

VIENNA: 3-DAY DISCOVERY



DAY 1

MORNING Start your exploration in the center of the old city and visit the **Hofburg**, the former Imperial Palace. From the 13th century until 1918, this enormous complex sat at the center of the **Habsburg Empire**. In the private apartments and state rooms, you can admire the splendor and magnificence of the daily life of the Habsburg family. Or visit the Sisi Museum, dedicated to the celebrated and deeply memorable Empress Elisabeth who has long since become a cult figure. **The Imperial Treasury** showcases the insignia and jewels of the Holy Roman Empire and the Habsburgs.

Renowned for its Lipizzan ballet, the **Spanish Riding School** in Vienna recreates the baroque ambiance of the Imperial Palace. Admire riding skills of the highest order, from pirouettes to caprioles. At 10 a.m. almost every day, you can attend a morning exercise of the famed stallions. Afterwards, walk towards the St. Stephen's cathedral and stop for a quick snack at **Trzesniewski** famous for its open-faced little sandwiches.

AFTERNOON Visit **St. Stephen's Cathedral**, the very symbol of Vienna. Construction commenced in the 12th century and it remains one of the most important Gothic structures in Austria. Guided tours are available at both the Cathedral and the catacombs below. You can also climb the 343 steps of the South Tower for a rooftop view of Vienna's first district.

Head over to the **Kunsthistorisches Museum Vienna**. Built in 1891 to house the extensive collections of the imperial family, the Kunsthistorisches Museum Vienna is among the West's preeminent museums—its trove of Bruegels alone is the largest in the world. Be sure to visit the **Kunstkammer**, the most important collection of its kind, a universe all of its own of beauty and wit, curiosities and wonder.

EVENING Visit a **Viennese Heuriger**, the uniquely Viennese style of wine tavern. As Vienna is the world's only major city producing its own wines within city limits—fantastic wines, to be precise—an evening at a Heuriger shouldn't be missed.

Here, in a comfortable and low-key atmosphere, join the Viennese as they savor the local wines and fine culinary accompaniments. At a true Heuriger only Viennese wines are served, many world class. These unique taverns can be found in the wine-growing regions of the city—places like Neustift and Grinzing, or Stammersdorf and Jedlersdorf. When you see a bunch of pine branches and the word "Ausg'steckt" written on a board, you'll know you've found one of these special taverns.

If you are looking for more late-night entertainment, the Gürtel ring road is fast becoming the nerve center of **Vienna's nightlife**. Beloved old music venues and mainstays like the Chelsea, B72 and Q [kju:] are being joined by new venues in the arches beneath the elevated subway—itsself an architectural marvel, courtesy of Otto Wagner.

DAY 2

MORNING Hop on the U4 subway line and head out to **Schönbrunn Palace**, the Habsburgs' former summer residence. Plan to spend a good half day at Schönbrunn, a World Heritage site and a marvel of Baroque architecture and garden design. Visit the palace's show rooms with a Grand Tour with Audio Guide. Stroll the enchanting park and fastidiously maintained gardens, and walk up to the Gloriette for a magnificent view of Vienna (and some delicious pastries). Schönbrunn is also home to the **world's oldest zoo**, originally founded as the Habsburgs' private zoo in 1752.

Enjoy lunch at a **typical Viennese bistro**, or Beisl—a cozy local restaurant serving traditional Viennese cuisine. A classic can be found there within Schönbrunn's walls: the **Gasthaus Tirologarten**.

AFTERNOON In the afternoon, visit the **Vienna State Opera**, one of the top opera addresses in the world, and home to the very best in first-class productions. This famous stage offers a different program every day, with over 50 operas and ballet works presented roughly 300 days per season. Guided tours are available on many days, offering an intimate window onto the world of opera, not to mention the stunning architecture around it. From April to June and September to October, some evening performances will also be broadcast live onto a large LED screen in Karajan Platz in front of the opera house. Here opera lovers casually mingle and enjoy the world-class performances for free.

EVENING A visit to Vienna would be incomplete without a concert, opera or musical performance. Vienna is the **world's capital of music**, after all, with thousands of music performances each year.

DAY 3

MORNING Start the day with a stroll through the **Naschmarkt**, Vienna's famous century-old open air market. Begin your exploration of the mile-long market at Karlsplatz and wander around the colorful stalls stacked with local and organic produce, spices and baked goods. Impress your friends back home with local artisanal vinegar from Gegenbauer at stall Nr. 111.

Head over to the **MuseumsQuartier Wien**, one of the ten largest museum complexes in the world. Located at the border of the old city in the former imperial stables, this lively zone houses dozens of art and cultural institutions, restaurants, cafés and shops – all in more than 640,000 square feet of postmodern ambiance, a combination of baroque buildings and modern architecture. Don't miss the **Leopold Museum**, home to one of the largest collections of modern Austrian art, featuring artists such as Egon Schiele, Gustav Klimt, Oskar Kokoschka and Richard Gerstl.

AFTERNOON Parks, Gardens and the **Vienna Coffeehouse**: Looking for a place to take a break in the center of Vienna? Visit one of the beautiful and serene **inner-city parks**. The Volksgarten (People's Park), is one such oasis, with impeccably designed flower beds, countless picnic spots and photo ops galore. Afterwards while away an hour at one of Vienna's famed coffeehouses. Among the most prominent nearby are the Cafés Landtmann, Hawelka, Central, Mozart and Museum.

EVENING The **Prater** and the Giant Ferris Wheel: For pure entertainment and excitement, be sure to hit the Vienna Prater. From nostalgic merry-go-rounds to hair-raising roller coasters, the Prater amusement park is a Viennese institution.

Start off with a ride on the **Riesenrad** (Giant Ferris Wheel), immortalized in the post-war Orson Welles classic, "The Third Man." Enjoy the view of the city from nearly 200 feet up. Once you've ridden the Riesenrad you can claim to have truly experienced Vienna.



VIENNA

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