

King of Waltz. Queen of Music 200 Years of Johann Strauss in Vienna

The world will be moving to the beat of the waltz in 2025 when the Waltz King and global superstar Johann Strauss II celebrates his 200th birthday alongside his Queen, Vienna – the world capital of music. The sounds of Strauss will ring out in the capital's ballrooms and concert halls, with numerous innovative projects dedicated to the musical genius, ranging from augmented reality shows to world premieres. Strauss was nothing less than a pop star of his time, every inch as famous back then as Taylor Swift is today. And he is still as relevant as ever: his melodies, which embody the joy and refinement of Viennese culture, continue to hold the whole world in thrall.

Neither geography nor the passing of the centuries proved to be barriers to success for Johann Strauss II. And to mark the 200th anniversary of his birth, Vienna is shining a light on Strauss, one of the city's brightest music stars of all.

Strauss and Vienna: King and Queen

The 2025 Strauss anniversary year will play out under "King of Waltz. Queen of Music". Strauss was already revered as the *Walzerkönig* or Waltz King during his lifetime. His Queen is Vienna, the world capital of music – and the only place where geniuses such as Mozart, Beethoven and Strauss were able to live up to their full creative potential. Today, cultural life in the city is thriving, with Viennese venues entertaining around 10,000 visitors every night. 2025 will see the King and Queen waltz together in perfect harmony: the superstar and the capital of music.

Johann Strauss is a genuine phenomenon: Die Fledermaus is the most famous operetta in the world, while his legendary Blue Danube Waltz is the capital's unofficial anthem. An essential element of the internationally celebrated and booming Viennese ball season, his waltzes never fail to fill the dance floors. They also feature prominently in the New Year's Concert by the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, which draws TV audiences of some 50 million.

Event Line-Up for 2025 – Every Shade of Strauss Imaginable

Throughout the anniversary year, Vienna will serve as one giant stage for a packed Strauss schedule that gives center stage to traditional renditions of Johann Strauss' music as well as a number of more contemporary experiments. Major Viennese orchestras will be involved, as well as artists and performers from all genres. Each week will bring fresh premieres. Ten different genres are set to feature, from concert music, drama and performance to digital and immersive art.

All of Vienna's key music institutions are taking part, including the Musikverein, Wiener Konzerthaus, MusikTheater an der Wien, Volksoper Wien and Vienna State Opera. Strauss will also feature in some surprising places – both indoors and outdoors – in all 23 of the city's districts in 2025, from the Central Cemetery to the Danube Island Festival. There are also specially themed days such as Fledermaus Day on April 5 (to mark the operetta's premiere) and Strauss's birthday on October 25.

Several exhibitions will be looking at Strauss from different angles. One major exhibition, Celebrating Johann Strauss, will run at the Theaternuseum from December 4, 2024 to June 23, 2025. Year-round attractions include the House of Strauss at Casino Zögernitz (location of the Strauss Center with its museum and concerts, home of the Vienna Institute for Strauss Research, and a place where Strauss once performed), the original Strauss apartment in Praterstrasse, the House of Music (where visitors can conduct the Danube Waltz with the Virtual Conductor) and Johann Strauss. New Dimensions (a new immersive experience).

A major Strauss hotspot is his golden statue in the Stadtpark, which is already Vienna's most photographed monument – even without the added draw of the anniversary. It embodies the Viennese attitude to life, all shaped by *Gemütlichkeit* or coziness and a distinctly laid-back outlook. All of this is also in evidence at Vienna's coffeehouses and in many a concert café, where Strauss's waltzes provide the perfect musical accompaniment.

Johann Strauss II: King of Waltz

Strauss combines everything that makes a star, even today: born in Vienna on October 25, 1825, Johann Strauss (Jr.), experienced a degree of popularity in his lifetime like no other. He had charisma, talent and a nose for business, and enjoyed international success with tours as far afield as the USA. Strauss was a true citizen of the world. At the 1872 World's Peace Jubilee and International Musical Festival in Boston, he conducted an orchestra of almost 1,000 musicians in front of an audience of 50,000. And in Europe, his tours took him to numerous places in Germany and Italy, and he would repeat his summer engagements in Pavlovsk outside St. Petersburg eleven times. Johann Strauss gave 63 Promenade Concerts at the Covent Garden Theatre in London. He was also held in the highest regard in France, where his performances and the fashionable figure he cut at the 1867 World's Fair soon had the whole of Paris raving about him. Strauss's first operetta *La Reine Indigo* would later be received to much critical acclaim, he was put in charge of the masked balls at the Paris Opera and was ultimately made a Knight of the French Legion of Honor in 1877.

He shot to incredible fame, also as a result of his competition with his father Johann Strauss I. And his three marriages ensured that his name was on everyone's lips, too. Everyone loved the Waltz King – a title which was bestowed upon him during his lifetime. His music permeated every echelon of society, which is why his influence was so enormous. The popularity of Strauss's music was not just confined to elite circles. His legacy: Johann Strauss perfected a popular music culture based on dance music and set up a sound family business in which everyone had a role to play – with his mother, wife, his brothers Eduard and Josef all involved. Otherwise, he would never have been able to keep pace with the scale of production work and performances that lay before him. Johann Strauss was synonymous with quality as well as quantity (500 dance pieces, 15 operettas), and his works played a key role in the social life of his day. His concerts and balls were popular, well-attended events. And his compositions, as perfect as they are timeless, went straight to the heart – and continue to do so among audiences today.

Everything you need to know about the King of Waltz. Queen of Music theme year:
[strauss.vienna.info](https://www.strauss.vienna.info) (from September 2024)

Strauss events covering a broad range of genres can also be found on the theme year website and in the Vienna Tourist Board's event database at [events.vienna.info](https://www.events.vienna.info).

Facts and Figures

Vienna: Queen of Music

- 3 opera houses:
 - Vienna State Opera: 300 performance days per year and the largest repertoire worldwide
 - Vienna Volksoper – Europe's leading operetta venue
 - MusikTheater an der Wien
- A uniquely Viennese quirk: people prefer consuming culture to soccer – night in night out, the capital's stages are able to accommodate 10,000 spectators.
- An impressive 2,000 hours of dancefloor magic at 450 balls each year (source: www.wko.at/wien/news/ballsaison-2023--die-liebe-zu-den-baellen-bleibt-auf-hohem-ni)
- 2023/24 ball season: 560,000 visitors (including 30,000 ball tourists); revenue EUR 185 million (source: www.wko.at/wien/news/ballsaison-sprengt-alle-rekorde)
- The only surviving Viennese apartment used by Mozart, at the Mozarthaus Vienna
- No other city has been home to so many composers: Mozart, Mahler, Haydn, Beethoven, Strauss and Schubert...
- New Year's Concert by the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, 50 million TV viewers in 91 countries (source: February 2024 EBU Report)
- The Vienna Boys Choir: world's oldest boy band (est. 1498), inscribed in the Unesco Inventory of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Austria in 2017. Arranged in four choirs, its 100 members perform in front of almost half a million people at around 300 concerts each year (source: wsk.at/ueber_uns/biografie)
- The 2023 QS University Ranking named the University of Music and Performing Arts, Vienna (mdw) the world's fourth-best music university (source: www.topuniversities.com/university-subject-rankings/performing-arts).
- Most successful German-language musical Elisabeth, seen by 11 million people in 12 countries (source: Vereinigte Bühnen Wien, www.musicalvienna.at/de/spielplan-und-tickets/spielplan/production/919/ELISABETH-Konzertante-Auffuehrung)
- Wienerlied phenomenon: Vienna is the only city with its own music genre
- Danube Island Festival: Europe's largest free open-air festival (source: www.ots.at/presseaussendung/OTS_20220525_OTS0130/alles-zum-dif22-4-areas-14-inseln-

11-buehnen-600-stunden-acts)

- Film Festival on Rathausplatz: Europe's largest culture and culinary festival with 700,000 visitors each year (source: www.filmfestival-rathausplatz.at)
- ImPulsTanz: Europe's largest contemporary dance festival (source: www.impulstanz.com)
- 640 bars, dance venues and discos (source: annual statistics for 2022 published by the Vienna Economic Chamber)
- Vienna is also seen as an outstanding city of music from the outside: cited by 24% of respondents, "attending music events" is the 10th most popular activity for visitors to Vienna. (source: 2022/2023 T-MonA visitor survey)