, but the kitchen serves contemporary Viennese cuisine. It's astonishing how kohlrabi dumplings or calf heart can be presented. The cooking here is outstanding. Another great example of a slightly different Beisl.

The love for Viennese cuisine is palpable at 575 Sagmeister. Both the ambiance and dishes have a special twist. Here, there is a firm emphasis on regionally sourced produce, hence the name: Austria is 575km in length from east to west, and the idea is that the products should not come from any farther away than that. A lot of them hail

from Vienna itself, including the Viennese catfish from blün's fish farm. A tip: 575 Sagmeister's fresh take on tartare – made from mushrooms, root vegetables, and beetroot. The original decor has been spruced up with colorful elements, and the service is full of Viennese charm.

While Brösl in the Stuwerviertel might seem like a classic Beisl, appearances can be deceiving. Here, the focus is on vegetable dishes rather than Viennese cuisine. Fish and meat are available but only play a supporting role. The menu changes daily based on what's available from small producers, with the chefs cooking whatever's going on that particular day. Overall, the cooking style has a distinctly Mediterranean flair. The dusted-down Beisl decor at Brösl is particularly well looked after.

It's also exciting to see other countries' cuisines move into a Beisl. Like at Léontine, a restaurant that serves superb French cuisine. And Rosebar Centrala, which has adopted a fantastic culinary concept with Eastern European influences. Here, Aleksandra Swarc and Nadim Amin, after stints in London, have realized their dream of their own venue.

VIENNA BITES

CUISINE, CULTURE, CHARACTER

Life in the capital will be flavored by all things culinary in 2026. Inspired by the theme for the year of "Vienna Bites. Cuisine, Culture, Character," we will be showing what makes Vienna so special in this particular sphere. More at viennabites.vienna.info



● Rosi
Sechshauser Strasse 120
1150 Vienna
→ rosi.wien

● Gasthaus Stern
Braunhubergasse 6
1110 Vienna
→ gasthausstern.at

● Zum Roten Bären
Berggasse 39
1090 Vienna
→ zumrotenbaeren.at

● Pramerl & the Wolf
Pramergasse 21
1090 Vienna
→ pramerlandthewolf.com

● Reznicek
Reznicekgasse 10
1090 Vienna
→ reznicek.co.at

● Gasthaus Jagetsberger
Märzstrasse 87
1150 Vienna
→ anna-jagetsberger.at

● 575 Sagmeister
Schimmelgasse 11/Paulusplatz
1030 Vienna
→ 575sagmeister.at

● Brösl
Wohlmutterstrasse 23
1020 Vienna
→ broesl.at

● Léontine
Reisnerstrasse 39
1030 Vienna
→ leontine.at

● Rosebar Centrala
Rauscherstrasse 5
1200 Vienna
→ centrala.at

More tips for Beisls and taverns in Vienna can be found in a guide on the ivie app.

(Text)
Susanne KAPPELLER

(Photos)
Anna STÖCHER

The Lettuce That Came in From the Cold



Vienna is known for the large agricultural sector that lies within its own city limits. Here, fruits and vegetables come straight from the fields – super sustainable, even in winter. As far as winter veg goes, Vienna has its very own flagship project in the shape of the Augarten City Farm. Elsewhere, top chefs at Vienna's Koch.Campus show what can be conjured up from winter staples such as cabbage, radicchio and various root vegetables.

Locally-sourced, seasonal produce is increasingly important in the restaurant trade. It couldn't be much easier in Vienna, given that the city grows so much of its own food. And even in winter, the capital's restaurants don't have to go without locally-grown vegetables as the winter harvests deliver much more than most people realize. In a bid to increase the popularity of home-grown produce, an association of local chefs is now focusing on the subject at the Koch.Campus, where expert restaurateurs and producers regularly get together to discuss all the latest innovations and trending topics. At their latest get-together in the capital, all eyes were on winter veg and its rich potential for the way we eat in future. Hardy vegetables are highly sustainable – after all, they grow out in the fields or in unheated greenhouses, so they do not require any additional energy. And then there are the advantages that come with crops being grown right on our doorstep, which cuts out lengthy delivery routes.

Seasonal Showcase

The Koch.Campus issued an invitation to its members to attend the Augarten City Farm, which is playing a pioneering role in winter vegetable growing practices. Right next door to the Augarten Porcelain Manufactory, the city farm has a nursery where its own produce is also on sale. It cultivates a broad mix of winter veg that you'd be hard pressed to find anywhere else – from countless varieties of cabbage and root vegetables to winter lettuces, and hardy herbs to different kinds of chicory. Visitors can even sample the produce fresh from the ground during a guided tour of the show garden. The sheer variety of arugula types – from wasabi rucola to mustard rucola – illustrates the different flavor profiles to an impressive degree. Even the ornamental cabbage is edible. And tastes great. Delivered to restaurants all over the city, the vegetables grown here can also be bought directly from the market stall.

The Taste of Winter

A masterclass showing what winter vegetables can become in skilled hands provided an eye-opening experience at the Koch.Campus. Led by acclaimed chef Heinz Reitbauer from Vienna's three-star restaurant Steirereck, the team embraced the theme of ice and frost, serving winter produce in its purest

form – lightly marinated and presented on ice to let its natural flavor do the talking. Kohlrabi leaves were paired with whey; tatsoi with fermented lemon. At the cooking station of the Michelin-starred vegetarian restaurant Tian, Paul Ivić and his kitchen team demonstrated the culinary potential of various radish and beet varieties. Michael Peceny, affectionately known as "Miraculix" among his colleagues at Tian, served a fermented beet drink. Next from the kitchen came a soup made from Crapaudine beets and salt-baked Goldeneye beets. The sweet beetroot fruit gummies are also fun. This is what the future of food looks like.



● Augarten City Farm
Obere Augartenstrasse 1/8
1020 Vienna
→ cityfarm.wien

● Restaurant Steirereck
Am Heumarkt 2A/Stadtpark
1030 Vienna
→ steirereck.at

● Restaurant Tian
Himmelpfortgasse 23
1010 Vienna
→ www.tian-restaurant.com/wien

Bring Out the Bubbly!



(Photos)
Thomas ALBDORF

(Text)
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(Silver)
Jarosinski & Vaugoin

(Ceramics)
Onka Allmayer-Beck

(Glass)
J. & L. Lobmeyr

(Porcelain)
Augarten Porzellan

Like peas in a pod, Vienna and wine are absolutely inseparable. Around 170 winegrowing estates, which manage nearly 600 hectares of vineyards between them, make sure that things stay that way.

What many people don't know is that lots of these winemakers produce excellent sparkling wines – aka Sekts – which are in demand internationally. So what better opportunity to pop those corks and profile five exceptional Viennese Sekts.

Vienna is the only European capital with a significant winegrowing industry within its city limits. It is largely known for its still wines – chief among them Wiener Gemischter Satz. Made from several different varieties of white grape, this uniquely Viennese wine is a true regional specialty. Production is subject to strict rules: the varieties must all be grown together in a single vineyard, and there must be at least three of them. Next, all of the different grapes have to be harvested and processed together. The Wiener Gemischter Satz is a homegrown success story. This dry white wine has put Viennese wine firmly on the international wine map. A local specialty, it enjoys DAC status – a legally controlled designation of origin. But the world of Viennese wine doesn't stop at still varieties. More and more of the capital's estates are focusing on sparkling wines. And not just any old plonk, but sparkling Sekts that are crafted using all of the tricks of the expert Sektmaker's trade. While many like to draw on the flavor profile of the Gemischter Satz for their Sekt, they cannot officially adopt the DAC appellation due to the strict rules in place governing its use. These sparkling wines are fresh, elegant, and precise. Pure drinking pleasure. And they are produced using the same method as the famous luxury sparklers from France – the Méthode Traditionnelle, i.e. time-honored bottle fermentation. The most sophisticated and finest method to make wine sparkle.

Demeter Sekt from Vienna

Weingut Zahel is also making its mark in this segment. Certified organic, the wines that come out of this particular estate are produced according to Demeter guidelines, which say that the grapes must be hand-picked, and highlight soil health is a priority. Now in its fourth generation, this winery produces a Blanc de Blancs Brut Nature that is one of Vienna's most remarkable sparkling wines. It is made using grapes from a Wiener Gemischter Satz vineyard. No additional "dosage" – which makers use to increase sweetness – is added. "We work with around seven grape varieties, depending on the vintage. Riesling and Neuburger grapes, in particular, give the sparkling wine its freshness," explains Lars Lackner-Petz, the winery's marketing manager. Without a certain base acidity, the Sekt will be missing its zestiness. "That's why we don't produce the Blanc de



Zahel – Blanc de Blancs Brut Nature

Blancs Brut Nature every year. In particularly warm years, when the grapes have less acidity, we give it a miss. Because an elegant Sekt needs acidity." This particular sparkling wine is not only an excellent aperitif. "It especially shines as a food pairing with fish dishes thanks to its distinctive flavors," says Lackner-Petz. Zahel's Blanc de Blancs Brut Nature is served at one of the city's top tier restaurants – Salonplafond in the Museum of Applied Arts (MAK). But it's best experienced at the source, in Mauer in the 23rd district, where the Zahel family also runs a Heuriger wine tavern. Their wines are in demand all over the world, and particularly in Asia: "Japan, China, Hong Kong, and Singapore are important markets. We also export to the USA, Canada, and numerous European countries."

A Glass of Joy

Weingut Christ also produces quality organic sparkling wines. Organic varieties are not really a rarity here, though, given that Vienna leads the way with an impressive 45% of its vineyards devoted to organic viticulture. Christ winery is a traditional estate that has truly earned that particular tag. "My family has been growing wine for over 400 years," says winemaker Rainer Christ. For more than two decades now, sparkling wines have been a particular focus: the joyful Freude Grand Cuvée Brut is the



Weingut Christ – Freude Grand Cuvée Brut

name of Christ's top sparkling wine, made from grapes grown northeast of the Danube at Bisamberg. "The sparkling wine is made based on a Wiener Gemischter Satz harvest," explains Rainer Christ. What's special about this base wine? "Normally, Grüner Veltliner is the dominant grape variety in Gemischter Satz. But here, it only plays a supporting role. Which is a real novelty." The name "Freude" (joy) couldn't be more fitting: "It's a real special-occasion Sekt full of freshness and elegance, containing only a moderate amount of sugar – a sparkling wine with great finesse, perfect for Asian dishes as well as breaded, deep-fried specialties." So it's hardly surprising to learn that Freude Grand Cuvée Brut is the house sparkling wine in some of Vienna's best hotels. It's also available at the winery's own Heuriger in Grossjedlersdorf in Vienna's 21st district. In fact, though, a large portion of this sparkling wine is exported: "We're strongly represented in fine dining in the Benelux countries, especially the Netherlands. It's also very well-received in the UK."

Municipal Wine Matters

The importance of wine in Vienna is demonstrated by the renowned Weingut Cobenzl, which the City of Vienna has owned and operated since 1907. So, in Vienna you could say that wine is something of

a municipal matter. Certified organic since 2023, the winery on the Cobenzl hill it is named after manages around 60 hectares of vineyards. These include top terroirs like the Ried Reisenberg vineyard in Grinzing: "Our Sekt Austria Reserve Wien is made exclusively from grapes from this prime site," explains head winemaker Georg Königsbauer. Also derived from a base wine in the style of a Gemischter Satz, this sparkling wine has taken the State Champion title at the Vienna Wine Awards multiple times. "Nutty aromas and elegant spice notes, as well as apple and grapefruit flavors characterize this sparkling wine," says Königsbauer. This vintage sparkling wine is as good for food pairing as it is as an aperitif. Anyone wanting to try Sekt Austria Reserve Wien when out for a meal should head to the basement of Vienna's City Hall, where they will find the renowned Rathauskeller restaurant. But the sparkling wine is also available near the Cobenzl winery, which sits high above Vienna and offers stunning views of the city below. "Café Rondell and the Waldgrill restaurant both serve this sparkling wine," says Königsbauer.

The Authentic Taste of Vienna

Fuhrgassl-Huber produces its sparkling wine according to the rules that define the international sparkling wine zeitgeist. Its Sekt Reserve Brut Nature contains minimal sugar and sulfur, resulting



Weingut Wien Cobenzl – Sekt Austria Reserve Wien



Mayer am Pfarrplatz – Das prickelnde Fräulein Rosé

in a particularly authentic taste experience. "It's a very mineral-bodied sparkling wine with a fresh note, subtle fruit, and fine bubbles," says the winery's sommelier Katharina Napokoj, summing up the sparkling wine's essence. The base wine is a Wiener Gemischter Satz from Neustift am Walde, made from Grüner Veltliner, Sauvignon Blanc, and Müller Thurgau.

Sparkling wine from Vienna is definitely on trend. "Sales of sparkling wine are rising, as it's increasingly seen as an everyday drink – and not just for special occasions," confirms Napokoj, who recommends pairing the Sekt Reserve Brut Nature with light dishes, fish, seafood or tender veal. Based in Neustift am Walde in the 19th district, the Fuhrgassl-Huber winery has its own Buschenschank tavern where the house sparkling wine flows.

Sparkling Rosé from Pfarrplatz

Vienna also excels in rosé sparkling wine, as the renowned Mayer am Pfarrplatz winery impressively proves with Das prickelnde Fräulein Rosé. This winery is another that is deeply rooted in the city's history. Wine has been made here since 1683. And it is in the venerable building housing the winery's Heuriger that Ludwig van Beethoven once lived in 1817. He would surely have expressed his joy about

the floral and aromatic rosé sparkling wine. It's made from Zweigelt grapes grown in Vienna and nearby Klosterneuburg. "The sparkling wine pairs wonderfully with summery dishes, grilled seafood, and fruity berry desserts," recommends Pascal Raab of Mayer am Pfarrplatz. "It's also great with a classic Viennese Brettljause cold cut platter. And it's, of course, a fantastic Sekt as an aperitif."



Fuhrgassl-Huber – Sekt Reserve Brut Nature

- Zahel – Blanc de Blancs Brut Nature
Maurer Hauptplatz 9
1230 Vienna
→ zahel.at

- Weingut Christ – Freude Grand Cuvée Brut
Amtsstrasse 12
1210 Vienna
→ weingut-christ.at

- Weingut Wien Cobenzl – Sekt Austria Reserve Wien
Am Cobenzl 96
1190 Vienna
→ weingutcobenzl.at

- Fuhrgassl-Huber – Sekt Reserve Brut Nature
Neustift am Walde 68
1190 Vienna
→ fuhrgassl-huber.at

- Mayer am Pfarrplatz – Das prickelnde Fräulein Rosé
Am Pfarrplatz 2
1190 Vienna
→ pfarrplatz.at

Vienna's *Live Cultures*

(Text)
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(Photos)
Hermann HÖGER

When it comes to fermented foodstuffs, most people would think of sauerkraut in a grandma's cellar. Bubbling away with lots of gases and funky smells. But fermentation isn't a relic of the past: it's a culinary artform with a strong history – true cultural heritage with plenty of potential for workshops, fine dining, and cocktails.



Fermented cucumbers in a jar

Fermenting is a millennia-old technique for preserving food. Once upon a time, fermented foods were part and parcel of everyday life. Salzgurken – or salted cucumbers – for instance, were eaten in the emperor's time and were sold as a completely un-packaged “finger snack” in Vienna's Prater all the way through to the 1980s. Today, they're only

really found at well-stocked sausage stands, alongside their cousins, vinegar pickles. Like sauerkraut, Salzgurken are lacto-fermented, meaning that they're preserved through lactic acid fermentation rather than vinegar.

Fermenting is making something of a comeback at the moment in the form of misos,

kimchis, and kombuchas. For Alexandra Liberda, it's an “artisanal craft”. One that matures and grows with each repetition. Like a good sourdough or moldy cheese, it calls for a lot of patience. In 2020, she opened Augora Fermente, a restaurant and store in the 6th district. Today, she has six people working for her. And that's just the official workforce. Unofficially, though, she employs billions of microorganisms. A silent team of bacteria, yeasts, and enzymes. Their mission? Fermentation.

Her philosophy: sustainability is a logical consequence. At Augora, nothing gets “tossed out”. Things are processed, upcycled, fermented, and experimented with. Fermentation extends the life of foodstuffs. As an entrepreneur, profitability is her priority. A surplus of mung beans and green peppers – to cite one example at random – will be used to create a peppery miso with a kick. This is then sold as a delicacy in the store or served in the restaurant. In another case, unused raw fish roe from local pike is used to make a freshwater bottarga – salty, golden, fishy, and utterly unique, given that this typically Sardinian specialty is normally made from sea fish. Even so, pike bottarga still tastes like a sip of seawater taken straight from a seashell – and it pairs perfectly with pasta.

Anyone who likes a little fizz will love the naturally carbonated beetroot kombucha. “Fermentation gases,” Alexandra explains dryly. Sounds unsexy. But it tastes excellent and is healthy, too.

“Fermentation requires a lot of patience. People need to take time and really learn to engage with the basic foodstuffs. And anyone who doesn't want to can gladly come and see us,” Alexandra laughs.



Kimchi in a jar

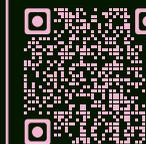


Fermented cherry pits in a jar

Addresses for Fermentation Fans:

- *Augora Fermente* is the place to be for fermented foods: with an online store, a restaurant with a weekly lunch menu and evening pop-up, as well as a deli in the restaurant and regular fermentation workshops. Stumpergasse 1A, 1060 Vienna → augora.at
- A glimpse into *Cucina Alchimia* in the 13th district shows that fermentation also has what it takes to claim a spot at the top table of fine dining. Here, the fermentation processes take shape at their own lab – a vaulted cellar that offers the perfect backdrop for conducting experiments. Firmiangasse 2, 1130 Vienna → cucina-alchimia.org

Impressive insights come from the new episode of *Hungry for More*, where London chef Thomas Straker lent chef Lukas Mraz a helping hand. Scan the QR code to watch the full episode on YouTube.



- Next-level experimentation is the order of the day at *Bruder* in the 6th district. Here, the cocktails feature home-curated essences. Windmühlgasse 20, 1060 Vienna → bruder.xyz
- *blob* at Brunnenmarkt is a magnet for people who love pickled, fermented and surprising flavors. Weyprechtgasse 12/1, 1160 Vienna → blob.at

Urban Life

30 years ago, before sunrise, a young Finnish woman moved into a part of town where Vikings celebrate the touchdown of their life in politically correct style.

26

Ten Questions for Denice Bourbon

Finnish comedy and performance artist Denice Bourbon was elevated to the status of queer icon in Vienna, all by showing that politically correct humor can raise a laugh.

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Canalside Haven, Hundertwasser Heaven

This unique corner of Vienna is nestled between the River Wien, the Danube Canal, and Landstrasser Hauptstrasse: the Weissgerberviertel. We take a closer look.

34

Touring Vienna – Like Céline and Jesse

On the trail of a very special Vienna film: back in 1995, Richard Linklater brought a film to cinemas that went on to become a globally celebrated cult classic – Before Sunrise.

38

Vienna Gripped by Football Fever

The Vienna Vikings rank among the best American football teams in Europe. There are lots of reasons why players and coaches are drawn to Vienna, as well as fans to the stadium in their thousands.



Photo: © Vienna Tourist Board/Paul Bauer



(Interview)
Tobias SCHREIBER

Ten Questions for *Denice Bourbon*

(Photo)
Daniel HILL

From Finland to Sweden and in Vienna since 2002: comedy and performance artist Denice Bourbon has been shaping the queer cultural scene for years and uses sharp-witted humor for her activism. Among others in the PCCC*, the “Politically Correct Comedy Club”, which she founded.

① **How did your stage name come about?**

I was known as a big whiskey drinker and had a short-lived duo called “Miss Bourbon & Smokey Jones” with a friend. The whiskey in my glass turned to wine, but the name stayed.

② **Why did you come to Vienna?**

Because of love. My then-girlfriend and now best friend is half Swedish, half Austrian. I was supposed to stay for a year, now it has already been 23. Vienna sucks you in with all its lazy coziness.

③ **What surprised you about Vienna?**

I was confused about how such a big city could feel like a village. That is still the case. But I like that.

④ **Why is the PCCC* so important?**

It gives a big stage and a big audience to performers that usually don't get access to. Normative society has decided that we are too queer, too punk, and not “Austrian” enough to fill a room that size. They don't think enough people are interested in hearing our stories. But we proved them wrong, ha!

⑤ **What is absolute no-go when it comes to comedy?**

We have a motto: “Punch up! Never kick down!” Kicking on people who already get discriminated by society is not comedy, that's just assholiness.

⑥ **What do you find funny?**

I love educational humor. When you can learn something while laughing.

⑦ **What is your favorite location to perform in Vienna?**

Definitely WUK. Because the PCCC* really got big there.

⑧ **You've done almost everything on stage. Any plans on what's next?**

I am toying with the idea of making a film. But before that there probably will be another revue, and I want to finally start a band again. I miss being in a band.

⑨ **Do you have a favorite neighborhood in Vienna?**

So many. I really love Vienna ridiculously. Nussberg, Lobau and I have a big crush on my own neighborhood, Meidling.

⑩ **Which dish of Viennese cuisine can you not resist?**

People will hate me for this. One of my absolute favorite guilty pleasures is Gebackener Emmentaler with Tartar Sauce. I'm a vegetarian.

Denice Bourbon: @thedenicebourbon
Politically Correct Comedy Club: @pccc.comedy



(Text)
Karoline KNEZEVIC

(Photos)
Zara PFEIFER

Canalside Haven,

Where Hundertwasser meets Art Nouveau, where the number 1 and O trams cross paths and time sets its own pace, lies a Viennese neighborhood that's not necessarily on most people's radar: the Weissgerberviertel in the 3rd district.

Hundertwasser Heaven

This unique corner of Vienna is nestled between the River Wien, the Danube Canal, and Landstrasser Hauptstrasse: full of grand old late-19th-century Gründerzeit apartment buildings with beautifully articulated facades, pockets of greenery, and strikingly contrasting areas where old and new exist in perfect harmony. Until 1850, the Weissgerberviertel was a suburb in its own right called “Unter den Weissgerbern” in reference to the tanners specializing in light-colored hides who lived and worked there. Due to the ripe aromas arising from the tanning process, the trade was banished from the city itself. Today, it is a distinctive local neighborhood that – though it hosts one of Vienna’s most famous landmarks – is still relatively unknown. But there’s one point that needs clearing up right away: anyone who only comes to this part of town to see the Hundertwasserhaus will miss out on plenty of sights.

A bustling local center, Radetzkyplatz is lined with numerous cafes and restaurants with outdoor seating. One of them, Gasthaus Wild, serves classic Viennese cuisine and seasonal specialties. Inside, it embraces every cliché of an old-school Viennese eatery: from the bar to the wood paneling, it ticks all the boxes. Right next door, Klee Restaurant & Café also has a spacious outdoor area.

Across the street is Café Menta, a Mediterranean/Middle Eastern place with a great breakfast menu. In summer, its shady outdoor seating framed by attractive hydrangea planters provides the perfect spot for brunch.

- Gasthaus Wild
Radetzkyplatz 1, 1030 Vienna
→ gasthaus-wild.at
- Das Klee
Radetzkyplatz 2a, 1030 Vienna
→ dasklee-restaurant.at
- Café Menta
Radetzkyplatz 4, 1030 Vienna
→ cafementa.at



The Heart of the Local Neighborhood
At Radetzkyplatz, the 1 and O tram lines cross – they are known locally as the “Einser” (the one) and “Nuller” (the zero), which makes little sense really, given that it definitely is the letter “O” and not the figure “0”! Anyway ... both of these two lines are worth knowing, as they are among the city’s most important routes. A trip aboard the “Einser” is advisable for all Vienna visitors, if only for the obligatory city-center ride, as it travels from the center (Karlsplatz) through the Weissgerberviertel before terminating in the leafy green Prater park.

Time Travel on Löwengasse
Beneath the viaducts carrying Vienna’s S-Bahn rapid transit line, a pathway leads between Radetzkyplatz and Löwengasse, where – between two snack bars – a relic has stood for at least 40 years (probably longer than that, though): a stationery store, a throw-back to another era. There’s no sign bearing the ubiquitous Instagram icon, no hip slogan on the locked door. The shop window is still decorated with calendars from years gone by. The elderly owner lives around the corner and, though she hasn’t run the shop for years, she can’t bear to part with it. What remains is a closed store and a name in faded letters, harking back to a time when “paper and office supplies” was shorthand for just about everything required for an orderly existence.

Further along Löwengasse lies a comic shop unlike any other. Franz Virt has run the specialist store for over 40 years. “If you can’t find it here, it was probably never published in the first place,” reads the sign in the window, something that he confirms in person. His website, from the year 2000, offers an immense range of comics, magazines and the like. There’s no shopping cart,



though. But the updates would put a daily newspaper to shame: “We update the website almost daily. In the ‘brand new’ section, the latest arrivals will have been put online within the past hour.” Inside, comics from past decades are stacked in piles.

Familiar protagonists feature: the Marvel dynasty, all generations of Star Wars, the classic Donald Duck comic books, and, of course, Garfield, Rantanplan, Lucky Luke and many more grace the covers. All of them in German – except for one box of English comics.

What’s changed in recent years? “Nothing,” says Virt, and you immediately believe him. Over the decades, the shop has earned enough to support Virt’s family and ensure that he can “afford a little something” on top. And what’s next? Well, Mr. Virt is on the lookout for a successor. Interested? Drop by and take a look at the store on Löwengasse! The journey back in time alone is worth the trip.

The neo-Gothic brick Kolonitzkirche church (Parish of St. Othmar unter den Weissgerbern) – designed by none other than cathedral architect Friedrich von Schmidt, builder of Vienna’s City Hall – adds the finishing touches to the historic wider backdrop.

- Comics Virt
Löwengasse 19, 1030 Vienna
→ comics-virt.at

Alice: Italian-Danish Fusion in Krieglergasse

In early 2025, Alice opened just around the corner. A restaurant housed in a former dairy store. And with a sign above the entrance from that era: TRÖSCH III – the name of the former Landstrasse central dairy. Owners Britt Kamper Nielsen and Manuel Bartolacci have brought the old space into the present with Danish and Italian influences centering on a carmine-red vaulted ceiling, a red bar, and contrasting historic white Bretschneider deli cabinet. The homemade focaccias and selection of desserts make Alice a culinary insider tip. And the sourdough bread with ricotta and tomatoes provides a top notch treat for the palate.

Further along Krieglergasse, you can enjoy authentic flavors of southern Italy at Masaniello, one of the best Italian restaurants in town.

- Alice
Krieglergasse 8, 1030 Vienna
@alice_wien
- Masaniello
Krieglergasse 14, 1030 Vienna
→ masaniello.at



Coffee Chez Friedlich

One street over, on Untere Weissgerberstrasse, is the Kunst Haus Wien – Museum Hundertwasser. This museum in Vienna, designed by Friedensreich Hundertwasser, is open to visitors 365 days a year. Café Friedlich – located on the museum's ground floor – is also worth a visit thanks to its idyllic outdoor area and excellent food. The breakfasts are especially popular. Entirely in Hundertwasser's style, the ambiance is touched off with climbing plants and a somewhat wild feel. The selection of Thonet chairs are a nod to the building's previous incarnation as an 1892 Thonet-brothers furniture factory.

On the other side of the museum and café, one exit leads to Weissgerberlande on the Danube Canal where the Hundertwasser-designed landing stage can be found.

- Kunst Haus Wien. Museum Hundertwasser
Café Friedlich
Untere Weissgerberstrasse 13, 1030 Vienna
→ kunsthauswien.com
→ friedlich.wien



Monumental Fashion History

Back on Löwengasse: most visitors to Vienna who venture into the Weissgerberviertel do so because they are heading to the Hundertwasserhaus – that colorful, organic, plant-covered spectacle that has long been a motif for countless Vienna photos (details of Vienna's key Hundertwasser locations can be found on page 33). But anyone who walks a few steps further will soon stumble upon another architectural treasure that is every inch as fascinating: the Palais des Beaux Arts. Built in 1908/09 by Anton and Josef Drexler as a “Chic Parisien” fashion palace, the building stands out as an architectural monument on Löwengasse. The golden globes on the facade hint at the former fashion publisher's international focus. Here, late historicism meets Art Nouveau. These days, the building is home to various embassies and regularly acts as an exhibition venue.

All in all, the Weissgerberviertel is one of those neighborhoods that doesn't need to be loud to leave an impression – the best way to find out why is to go and see it for yourself.

- Palais des Beaux Arts
Löwengasse 47a, 1030 Vienna
→ palaisdesbeauxarts.at

A Tour of Hundertwasser's Vienna *with ivie*

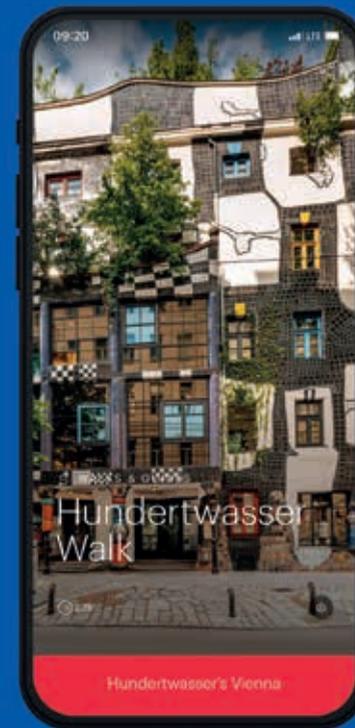
The Weissgerberviertel is a true hotspot for Friedensreich Hundertwasser fans. Anyone looking to explore this local neighborhood and many of the other Hundertwasser sites in Vienna on foot with an audio walk have an exceptional opportunity to do precisely that – thanks to the “Hundertwasser Walk” in Vienna's city guide app, ivie.

Two of the Viennese artist's major works are found in the Weissgerberviertel: the Kunst Haus Wien – Museum Hundertwasser, home to the world's largest Hundertwasser collection, and the famous Hundertwasserhaus. But the picturesque Hundertwasser Promenade, which runs along the Danube Canal, is also located in this

special neighborhood. Part of ivie, Vienna's city guide app, the free “Hundertwasser Walk” gives you the chance to experience these key sites in Hundertwasser's life through an audio walk. The city walk starts at the Kunst Haus Wien. Among the sites along the way are Hundertwasser masterpieces such as the Spittelau waste incineration plant.

The Hundertwasser Walk also takes in the grand apartment building where Hundertwasser lived for many years and had his studio: the Ankerhaus on Vienna's Graben, designed by renowned Viennese architect Otto Wagner. It also stops by the Looshaus, which was designed by Adolf Loos – a key figure in early modernism whose linear architecture particularly irked Hundertwasser.

But Hundertwasser left his mark on numerous places in Vienna. Including the 9th district, where the artist created extraordinary urban greenery with his Baummieter Alserbachstrasse (literally “Tree Tenants Alserbachstrasse”) action. Hundertwasser also designed a river cruiser: the MS Vindobona. The entire city stroll takes a good three hours. Extraordinary anecdotes and stories about the life and work of one of the 20th century's most famous Viennese artists provide the common thread.



TIP

You can explore Friedensreich Hundertwasser's Vienna via one of the audio walks on Vienna's city guide app, ivie. Simply scan the QR code and start your free tour.



(Photos)
Paul BAUER

Touring Vienna – Like Céline and Jesse

(Text)
Johannes LUXNER



Back in 1995, Richard Linklater brought a film to cinemas that went on to become a globally celebrated cult classic – *Before Sunrise*. The romantic odyssey that Julie Delpy and Ethan Hawke embark upon is not only etched into the hearts of a global fanbase, it's also deeply ingrained in Vienna's DNA.



One of the film's most emotional scenes unfolds at the Teuchtlér – Alt & Neu record store at Windmühlgasse 10. An absolute hotspot for fans of *Before Sunrise*.

In the mid-1990s, Vienna was firmly in the international film spotlight when the American director Richard Linklater (*Slackers*, *Dazed & Confused*, *School of Rock*) chose the city as the backdrop for the most extraordinary love story of its time. In *Before Sunrise*, Julie Delpy (Céline) and Ethan Hawke (Jesse) wander through Vienna. And they do one thing above all: they talk, talk, and talk about life's big questions. Which is precisely what helped the film to strike such a chord with audiences. Linklater's unconventional storytelling technique delivered a unique love story for Generation X, one that explores postmodern relationships and stands out thanks to its authenticity. A film whose dialogues continue to cast a spell on viewers to this day.

Thirty years after its release, people's fascination with the film is undiminished. Particularly in Asia, where it enjoys absolute cult status. And its filming locations have become places of pilgrimage for film enthusiasts worldwide. The movie has added a fresh and profound significance to numerous spots in Vienna – the Zollamtssteg

bridge, Kleines Café, Café Sperl, Teuchtlér – Alt & Neu record store and the Cemetery of the Nameless. *Before Sunrise* is ever-present. Though its run is long since over, it's a film that continues to play on because *Before Sunrise* and its iconic scenes – like those in the tram and in front of the Albertina – have embedded themselves deeply into Vienna's DNA. No wonder really, as film fans say that there are three main characters in *Before Sunrise*: as a city, the role played by Vienna is every bit as vital as that of lovers Céline and Jesse.

TIP

With *ivie*, the city guide app for Vienna, you can explore eleven *Before Sunrise* filming locations on an extended city walk. Simply scan the QR code and start your free tour.





Want to see Vienna's Ringstrasse through Céline and Jesse's eyes? Then head to the Burgring tram stop and take Line 1 towards Prater Hauptallee. A wealth of sights awaits.



Céline and Jesse pass by the impressive square in front of the Albertina, one of Vienna's leading art museums, twice to hang out at the base of an imposing equestrian statue.



At Kleines Café on Franziskanerplatz, near St. Stephen's Cathedral, Céline and Jesse meet a fortune teller who, of course, zeroes in on the magic of human connection. The perfect spot for a coffee break.



And where would Before Sunrise be without a classic Viennese coffeehouse scene? Director Richard Linklater chose Café Sperl at Gumpendorfer Strasse 11, which boasts a uniquely evocative charm.

Vienna Gripped by Football Fever



(Text)
Tobias SCHREIBER

(Photos)
Hannes JIRGAL



Finnish defensive back Elmeri Laalo feels at home in Vienna, and not just out on the field.

American Football – in Vienna? Absolutely!
The hype surrounding the number-one sport in the USA has crossed the Atlantic. One of the best teams in the European League is the Vienna Vikings.

For some Europeans, it still feels odd to say that in American Football, the ball is mainly played with the hands. But still, interest in the sport is steadily growing. The Super Bowl – the National Football League’s season finale in the USA – is watched by about 125 million Americans as well as another 60 million-plus viewers outside the States. In fact, star-studded regular-season NFL games play out in Europe on a regular basis, too. At the same time, European teams are becoming more and more professional all the time. And Vienna has one of the best: The Vienna Vikings consistently make it into the finals and have won six international titles to go

with their 17 Austrian championships. One of the keys to their success is an indomitable team spirit.

Full House

The roster, as the player lineup is called, is international. Robin Lumsden, the Vikings’ main owner, is fully aware of Vienna’s competitive edge: “The city makes it easy for players to feel at home.” Including for Finns – in the 2025 season, four were on the roster. One of them was Elmeri Laalo. In his third season in Vienna, the young defensive back and fan favorite from Helsinki was one of four team captains – a leadership role. The club takes



US quarterback Ben Holmes commands the offense.

great care of its imports. Almost all of them live in the same apartment building.

This creates close bonds for Laalo, even if non-Finns sometimes struggle with the language barrier. “We even have a sauna in the building where we speak our ‘mystery language’ that no one else understands.” Beyond the sports side of things, Vienna has won over the defender with its culinary scene: “I love discovering new restaurants in Vienna. It’s a great city for that.” With Marianne Pahkala as Special Teams Coordinator and Strength Coach, the Vikings also have an experienced woman on the coaching staff – unique in Europe. And she, too, is from Finland.

For the Kids

Ben Holmes from the USA was a key player last season. “The family atmosphere is a big reason I came back,” says the star quarterback after his first season with the Vikings in 2024. He, his partner, and their two children feel truly at home in the city. But are his kids set to follow in their father’s

football footsteps? Well, Vienna would be the perfect place for it.

The Vienna Vikings Academy nurtures its own talent for the professional team. And like in a family, the young learn from the experienced. With the club since 2015, Noel Swancar is now a mainstay in the defensive line-up. At the same time, he coaches the U12 team – one of five players currently engaged in passing their experience on to the club’s next generation. “Having all these young players look up to me is surreal,” says Swancar: “I started out with football at 15 and was coached by active players who were big role models for me.” In June 2025, the 21-year-old Austrian also became an ambassador for Lichtblickhof children’s hospice, which specializes in supporting children with serious illnesses, disabilities, or traumatic experiences. A role that exemplifies the club’s belief in meaningful social engagement.



The Vienna Vikings and Noel Swancar prioritize youth development.

Good Vibes Only

Head coach Chris Calaycay was born in Hawaii and came to Vienna in 1999 as a quarterback for the Vikings. He not only fell in love with Vienna, but also with his now-wife, with whom he has three children and lives on the city’s outskirts. In 2007, he was hired as the Vikings’ head coach and also served as defensive coordinator for the Austrian national team for a time. He is considered the father of its success – both from a personal and athletic perspective. Calaycay zeroes in on the harmonious atmosphere at

home games: “There’s a family-friendly vibe among both Vikings fans and away supporters. Everyone comes together to celebrate the sport.”

Game days are a true spectacle for families and fans of all ages. Typically American, with all the game-adjacent entertainment: pre-game parties in the parking lot, multiple cheer-dance groups, sometimes even motocross shows during breaks. And, of course, there’s the sport itself, with its famous edge-of-the-seat action and layered strategic gameplay. The clashes themselves take place in various stadiums, including the Generali-Arena and the Hohe Warte Stadium. Knowing every last rule isn’t necessary to appreciate the great entertainment on offer, either. The stadiums are rocking from start to finish – and unlike soccer matches, it’s always peaceful. These days, the Viennese police only stop by to watch the game. For close to three hours, the teams are cheered on relentlessly by up to 11,000 fans – until their vocal cords are strained, their hands tired from clapping, and – hopefully – the Vikings have brought home the win.

@viennavikings
→ [viennavikings.football](https://www.viennavikings.com)



Longtime head coach Chris Calaycay has shaped the club like no one else.

Art & Culture

Right on cue for the last supper in the Emperor's Stables, and a celebrated actor EXPORTed back to where it all began.



Photo: © Vienna Tourist Board/Paul Bauer

44

Ten Questions for Stefanie Reinsperger

Back home after ten years away. The celebrated film and stage actress is in her element in Vienna.

46

The Icon of the Radical

One of the earliest pioneers of artistic feminism, VALIE EXPORT runs the rule over an exceptional career. We paid her a visit in her studio for her 85th birthday.

50

Bricks and Mortar Leafy Culture Quarter

Where old meets new: the Arsenal complex near the Hauptbahnhof main train station. Full of surprises and with a magnetic cultural appeal.

52

The Da Vinci Puzzle

The Minoritenkirche church is home to an epochal artistic treasure: a mosaic of Leonardo da Vinci's Last Supper that was originally commissioned by Napoleon for the Louvre.

56

In the Emperor's Stables

From the home of the Habsburgs' horses to one of the largest cultural complexes on the planet: the MuseumsQuartier celebrates its 25th birthday.



(Interview)
Maria SCHALLER
(Photo)
Hilde VAN MAS

Ten Questions for *Stefanie Reinsperger*

She is one of the highest-profile – and most in-demand – film and theater actresses in the German-speaking world. The 37-year-old's roles include a detective in the Dortmund-based franchise of the popular Tatort police procedural. In 2025, she starred as Empress Elisabeth in a solo show at the Burgtheater. After almost a decade in Berlin, Stefanie Reinsperger is back home in Vienna.

① **Theater stage or film set?**

I'm very grateful to be in a position to do both. I love the chronological nature of theater, the audience, the sense of your own responsibility that it brings. With film, you give a lot of that up – camera, cut, edit. But I like the crews, location shoots and the fact that the camera looks into your soul.

② **Are there any other career options out there for you?**

No. It's a simple no. I've been acting since I was four.

③ **You've played Maria Theresia on TV and Elisabeth on the stage. Why the Habsburgs?**

We can be proud of the fact that we had women in positions like these in Austria at a very early stage. I'm a huge Romy Schneider fan. Memories of Empress Elisabeth – aka Sisi – are adapted to the current spirit of the age. They all use Sisi – she's the "kitsch bitch" of Austria, the cash cow.

④ **Why is Vienna a world capital of culture?**

Culture just means so much to people here. Vienna brings together so many art forms – theater, opera, painting, dance. And events: from the Vienna Festival to the Eurovision Song Contest. In 2026, we'll be proving the power of love, openness and tolerance once again.

⑤ **Your relationship with Viennese audiences?**

They just love the theater of it all. An incredible privilege. And lots of pressure and responsibility.

⑥ **What was coming back to the city like for you?**

Exciting. But from day one, this sense of peace and relief washed over me and I felt at home.

⑦ **What projects do you have coming up?**

„Volksvernichtung“ (People Annihilation or My Liver is Meaningless) by Werner Schwab and „Selbstbeziehung“ (Self-Accusation) by Peter Handke at the Burgtheater. A number of TV productions. And I would like to make Mareike Fallwickl's „Die Wut, die bleibt“ (The Rage That Remains) – in my debut as creative producer.

⑧ **What is it about Vienna that people are envious of?**

The beauty of the city. So far, every time I've been to the Burgtheater – the most beautiful place to work that I could wish for – I've ended up taking a photo. For the public transportation, I love it. And the culture, of course. And the food.

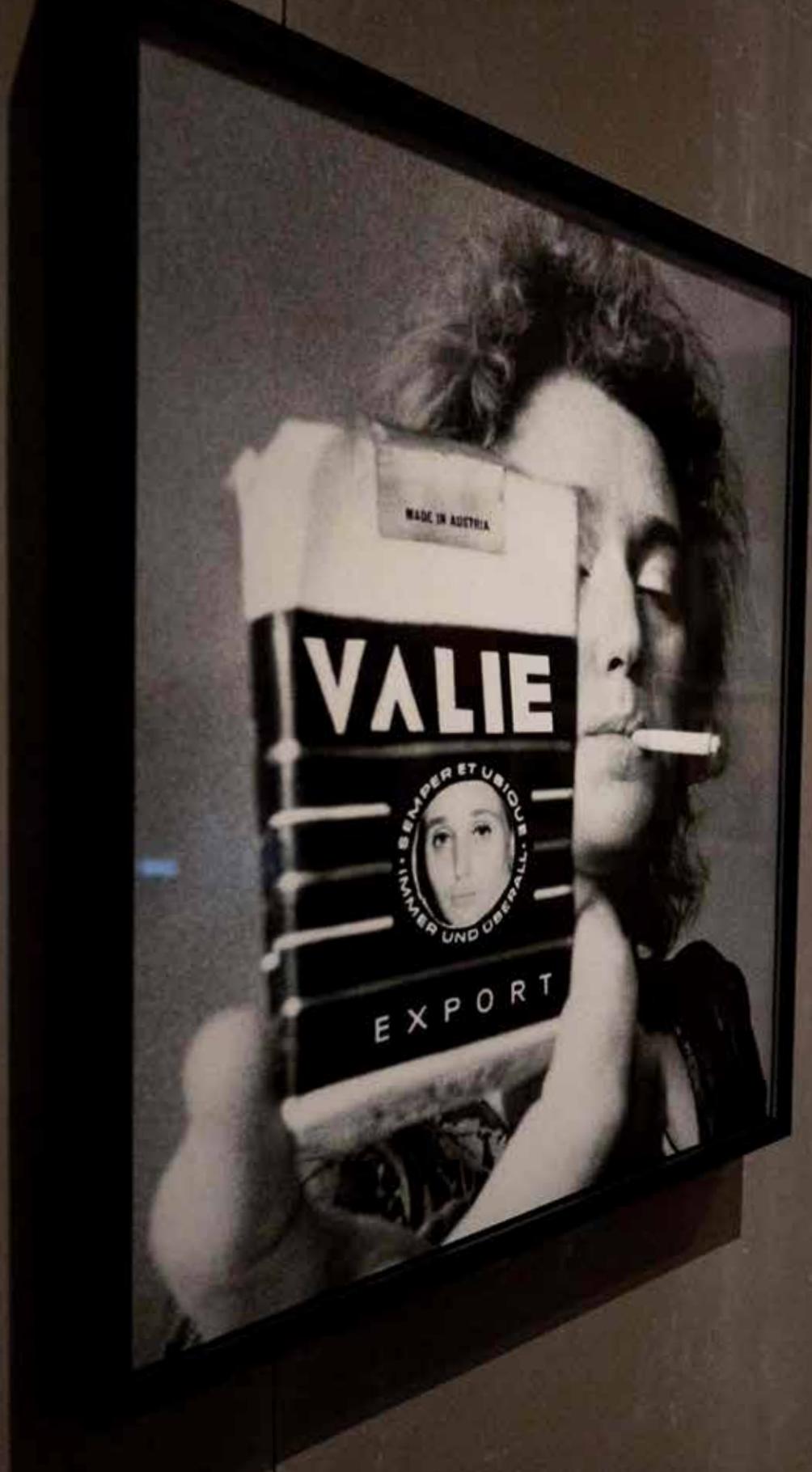
⑨ **What is the taste of Vienna for you?**

Soda Zitron – carbonated water with lemon juice – and a Melange coffee. I could drink it all day.

⑩ **Vienna's cheese-filled Käsekrainer or Berlin's Currywurst. Which sausage wins?**

Honestly, neither. The evening has to take a certain turn for me to have either. But if I had to pick – Käsekrainer!

@reinspergerin
→ burgtheater.at



VALIE EXPORT – the pioneer of artistic feminism. Always provocative, often rejected, her radiance remains undimmed after more than half a century of creativity. At 85 years of age, Austria’s most influential contemporary artist reflects on an exceptional career from her first-district studio in the heart of Vienna.

The Icon of *Radical art*

(Text)
Maria SCHALLER

VALIE EXPORT, SMART EXPORT, Self Portrait, 1970, during the exhibition "VALIE EXPORT Retrospective" at the Albertina, 2023
Photo: © JOE KLAMAR/AFP/picturedesk.com



VALIE EXPORT, Tap and Touch Cinema, 1968, black-and-white photograph
 Photo: © VALIE EXPORT – Bildrecht, Wien 2025; Photo: Werner Schulz

VALIE EXPORT's eyes light up when she talks about her work in her studio on Vienna's Franz-Josefs-Kai. The visitors she regularly receives here hang on her every word. VALIE stops by several times a week, gives interviews, and discusses exhibitions, texts and works with her team. Countless pieces of her art adorn the walls and tables in the large rooms, all with direct views of the Danube Canal. It is here that VALIE also hones new ideas for her portfolio and works on her biography. She has also set up a kind of surgery to support the work of students and her fellow artists. And she shares her insights with them on her own life's journey. On a career that initially seemed unlikely.

Born in 1940 as Waltraud Lehner during the upheaval of war in Linz, the former convent schoolgirl became a mother and wife at an early age.

"I got to know bourgeois life but rejected it," she says today. Still young, she got divorced and moved to Vienna in 1960, where she blossomed. "From the age of about 14, I came to appreciate that Vienna was an important cultural city. Vienna has produced, expanded, and carried forward many cultural eras." VALIE wanted to be part of Vienna's art scene, which rebelled to bring about social progress. "Vienna was always the breeding ground for my creativity, my canvas," she emphasizes during our studio visit. "The city was always my center, my identity." In Vienna, she also shed her birth name, calling herself VALIE EXPORT from then on. "Export, because I wanted to export my thoughts and everything within me. Out of a safe haven, in a manner of speaking. And this name must always be written in capitals," she adds.

Uncompromisingly Feminist

In the 1960s and 1970s, VALIE rose to become a pioneer of media art and simultaneously an icon of the feminist avant-garde. She was the Viennese It-Girl of her time, posing nude for Friedensreich Hundertwasser in Paris, and experimenting with film, photography, and installations. She was among the first to understand that new media and society influence each other. Her public actions, in particular, drew much attention: prominent examples included the "Tap and Touch Cinema" (where passersby could reach into a box strapped around the 28-year-old's bare torso) and "From the Portfolio of Doggedness" (where she led her artist colleague Peter Weibel on a leash through Vienna's city center before the outraged bourgeoisie). It was with Weibel (1944–2023) that VALIE formed an artistic and private power couple. However, she never collaborated with the no-less-radical Vienna Actionists, even though they were driving the most significant Viennese art movement of the 20th century at the time – "because of their view of women."

VALIE EXPORT tirelessly denounced patriarchal structures and gender inequality, anchoring a radically body-centered feminism in international art. She repeatedly used her own body for her actions. For "Body Sign," she had a garter belt tattooed on her thigh. She positioned herself as a performance artist – moving into a previously exclusively male domain – paving the way for many subsequent female artists. Yet she repeatedly faced rejection and misunderstanding, was insulted and threatened. But addressing taboo topics was a major concern for her. "I was brave, but that was natural for me," she reflects, "though it was often a lonely path."

Retirement Not an Option

Her path took her to the USA and Germany, where – unlike in Austria – professorships followed. VALIE EXPORT's works hang today in the Centre Pompidou in Paris, the Museum of Modern Art in New York and the Tate Modern in London. She is universally accepted as Austria's most significant contemporary artist. Her work has been shown in numerous national and international exhibitions: in 2023, the Albertina hosted a major retrospective of her work. And in 2026, she will be part of the "Feminist Futures Forever" show at Belvedere 21. A grand birthday celebration was held in her honor at the same venue in May 2025. Her thoughts on this milestone: "I see 85 reciprocally as 58. For me, art is my process." A process that VALIE EXPORT intends to continue devoting herself to with body and soul. And going into retirement is definitely not on her mind.

→ valieexport.at



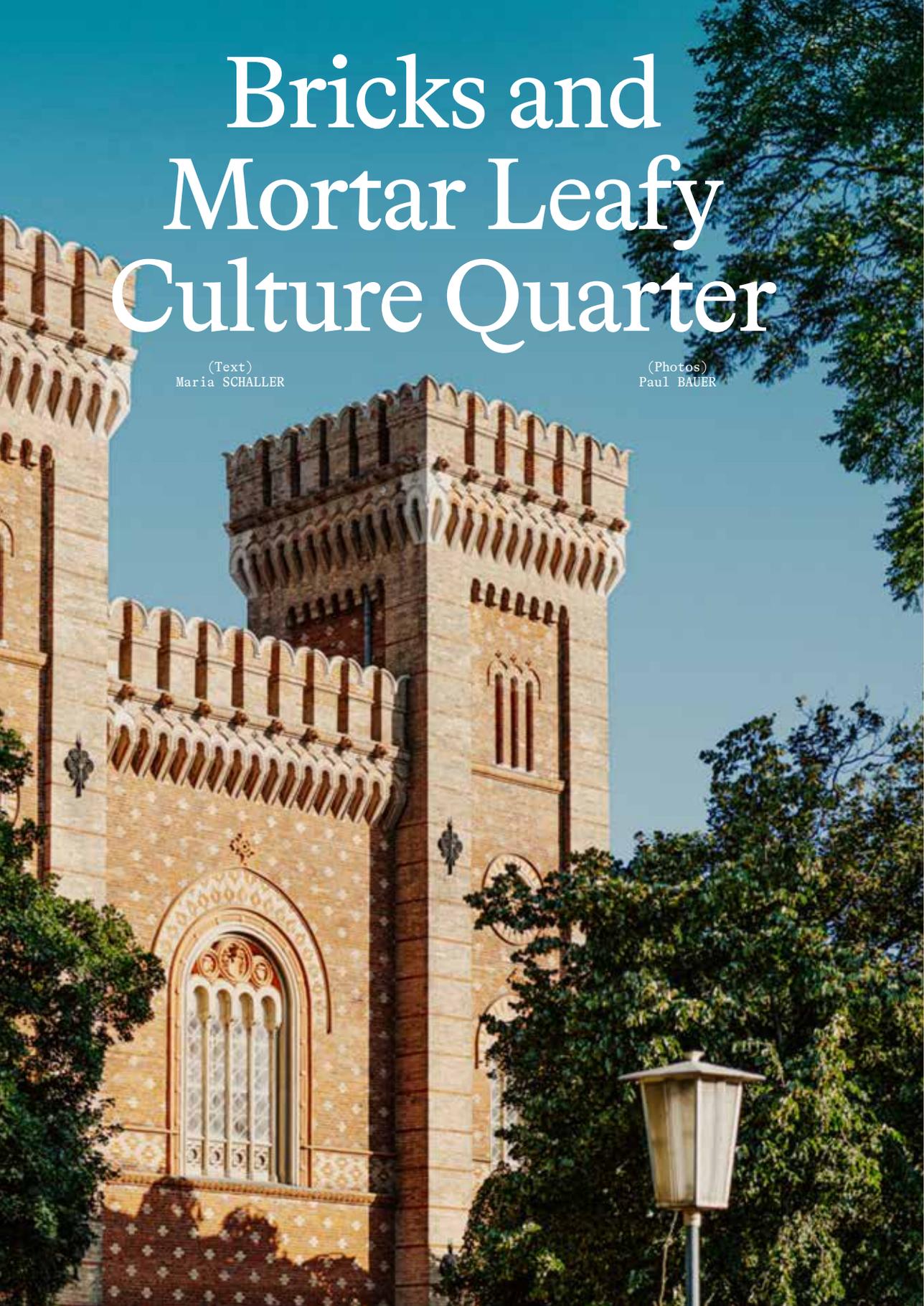
VALIE EXPORT in her Vienna studio. Here, the artist regularly welcomes visitors and shares insights from her eventful life.

Photo: © Michael Seirer Photography

Bricks and Mortar Leafy Culture Quarter

(Text)
Maria SCHALLER

(Photos)
Paul BAUER



The Arsenal complex is not just one of the most idyllic spots in Vienna, it's a constantly-evolving hub for culture, science, and research, too. An extraordinary site where the walls are old and the streets have no names.

Here in the southeast of the city, on the border between the 3rd and 10th districts, Vienna is once again showing how the old and new can rub shoulders in exciting ways. Near the modern Hauptbahnhof main train station and the Sonnwendviertel (which only emerged with the station's construction), a rather unusual area can be found: the vast, spacious and thoroughly green Arsenal. The numerous (mostly nameless) paths that criss-cross the complex are lined with trees, many of which are ancient. Long used for military purposes, the 86-hectare site is an architectural particularity, defined by brick buildings (seen on the signposts here as "Objekte") which have Italo-Medieval and Byzantine-Moorish forms. Like coming into contact with grand structures reminiscent of old castles, it makes the Arsenal seem enchanted. And feels like a village nestled within the bustling capital.



from far and wide. The area is also a technology and research hub. The Vienna University of Technology operates an innovation campus here, the Science Center. Several thousand people also call the Arsenal home, since some of its "Objekte" have been converted into residential buildings.

Culture in the Green

Above all, though, it is a steadily growing cultural quarter. In spring 2025, Foto Arsenal Wien joined the scene. Through a changing line-up of exhibitions, it showcases renowned national and international photographic art as well as young and undiscovered artists – a tack which has been very well received by culture fans. The LAB – an archiving and digitization satellite lab run by the Austrian Film Museum, which is based in the city center – also moved into the newly renovated "Objekt 19". Far older than these two institutions is the architectural centerpiece of the area: the Museum of Military History. Completed in 1856, it is Austria's oldest purpose-built museum. It primarily tells the military history of Austria from the late 16th century. Elsewhere in the Arsenal: rehearsal stages and workshops for the Vienna State Opera and Burgtheater, as well as Belvedere 21, the Belvedere's contemporary art satellite. An exceptionally cultural neighborhood that absolutely deserves a visit.

One of the first construction projects of the young Emperor Franz Joseph, it came into being following the March Revolution of 1848 in a bid to underpin the royal power base in case of an uprising. Today, things are strictly peaceful here. The Arsenal is virtually an extension of the Schweizergarten, a large park with meadows and ponds. There are tennis courts and allotment gardens, playgrounds and dog zones, open-air artworks, a family pool, and taverns. And in between: the occasional piece of military hardware, including the odd tank. The 155-meter-high Arsenal radio tower is clearly visible

How to get there: rail and S-Bahn rapid transit services (stations: Hauptbahnhof, Quartier Belvedere), or tram/subway/bus

- Foto Arsenal Wien
Object 19A, 1030 Vienna
→ fotoarsenalwien.at
- Museum of Military History
Arsenal 1, 1030 Vienna
→ hgm.at
- Belvedere 21
Arsenalstrasse 1, 1030 Vienna
→ belvedere.at/belvedere-21

The Da Vinci Puzzle

A mosaic replicating Leonardo da Vinci's The Last Supper – the size of the original, intended for the Louvre in Paris and commissioned by Napoleon Bonaparte? This art history curio is hidden away inside Vienna's Minoritenkirche church. The story behind it is curious, too.



More than nine meters long, about four and a half meters high, and weighing in at a hefty 20 tons: the mosaic replica of Leonardo da Vinci's (1452–1519) *The Last Supper* at the Minoritenkirche church in Vienna is a work that defies superlatives. And the tale of its creation is every inch as compelling as the original masterpiece. The fact that it is located in a Viennese church rather than the Louvre in Paris is the upshot of the political dynamics of Europe at the time. Let's journey back to the late 18th century, and the genesis of this quirk of art history.

Da Vinci For the Louvre

It all started with Napoleon Bonaparte's (1769–1821) military victory in northern Italy. The French ruler famously understood that newly conquered territories were also a treasure trove of exceptional artworks. In Milan, he set his sights on the original *The Last Supper* by Leonardo da Vinci – one of the world's most famous wall paintings. The uncompromising commander's plan: to simply have the original removed from the wall of Milan's Santa Maria delle Grazie monastery before transferring it to the Louvre's collections in Paris. But it turned out not to be such a great idea, after all. Not only was the original in very poor condition. When it came down to it, transporting the fresco was a technical impossibility. Even Napoleon Bonaparte was forced to concede on this front. So it was time for Plan B. Ultimately, Napoleon and his stepson Eugène de Beauharnais – then Viceroy of Italy – commissioned an exact mosaic

replica of the masterpiece to be given pride of place in the Louvre. The best artisans available would be needed.

Eight Years of Meticulous Work

Painter Giuseppe Bossi (1777–1815) first created a full-scale copy on canvas. Then Giacomo Raffaelli (1753–1836), one of the era's foremost mosaic artists, took over, even relocating from Rome to Milan in 1806 just for this commission. Mosaic piece by mosaic piece was applied to thick stone slabs. At 41 square meters, it called for painstaking craftsmanship. In total, Raffaelli and his team toiled on the artwork for eight years. But then everything changed. By the time the mosaic was finally completed in 1814, Napoleon Bonaparte had already been defeated and had his power taken away. And just like that, *The Last Supper* had lost its buyer. Who stepped in for Napoleon? The House of Habsburg, in the form of Emperor Franz I of Austria. He paid 400,000 guilders, equivalent to more than ten million euros in today's money. The 20-ton work began its journey across the Alps. Franz I intended to install it in Vienna's Belvedere palace, home to significant works of art from day one. However, Raffaelli's mosaic was just too big and too heavy. It ended up in storage in the palace's basement, packed in crates.

Italy and the Minoritenkirche

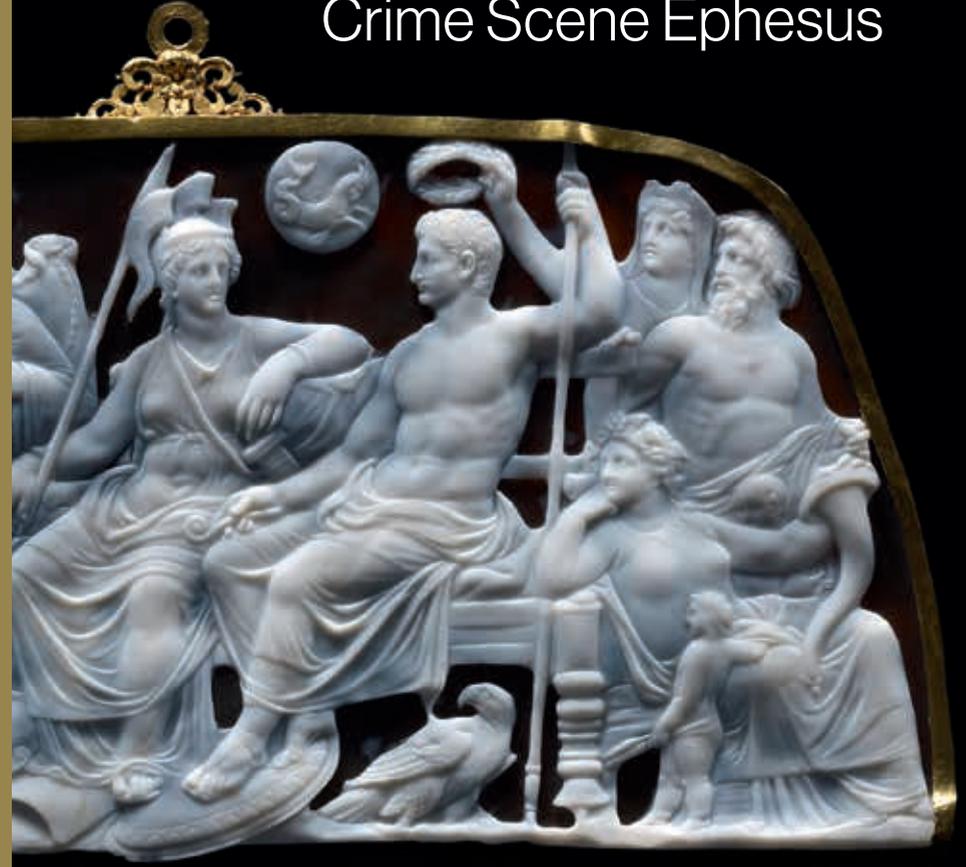
A few years later, in the 1820s, the Minoritenkirche entered the frame. Why? Also known as the "Italian National Church of Maria Schnee", it

was – and still is – the home of Vienna's Italian-speaking community. 2025, by the way, was the remarkable 400th anniversary of the Italian Congregation of Maria Schnee. As it so happened, the initial attempt to install the mosaic in the Minoritenkirche met with failure: the endeavor was deemed too costly and complex. More than 20 years later, in 1845, momentum returned under Emperor Ferdinand I. The Italian Congregation's idea resonated with him, and he gave the project his blessing. The Minoritenkirche was structurally adapted to accommodate the 20-ton work. In March 1847, the time had come: the mosaic and its accompanying altar were consecrated – over half a century after Napoleon's conquest of northern Italy.

● Minoritenkirche
Minoritenplatz 2A
1010 Vienna
→ [minoritenkirche.wien](https://www.minoritenkirche.wien)

Cleopatra & Rome

Crime Scene Ephesus



An exhibition by the Kunsthistorisches Museum
at the Neue Hofburg

20.10.2026 – 29.3.2027

Neue Hofburg
Heldenplatz, 1010 Vienna



Horses' heads provide a reminder of the MQ's original incarnation as a stable complex.
Photo: © MuseumsQuartier Wien, Photo: Klaus Pichler

In the *Emperor's Stables*

(Text)
Andrea ORTMAYER

In the days of the Habsburg dynasty, the emperor's stables housed hundreds of horses, carriages, and coaches. Today, it is home to one of Europe's largest and most dynamic cultural complexes. But the MuseumsQuartier Vienna (MQ) only came into being 25 years ago after seeing off some fierce resistance.

It was a cultural spectacle unlike anything the Viennese had experienced before: a three-day opening festival in late June 2001 tagged "Baroque Meets Cyberspace." Featuring laser shows, daring dance performances, DJ sounds and music echoing across the city center, plenty of pyrotechnics and a wide-ranging cultural program, it marked the MuseumsQuartier Vienna's official inauguration after two years of construction. Back then, the Kunsthalle Wien had just moved into its new HQ in the former imperial stables' Winter Riding School building, which had had a new structure added to it. A second phase followed in September 2001, which brought the official openings of the mumok – Museum of Modern Art Foundation Ludwig

Vienna, Leopold Museum, Tanzquartier Wien, WIENXTRA-Kinderinfo and ZOOM Children's Museum.

Ever since, the 90,000m² MuseumsQuartier Vienna with its 50-plus cultural institutions has claimed its place alongside the Centre Pompidou in Paris and Berlin's Museum Island as one of the largest and most prestigious art and culture complexes in Europe. Anyone who takes a relaxing stroll around the MQ's museums and its courtyards today would scarcely suspect the long and turbulent history behind this natural-seeming quarter and urban space, nor the battles fought over its redevelopment.



Jakob Alt: Imperial Stables, 1816
 Photo: © Jakob Alt (Artist), Imperial Stables, 1816,
 Wien Museum Inv.-No. 15614, CC BY 4.0

Visionary Transformation

The story of what is now the MuseumsQuartier begins 300 years ago. Built in the 18th century as the imperial stables, the original complex of buildings was designed by the renowned Austrian Baroque architect Johann Bernhard Fischer von Erlach. Together with the Hofburg, the Neue Burg, the Kunsthistorisches Museum and Natural History Museum, the site was originally conceived as the



Wiener Messe, spring 1949

Photo: © United States Information Service/ÖNB-Bildarchiv/picturedesk.com



Jochen Rindt Car Show at the Vienna Messepalast in 1965

Photo: © Votava/brandstaetter images/picturedesk.com

final piece of a constellation dubbed the “Imperial Forum.” A project that, ultimately, was never realized.

After the monarchy fell in 1918, the imperial stables became obsolete. In 1921, the expansive site was given a new lease on life as the Messepalast – an exhibition space for commercial fairs. After “Messe Wien” moved out in the 1980s, the question arose: what should be done with this vast, dilapidated, historic site right in the heart of the city? Suggestions included apartments, a hotel and a modern shopping center. Then city councilor Erhard Busek and the Minister for Science and Research at the time Hertha Firnberg were the first to propose the vision of a modern, forward-looking art and culture center.

The Battle for the Tower

After lengthy discussions, a two-phase architectural competition for a MuseumsQuartier was announced in 1986. The “Fischer von Erlach” – as the historic architecture is still referred to by MQ insiders to this day – had to be preserved and was to be complemented by contemporary buildings. Architects Laurids and Manfred Ortner won the competition. Their design was bold, foreseeing a reading tower as a cultural landmark, modern museum buildings, and an open, metropolitan structure that would usher in a new era of urban development for Vienna. But the project divided opinion.

Many Viennese, with their natural aversion to tall buildings, railed against the planned reading or library tower – already scaled back from 67 meters to 57 meters in height. A citizens’ initiative, prominent figures and the Kronen Zeitung tabloid newspaper campaigned against the tower and the entire MuseumsQuartier concept, too. In the end, Mayor Helmut Zilk exercised his authority – and the tower was scrapped entirely. And the planned museum buildings also had to be brought down in height. Nothing would be allowed to overshadow the original historic Fischer von Erlach buildings. Against their will, Ortner and Ortner ended up having to architecturally scale down the entire project.

Temple of Culture and Open-Air Living Room

But all of that is largely forgotten today. Now, it is impossible to imagine Vienna’s cultural landscape without the MQ. In one of its guises, it is a prestigious art and culture venue with a high international profile. Here, the spectrum covers visual arts, architecture, music, fashion, theater, dance, literature, children’s culture, design, and photo-



Bird's-eye view of the construction site one year before the opening

Photo: © MuseumsQuartier Wien, Photo: Popelka

graphy. And in its other role, the MQ is a low-threshold, always-accessible public space and “place of encounter”. Its courtyards, cafés, outdoor seating and shops serve as an oasis of relaxation and recreation in the heart of the city.

But that was not always the case. “In the early years, the courtyards were empty. There was nothing there, just open space to let the architecture shine,” recalls Bettina Leidl, the current MQ director and Managing Director of the Kunsthalle Wien back in 2001. Over the years to come, the courtyards were made more appealing and visitor friendly. Today, the MQ is simply an “open-air living room” for many of Vienna’s residents. Part of the appeal stems from the MQ courtyard furniture: known in Vienna as Enzis, they are named in honor of former MQ exec Daniela Enzi. These modern, colorful seating options – which have become a trademark in their own right over the years – are highly sought after and any vacant spots are quickly snapped up. The color of the Enzis has been chosen by an online poll since 2008.

According to Director Leidl, the diverse and – mostly free – event program is particularly

popular: highlights include the MQ Summer Stage with concerts, readings, open-air cinema, MQ Public Art in the outdoor spaces, Winter at MQ with the Christmas market, and the numerous exhibitions in the MQ Freiraum.

“Culture Terrace” and Landmark

The MQ Libelle was the first major new feature to be added since the MQ opened in 2001. This “culture terrace” on the roof of the Leopold Museum was inaugurated in September 2020. Free to access, it offers stunning views over the cultural complex and city center below, all the way to Vienna’s landmark hills in the distance. The sleek, fully glazed structure by Laurids Ortner was designed as a Gesamtkunstwerk or total work of art that includes interventions by Brigitte Kowanz and Eva Schlegel. In the terrace area, the iconic “Light Circles” by Brigitte Kowanz create a particularly atmospheric ambiance. After everything that went before, the MQ Libelle finally added a highly visible landmark to the complex.



The MQ Libelle offers stunning views of the city center.

Photo: © MuseumsQuartier Wien, Photo: Thomas Meyer

MQ – Work in Progress

Today, a quarter-century after it opened, the MQ is firmly embedded in Vienna’s urban landscape. It is popular, vibrant – and far from finished. Quite the opposite, in fact: there is still room for a new museum. To fill the gap, the House of Austrian History (hdgö) is set to find a home in the MQ. The opening of the new sustainable timber building is slated for 2028.

Unsurprisingly, the vision of an energy-efficient and environmentally conscious MQ is

particularly close to Director Leidl's heart. "The 'MQ goes Green' slogan stands for transformation, for evolving toward a climate-neutral MQ by 2030," she explains. Long-term, the entire complex is targeting resource-efficient operations, and increased use of renewable energy sources such as solar panels and district cooling, more biodiversity, more trees, and more greenery in the MQ. Three years ago, temporary greening began. Next, parts of the ground were unsealed, and three central islands of trees were planted. The facades in the Staatsratshof courtyard are now also being greened. Through these and other measures on top, the aim is to improve the quality of stay for residents and visitors through natural shading and lower temperatures.



The MQ's main courtyard is getting greener.

Photo: MQ Summer Stage © MuseumsQuartier Wien, Photo: Klaus Pichler

"The MQ is a 'work in progress,'" says Leidl, quoting architect Laurids Ortner, "a cultural space in a constant state of change and transformation." And perhaps that's exactly why it's so successful. After all, the MuseumsQuartier is not just a place where art is displayed and culture is staged. It is a place where the city happens and lives are lived. Where people meet, where visions are cast in concrete – and broken open again. A place that, like no other, proves that cultural visions require courage, resilience, and perseverance.

The MuseumsQuartier Vienna is home to more than 50 cultural institutions – here's a selection:

● Az W Architekturzentrum Wien
→ azw.at

● designforum Wien
→ designforum.at

● Dschungel Wien
→ dschungelwien.at

● Halle E+G
→ halleneg.at

● Kunsthalle Wien
→ kunsthalle.at

● Leopold Museum
→ leopoldmuseum.org

● MQ Freiraum
Exhibition spaces/Ovalhalle
→ mqw.at

● mumok – Museum of Modern Art
ludwig foundation vienna
→ mumok.at

● Tanzquartier Wien
→ tqw.at

● WIENXTRA-Kinderinfo
→ kinderinfowien.at

● ZOOM Children's Museum
→ kindermuseum.at

● Café Leopold
→ cafeleopold.wien

● MQ Daily
→ mqdaily.at

● Kantine
→ mq-kantine.at

● MuseumsQuartier Vienna
Museumsplatz 1
1070 Vienna
Information on the MQ anniversary program
can be found at
→ mqw.at



Music & Dance

When the DJ mixes leeks with violins and the whole of Europe is celebrating in Vienna, Florentina's off dancing a radical path to Venice.



Photo: © Vienna Tourist Board/Peter Rigaud

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Ten Questions for DJ Wolfram

This Austrian DJ is not only in demand in the world's top clubs. International stars can't get enough of his unique musical style either.

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Eurovision Song Contest 2026 in Vienna

After JJ's incredible victory with Wasted Love, the Eurovision Song Contest will be back in Vienna for the third time in 2026.

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"Lashings of Lipstick" and Leek Violins

Vienna's world-famous orchestras are supplemented by a number of creative combos such as the "cuddle choir" and the vegetable orchestra who serve up rare musical treats.

72

Radical. Feminist. Holzinger.

Her performances are extreme. And award winning. In 2026 Florentina Holzinger will be stirring the pot at the Biennale in Venice.



(Interview)
Susanna BURGER

Ten Questions for *DJ Wolfram*

(Photo)
Alexander ROBOTNICK

Whether he's wearing his DJ, producer or fashion icon hat – Wolfram Eckert is all about style, creativity and boundless club energy. He's no stranger to working with big name stars including Moby, Haddaway and Pamela Anderson. His unique sound at the point where Italo-disco, house and electro meet is in demand at clubs worldwide, as well as at aftershow parties hosted by the likes of Vivienne Westwood and Balenciaga.

- ① **From Carinthia into the big wide world. Where does Vienna fit into your career?**
Vienna was my first big love story. As a teenager I often traveled here from Carinthia to go to clubs like Flex and Meierei im Stadtpark, or a David Bowie concert. I moved here in 2002, into an apartment on Naschmarkt. After a sound engineer course at the School of Audio Engineering, I did a degree at the Academy of Fine Arts. And I was given the opportunity to play my music on the radio on FM4 as Newcomer of the Week. And that was how my career started in Vienna.
- ② **What links do you have with Vienna today?**
These days, I enjoy coming to Vienna as a tourist, adding an extra day or two at a hotel after a show. This lets me experience the city from a different angle.
- ③ **Five things that you love about Vienna ...**
The drinking water, the coffeehouse culture, all the beautiful parks, the public transportation network, the open-air pools.
- ④ **The coolest music venue or club in Vienna in your eyes?**
I think Grelle Forelle's really good.
- ⑤ **Do you like other genres of music such as classical?**
Yes, I almost listen to more classical or ambient music than dance music. Lots of Max Richter and film music at the moment.
- ⑥ **Who are your Viennese music icons?**
Obviously, Falco and my friends Kruder & Dorfmeister – who were deservedly awarded the Gold Decoration of Honor for Services to the Province of Vienna.
- ⑦ **What makes Vienna different from other music cities?**
The special blend of history, tradition and openness to new things.
- ⑧ **Which do you prefer: DJ sets or working in the studio?**
A decent set is easily as enjoyable as one of those days in the studio where you feel like you've created something good.
- ⑨ **What does Vienna sound like to you?**
Like Johann Strauss – as soon as you land in Vienna with Austrian Airlines.
- ⑩ **And what does it taste of?**
Schnitzel.

@wolfram_amadeus

Eurovision Song Contest 2026 in Vienna

(Text)
Robert SEYDEL



JJ won the Eurovision Song Contest 2025 in Basel.
Photo: © ORF/Roman Zach-Kiesling

First Udo Jürgens, then Conchita Wurst, and last year JJ. Between them, these three Austrian stars are responsible for the fact that the Eurovision Song Contest will be taking place in Vienna for the third time in May 2026.

JJ's extraordinary song Wasted Love left a deep impression on the expert jury above all in 2025. And by securing the win, the countertenor brought the Eurovision Song Contest (ESC) back to Vienna. And 2026 won't just be any ESC in Vienna: the world's largest live music event – which attracts around 170 million TV viewers – will celebrate its 70th birthday.

On May 16, 2026, the grand final will take place at the Wiener Stadthalle. The Tuesday

(May 12) and Thursday (May 14) before, the venue will host the two semifinals. And on May 10, the grand opening ceremony will take place at Vienna's Rathausplatz. Just like it did in 2015, this square will be transformed into the world's most beautiful public screening zone. The City of Vienna will stage numerous free events in public spaces in honor of the Eurovision Song Contest.



In 2014, Conchita Wurst won for Austria with Rise Like A Phoenix in Copenhagen.
Photo: © ORF/Milenko Badzic

“Vienna is the perfect host city”

ESC Director Martin Green from the European Broadcasting Union (EBU) is delighted that the Austrian capital has been selected to host the event once again: “Vienna’s reputation as one of the most musical cities in the world and its location in the heart of Europe make it the perfect host city for the 70th Eurovision Song Contest. Together with host broadcaster ORF and the City of Vienna, we will create a spectacular music festival that will resonate worldwide.”

As in 2015, thousands of fans from around the world will travel to the Austrian capital. Added to that are the participants and their delegations



The world's most beautiful public screening zone:
Vienna's Rathausplatz
Photo: © ORF/Hans Leitner

from more than 30 countries, as well as over 1,500 accredited journalists. Together, they will create an incredible atmosphere – not just inside the Wiener Stadthalle but at numerous locations throughout Vienna, too.

Vienna Struck by Song Contest Fever
Udo Jürgens secured Austria's first victory in 1966 with Merci, Chérie. The following year, the ESC took place in Vienna's Hofburg. But then, luck would elude Austria for the next 48 years. Until Conchita Wurst, wearing a breathtaking evening gown, delivered a stunning rendition of Rise Like A Phoenix in Copenhagen in 2014 – and won. The ESC in Vienna the following year became a celebration of all things musical, with the entire city struck down with Song Contest fever for two weeks. The whole of Vienna joined in the celebrations. To this day, the same-sex traffic light figures are a symbol of what Vienna and the ESC stood for then and still stand for today: openness, equality, and tolerance.



The atmosphere in the Wiener Stadthalle during the ESC 2015 was fantastic.
Photo: © ORF/Roman Zach-Kiesling

Opening Ceremony and Turquoise Carpet Event:
May 10, 2026

● Rathausplatz, 1010 Vienna

Live TV shows: May 12, 14, and 16, 2026
Dress rehearsals: May 11, 13, and 15, 2026
Ticket sales are expected to start in early 2026.
→ eurovision.tv

● Wiener Stadthalle
Roland-Rainer-Platz 1, 1150 Vienna
→ stadthalle.com

“Lashings of Lipstick” and Leek Violins

Vienna’s music scene doesn’t just revolve around global stars – it’s also buzzing with creative niche talent. From the out-there Schmusechor and the improvisational talents of the Vegetable Orchestra, to the poetic-pop Home Organ Ensemble and a burgeoning urban subculture centered on brass music. We take a look at the world capital of music from a slightly different angle.

(Text)
Susanna BURGER

(Illustrations)
Francesco CICOLELLA



Everyone knows the superstars of Vienna’s music scene: heavyweights like the Vienna Philharmonic, the Vienna Boys Choir, the State Opera and the Musikverein. But there’s more to it than this. While not exactly hidden, it’s not so easy for outsiders to find. Here’s a glimpse at some amazing, daring, almost exotic alternatives. Unique expressions of Vienna’s passion for music can be found in the capital’s thriving – and diverse – choral scene. In 2024, the Vienna Choir Forum totted up around 26,000 singers in 153 choirs, which gave nearly 1,000 concerts.

Lashings of Lipstick

The Schmusechor (cuddle/snuggle choir) stands out immediately, thanks to its name. Its heartbeat, rhythm and baton are all in the hands of conductor and artistic director Verena Giesinger. In an interview with Vienna, Intl., she explains:

“The Schmusechor is all about passion, a discrimination-free and peaceful community, openness, and, of course, art.”

Its clear stance against sexism and racism has made the choir as famous as its pop music, extravagant outfits with a touch of haute couture, bold stage performances, makeup and “lashings of lipstick”. Having found other choirs too tame for her taste, Giesinger set up her very own ensemble eleven years ago. And today, the Schmusechor has 50 members, performs about 20 shows annually and has established a devoted fanbase. Its repertoire spans everything from tracks like I Want It That Way by the Backstreet Boys to modern-day Billie Eilish hits. Giesinger counts Grande Amore among her favorite songs – big, bold and theatrical,

it's perfect for a Schmusechor performance. Playing out across every emotional channel, their live shows, including the queer-feminist New Year's concert, sell out in a matter of minutes. Collaborations venture into various worlds including theater (Nesterval, Volkstheater), visual arts (Künstlerhaus, Belvedere), dance and film (David Schalko's TV series *Ich und die Anderen*).

The Viennese choir scene offers more specialties, where the name is playfully self-aware: the 1st Vienna Ich-kann-nicht-singen-Chor (I can't sing choir) or the Prosecco Choir (celebratory singing with a taste of the finer things in life). And since the famous Vienna Boys Choir has already cropped up, it's time to mention that their female counterpart, the Vienna Choir Girls, is gaining momentum. What started out in 2004 with ten singers is now a chamber choir with 26 young female members aged 10 to 14, who tour the world just like the boys do.

Carrot Cadence

Beyond Vienna's choral world, there are extraordinary things happening in the instrumental music sphere. Whenever the one-of-a-kind Vienna Vegetable Orchestra performs, vegetable soup is served as an encore. Since 1998, this ten-part Viennese collective has explored the sonic boundaries of the vegetable kingdom – with utmost seriousness and creativity. It's no laughing matter! Having once focused on interpreting Stravinsky or electronic pioneers Kraftwerk, they now focus solely on experimental and contemporary original compositions which touch on various genres including electronic, free jazz and new music. It's not always easy listening for untrained ears.

The "veggie musicians" carve their instruments from real vegetables just before the performances begin: carrot flutes, cucumber trumpets with bell pepper bells, pumpkin drums, radish bass flutes, or leek violins. They are constantly coming up with new tools of the trade and playing techniques. The ability to improvise is key: whenever one of the instruments gives up the ghost mid-set, spares are always ready and waiting. The sounds of the veggie cosmos are virtually impossible to describe; no synthesizer on earth can replicate them. Jürgen Berlakovich, a member since 2005, explains:

"We create a unique sound language with these 'extramusical' elements."

In their piece "krautrock," for instance, four performers give the humble cabbage a thorough going over, in a kind of veggie-based hard rock set-piece. From Vienna's Konzerthaus to Barcelona's Sonar Festival and London's Royal Festival Hall, the ensemble connects with fans worldwide. TV channel ARTE even dedicated a documentary to them.



Deep and Meaningful Home Organ Poetry

The Erstes Wiener Heimorgelorchester (First Vienna Home Organ Orchestra) has been serving literary home organ pop since 1994. Thomas Pfeffer, Jürgen Plank, Daniel and Florian Wisser create eccentric yet poetic pop songs with witty German lyrics that they perform using cheap Casio, Yamaha and Bontempi keyboards. The quartet has struck the perfect balance between humor and seriousness. With over 500 performances and ten albums under their belts – including recent track



"wo sind die blumen gebliebt" (where have all the flowers gone) – they've earned cult status. Highlights include theater music for Peter Handke's *Underground Blues*, the *Singspiel* (a musical play with spoken parts) "Alois and Eurydice", and performances at the Vienna Festival and lit.Cologne, Europe's largest literary festival. For a new 2026 album, they are experimenting with electric bellows organs from the 1950s and 1960s. Nostalgia can be progressive, too.

Techno on the Tuba

The MusikarbeiterInnenkapelle band turns conventions on their head. Since 2007, this 45-member collective has been sweeping through Vienna with raw brass-music energy, proving that blue-collar songs and techno covers hit that brass groove every bit as deep as traditional marches. Their *raison d'être*: healing the wounds left behind by brass bands – something that they do through a mix of pop, rock, and Eurodance hits. A live scoring of the silent film *Little Veronika* (1929) was such a success that a repeat performance was scheduled for fall 2025.

Their current repertoire includes Metallica's *Master of Puppets*, The Chemical Brothers' *Galvanize*, Arctic Monkeys' *I Bet You Look Good on the Dance Floor*, and Avril Lavigne's *Sk8er Boi* – all uniquely rearranged, all

totally unorthodox. So it comes as little surprise that Vienna's weekly what's-on bible *Falter* hailed the MusikarbeiterInnenkapelle as a "tuned-in Viennese subculture brass band flying under the red flag." In short: this is progressive brass in its boldest form – loud, unconventional and essential to Vienna's music scene, which is as diverse as the city itself.

Anyone who fixates on Vienna's big names alone really does run the risk of missing out on an equally thrilling and inspiring parallel musical universe.



- Schmusechor
→ schmusechor.at

- Vienna Vegetable Orchestra
→ gemueseorchester.org

- Erstes Wiener Heimorgelorchester
→ ewho.at

- MusikarbeiterInnenkapelle
→ musikarbeiterinnenkapelle.net



Radical. Feminist. Holzinger.

(Text)
Susanna BURGER

Viennese choreographer and performance artist Florentina Holzinger is taking stages and cinemas by storm. In her award-winning productions, which push every boundary to the extreme, everyone ends up naked at some point. Vienna has shaped her, Europe is her playground – and she’s poised to shake up Venice next. Her latest coup: representing Austria at the 2026 Venice Biennale.

Born in 1986 in Vienna, Florentina Holzinger is one of Europe’s most provocative choreographers, directors, and performers. She shatters all expectations; her art is physical, unflinching and shocking. What she creates transcends the boundaries of dance, theater and opera. And is definitely not for the fainthearted. The list of trigger warnings includes nudity, depictions of sexual acts, self-harm such as live piercings, as well as real blood and bodily fluids – so it’s off limits to audiences under 18. This theater revolutionary tells her stories through women’s bodies, creating something entirely her own. Her productions oscillate between trash and high culture. She embraces elaborate technology,

water effects, aerial acrobatics and trampolines. Her audiences experience a gamut of emotions including awe, fascination, fear, perhaps even revulsion – yet, above all, excitement.

Holzinger studied choreography at the School for New Dance Development (SNDO) in Amsterdam. Her graduation piece, *Silk*, was performed in 2012 at Vienna’s *ImPulsTanz*, Europe’s largest contemporary dance festival, where it won the *Prix Jardin d’Europe*. Even here, her radically performative artistic signature was plain to see: she blended dance with acrobatics, martial arts, body-building, nudity, sex, rebellion and pop culture.



The female body takes center stage in Florentina Holzinger's marine creature show *Ophelia's Got Talent* (2022).

Photo: © Nicole Marianna Wytyczak

Mad Ophelia, Sainly Susanna

Through her more recent works, Holzinger has cemented her reputation as the enfant terrible of contemporary performance theater. In *Ophelia's Got Talent* (2022), she dismantled the image of Shakespeare's tragic heroine in an absurd spectacle that was part casting show, part witches' sabbath, and part high-performance circus, complete with apnea diving in a water tank. A huge critical success, the production picked up various theater awards (Nestroy, Faust).

In May 2024, Holzinger debuted her first opera production, *SANCTA*, which is a wild requiem on female sexuality and religious oppression. In it, she reimagined Paul Hindemith's 1922 one-act opera *Sancta Susanna* for the present day – featuring naked nuns in a sacred gym that challenges the Catholic establishment. Among the stage props: a two-ton bell, a skateboard halfpipe and a waterfall.

Cinema Star in "Moon"

In 2024, Florentina Holzinger made her acting debut in Kurdwin Ayub's Austrian thriller *Moon*, in which she played the part of Sarah, a character who trains three sisters in boxing in Jordan. Holzinger shone in the role through a mixture of physical presence and emotional depth. The film won a special jury prize at the Locarno Film Festival. In late 2024, prestigious art magazine *Monopol* named the 39-year-old Holzinger the most influential artist in the German-speaking world. Their reasoning:

"She thinks bigger and with more freedom than many in the traditional art world and shows no fear of pathos or spectacle."

More "Macabre" Than "Musical"

Holzinger's major achievement in 2025 was *A Year Without Summer*. The piece premiered on May 21 at Berlin's Volksbühne and was brought to Austria by Tanzquartier Wien in June. In it, Holzinger crafts an apocalyptic vision of artificial life, with the body as an experimental field. The key thematic motifs in this body-horror musical (complete with singing) take various forms: Frankenstein, the hubris of scientific research, psychoanalysis (enter Dr. Freud), genetics and the fear of aging. During the "Ultimate Facelift," fishing hooks in eyebrows



A Year Without Summer (2025): Holzinger's reflections on Frankenstein and artificial life

Photo: © Nicole Marianna Wytyczak



SANCTA – a mass of a different kind – had its Austrian premiere at the 2024 Vienna Festival.

Photo: © Nicole Marianna Wytyczak

and cheeks lift a performer into the air. But that's only part of it: other elements include performers entering the stage through the legs of a giant rubber woman and robotic quadrupeds howling like the hounds of hell. In a close-up, Holzinger has a thumb-sized embryo figure cut from a previously sewn-up slit in her thigh.

"Seaworld Venice" at the Biennale

For the 61st Venice Art Biennale in 2026, Holzinger is designing Austria's pavilion with a performance installation with the working title of "Seaworld Venice". It features aquatic creatures from mythological and classical narratives, immersing visitors in a possible future for Venice. Holzinger says:

"Water is the central element: water in relation to the body and in the interdependent relationship between humans, nature, and technology."

What this means exactly is yet to be disclosed. What is certain, though, is that it will be naked, wet (possibly for the audience too) and feminist. It will be Holzinger.

● 61st Venice Biennale
May 9–Nov 22, 2026
→ labiennale.org

@floh Holzinger

Fashion, Architecture, Arts & Crafts



Photo: © Vienna Tourist Board/Paul Bauer

Hats off to the villa's frontage or the banking hall – never mind, the main thing is that the Emperor's table is nicely set.

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Ten Questions for Nuriel Molcho

This fashion-loving scion of Vienna's NENI culinary dynasty is a creative force of nature.

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Vintage Vibes in Vienna

Pre-loved fashion is flying high, especially as awareness of sustainability soars. Our model had the pick of the racks in Vienna's vintage stores.

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Visionary Villa

Villa Beer, a work of genius by leading Viennese architect Josef Frank, is back to its best after a root-and-branch renovation project.

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Mise en Palace

The Imperial Silver Collection is reopening in 2026. And like many of the capital's traditional artisanal manufacturers, it flies the flag for the former empire's incredible table culture.

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Vienna's Most Radical Building

The 1970s brought the Domenig-Haus – a radical bank building which blended biomorphic forms with an attention-grabbing, steel-plate aesthetic.



(Interview)
Andrea ORTMAYER

Ten Questions for *Nuriel Molcho*

(Photo)
Nuriel MOLCHO

Nuriel Molcho blends a culinary entrepreneurial spirit with an instinct for esthetics. He is the co-founder of NENI, a restaurant brand that is now successful throughout Europe, as well as the creative spirit behind the Nomade Moderne headwear label and a passionate photographer.

① **What's behind the success of your family's NENI restaurants?**

My family and I live by an authentic, cosmopolitan approach to food – with plenty of heart and passion. We all pull together in the same direction and aren't afraid to strike out on new paths.

② **What connects NENI's Levantine cuisine and Viennese cuisine?**

Israel's cuisine – especially in Tel Aviv – unites influences from lots of different cultures, just like Viennese cuisine. At NENI we combine recipes from Vienna with the aromas and spices of the Middle East.

③ **Your favorite Viennese dish?**

I love Tafelspitz! Similarly to Middle Eastern cuisine, there are lots of sides that go with the boiled beef: apple and bread horseradish sauces, chive sauce, pan-fried potatoes.

④ **Your favorite place to eat in Vienna?**

When I'm entertaining I like to go to Zum Schwarzen Kameel – Viennese delights served against an art nouveau backdrop.

⑤ **You're not just a successful restaurateur, you're also in demand as a hatmaker. What made you pick up this rare handicraft?**

I just couldn't find the hat that suited me and my particular look.

⑥ **So how did you become a milliner?**

Back more than ten years ago, hatmaking was still shrouded in secrecy in Vienna. There were only a handful of milliners.

So I am largely self-taught, through YouTube tutorials, lots of research, and trial and error. I also reached out to various hatmakers including Shmuel Shapira from Szaszi Hüte and Manufaktur Mühlbauer, and the masters were kind enough to let me look over their shoulders.

⑦ **Why are Nomade Moderne hats special?**

On our travels, my wife Audrey and I go off looking for rare materials and vintage fabrics. These are used to create hand-made hats that tell stories and reflect the wearer's personality.

⑧ **What makes Vienna unique for you?**

Vienna is small, perfectly formed and a place where everything is relatively close at hand. It's attractive, livable and has a thriving cultural scene.

⑨ **Your favorite place, your neighborhood in Vienna?**

The Naschmarkt and the little neighborhoods around it. I particularly like the mood and the architectural charm.

⑩ **Please describe Vienna in five words.**

Beautiful, uncomplicated, historic, (partially) undiscovered, social.

Nuriel Molcho – Nomade Moderne
Naschmarkt Stand 510, 1060 Vienna
→ nomade-moderne.com

Vintage Vibes in Vienna

Vintage fashion is booming. The younger generation, in particular, is increasingly embracing secondhand fashion for sustainability reasons. Vienna's vintage shops look like hip concept stores. Each has a different focus – ranging from 1980s streetwear to luxury brands. The preloved fashion on offer is personally curated and carefully checked for quality. Dressed in typical outfits from the stores themselves, our model Laura Magritzer posed for the camera in their shop windows.

There's a vintage shopping-themed neighborhood walk on ivie, our city guide app. It also features recommended secondhand shops – and not just for fashion.



Shop or cafe? Burggasse 24 in the trendy 7th district is both – a fantastic vintage store and an oasis of *Gemütlichkeit*, or coziness, all in one. Handpicked and lovingly sorted by color, the unique pieces are presented in light-filled, high-ceilinged rooms. Menswear and coffee are available too. Our model's outfit channels the 80s.

Dress: Kamo Jeans
Bag: Gola
Glasses: Gucci
Shoes and hat: no name

Burggasse 24
1070 Vienna
→ bg24.com

Kleider gehen um



“Kleider gehen um”, a stylish vintage shop in the 6th district, is where “clothes go around”, as the German name says. The fashion sold here is every bit as stylish and trendy as the store itself. Model Laura drew inspiration from the 1950s for her look. The shop’s fashion spans from the 1960s to today.

Dress: Moschino
Bag: Donna Karan New York
Scarf: Bogner
Shoes and glasses: no name

Webgasse 4
1060 Vienna
@kleidergehenum

Wolfmich



Wolfmich offers a mix of designer pieces and casual fashion. Numerous items from the 80s and 90s can be found in this cool shop, which has a particularly extensive range of menswear. In fact, Wolfmich has made a name for itself far beyond Austria’s borders. Anyone looking for clubbing outfits is sure to find something.

Pants: Y Project
Top: Stella McCartney
Shoes: Salvatore Ferragamo

Gumpendorfer Strasse 51
1060 Vienna
→ wolfmich.com

Designer Secondhand Vienna



The store offers an exclusive selection of preloved designer pieces – from Chanel to Balenciaga. This charming little shop's assortment includes clothing, designer bags and accessories. And everything's always in excellent condition. Here, our model Laura really fell for Gucci.

Jacket: Gucci
Pants: no name
Shoes: Gucci

Gumpendorfer Strasse 10-12
1060 Vienna
→ designersecondhandvienna.com

Minaminou



Selected pieces from big-name designer labels are also available at Minaminou. Minou Kremer and Mina Härter aim to take a stand against fast fashion with their shop, restoring preowned pieces to premium condition. Personalized advice is a priority here. Everyone at the shoot wanted the Vivienne Westwood piece.

Jacket: Vivienne Westwood
Pants: Jean Paul Gaultier, femme
Shoes: Miu Miu
Bag: Arti Della Mano

Schleifmühlgasse 18
1040 Vienna
→ minaminou.com

carla



carla is the name of the secondhand shops run by social aid organization Caritas. Affordable and sustainable, they're places where shopping has a clear social impact. They also take in donations of well-looked-after items to keep the circular economy turning. At its prominent location on Stephansplatz, the range includes antiques and household goods as well as clothing. Every purchase supports Caritas's charity projects.

Jacket: Basset
Bag: Furla
Shoes and pants: no name

Stephansplatz 5
1010 Vienna
→ [carla.at](https://www.carla.at)



Visionary Villa

(Text)
Maria SCHALLER

Josef Frank created a piece of Viennese architectural history in the 13th district. And now, after a root-and-branch restoration project, Villa Beer is being made publicly accessible and will open in 2026 as a house museum.



Photo: © Studio Huger

In the heart of Hietzing's cottage district, near Schönbrunn, new life has been breathed into one of Vienna's most impressive interwar buildings: Villa Beer. Built in 1929/1930 by Josef Frank and Oskar Wlach, the four-story villa is considered a masterpiece of the second wave of Viennese Modernism. The visionary behind the project, Josef Frank (1885–1967), was a luminary of the architecture and design scene, and known in interwar Vienna for placing people at the center of his work. His motto: modern is what gives us the

greatest possible freedom. He was the mastermind behind several municipal buildings and, also in Hietzing, the Werkbundsiedlung estate. In 1933, Frank emigrated to Sweden and became a celebrated designer for the firm Svenskt Tenn. To this day, his textile patterns, furniture designs, and visionary living spaces continue to be held in the highest of regard the world over. Even Ikea likes to reference his work. And with Villa Beer, Josef Frank set out to create a monumental example of his work in Vienna.

Open to Everyone

Although this architectural gem had hardly changed over the decades, it was slowly succumbing to the ravages of time. In early 2024, a monumental project began to meticulously restore the 650-square-meter villa and its garden – guided by heritage protection rules and with painstaking attention to detail. Everything had to be restored as closely to the original as possible and brought up to modern standards. The driving force behind the restoration is the Villa Beer Foundation, a non-profit led by Lothar Trierenberg, which aims to make the villa accessible to the public as a house museum. The opening is planned for spring 2026. A wide range of uses is envisioned including guided tours and the opportunity to spend extended periods of time at the villa. Even overnight stays will be possible for small circles. The villa at Wenzgasse 12 will be open to both enthusiasts and researchers. Events of all kinds are also planned – exhibitions, music, dance, readings, panel discussions and much more.

Revolutionary Rooms

In its nearly 100 years of existence, the villa changed hands several times. Although they were the ones to commission the property, industrialist Julius Beer and his wife Margarete soon found themselves compelled to rent it out. Opera and theater personalities like Richard Tauber, Martha Eggerth, and Marcel Prawy all lived here. After



Photo: © Stephan Trierenberg



Photo: © Studio Huger

the war, the villa was used by the British Army. In 1987, it was heritage listed, before eventually coming into the possession of the nonprofit foundation in 2021. Architecturally, Villa Beer stands out with an open, flowing layout that dissolves traditional boundaries between floors, while creating a broad scope of sightlines opening up views to the outside through large windows. Josef Frank's philosophies also feed into the new usage concept. The villa is



Photo: © Daniel Hertzell/Svenskt Tenn

intended as a time capsule, recalling the eventful history of its creators and residents. But in doing so, ideas from the past are brought into the present to impressive effect.

- Villa Beer
Wenzgasse 12, 1130 Vienna
→ villabeer.wien

EXHIBITION TIP

Josef Frank and the others. New furniture 1920–1940 until January 11, 2026

- Vienna Furniture Museum
Andreasgasse 7, 1070 Vienna
→ moebelmuseumwien.at

Mise en **Palace**

(Text)
Robert SEYDEL & Susanne KAPPELLER



Part of the Milan Table Centerpiece

Photo: © Federal Property Administration, Silberkammer – Hofburg Vienna, Photo: Edgar Knaack

There's nothing better than a beautifully set table. After all, "you eat with your eyes, too" as the saying goes here in Austria. What the Habsburgs put on the table, however, elevated things to a completely different level. A glimpse into the opulent tableware used by the former imperial house is served up by the Silberkammer (Imperial Silver Collection), which is set to reopen in 2026.

The dazzling star of the meticulously redesigned new-look Silberkammer is the Mailänder Tafelaufsatz or Milan Centerpiece, which will be on display in all its glory once again from 2026. Crafted in 1838 for the coronation of Austrian Emperor Ferdinand I as King of Lombardo-Venetia, the 560-piece ensemble is made from fire-gilded bronze. Assembled in full, it stretches more than 30 meters in length. The powerful impression it left on diners was crucial for the Habsburgs: "Table culture held great importance be-

cause it was also an expression of the host's status," says Anja Hasenlechner from the Federal Ministry for Economy, Energy, and Tourism, who is responsible for the Silberkammer's collections. After all, the Habsburgs were not just anyone. They were emperors. And they needed to show that. "Imperial rank could never be understated," says Hasenlechner. Europe's ruling princes vied to get their hands on the most beautiful and valuable services. "Go big or go home" was the order of the day.

Maria Theresia's Cutlery

This goes some way to explaining why the Silberkammer's collection – part of the Sisi Museum within the Schönbrunn Group – is so large: in total it comprises around 135,000 items. Documentary evidence of the former imperial residence's Silberkammer dates all the way back to the 15th century. It is the only silver collection in the world that is still in use, continuing to adorn formal dining tables for state visits to this day. Comprising close to 20,000 individual silver service items, the Hof Tafelsilber (imperial silver service) is the most extensive set of them all. While the fire-gilded silver Grand Vermeil service is the most prestigious. Its original pieces were created by Napoleon's court goldsmith Martin-Guillaume Biennais in Paris. The complete set is suitable for banquets with 140 guests.

Bearing inventory number 1, Maria Theresia's (1717–1780) personal cutlery set is among the oldest items. It consists of a soup spoon, fork, knife, carving fork, egg spoon, spice tin and egg cup. The inventory's only older pieces are a rock crystal service and some Asian porcelains. Collected by the Habsburgs since the early 18th century, the latter were used as ornaments for Chinese cabinets in their residences and as features for formal dining tables.



Maria Theresia's golden cutlery set

Photo: © Federal Property Administration, Silberkammer – Hofburg Vienna, Photo: Aline Schwabl

Glasses for the Emperor, Chandeliers for the Rapper

But not all tableware came from so far away. A great deal of it was made just around the corner from the Vienna Hofburg in the then-imperial city center – by traditional businesses and former holders of the court warrant. Many of them still exist today and continue to display mastery of their craft at the very highest level (an overview of these producers follows on the next double page). One highlight is the numerous floral plates on dark or white backgrounds, produced from the 1820s onwards by the imperial Porcelain Manufactory in Augarten.

Thousands of fine glasses were also commissioned by the Habsburgs, most from J. & L. Lobmeyr. Founded in 1823, the glass manufactory has perfectly bridged the past and future: today as then, Lobmeyr still produces fine drinking glasses – as well as modern chandeliers for the New York Metropolitan Opera and the rapper and singer Drake. The emperor would surely have liked that – the chandelier, not Drake.



Passiflora floral plate, Wiener Porzellanmanufaktur, 1821

Photo: © Federal Property Administration, Silberkammer – Hofburg Vienna, Photo: Edgar Knaack

● Silberkammer
(with Sisi Museum and Imperial Apartments)
Hofburg (entrance under the Michaelerkuppel)
1010 Vienna
Reopening 2026
→ sisimuseum-hofburg.at

The Art of Dining *Then and Now*

Augarten Porcelain

The Augarten Porcelain Manufactory in Vienna has operated almost continuously since 1718, making it the second-oldest porcelain maker in Europe. The Austrian imperial house was among its illustrious customers, a legacy that is still visible today. In the early 19th century, the court ordered a modern dining service with a wide gold rim for grand banquet tables. It provided the inspiration for the current Habsburg service which is adorned with “Elisabeth” gold decor detailing. Used at state banquets and in embassies, this commercially available set features the federal eagle. Designers from all eras, from Baroque to the present day, have created pieces for Augarten Porcelain. The “Vienna Rose,” a famous early 19th-century Biedermeier motif, and the world-renowned Melon Service by Josef Hoffmann from 1929 remain bestsellers. Right from the outset, Augarten porcelain has been handmade and handpainted.

● Augarten Vienna
Obere Augartenstrasse 1, 1020 Vienna
→ augarten.com

● Augarten flagship store
Spiegelgasse 3, 1010 Vienna



There is a distinct shift in the air toward opulence. As clearly demonstrated by Augarten with the Vienna Rose.

Photo: © Nuno Oliveira



Still in vogue: Drinking Service No. 267 by Hans-Harald Rath from 1952 reflects the spirit of the 1950s.

Photo: © J. & L. Lobmeyr

J. & L. Lobmeyr

Former purveyor of glassware to the imperial court, Lobmeyr has produced high-quality glassware since 1823 – from drinking services to engraved mirrors and chandeliers. This delicate drinking glass is mouth-blown and hand-polished. The imperial house placed lots of orders. In 1835, Lobmeyr delivered its first service for official receptions: the Hofburg service for up to 400 people would later be used for state receptions hosted by the Republic of Austria. Today, the Lobmeyr drinking set by the Polka designer house is in use. A sixth-generation family business, Lobmeyr has always collaborated with contemporary artists, designers and architects – from Theophil Hansen, Adolf Loos and Josef Hoffmann to current designers like Stefan Sagmeister and Polka. One of Lobmeyr’s oldest series, Service No. 4, dates back to 1856. It was displayed at the Vienna World’s Fair in 1873 and has been a bestseller ever since, continuing to impress new generations all the time with its simplicity and modern aesthetic.

● J. & L. Lobmeyr
Kärntner Strasse 26, 1010 Vienna
→ lobmeyr.at

In March 2026, J. & L. Lobmeyr is opening an exhibition on Viennese table culture at its Kärntner Strasse store – a history of forms from Baroque to the present day. For small and grand tables alike.

Jarosinski & Vaugoin Silversmiths

In the days of the empire, tables in the households of Viennese nobility and high society would be set using cutlery and tableware from this elite silversmith (est. 1847). A family business producing hand-forged silverware, it is among the oldest surviving silversmith workshops in the world. Jarosinski & Vaugoin’s extensive range of silver cutlery includes 200 different models. Today, the company is in its sixth generation. Headed by Jean-Paul Vaugoin, it even supplies the royals in London’s Kensington Palace, as well as faraway royal houses on the Arabian peninsula and in Malaysia. Vaugoin silverware continues to be made in a historic workshop in the 7th district. Besides time-honored pieces, it also produces modern designs by contemporary creators including Thomas Feichtner and Sebastian Menschhorn.

● Jarosinski & Vaugoin
Zieglergasse 24, 1070 Vienna
→ vaugoin.com



Besides historical designs, contemporary-style cutlery and tableware also feature.

Photo: © Vienna Tourist Board/Paul Bauer

Zur Schwäbischen Jungfrau

What would a perfectly set table be without the table linens to match? The fine tablecloths from Zur Schwäbischen Jungfrau are the stuff of legend. This traditional Viennese company was established by a canvas trader from Swabia in 1720, and later became an important supplier to the imperial and royal court. Today, it is run by Viennese grande dame Hanni Vanicek and her nephew Theodor Vanicek. For anyone looking for something special beyond off-the-shelf products, Zur Schwäbischen Jungfrau produces high-quality custom orders and

monogrammed and embroidered pieces in its own studio in the 8th district. Royal houses worldwide are among the clients: the King of Malaysia even called in at the store during a state visit – back when the main store was still on Graben. In fall 2025, it moved to a new location on nearby Spiegelgasse.

● Zur Schwäbischen Jungfrau
Spiegelgasse 13, 1010 Vienna
→ zsj.at

Wiener Silber Manufaktur

Wiener Silber Manufaktur’s roots can be traced back to 1882. The manufactory was an important partner of the Wiener Werkstätte design collective around 1900, a legacy that the re-established company draws upon today. As the owner of the former production company’s archive – which also includes various tools and molds – the new Wiener Silber Manufaktur holds the rights to around 11,000 sketches by renowned designers from Josef Hoffmann to Otto Prutscher. Numerous historical items of cutlery and tableware are available today in the elegant silver boutique in the 1st district – alongside contemporary designs by Ted Muehling and Atelier Bindernagel. Patrons of star chef Juan Amador’s Vienna restaurant have the pleasure of dining with Josef-Hoffmann-designed cutlery from Wiener Silber Manufaktur. A rare treat!

● Wiener Silber Manufaktur
Silverware boutique
Spiegelgasse 14, 1010 Vienna
→ wienersilbermanufaktur.com



The tea service by Spanish designer Tomás Alonso feels like a homage to Josef Hoffmann.

Photo: © Wiener Silber Manufaktur

Vienna's Most Radical Building

(Text)
Johannes LUXNER

(Photo)
Paul BAUER



Ready for some truly extreme architecture? In the 1970s, iconic architect Günther Domenig designed the Domenig-Haus. A radical bank building which blended biomorphic forms with an attention-grabbing steel-plate aesthetic that pushed the boundaries of what was physically achievable. An architectural gem of a different kind that is dedicated to cuisine these days.

Some call it a “crashed spaceship”, others think that they can spot a caterpillar in the facade. In 1970s Vienna, it was dubbed “Tin Gaudí” in reference to the work of Antoni Gaudí. But what did Günther Domenig (1934–2012) himself, one of the most significant Austrian architects of his time, have to say about it? Referencing the articulated facade, created between 1975 and 1979, he called it the “House with the bend” singling out the folds on the building’s facade. It not only aptly describes the building’s appearance but also Domenig’s building philosophy: he sought to bend the rules, his gaze firmly fixed on the future. He even once referred to himself as an extremist. With great success: the Domenig-Haus, one of the architect’s major works, made waves worldwide at the time. From Tokyo to Milan, everyone was talking about the building. The architectural world was captivated by the extreme design – Vienna’s residents were, naturally, more skeptical. It is a sculpture-like building. And not just on the outside. Inside, biomorphic forms dominate too. Right angles and straight lines are nowhere to be found.

Bones, Sinews and Skins

This revolutionary architectural feat was only made possible by the cooperation of a particularly open-minded client. The then-director of the City of Vienna’s now-defunct Zentralsparkasse, Karl Vak, saw enabling contemporary art and culture as part of the role of a bank. He wanted Domenig to create a radical bank building that signaled the institution’s progressive thinking through innovative architecture. And that is precisely what he got. Domenig created an organ-like body with biomorphic structures that were meant to evoke bones, sinews, and skins. This particularly applied to the prominently displayed ventilation ducts inside the building which snake through the first two floors

like veins. Like the facade, the ducting was put under a heritage protection order in 2005. But the commercial banking that once played out inside is now a historical footnote.

Urban Renewal Spirit

The building was used as a publishing house in the 2000s and then as a gallery. After an extensive vacancy, the Domenig-Haus has been dedicated to food since 2022, making it accessible to the public. It’s anchor tenant – the restaurant Kent – serves Turkish-Levantine specialties on four levels of the building. Anyone who is passionate about unique architecture should definitely take advantage of the daily brunch special to experience the building’s interior. It’s a trip back in time to the 1970s, complete with extraordinary design language. And it’s a great opportunity to explore life in Vienna outside the city center. The Domenig-Haus – located on Favoritenstrasse in the multicultural 10th district – is right next to the Keplerplatz U1 station. An important part of the history of public transportation in Vienna, this section of the subway opened in 1978 and was Vienna’s first entirely newly built underground line. And at the same time, Favoritenstrasse became one of Vienna’s first major pedestrian zones, and one of the defining examples of the spirit of urban renewal that prevailed at the time. All eyes were on the future. And it is in this context that the Domenig-Haus must be seen – a building that shattered all architectural conventions.

● Domenig-Haus
Favoritenstrasse 118
1100 Vienna
→ kentrestaurant.at/favoriten

Urban Idyll

Wine doesn't grow on trees, but it's still pretty cool and green.



Photo: © Vienna Tourist Board/Paul Bauer

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Ten Questions for Jutta Ambrositsch

A graphic artist by trade, she made the switch to winegrowing and is now taking the city's top restaurants by storm with her expressive and authentic wines.

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The City Needs Trees

Vienna is one of Europe's greenest cities. And to keep it that way, investment in the capital's green infrastructure is growing.

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Cool City

Vienna blows hot and cold – and that's exactly the way it should be. District heating and cooling are already helping to make Vienna the chilliest city of the future.



(Interview)
Johannes LUXNER

Ten Questions for *Jutta Ambrositsch*

(Photo)
Thomas SCHARF

Jutta Ambrositsch actually has her roots in the ad industry, but in 2004 she changed courses, going from graphic designer to winemaker. Individualistic and bursting with character, her wines are making people sit up and take notice. She is also the operator of Buschenschank in Residence.

① **What made you decide to become a winemaker?**

The inner drive to find a meaningful occupation with a long-term outlook for head and heart.

② **What sets your wines apart?**

Controlled freedom. As little intervention as possible. So that means hardly any sulfur and only yeasts that occur in our vineyard. The outcome is that their personalities change from year to year.

③ **What's the difference of doing things this way in terms of flavor?**

My wines aren't crowd pleasers that conform to the market. They're genuine comestibles with a soul. And alcohol.

④ **Which of your wines is the ideal gateway into the world of Viennese wine?**

The Rakete – the rocket. Completely untypical of Vienna in terms of style, but somehow eminently Viennese too; cool and edgy. And "Rakete" is also Viennese for a buzz.

⑤ **What sets wine from Vienna apart? Are there certain fundamental characteristics?**

In terms of flavors, hardly any. But definitely on an emotional level. Maybe that's something inherent in the vineyards overlooking the city.

⑥ **You've also got some vines in the Rosengartel, one of the best locations in Vienna. What's so special about this particular "terroir"?**

Finest shell limestone soil, with an optimal slope and world-class view.

⑦ **You also operate the Buschenschank in Residence, which is a conscious differentiation from the classic notion of the Heuriger wine tavern. What can patrons expect to find there?**

A journey into the full belly of the city – both from a culinary and emotional perspective. And wine.

⑧ **Which of your wines would you recommend with which food?**

Satellit for oysters, Fürchtegott for richness, Kosmopolit for an open cheese sandwich and Ein Liter Wien for the seriously thirsty.

⑨ **Your wine bottles are a visual event. What's the key to a good label?**

Typography that fits the story. The two factors in sync, resonating with one another. And a little finesse.

⑩ **Vienna's top restaurateurs swear by your wines. Which restaurants serve them?**

Heunisch & Erben, Mast, Café Azzurro, Brösl, Gasthaus Wolf, Café Kandl, Gasthaus Stern, Café Caché ... A whole cross section of all self-respecting Viennese food and wine establishments.

Buschenschank in Residence
Langackergasse 5a, 1190 Vienna
→ jutta-ambrositsch.at



(Text)
Andrea ORTMAYER

(Photos)
Paul BAUER

The *City* Needs *Trees*

In the shade of the trees in front of the Hochstrahlbrunnen fountain

Trees are – quite literally – a natural part of Vienna’s cityscape. They live alongside us, working around the clock for our well-being. And without anyone noticing, trees produce the elixir of life: oxygen. They filter and purify, cool and humidify the air, making our living space truly livable.



Fresh plants on the square in front of the Karlskirche church

Vienna is in the fortunate position to rank among Europe’s greenest cities. In fact, about half of the city’s total footprint is accounted for by green spaces – a remarkably high figure by international standards. The Vienna Woods in the west of the capital play a significant role. And in the east of the city, its woodlands – in the shape of the wetland forests of the Lobau – even form part of a national park: the Donau-Auen. On top of that, there are more than 1,000 parks and sprawling oases of greenery such as the Prater and the Lainzer Tiergarten game preserve. In times of accelerating climate change, the value of these green recreational areas cannot be overstated. They make an essential contribution to the well-being of the city’s residents and its visitors, to quality of life, and to the city’s underlying appeal.

Hot in the City

The global climate is changing, and urban life is being transformed permanently as a result. Everyone suffers when a city swelters under the heat, and every patch of shade is used to escape the blazing sun. Cities are particularly prone to heat due to building density, sealed surfaces and a lack of vegetation – as well as additional heat sources like traffic and air conditioners. In parts of Vienna’s built-up city-center districts, real “hotspots” and the effects of urban heat islands are a fact of life. Affecting not just road surfaces and “asphalt deserts” like Schwarzenbergplatz, it also applies to the charming narrow cobblestone alleys from Spittelberg to the area of the old town around Blutgasse. “The buildings provide shade for each other, but once they heat up, the warmth stays put due to the reflection of radiated heat in the narrow streets,” explains Christiane Brandenburg. She was the project leader of Vienna’s “Urban Heat Islands” strategy plan. Developed a decade ago, it has served as a foundation for the city’s urban development projects ever since.

More Green for the City

In light of the changing climate, Vienna’s municipal government is focusing on extensive tree plantings, the widespread expansion of “green infrastructure” – such as roof and facade greening and hedge planting – as well as unsealing projects to safeguard and improve the already high quality of life that the city has to offer. All these measures have direct impacts on health, the environment, and the climate: besides shading and cooling effects through evaporation, they help to bind fine particulate matter, sequester CO₂, and aid water retention, while also promoting biodiversity in the city.

Since 2021, Vienna has been using special funding to continue to unseal, green, and cool the city. One of the city’s core goals is to become greener,



The newly greened Praterstrasse in the 2nd district after its makeover

especially in densely built-up areas. Inspired by “Raus aus dem Asphalt” around 350 projects to get the city “out of the asphalt” have been implemented across all 23 of Vienna’s districts. Entire streets and squares are being made more climate-resilient, and the fight against urban heat islands is very much on. As part of these projects, about 85,500m² of streets and public squares have been greened so far, with around 25,000 trees being planted in the city, including 3,000 at 500 new locations. Water features, misting systems, and drinking water fountains have also been installed.

In times of climate change, trees are more essential than ever, alongside the availability of sufficient water resources. Put simply, trees are the ultimate water and climate regulation machines. And here are some figures to back it up: a mature tree provides up to 150m² of shade, cools its surroundings by up to three degrees in summer and releases around 400 liters of water into the atmosphere each day. On a hot summer day, trees like this absorb 18 kilos of CO₂ and produce 13 kilos

of oxygen – and besides dampening ambient noise and wind, clusters of mature trees also trap up to a ton of airborne dust each year.

Which Trees Does the City Need?

Not every tree is suited to life in the city. City trees, and among them “street trees”, are the pioneers, the true heroes of the plant world. They need to be able to cope with specific stress factors. These include traffic, soil compaction and sealing, underground installations, construction work, the radiant heat from glass and concrete facades, and, of course, rising temperatures. The maple is still the most common tree on Vienna’s streets, followed by linden and horse chestnut. But nowadays these Viennese classics are hardly ever replanted. Extensive studies and long-term experimental projects by various experts, including teams from the Federal College and Research Institute for Horticulture at Schönbrunn and the University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences, Vienna (BOKU), are helping to shape the development of new strategies for future



The Rabenhof Theater in a Gemeindebau municipal housing complex in the 3rd district

urban vegetation and align them to the accelerating pace of climate change. And the studies confirm that the specific brief which the city's trees need to meet has changed. So in response, Vienna's municipal gardens department is now increasingly opting for heat- and drought-resistant street trees – as well as long-lived species that are native to Southeastern Europe and parts of Asia. Varieties include specific elm cultivars, ashes and plane trees as well as the Celtis, the ginkgo tree, the Japanese pagoda tree, and the Chinese ornamental pear.

Tree Protection and Tree Registry

Trees in Vienna have enjoyed special protections for more than 50 years now. Once their trunk reaches a circumference of 40cm, they fall under the remit of the Vienna Tree Protection Act and are safeguarded from felling. Anyone wanting to cut down a tree not only needs official approval but also has to plant another tree in its stead. And if a replacment is not planted, a special compensa-

tion fee is levied. This law also applies to private property.

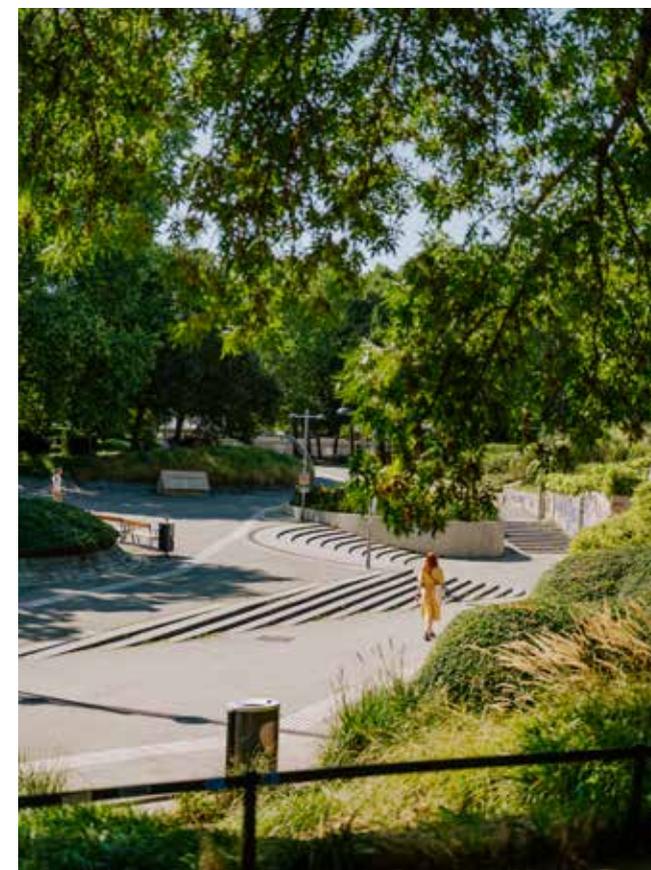
The city's tree stock is a known quantity, too. Its total inventory of around 480,000 trees is recorded to the most accurate degree possible in the Vienna Tree Registry, a visual representation of which can be viewed on the online city map at wien.gv.at under "Bäume und Grünflächen in Wien". The trees that populate the city's boulevards and parks as well as the green spaces in municipal building complexes and wooded areas are all registered here. The information stored on each tree includes its precise location, species, trunk circumference, height, crown size, and sometimes even the year it was planted. More than 3,300 of the trees listed in the registry are over 100 years old, and almost 40 are older than 200. Vienna's oldest tree is a giant Oriental plane tree in front of the University of Vienna's Department of Botany and Biodiversity Research on Rennweg 14. Around 280 years old, the circumference of its trunk exceeds six meters.

Watering – A Lifeline for the Trees

The giant old trees and other monuments to Mother Nature in the city have witnessed – and survived – a great deal over the decades and centuries. But despite their resilience, they are now suffering from the effects of increasingly frequent heatwaves and periods of drought. This brings the issue of irrigation and water availability into focus. Vienna is fortunate to draw up to 437 million liters of mountain water directly from the Alps each day via its famous Mountain Spring Pipeline. But even this huge volume is not enough to water all of the city's urban green infrastructure during heatwaves. As a result, experts have issued an urgent plea to expand the "sponge city" principle in Vienna, which would give trees more space around their roots, even under streets, parking lots, and side-

walks. This helps with water storage and retention, maintaining availability of this precious resource for longer. Additionally, it can lessen or prevent flooding during heavy rainfall and stop valuable rainwater from simply draining into the sewer system. There are also plans to ensure that watershed from rooftops is captured and diverted onto public ground to supply city trees with water.

Trees are the "green lungs" of the city and make our living space truly livable. But they need time to get established. Depending on the species, a tree will only have a trunk circumference of about 20cm even after ten years of growth. It is essential for our future that people are aware of the timeframes involved, as well as the unique impact that trees have on our environment. Every new tree planted is a promise of shade on hot days, of cleaner air to breathe and of life in the heart of the city.



On the way to the Karlsplatz subway station

Cool City

(Text)
Karoline KNEZEVIC

(Illustrations)
Francesco CICCOLELLA



Summer temperatures pack a punch – especially in the city. Asphalt sizzles, air conditioners hum and shade becomes a coveted commodity. It’s no secret that urban spaces are heating up more and more. But few know that Vienna is tackling the heat with high-tech and innovation. Welcome to Cool City Vienna.

Koid – Woam: a Very Viennese Take on Cooling and Heating

District cooling is the most environmentally friendly form of cooling available. Similar to district heating, building temperatures are regulated with cold or warm water through a central pipeline system. Cooling plants chill the water to five or six degrees before it is transported through insulated pipes to buildings on the grid. Next, the water draws away heat from inside the buildings and returns – warmer – to the cooling plant, where it is brought back down to temperature again. This smart technology can deliver CO₂ reductions of about 50 percent compared to conventional air conditioners. Unlike traditional units, though, the heat that is extracted from the building isn’t released into the surrounding air. So the cooling process does not end up heating the city further. The warmed water flows back to the cooling plant. Wherever possible, river water is used to cool it down again.



The Cooling Ring: Vienna’s Cool Cycle

A 4.7km district “cooling ring” is buried beneath Vienna’s Ringstrasse, supplying eco-friendly cooling to various buildings including the University of Vienna, City Hall, Parliament, Vienna State Opera, Museum of Applied Arts (MAK), Ronacher Theater and the Hotel Sacher. Completed a year ahead of schedule in 2024, this ring connects the Schottenring and Stubenring cooling plants. All told, something like 200 buildings benefit from this system, which is laying the foundation for district-wide cooling coverage in Vienna’s city center going forward.



Locally-Sourced District Cooling

The district cooling plants in Spittelau and on Schottenring and Stubenring use water from the Danube Canal for recooling. Especially cool: in winter months, the water is so cold that energy-intensive cooling machines can often be bypassed entirely. Water is drawn from the Danube Canal through intake structures and used for cooling via heat exchangers before being returned to the source at a slightly higher temperature. But what needs cooling in winter in the first place? Data centers and commercial kitchens, for example, require year-round cooling.



Insider

Barrier-free subway access to get to the world's best WCs and explore Vienna online.



Photo: © Vienna Tourist Board/Daniel Gebhart de Kockkoek

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Ten Questions for Eva-Maria Weiss

Vienna's subway network is being expanded.
Project manager Eva-Maria Weiss on the challenges of building the new U5.

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The Art of Accessibility

There's more to accessibility in museums than installing ramps and elevators.
Vienna's galleries are making art truly accessible for everyone.

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Tour de Toilette

In Vienna, spending a penny is something of a sightseeing activity in its own right. From art nouveau gems to WC wonders: these public conveniences are well worth a visit even without a full bladder.

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Vienna Online

The inside line on Vienna – important info online, on social media, as well as more on our service for visitors.

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Top Events in 2026

An overview of the main events in 2026 – from the 250th anniversary of the Burgtheater and the Albertina to the New Year's Eve Trail.



(Interview)
Helga GERBL

Ten Questions for *Eva-Maria Weiss*

(Photo)
WIENER LINIEN/
DIESNER

Vienna is getting a new subway line: the U5. And Eva-Maria Weiss has a key role to play in it. Weiss is a project manager at the Wiener Linien public transportation authority and responsible for the Frankhplatz construction site, where the first U5 station is scheduled to open in 2026. We take a look below the surface with her.

① **How important is the U5 for Vienna?**

The expansion of the U2 and U5 subway lines is Vienna's largest infrastructure and climate protection project. Twelve new stations across eleven kilometers will provide fast connections as well as capacity for several million more passengers each year.

② **What does that mean in terms of climate protection?**

Savings of up to 75,000 tons of CO₂ per year. That's the amount of CO₂ that around six million 30-year-old trees can absorb.

③ **The U5 is being built in the middle of the city. What's the biggest challenge?**

There are a few – such as special below-ground construction measures, legal permits and archaeological finds. But mainly it's the tight spaces that we are operating in.

④ **What do you have to look out for to avoid endangering historic buildings?**

Before construction starts, buildings are inspected and the necessary improvements made – such as reinforcing the foundations of late-nineteenth century Gründerzeit buildings.

⑤ **And what is lurking in the deep? Have there been any surprises?**

There have been a number of interesting discoveries including an old municipal gas pipeline, a concrete-filled sewer and various archaeological finds.

⑥ **How deep below ground have you been, and what does Vienna feel like down there?**

At Frankhplatz: 25 meters. A subway construction site like that has its own mood. On the surface you have no idea of the scale of what's going on below ground. It's impressive how something permanent is gradually taking shape beneath the city.

⑦ **The U5 will be Vienna's first fully automated subway line. What are the advantages of this for passengers?**

There are loads! New doors on the platform will separate the tracks from the concourse, which gives passengers a feeling of safety, and by enabling faster embarkation and disembarkation it helps to keep services on schedule.

⑧ **The U5 is turquoise. Why?**

More than 140,000 passengers voted on whether it was going to be turquoise or pink.

⑨ **What is your favorite station? Why?**

Frankhplatz, of course. If you are part of the station build, then it really does come to mean something special to you.

⑩ **What are you looking forward to when Frankhplatz opens?**

The moment that the first passengers get in the U5. That's when the planning and construction become reality. It's great to be part of this process.

Wiener Linien
→ [wienerlinien.at](https://www.wienerlinien.at)

The Art of Accessibility

(Text)
Karoline KNEZEVIC

Things like blocked routes, tiny typefaces and out-of-service elevators are obstacles that most individuals can navigate with little difficulty. But for some, they are a significant hurdle. What accessibility means for Vienna's museums, and how art can be made inclusive and accessible to everyone is something that many people won't necessarily be aware of. An open and considerate approach pays off – after all, art should be for everyone.



Photo: © Vienna Tourist Board/Rafael Bittermann

Accessibility is More Than a Ramp

When people hear the word “accessible,” their minds tend to go to wheelchair users, elevators and automatic doors. But this definition is too narrow, because accessibility also extends to individuals with hearing, vision or mobility impairments – as well as stroller users, senior citizens and people using mobility aids. In Vienna, the term applies on several levels: primarily in urban planning, public transport and online, but in cultural institutions, too.



The numerous hands-on stations make art truly tangible.
Photo: © Vienna Tourist Board/Rafael Bittermann

How is Art Made Accessible?

Accessibility doesn't begin and end with structural measures. However, many of Vienna's historic buildings – including some of its museums and galleries – face real-life limitations due to heritage orders or exceptional physical characteristics. One unusual “luxury case,” as she calls it, is described by Jennie Carvill Schellenbacher. Talking about the Wien Museum, which reopened in 2023, she explains: “Long before the renovation project got under way, accessibility and inclusion concepts were developed in the planning phase – ready for implementation during construction.” Originally designed by renowned architect Oswald Haerdtl, a former collaborator of Josef Hoffmann, the building on Vienna's Karlsplatz opened in 1959. For the three-year renovation project, this meant that the

main foundational structure, the first three floors and the main stairwell were all subject to a strict heritage-protection order. Even so, today the Wien Museum is a paradigm of accessibility and shining example of inclusion done the right way.

Jennie Schellenbacher oversees exhibition production and is also in charge of the institution's Inclusive Museum department. “The permanent exhibition was the subject of a very long planning phase. Between 2019 and 2023, we worked closely with numerous experts to create an inclusive museum experience. Among the focus group participants were individuals with visual impairments. This gave the right audiences the opportunity to consider ‘what will it take for me to visit this museum?’”

Touching Allowed

“We wanted to develop stations that offer added value for both sighted and visually impaired visitors,” says Schellenbacher, referring to the interactive exhibition elements. Known as hands-on stations, they operate on a multi-sensory principle where touching is actively encouraged. In total, the permanent exhibition comprises over 50 of these stations.

Working with focus groups is an invaluable part of designing new exhibitions. “They help us pick up on things that wouldn't be immediately apparent otherwise,” Schellenbacher notes, recalling a situation where a meticulously planned exhibition was tested, and in the final walk-through, a curtain that was used for visual effect ended up creating a barrier for visually impaired visitors and needed to be replaced with another solution.



Braille and hands-on models, wherever possible
Photo: © Vienna Tourist Board/Rafael Bittermann

New exhibitions typically take two years to plan. Inclusion comes into play as soon as the idea has been clearly defined. “The challenge is that our mission is still to mediate art. This means that we have to ask just how much is actually possible in terms of inclusion. Certain conditions are considered from the start: readability, width of circulation routes and so on. However, we also find ourselves coming up against the limits of what’s feasible sometimes, as we continue to see our responsibility as serving art education – but for everyone,” says Schellenbacher, describing the process of designing new exhibitions. And successfully so, given that the museum’s various offerings are so well-received, and its guided tours are consistently fully booked.



More than 100 of the latest low-floor Flexity trams are currently in operation in Vienna.
Photo: © Vienna Tourist Board/Paul Bauer

built for its temporary and permanent exhibitions by its own Hands-On team to make the exhibits more tangible. Various other renowned art institutions including the Belvedere and Albertina also offer their own inclusive programs.

Accessible throughout the City

Accessibility plays a central role in the design of the public transport authority’s stations and vehicle fleet, as well as the guidance and orientation systems that have been installed throughout the city. Wiener Linien, for example, has low-floor trams, as well as buses that are equipped with additional hydraulic lowering systems to ensure ease of access.

All of the city’s subway stations – and most of its tram and bus stops – offer barrier-free access. Ramps, elevators and elevated platforms level out height differences, and there are tactile ground surface indicators that can be detected underfoot or with a cane. Squares, streets and intersections are also equipped with such systems to help people navigate road traffic. People with visual impairments need orientation aids that engage the sense of hearing or touch when crossing a street.

“The scope of the city’s accessibility program is growing all the time, but it’s also important that sensitivity to this issue is raised throughout society,” says Schellenbacher, concluding with a personal anecdote: “I myself only became aware of many things when pushing a stroller. That’s when you realize exactly how much of a barrier two steps can be.”

Extensive Accessibility Programs at Vienna’s Museums

Schellenbacher emphasizes the importance of regular exchange with other galleries and museums. In one such example, the House of Austrian History is currently dedicated to a project centered on promoting the visibility of people with disabilities. It issued a remarkable call for its Disability History Project, when it invited people with disabilities to submit personal items and share their unique experiences and perspectives. The Kunsthistorisches Museum Vienna has offered a broad inclusive program for years, which includes sign language tours, tactile reliefs, tactile transparent sheets and audio descriptions. The Vienna Museum of Technology even had 150 hands-on terminals developed and

- Wien Museum
Karlsplatz 8, 1040 Vienna
→ wienmuseum.at/infos_accessibility

- House of Austrian History (hdgö)
Neue Burg, Heldenplatz, 1010 Vienna
→ hdgoe.at/accessible_events_en

- Kunsthistorisches Museum Vienna
Maria-Theresien-Platz, 1010 Vienna
→ khm.at/en/visit/accessibility

- Vienna Museum of Technology
Mariahilfer Strasse 212, 1140 Vienna
→ technischesmuseum.at/visit_us/accessibility_at_the_museum

“Welcome to Vienna”

(Photos)
UNIT/Thomas SCHARF



Katja Fischer (top), Georg Marsh (middle) and Lena Schramek (bottom)

Vienna speaks many languages – including German, Austrian and international sign language on the Vienna Tourist Board website, vienna.info. Working with sign language interpreters, we have developed and implemented tailored content related to the city, as well as offerings for deaf and hearing-impaired visitors.

Sign language is not simply a translation of spoken language but an independent language in its own right, with its own grammar, facial expressions and logic. In a series of clips lasting roughly five minutes, Norbert Kettner, Managing Director of the Vienna Tourist Board, and sign language interpreters Katja Fischer, Lena Schramek, and Georg Marsh welcome visitors to the capital in German, Austrian and international sign language, explaining what makes Vienna special: a city brimming with diversity and openness as well as quality of life. There’s also related information about helpful services. The sign language videos are available on vienna.info and YouTube. They were synchronized using artificial intelligence to make them understandable to hearing people as well.

The following QR code directs you to the sign language videos and extensive information on the barrier-free way to experience the city.



Tour de Toilette

(Text)
Tobias SCHREIBER

(Photos)
Hermann HÖGER

When nature calls, Vienna has an unusual variety of public conveniences to choose from. And they are sights in their own right. A lavatorial lap of Vienna – and a quick “dive” into the history of Viennese public toilets.



Public toilet

→ *Schlosspark Schönbrunn, 1130 Vienna*

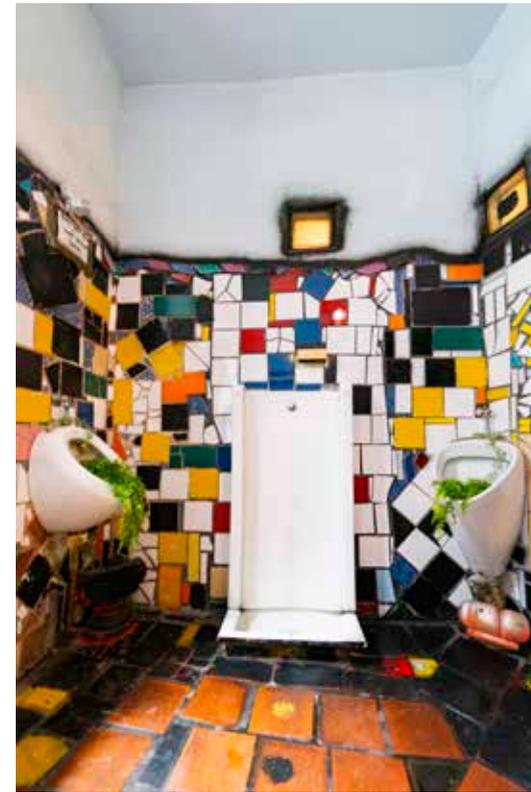
Very well camouflaged thanks to the use of Otto Wagner green. Almost feels like nipping behind a bush.



Public convenience

→ *Graben 3, 1010 Vienna*

A real Viennese art nouveau highlight: old and incredibly charming. This public convenience is definitely worth a visit – and not just in an emergency.



Toilet of Modern Art

→ *Kegelgasse 43, 1030 Vienna*

A lavatorial work of art and the perfect “Hundertwasser” water closet! Worthy of a place in a museum.

Sanifair

→ *Stephansplatz subway station, 1010 Vienna*

St. Stephen's Cathedral is even visible during a comfort break below: plastered on the wall. Efficient sightseeing – a penny well spent!

Toilette für Alle, Wien Museum

→ *Karlsplatz 8, 1040 Vienna*

It doesn't get much more accessible than this – it even comes with a ceiling hoist.

Only open during standard museum opening times, but free of charge.

Toilet Tales

Vienna was already a popular place for people to do (their) business in the mid-19th century. Both number ones and number twos ended up unceremoniously dumped at the side of the road. Known as *Buttenfrauen* and *Buttenmänner*, mobile human waist collectors were deployed to try and get this unsanitary and primarily smelly problem under control. The “Butten” they got their name from were wooden baskets which they would carry on their backs under a wide cloak. And we're sure you can imagine the rest. For a small sum of money, people could relieve themselves with at least some degree of privacy. For obvious reasons, this turned out to be anything but a long-term solution.

But one was provided, by Berlin businessman Wilhelm Beetz: designed by the man himself, Vienna's first public restrooms officially opened on September 23, 1883, in the 3rd district. A short time later, they could be found throughout the city. Dating back to the start of the 20th century, some facilities are still in use – albeit now featuring state-of-the-art technology. The city of Vienna manages more than 160 restrooms itself, 80 percent of which are free to use. Added to that, the public lavatories in the public transportation network, parks, museums and universities ensure the next WC is seldom far away. Which is a relief to know. After all, everyone needs to go some time!



You can find all of the public restrooms operated by the City of Vienna on a special map in *ivie*, the official city guide app.

Download yours for free now!

→ ivie.vienna.info

TOP EVENTS IN 2026

New Year's Concert by the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra

in the Golden Hall at the Musikverein
Conductor: Yannick Nézet-Séguin
Jan 1, 2026
→ wienerphilharmoniker.at



Vienna Ice World

Set against the stunning backdrop of City Hall, ice skating fans have the run of 10,000m² of ice including a winding trail through the Rathauspark. Culinary treats and music to suit every taste complete the picture.
Skate hire is available.
Jan 22–Mar 8, 2026
→ wienertraum.com

SPARK Art Fair Vienna

Innovative contemporary art fair – meeting place for galleries, collectors, artists and art lovers.
Mar 20–22, 2026
→ spark-artfair.com

Vienna City Marathon

Thousands of runners from all over the world and a route that takes in many of the city's best-loved landmarks.
Apr 19, 2026
→ vienna-marathon.com

70th Eurovision Song Contest

The ESC will take place in Vienna for the third time.
Live TV shows:
May 12, 14 and 16, 2026
Dress rehearsals:
May 11, 13 and 15, 2026
Wiener Stadthalle
→ eurovision.tv
→ stadthalle.com



Highlights of the 2026 Viennese Ball Season

The Viennese Ball Season reaches its peak in January and February as the city celebrates its version of carnival – Fasching.

Confectioners' Ball

Hofburg Vienna
Jan 15, 2026
→ zuckerbaeckerball.com

Vienna Philharmonic Ball

Wiener Musikverein
Jan 22, 2026
→ wienerphilharmoniker.at

Coffeehouse Owners' Ball

Hofburg Vienna
Jan 23, 2026
→ kaffeesiederball.at

Rainbow Ball

Parkhotel Schönbrunn
Jan 24, 2026
→ regenbogenball.at

Vienna Opera Ball

Vienna State Opera
Feb 12, 2026
→ wienerstaatsoper.at/opernball

For an overview of all the ball events in Vienna, go to events.vienna.info or check the ivie app.



Exhibition Highlights in 2026

Monument of the City. City Hall

Vienna Library at City Hall
Until April 30, 2026
→ wienbibliothek.at

250 Years of the Burgtheater

Special guided tours of the Klimt ceiling paintings adorning the grand staircase
Until June 2026
→ burgtheater.at

250 Years of the Albertina

Albertina
Jun 12–Oct 11, 2026
→ albertina.at

Gustave Courbet

Leopold Museum
Feb 19–Jun 21, 2026
→ leopoldmuseum.org

Ferdinand Georg Waldmüller

Lower Belvedere
Feb 27–Jun 14, 2026
→ belvedere.at

Canaletto & Bellotto

Mar 24–Sep 6, 2026

A Bite of Art

A culinary odyssey through the Picture Gallery
Start of April–December 2026
Kunsthistorisches Museum Vienna
→ khm.at

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Culinary Events in 2026

Vienna is the only city in the world to have lent its name to a particular style of cooking. Inspired by the theme for the year of “Vienna Bites. Cuisine, Culture, Character”, 2026 will be a celebration of Viennese cuisine and the capital's unique culinary identity.

Genuss Festival

Stadtpark
May 8–10, 2026
→ festival.genussregionen.at

VieVinum Wine Festival

Hofburg Vienna
May 16–18, 2026
→ vievinum.at

Gault & Millau

Genussmesse
Ottakringer Brauerei
Sep 12–13, 2026
→ gaultmillau.at

Vienna Coffee Festival

Marx Halle
September 2026
→ viennacoffeefestival.cc

Vienna Wine Hiking Day

4 routes through Vienna's winegrowing areas
September 2026
→ wien.gv.at

Visit viennabites.vienna.info for further details of the 2026 culinary year

Vienna Festival

Celebrating its 75th anniversary in 2026, the Vienna Festival will once again be setting the stage for new opera, theater, performance, dance and music productions and premieres.
May 15–Jun 21, 2026
→ festwochen.at

Vienna Pride and Rainbow Parade

In 2026, the legendary Rainbow Parade will take to the capital's show-piece Ringstrasse boulevard for the

30th time in the name of acceptance, respect and equal rights. The parade marks the culmination of Vienna Pride, a two-week event which sees the rainbow flag flying high all over the city.

June 2026
→ viennapride.at
→ regenbogenparade.at

Summer Night Concert at Schönbrunn Palace

Against the stunning Baroque backdrop of Schönbrunn Palace, the Vienna Philharmonic serves up classical music at its finest – outdoors and free of charge.
Jun 19, 2026
→ sommernachtskonzert.at



Danube Island Festival

The three-day Danube Island Festival is one of the largest open-air music festivals in Europe. Admission is free.
Jul 3–5, 2026
→ donauinselfest.at

ImPulsTanz – Vienna International Dance Festival

The capital's leading contemporary dance festival presents a uniquely diverse line-up of performances, workshops and musical acts.
Jul 9–Aug 9, 2026
→ impulstanz.com

36th Film Festival on Rathausplatz

In July and August, the square outside City Hall is transformed into an open-air hotspot. The Film Festival serves up opera, classical, pop and rock music film highlights – and great food, too! Admission is free.
Jul 4–Sep 6, 2026
→ filmfestival-rathausplatz.at

Check events.vienna.info or the ivie app for details of the city's other all fresco summer cinemas in 2026



Art & Design in Fall

Open House

Free tours of more than 50 fascinating Viennese buildings that are otherwise not open to visitors provide exclusive insights for architecture buffs.
Sep 17–20, 2026
→ openhouse-wien.at

viennacontemporary

A magnet for art collectors, curators, gallery owners and art experts from all over the world.
September 2026
→ viennacontemporary.at

Parallel Vienna

An empty building will once again provide a platform for contemporary art, serving as a canvas for Austrian and international artists.
September 2026
→ parallelvienna.com

curated by

Gallery festival with international guest curators
September/October 2026
→ curatedby.at

Vienna Design Week

International design festival
Sep 25–Oct 4, 2026
→ viennadesignweek.at

Long Night of Museums

Over 100 museums and galleries will be opening their doors to art-loving night owls – from six in the evening until midnight.
Start of October 2026
→ langenacht.orf.at

Vienna Art Week

Highlights of the Viennese art scene: exhibitions, panel discussions, tours, studio open houses and parties throughout the city.
November 2026
→ viennaartweek.at



Christmas Markets in Vienna in 2026

Some of the city's most attractive squares are turned into enchanting Christmas markets between mid-November and Christmas. Festive lights twinkle above the old town and shopping streets, spreading Christmas cheer throughout the city.

Viennese Christmas Market on Rathausplatz
→ christkindlmarkt.at

Old Viennese Christmas Market on Freyung
→ altwiener-markt.at

Christmas Market Schloss Schönbrunn
→ weihnachtsmarkt-schoenbrunn.at

Spittelberg Christmas Market
→ spittelberg.at

More Christmas markets at events.vienna.info and in the ivie app

Vienna New Year's Eve Trail

On December 31, the city center is transformed into a giant party scene. Non-stop revelry from 2pm until 2am: the New Year's Eve Trail in the old town keeps the entertainment coming.
Dec 31, 2026
→ wienersilvesterpfad.at

Details of New Year's Eve events including concerts, balls, galas and parties are listed at events.vienna.info and in the ivie app.

Please note that the events listed are subject to change or cancellation. As a result, we highly recommend checking the organizer's websites for updates in good time beforehand.

Publication Details

PUBLISHED BY
Vienna Tourist Board
1030 Vienna, Invalidenstrasse 6
→ vienna.info

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Printed according to the Austrian Ecolabel criteria for printed matter,
SANDLER
Gesellschaft m.b.H. & Co. KG.,
UW 750 

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Copy deadline:
October 2025

