

## Chapter 8

# DAY TRIPS FROM VIENNA

8

Updated by  
Joseph Reaney



 Sights  
★★★★★

 Restaurants  
★★★★☆

 Hotels  
★★★★☆

 Shopping  
★★★★☆

 Nightlife  
★★★★☆

## WELCOME TO DAY TRIPS FROM VIENNA

### TOP REASONS TO GO

#### ★ **Abbey with a view:**

The magnificent Benedictine Baroque splendor of Melk Abbey leaves you breathless.

#### ★ **Step into Slovakia:**

Easily reached by boat, bus or train, Bratislava offers a towering Renaissance castle, a historic Old Town, and a buzzy café and pub culture.

#### ★ **Lakeside cycling:**

Pedal across the plains surrounding Neusiedl, one of Central Europe's largest lakes, stopping to explore scenic hamlets.

#### ★ **Bold architecture:**

Internationally renowned for its daring architecture, Linz—capital of Upper Austria—has taken a leading role in contemporary art, style, and design.

#### ★ **Verdant vistas:**

Travel in tranquility by boat or bike through the Wachau Valley. Perhaps the Danube's most picturesque stretch lies between the towns of Krems and Melk.

#### ★ **Hop into Hungary:**

Head just across the border to the fairytale Hungarian city of Sopron, famed for its cobbled medieval Inner Town.

**1 Carnuntum and Hainburg an der Donau.** Discover the remains of Carnuntum and follow in the footsteps of composer Joseph Haydn.

**2 Marchegg.** This tiny Weinviertel town close to the border with Slovakia is a great base for exploring Schlosshof.

**3 Bratislava.** Famed for its medieval Old Town overlooked by a grand Renaissance castle, Slovakia's capital is just a short trip downriver (by catamaran) from Vienna.

**4 Neusiedl am See.** Situated at the northern tip of the vast Neusiedl Lake, this resort town is a great base for exploring the area by bike, boat, or car.

**5 Eisenstadt.** It may be the largest settlement in the Neusiedl region, but Eisenstadt remains a small and eminently strollable city, overlooked by the pretty Schloss Esterházy.

**6 Rust.** Come for the charming historic center, the chimney-dwelling birdlife, and the delicious *beerenauslese* dessert wine.

**7 Sopron.** Located just across the border, Sopron offers a beautiful and proudly Hungarian city that mixes Celtic, Roman, German, Slavic, and Magyar influences.

**8 Baden.** Taking a trip to the spa town of Baden bei Wien means following the Vienna Woods' southern trail past ancient monasteries, fertile plains, and bucolic vineyards.

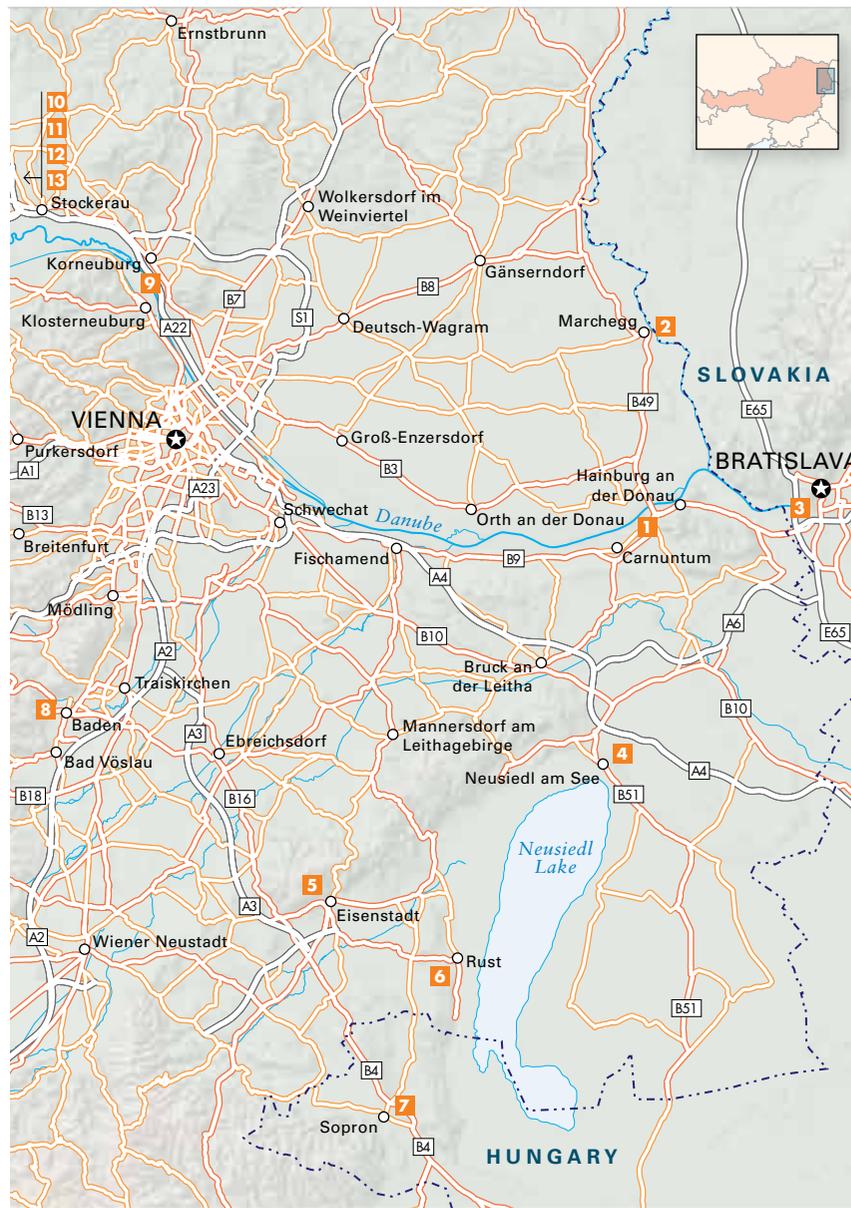
**9 Klosterneuburg and Korneuburg.** These two villages, which sit across the Danube from one another, are home to an impressive Augustinian abbey and a particularly photogenic castle.

**10 Krems.** Marking the start of the Wachau section of the Danube, Krems is itself a pretty riverside city with a lovely cobbled Old Town.

**11 Dürnstein.** Amid stiff competition, Dürnstein is perhaps the prettiest town on the Danube, with the ruins of its medieval hilltop castle jutting out over verdant vineyards.

**12 Melk.** The gigantic Benedictine abbey in Melk is one of Austria's most photographed buildings. Take a snap from the riverside then climb the cobbled streets for a peek inside.

**13 Linz.** Austria's third-largest city basks in amazing cutting-edge design. You can experience exciting insights into the latest technology at one of its incredible museums.



The area along the Danube and around Vienna is drenched in history. Composers like Johann Strauss were inspired by the woodlands and river, and Joseph Haydn and Anton Bruckner both lived in the region and left their traces. A trip here unfolds like a treasured picture book, with Roman ruins, medieval castles, and Baroque monasteries perching precariously above the river. This is where the Nibelungs—later immortalized by Wagner—caroused operatically, and where Richard the Lionheart was locked in a dungeon and held for (a substantial) ransom for nearly two years.

Passenger boats can take you along the Danube on pleasure cruises that stop at quaint villages. Aside from the Danube, water sports are on offer in the Neusiedl Lake area, where the Viennese go to escape the city. Biking both in the lake area and along the Danube is becoming increasingly popular, and the nearby town of Baden, a favorite haunt of Beethoven, offers superb postpedaling spa relaxation.

In the towns and hamlets throughout the region, time seems to be on pause. Colorful 17th- and 18th-century buildings

now serve as hotels and inns, with old-fashioned charm and well-made traditional food that invites you to sit outdoors and savor the countryside. No one is in a hurry here. But not everything is old-fashioned. A little exploring, especially in the vineyards around Neusiedl Lake, will turn up eateries pushing the envelope with modern cuisine, matched with top-notch local wines. Time suddenly leaps forward in Linz, which has more and more modern buildings punctuating the skyline along with its churches and castles, helping the city to become a unique melange of past and future.

## MAJOR REGIONS

**Weinviertel and Bratislava.** Austria's Weinviertel (Wine District) has been largely neglected by the "experts," and its deliciously fresh wines reward those who enjoy partaking of the grape without the all-too-frequent fuss and nonsense that goes with it. Situated to the north and east of Vienna, this is a lovely region to tour by car for a day. You could even put aside two or three days to truly savor the region's wines (which are generally on the medium-dry or dry side, like the popular Blaufränkisch reds) and attractions like the Roman town of Carnuntum and the Baroque castle near Marchegg. Further east lies Bratislava, the Slovakian capital renowned for its medieval Old Town and exciting nightlife.

**Neusiedl Lake, Sopron, and Baden.** To the southeast of Vienna, Neusiedl Lake occupies a strange world. One of the largest lakes in Europe, it is a bizarre body of warm, brackish water, fed by underground springs and encircled by a thick belt of tall reeds. The habitat of more than 250 species of birds, it is also a magnet for anglers, boaters, and windsurfers. Relax on the beach in Neusiedl am See, or head down the western shore to Eisenstadt for some historical sightseeing. Nearby Rust prides itself on its wine-making tradition. Further south, just across the Austria-Hungary border, Sopron offers daytrippers an entirely different culture, language, and perspective. And northwest of here (southwest of Vienna) lies the famous spa city of Baden, separated from the capital only by the Vienna Woods.

**West Along the Danube.** The Romans used to say, "Whoever controls the Danube controls all of Europe." That may no longer be true, but the scenery is still something to behold. There are riverside highlights to be found near Vienna, particularly the hilltop fortifications in Klosterneuburg and Korneuburg, but the loveliest stretch of the Danube's Austrian

course runs through the narrow defiles of the Wachau; from the art gallery-laden town of Krems to the spectacular abbey-topped Melk. Further west still lies culture-crammed Linz, Austria's third-largest city. Visiting today, it's hard to believe that for years after the Second World War, the River Enns near Linz marked the border between the western (U.S., British, and French) and eastern (Russian) occupation zones.

## Planning

### When To Go

Most of the regions around Vienna and along the Danube are best seen in the temperate months between mid-March and mid-November; not much is offered for winter sports and a number of hotels as well as sights close in the winter. The glorious riverside landscape takes on a fairy-tale quality when apricot and apple trees burst into blossom late April to mid-June. Others might prefer the early to mid-autumn days, when the vineyards on the terraced hills turn reddish-blue and a bracing chill settles on the Danube. From mid-September until the beginning of October, the Bruckner Festival in Linz joins forces with Ars Electronica, combining the classic with the contemporary. No matter the season, crowds jam the celebrated abbey at Melk; you're best off going first thing in the morning before the tour buses arrive, or at midday, when the throngs have receded.

### Getting Here

To get to the area between Linz and Weinviertel you can fly into the airport in Vienna or take a EuroCity train to Vienna or Linz. Once here, driving is the most convenient and scenic way to explore the region, especially if you're visiting the smaller towns and villages. If you don't

want to drive, opt for the train—rather than a bus—for the main routes and longer distances. Local trains that stop at every station take a long time to get anywhere, but if you have time to spare, train rides can be fun and there are great views of the countryside from the broad windows.

### AIR

The northern part of eastern Austria is served by Flughafen Wien (Vienna International Airport) at Schwechat, 19 kilometers (12 miles) southeast of the city center.

Linz Airport (also known as Blue Danube Airport Linz) is a good alternative if you want to start your journey in calmer surroundings. Located just 20 minutes from the city center by car or train, the airport is serviced regularly by Lufthansa, Austrian Airlines, and several low-cost airlines.

### BOAT

You can take a day trip by boat from Vienna or Krems and explore one of the stops, such as Dürnstein or Melk. Boats run from mid-April to late October. One of the most popular boat companies to ply the Danube is Brandner Schifffahrt. Along this stretch of the river, bridges are few and far between, so old-fashioned tow ferries (attached to cables stretched across the river) allow a speedy crossing for people, cars, and bikes for a small fee.

Consider traveling from Vienna to Bratislava by Twin City Liner catamaran. It's fun, comfortable, and fast too, with the whole journey taking just 75 minutes. Sit on the upper deck for the best views.

### BOAT INFORMATION Brandner Schifffahrt.

✉ [Welterbeplatz 1, Krems](mailto:Welterbeplatz 1, Krems)  
☎ 07433/259021 🌐 [www.brandner.at](http://www.brandner.at)

**Twin City Liner.** ✉ [Schiffstation Wien City, Franz-Josefs-Kai 2, Vienna](mailto:Schiffstation Wien City, Franz-Josefs-Kai 2, Vienna) ☎ 01/904-88-80 🌐 [www.twincityliner.com/en](http://www.twincityliner.com/en)

### BUS

While most of the region is sufficiently covered by trains, some destinations are quicker and easier to reach by bus. For example, to get to Rust on Neusiedl Lake, take the regular Bus 200 from Vienna Central Station. Alternatively, you can pick up Bus 285 or 286 from Neusiedl am See or Eisenstadt.

Most services are run by the Austrian railroad system and the Austrian postal service, but some connections to smaller towns are operated by Blaguss Reisen. Between all three, you can get almost anywhere in the region by bus, assuming you have the time.

### BUS INFORMATION Blaguss Reisen.

☎ 050/6550 🌐 [www.blaguss.at](http://www.blaguss.at)

### CAR

The Weinviertel to the north is accessed by major highways but not by autobahns, while taking Route 9 east will get you to Carnuntum and Hainburg an der Donau. Turn north here onto Route 49 for Marchegg, or continue east to Bratislava.

To get to Neusiedl am See, take the scenic Route 10, or for Eisenstadt, take the A3 south. From the latter, turn east onto Route 52 for Rust, or continue south on Routes 16 and 84 for Sopron in Hungary.

Baden can be reached by taking the E59 autobahn south in the direction of Graz and turning west onto Route 210 for the last few kilometers.

For the Danube, the main routes along the north bank are the A22, S5, and A3, while the south bank is a choice between the A1 and a collection of lesser roads. Car rental is easiest in Vienna or Linz.

### TRAIN

The train system is excellent, and reliable trains run frequently from Vienna's Schnellbahn stations to most of the destinations around Vienna.

Heading east, there are hourly trains running from Wien-Mitte (Landstrasser Bahnhof) to Petronell-Carnuntum (50 minutes), with the same trains continuing on to Hainburg (one hour). A fast train runs from Vienna Central Station to Bratislava (one hour), via Marchegg.

Trains depart from Vienna Central Station frequently for the 40-minute ride to Neusiedl am See. The same train continues on to Eisenstadt, taking another 30 minutes. The fast train from Vienna Central Station to Sopron takes one hour 15 minutes. Trains also leave the same station regularly for Baden (30 minutes).

Regional rail tracks run parallel to the north and south banks of the Danube, and while trains reach all the larger towns and cities in the region, they miss the smaller towns of the Wachau Valley along the Danube's south bank. You can combine rail and boat transportation along this route, taking the train upstream and crisscrossing your way back on the river.

### TRAIN INFORMATION ÖBB.

☎ 05/1717  
🌐 [www.oebb.at](http://www.oebb.at)

## Hotels

Although there are some luxury hotels in Linz and a few castle-hotels along the Danube, in general accommodations in the countryside are no frills. That said, the region has become much more heavily traveled than it was a generation ago, and many lodgings have been upgraded and restyled to attract the growing number of guests. Establishments are generally family-run, and there is usually somebody on staff who speaks English. You'll probably have to carry your own bags, and sometimes climb stairs in older buildings. Booking ahead is a good idea, as most places have relatively few rooms, particularly rooms with private baths. The standard country pillows and bed coverings are down-filled, so if you're

allergic to feathers, ask for other blankets. Accommodations in private homes are cheaper still, and these bargains are usually identified by signs reading "zimmer frei" (room available) or "früstückspension" (bed-and-breakfast).

Some hotels offer half-board, with dinner in addition to buffet breakfast. The half-board rate is usually an extra €15–€30 per person. Occasionally, quoted room rates for hotels already include half-board accommodations, though a discounted rate is generally offered if you prefer not to take the evening meal; inquire when booking. Rooms rates include taxes and service, and usually breakfast—although this is likely little more than bread or rolls with slices of ham and cheese. In summer, nights are generally cool, but days can get uncomfortably hot. Most older hotels don't have air-conditioning, and rooms can get stuffy; whenever possible, see the rooms before checking in.

Accommodations in the bigger cities of Bratislava and Sopron are rather more varied, with options ranging from cheap and cheerful hostels to luxe, five-star hotels. *Hotel reviews have been shortened. For full information, visit [Fodors.com](http://Fodors.com).*

## Restaurants

With only a few exceptions, food in this region is on the simple side. The basics are available in abundance: roast meats, customary schnitzel variations, game (in season), fresh vegetables, and standard desserts such as *Palatschinken* (crepes filled with jam or nuts, topped with chocolate sauce) and *Apfelstrudel*. However, imaginative cooking is beginning to spread, and most places have fresh fish and other lighter fare. You'll find at least one vegetarian course on most menus.

Around Neusiedl Lake, the local Pannonian cooking, strongly influenced by neighboring Hungary, showcases such spicy dishes as *gulyas* (goulash) flavored with

paprika. You'll also find fresh fish, goose, game, and an abundance of fresh local vegetables. Along the Danube, restaurants make the most of the river views. Simple *Gasthäuser* are everywhere, but better dining is more often found in country inns. Restaurants, whether sophisticated and stylish or plain and homey, are often rated as much by their wine as by their cuisine. As bigger cities, food and drink options across the borders in Bratislava and Sopron are significantly more varied.

Dining in the Austrian countryside is a casual affair. Meal times are usually from noon to 2 pm for lunch and from 6 to 10 for dinner. It's rare to find a restaurant that serves all afternoon, so plan ahead. It's a good idea to reserve a table, especially for Sunday lunch, which is a popular time for families to get together. As in Vienna, tipping is usually rounded to the nearest euro. When in doubt, tip 5%. *Restaurants reviews have been shortened. For full information, visit Fodors.com.*

### What it Costs in Euros

	\$	\$\$	\$\$\$	\$\$\$\$
<b>RESTAURANTS</b>				
under €12	€12–€17	€18–€22	over €22	
<b>HOTELS</b>				
under €100	€100–€135	€136–€175	over €175	

## Tours

One-day tours to Bratislava usually include a boat ride one direction. For the Vienna Woods and Baden, short half-day tours give only a quick taste of the region; if you have more time, investigate further.

Tours from Vienna also take you to Melk and back by bus and boat. These tours usually run about eight hours, with a stop

at Dürnstein. Bus tours operate year-round except as noted, but the boat runs only mid-April to late October. For details, check with your hotel or with Vienna Sightseeing Tours.

### Vienna Sightseeing

**GUIDED TOURS** | In addition to its city tours, this company offers a number of whole and half-day trips to nearby attractions. You can visit Bratislava, traveling there by bus and returning by catamaran; head to the Danube Valley, including a guided tour of Melk Abbey; or explore the pretty Vienna Woods, with a walking tour in Baden. Tours run year-round, though some transport options are seasonal. ☒ *Opening 3-5/Top 17-24, Vienna* ☎ 01/712-46-83 🌐 [www.viennasightseeing.at](http://www.viennasightseeing.at) 📄 €44.

## Visitor Information

For information on Lower Austria, call the Niederösterreich Tourismus in Vienna. Local tourist offices in the Vienna Woods, including those in Baden, are generally open weekdays. The Weinviertel region also has several tourist centers, while there are regional tourist information offices for Neusiedl Lake in Eisenstadt (Burgenland Tourismus) and Neusiedl am See (Neusiedler See Tourismus). There are helpful local *Fremdenverkehrsämter* (tourist offices), listed in the individual towns.

If you plan on seeing many museums, galleries, and castles in Lower Austria—which includes Vienna, Baden, Melk, Krems, and the Weinviertel—consider getting the Niederösterreich-Card (Lower Austria Card), which allows free entry to more than 300 sites and offers a host of discounts on concerts, rail travel, and accommodations. It costs €63 for the whole year (spring to spring), and is available at tourist information offices, Raiffeisen banks, tobacco shops, and online at 🌐 [www.niederoesterreich-card.at](http://www.niederoesterreich-card.at).

**CONTACTS Burgenland Tourismus.** ☒ *Johann Permayr-Strasse 13, Eisenstadt* ☎ 02682/633840 🌐 [www.burgenland.info](http://www.burgenland.info). **Neusiedler See Tourismus.** ☒ *Obere Hauptstrasse 24, Neusiedl am See* ☎ 02167/8600 🌐 [www.neusiedlersee.com](http://www.neusiedlersee.com). **Niederösterreich Tourismus.** ☎ 02742/9000–9000 🌐 [www.niederoesterreich.at](http://www.niederoesterreich.at). **Upper Austria.** ☒ *Freistaedter Strasse 119, Linz* ☎ 0732/221022 🌐 [www.upperaustria.com](http://www.upperaustria.com).

## Carnuntum and Hainburg an der Donau

42 km (26 miles) southeast of Vienna.

Until a few years ago, the village of Carnuntum was a yawning backwater on the Austrian plain and, along with its slightly larger neighbor, Hainburg, was the last stop before the Iron Curtain. But the fall of the wall turned the main road into a major thoroughway connecting East to West. The development of the Carnuntum archaeological complex and the rise of the Donau-Auen National Park (the last remaining intact wetlands in Central Europe) turned this once-forgotten region into a significant destination for travelers.

### GETTING HERE AND AROUND

From Vienna, take the A4 east directly to Petronell-Carnuntum. By train, take the S7, a local service that departs from Wien-Mitte/Landstrasse or Wien-Nord/Praterstern; from here, buses run to Hainburg via Bad Deutsch-Altenburg. The tiny village of Rohrau, Joseph Haydn's birthplace, is five kilometers (three miles) south of Petronell on Route 211. There is a bus service, but it takes a very long and circuitous route; better to take a taxi or even walk it.



### ★ Carnuntum

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE | FAMILY** | The remains of the important Roman legionary fortress and civil town of Carnuntum, which once numbered 55,000 inhabitants, extend about five kilometers (three miles) along the Danube from the tiny village of Petronell to the next town of Bad Deutsch-Altenburg. The recent discovery here of an ancient school of gladiators delighted archaeologists and significantly raised Carnuntum's stature, and rightfully so. Visitors can tour the grounds, which include two amphitheaters (the first one seating 8,000) and the foundations of former residences, reconstructed baths, and trading centers—some with mosaic floors. The ruins are quite spread out, with the impressive remains of a Roman arch, the **Heidentor** (Pagans' Gate), a 15-minute pleasant walk from the main excavations in Petronell. You can experience what Roman life was like circa AD 380 in the elegantly furnished Villa Urbana. Many of the excavated finds are housed at the Museum Carnuntinum at Bad Deutsch-Altenburg. The star of the collection is a carving of Mithras killing a bull. Guided tours in English are available in July and August at noon; otherwise they are in German only. ☒ *Hauptstrasse 1A, Petronell* ☎ 02163/33770 🌐 [www.carnuntum.at](http://www.carnuntum.at) 📄 €12 🕒 Closed mid-Nov.–mid-Mar.

**Haydn's Birthplace** (*Haydn-Geburtshaus Rohrau*)

**HOUSE** | Just a five-minute drive south of Petronell, the tiny village of Rohrau was the birthplace of Joseph Haydn—and the quaint, reed-thatched cottage where the composer, son of the local blacksmith, was born in 1732 is now a small museum. You'll see a pianoforte he is supposed to have played, as well as letters and other memorabilia. The furnishings are homey, if a bit spartan. After Haydn had gained worldwide renown, he is said to have returned to his native Rohrau



Situated near the border between Vienna and the Bratislava, the ancient Roman city of Carnuntum was once even larger than Vienna.

and knelt to kiss the steps of his humble home. Concerts are occasionally held on the grounds. ☒ *Obere Hauptstrasse 25, Rohrau* ☎ 02164/2268 🌐 [www.haydngeburtshaus.at](http://www.haydngeburtshaus.at) 🎫 €5 🕒 Closed Mon. and Nov.–mid-Feb.

### Schloss Rohrau

**CASTLE/PALACE** | Also in Rohrau, this palace is where Haydn's mother worked as a cook for Count Harrach. It also has one of the best private art collections in Austria, with an emphasis on 17th- and 18th-century Spanish and Italian painting; weekend tours are available Easter through October. The upper level has been renovated and turned into private apartments; there is now also a good restaurant on the grounds serving Austrian fare. Be mindful of the peacocks that wander the grounds, and sometimes beyond. ☒ *Schloss Rohrau 1, Rohrau* ☎ 02164/225316 🌐 [www.schloss-rohrau.at](http://www.schloss-rohrau.at) 🎫 €12 🕒 Closed Nov.–Easter.

### Schlossberg Castle Ruins (*Burgruine Heimenburg*)

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE** | Situated in the heart of Hainburg, these castle ruins (easily approached on foot) are equally appealing for the castle's long and illustrious history and the lovely views from the top. During the 11th century, Hainburg was a fortified town on the far eastern front of the Holy Roman Empire, and in 1252, Przemysl Ottaker, the king of Bohemia, married Duchess Margarethe of Austria here, a union designed to considerably expand his kingdom. The castle had been built shortly before that with part of the ransom received from the capture of King Richard the Lionheart in Dürnstein. The Schloss was attacked many times, most severely by the 1683 Turkish invasion, which also took the lives of 8,000 residents, nearly the entire community. Each summer the town hosts "Burgspiele Hainburg," where open-air plays (often Shakespeare) are performed in German on the castle grounds. ☒ *Schlossbergstrasse, Hainburg an der Donau* ☎ 02165/67365 🎫 Free.

### Wienertertor

**BUILDING** | The imposing "Vienna Gate" still represents the entrance to the medieval town of Hainburg on the Danube, and buses, tractors, and a steady stream of cars still squeeze through its passage daily. The town is encircled by remarkably well-preserved 13th-century walls with 12 gates and towers, including the Wienertertor, which is the largest extant medieval gate in Europe. In 1683, the Turks devastated the town, leaving only a handful of survivors, including composer Josef Haydn's grandfather (who, as a small boy, scrambled up a chimney and hid from the marauders). Climb up inside the Wienertertor, now a museum, and see an impressive supply of weaponry left behind by the invaders—clearly in a hurry to get to Vienna—as well as a stockpile from other ancient wars. A view out the narrow window offers a charming look down at the winding main street and the church steeple. While you can always stop by and view the exterior of the tower, inside access is only available Sunday and holidays. ☒ *Hainburgerstrasse 1, Hainburg an der Donau* ☎ 06642/261630 🌐 [www.wienertertor.at](http://www.wienertertor.at) 🎫 €4 🕒 Closed Mon.–Sat. and Nov.–Apr.

### Hotels

#### Hotel Altes Kloster

\$\$ | **HOTEL** | Adjacent to the historic Kulturfabrik (once the Imperial Royal Tobacco Factory) and just around the corner from where little Joseph Haydn used to have his music lessons, this 17th-century monastery retains all its historic serenity in the sleepy, romantic town of Hainburg. **Pros:** live piano music in the restaurant-café; quiet and peaceful setting; five-minute walk to town center. **Cons:** carpeting in rooms may aggravate allergies; not all staff speak English; no air-conditioning. 📍 *Rooms from: €105* ☒ *Fabriksplatz 1a, Hainburg an der Donau* ☎ 02165/64020 🌐 [www.altes-kloster.com](http://www.altes-kloster.com) 🛏 52 rooms 🍳 Free breakfast.

## Marchegg

52 km (32 miles) northeast of Vienna.

This tiny corner of the lower Weinviertel is known as the Marchfeld, for the fields stretching east to the March River that form the border with Slovakia. Known as the granary of Austria, the region is home to an elegant Baroque castle that, while totally renovated, has lost none of its gracious charm over the centuries.

### GETTING HERE AND AROUND

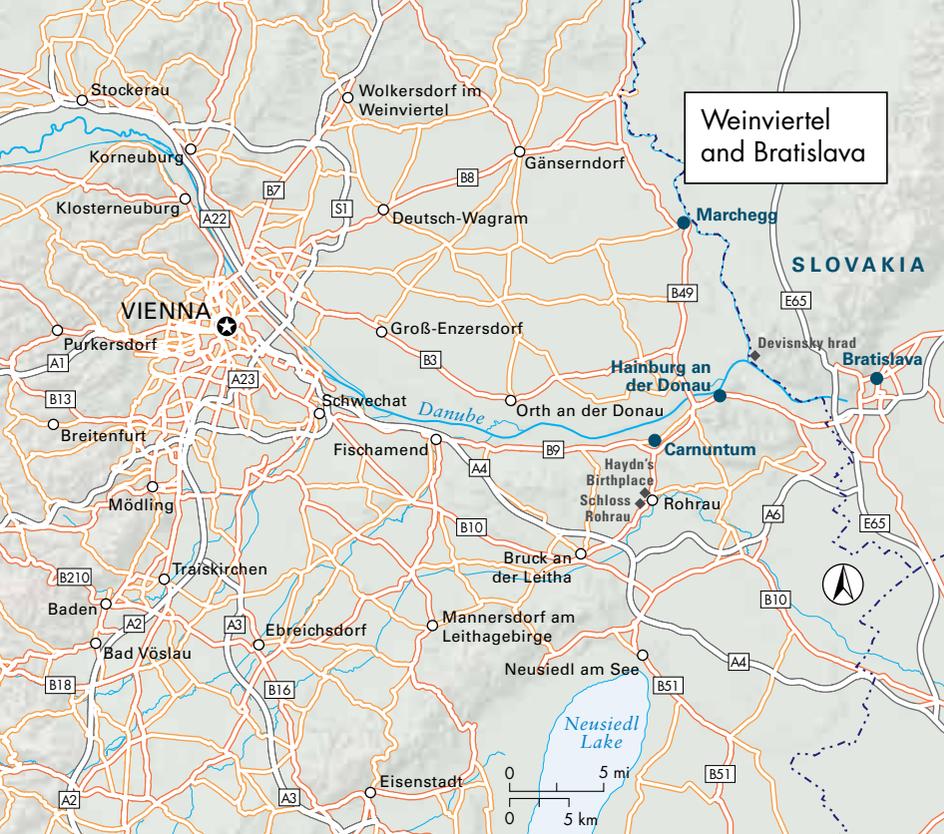
From Vienna, take the A4 highway east to Bad Deutsch-Altenburg, then turn onto the B49, which goes directly north to Marchegg. Trains go from Vienna Central Station to Marchegg several times daily. To get from here to Schlosshof, jump on the free shuttle bus starting at Marchegg train station; it runs mid-March through mid-November and there are timetables on the Schlosshof website.

### Sights

#### ★ Schlosshof

**CASTLE/PALACE** | **FAMILY** | A true Baroque gem, this castle is shining even more brilliantly since the completion of extensive restorations. The product of that master designer and architect Johann Lukas von Hildebrandt, who in 1732 reconstructed the square castle into an elegant U-shape building, the Schloss opens up on the eastern side to a marvelous Baroque formal garden that gives way toward the river. The famed landscape painter Bernardo Bellotto, noted for his Canaletto-like vistas of scenic landmarks, captured the view before the reconstruction. His three paintings were used as a guide for restoring the gardens to their Baroque appearance.

The castle was once owned by Empress Maria Theresa, mother of Marie Antoinette. You can visit the suite the empress used during her royal visits, faithfully re-created down to the tiniest details, as well as the two-story chapel in which she prayed.



In 2016, the Schlosshof added some highly popular adventure paths to the interactive visitor experience. Children can play the roles of stable boys and maidens, performing various chores and encountering blacksmiths, falconers, or bakers along the path. You might stumble upon a large estate farm that is home to horses, goats, donkeys, and several other animals. The complex also includes a restaurant and pâtisserie, both with indoor and outdoor seating. Guided tours and audio tours of the castle and garden are available in English, but it's also possible to wander around the buildings and grounds on your own. The castle is about eight kilometers (five miles) south of Marchegg. Be sure to enjoy the panoramic view (you can even see across the border into Slovakia and its capital Bratislava from here). If you come in winter, you can enjoy the charming Adventmarkt set up on the sprawling

grounds. ☒ *Schlosshof 1, Schlosshof*  
☎ 02285/20000 🌐 [www.schlosshof.at](http://www.schlosshof.at)  
🎫 €18.

## Bratislava, Slovakia

66 km (42 miles) east of Vienna.

Slovakia may be one of the world's youngest nations, but the country—and its capital Bratislava—has a long and illustrious history. Settled since the Neolithic era, Bratislava and the area around has spent much of this time as a component of a larger state, from the Roman Empire to the Kingdom of Hungary, the Hapsburg Monarchy to Czechoslovakia. In 1993, Slovakia became an independent state, and since then Bratislava has blossomed into a thriving, modern European capital—while still retaining its charming historic center.

### Weinviertel and Bratislava

The city's most visible attraction is its enormous white Renaissance castle, perched on a rocky hill overlooking the Danube. But head down to ground level and you'll find there are plenty of other charms to this city, from the extensive Old Town that combines medieval and Gothic architecture to the thriving restaurant and nightlife culture that seriously rivals Vienna. Most of the top attractions are free (or very cheap) to experience, but if you want to dig a little deeper, it's worth picking up a **Bratislava Card**. This will give you entry into 16 museums and galleries in the city and around, including the Museum of Viticulture and Devin Castle, as well as a one-hour guided tour of the Old Town and free public transportation. The card is valid for 24, 48, and 72 hours, at €20, €25, and €28 respectively. Pick it up at the tourist information or on the Visit Bratislava website.

### GETTING HERE AND AROUND

Bratislava has a small international airport served by budget airlines including Ryanair and Wizzair; a 40-minute bus brings you in the city center. For long-haul destinations and national carriers, fly to and from Vienna.

To reach Bratislava from the Austrian capital, you can come by car (about one hour east on Route 9) or with a fast train (via Marchegg, also one hour). Alternatively, take to the water with the Twin City catamaran (75 minutes).

Once you're in town, ditch the car: the Old Town is almost completely pedestrianized, and small enough to walk around, while regular buses and trams will take you to destinations further afield.

**AIRPORT INFORMATION Bratislava Airport.** (*Letisko M. R. Štefánika*) ☒ *Ivanská cesta, Bratislava* ☎ 02/330-333-53 🌐 [www.bts.aero](http://www.bts.aero).

### RESTAURANTS AND HOTELS

Bratislava has a small but excellent selection of quality boutique hotels, as well as several fine restaurants and casual

## Weinstrasse Cycling



A great way to see Carnuntum and the towns along the Danube is by bicycle. Bike routes are well marked, extensive, and in excellent condition. Many shops in Vienna rent bikes, and some hotels have bikes available to their guests. For the most part, you can take a bike free of charge on the local and regional trains, which makes it easy to explore a larger area. And you'll be in good company: weekend cycle tours along the Danube are popular with the Viennese and the neighboring Slovaks.

dining options. Despite using the same currency, you will usually get more bang for your euro in Bratislava than in Vienna.

### What it Costs in Euros

	\$	\$\$	\$\$\$	\$\$\$\$
<b>RESTAURANTS</b>				
	under €10	€11–€15	€16–€20	over €20
<b>HOTELS</b>				
	under €80	€81–€105	€106–€135	over €135

### VISITOR INFORMATION

**CONTACTS Visit Bratislava.** ☒ *Klobučnícka 2, Bratislava* ☎ 02/544-194-10 🌐 [www.visitbratislava.com](http://www.visitbratislava.com).

### Sights

★ **Bratislavský hrad (Bratislava Castle) CASTLE/PALACE** | With roots dating back more than a millennium—it was first mentioned in 907 for its role in a battle between Bavarians and Hungarians—Bratislava Castle was significantly rebuilt in the Renaissance style in the mid-16th

century. It's this enormous, rectangular form with four stocky towers that you can see today (though it incorporates architectural features from throughout its history, and the dazzling white paint job is distinctly 20th century). Walk up the (steep) castle hill and pass through one of the four entrance gates (probably **Viedenská brána** or **Leopoldova brána**) for incredible views of the town and the Danube below. The grounds are free to enter, so you can soak up the vistas as long as you like; make sure you visit the beautiful **Baroková záhrada** (Baroque Garden) while you're at it. You only need to pay if you want to head inside, either for the **SNM-Historical Museum**, which is a little sparse but does include access to the **Crown Tower** via a narrow passageway, or any of the regularly-changing temporary exhibits. ☒ *Zámocká 2, Bratislava* ☎ 02/204-831-10 🌐 [www.bratislava-hrad.sk](http://www.bratislava-hrad.sk).

#### **Devínsky hrad** (*Devín Castle*)

**CASTLE/PALACE** | Located on the confluence of the Morava and Danube rivers that form the border between Slovakia and Austria, just 10½ kilometers (6½ miles) west of Bratislava, lies this extraordinary ruined castle. Built on the top of a high crag, the enormous Devín Castle is one of the oldest in the region, first mentioned in written sources in 864. You can learn about the history of castle and the village (all the way back to Neolithic times) in a fascinating exhibition within the castle walls. Enjoy the sweeping views from the top of the ruined Upper Castle, and take a snap of the famous **Maiden's Tower**, a tiny watchtower precariously balanced on a lone rock that has spawned countless legends of imprisoned women leaping to their deaths. In summer, there are kid-friendly medieval-themed events held in and around the castle. To reach Devín, take Bus 29 from Bratislava (30 minutes) or drive west out of the city on Devínska cesta. ☒ *Muránská 1050/10, Bratislava* ☎ 02/657-301-05 🌐 [www.muzeum.bratislava.sk](http://www.muzeum.bratislava.sk) ☎ €5 🗨️ *Closed Mon.*

#### **Grasalkovičov palác** (*Grassalkovich Palace*)

**GOVERNMENT BUILDING** | This grand Rococo-style summer residence was built in 1780 for Count Anton Grassalkovich, advisor to Empress Maria Theresa (who was crowned in Bratislava in 1761). Today, it's the official residence of the President of the Slovak Republic so it isn't possible to see inside, but come at 1 pm any day of the week to witness the ceremonial Changing of the Guard. You can also head around the back of the palace to explore the lovely **Prezidentská záhrada** (Presidential Garden), a public park that's an oasis of manicured lawns, sculpted hedges, and gorgeous flower displays. It also has a number of avant garde sculptures, including the playful *Fountain of Youth* by Slovak sculptor Tibor Bártfay. ☒ *Hodžovo námestie 2978/1, Bratislava* ☎ 02/578-881-55 🌐 [www.prezident.sk](http://www.prezident.sk).

#### **Hlavné Námestie**

**PLAZA** | Bratislava's main square is the beating heart of the city, home to some of its most interesting history, architecture, and artworks. The centerpiece of the square is **Maximiliánova fontána** (Maximilian's Fountain), erected in 1572 as a public water supply. The knight on top is said to bow once a year, on New Year's Eve, though only for those pure of heart and born in Bratislava. The square is ringed by a number of beautiful Gothic and Baroque buildings, many of which are now embassies. The most notable of these is the **Stará radnica** (Old Town Hall), which is actually a mishmash of different houses built at various stages from the 14th century onwards; look for the cannonball embedded in the town hall's tower. Opposite, on the corner outside Café Mayer, is the **Schöne Náci** (Nice Nazi) statue, depicting a famous local eccentric who cheerfully wandered the streets in top hat and tails. As well as the permanent fixtures, the square also hosts regular markets, concerts, and political events. ☒ *Bratislava*.



Bratislava, with its compact old town, charming city streets, and outdoor café culture, is a wonderful day trip from Vienna.

#### **Hviezdoslavovo námestie** (*Hviezdoslav Square*)

**PLAZA** | This charming, tree-shaded promenade is named for renowned Slovak poet Pavol Országh Hviezdoslav and lined with some of the city's grandest buildings—now mainly embassies, hotels, and restaurants. The “square” starts with a **statue of Hviezdoslav** and ends at **Morový stĺp**, a beautiful Baroque trinity column. Just east of Hviezdoslav Square is the old **Slovenské národné divadlo** (Slovak National Theatre) building, while just around the corner crowds gather to see the popular **Čumil** (Rubberneck) sculpture; a cheeky bronze chap peeping out from under a manhole cover. ☒ *Bratislava*.

#### **Kostol svätej Alžbety** (*Blue Church*)

**RELIGIOUS SITE** | Bratislava's most striking Secession (Art Nouveau) style building, the Church of St. Elizabeth is noted for its powder blue exterior, which extends all the way up to its 120-foot round tower. The unusual color scheme continues throughout the early-20th-century building, from the blue ceramic roof

tiles, mosaics, and maiolica (tin-glazed pottery) decorations outside, to the baby blue pews and arches inside. The church once functioned as the chapel of the school opposite, which is evident in the two buildings' similar design elements (though the school has a rather more traditional color scheme). ☒ *Bezručova 2, Bratislava* 🌐 [www.modrykostol.fara.sk](http://www.modrykostol.fara.sk).

#### **Michalská brána** (*Michael's Gate*)

**MUSEUM** | The last gate standing from Bratislava's original 13th century city walls, Michael's Gate was rebuilt in the Baroque style in 1758; that's when the onion dome was added. Look up to the top of the tower to see the dome, as well as a statue of the archangel Michael slaying a dragon; or look down to see a bronze plate showing the distances to different world capitals. Also of note is the remarkably skinny house on the northwest side of the gate, now a fast food joint. For a small fee, you can climb the tower for views over the city; your ticket also includes entry to the small Museum of Arms within the gate, as

well as the nearby Pharmacy Museum, a fascinating exhibition on 16th-century medicine. ☒ *Michalská ulica 22, Bratislava* ☎ 02/544-330-44 ☉ [www.muzeum.bratislava.sk](http://www.muzeum.bratislava.sk) ☎ €4.50 (tower and museum) ☹ Closed Mon. (tower and museum).

**Primaciálny palác** (Primate's Palace) **CASTLE/PALACE** | This gorgeous Neoclassical building, constructed between 1778 to 1781 for the Archbishop József Batthyány—"primate" is a title given to a bishop; nothing to do with monkeys—played a vital role in European history in 1805. That's when the palace's Hall of Mirrors was used to sign the fourth Peace of Pressburg, which effectively brought an end to the Holy Roman Empire. Today, you can visit the beautiful hall, elegantly furnished with period pieces, as well as the picture gallery with portraits of Hungarian rulers. Somewhat surprisingly, the palace also contains a rare collection of exquisite English tapestries from the time of King James I (1566–1625). ☒ *Primaciálne námestie 2, Bratislava* ☎ 02/593-563-94 ☉ [www.visitbratislava.com/places/primatial-palace](http://www.visitbratislava.com/places/primatial-palace) ☹ Closed Mon.

### Slovak National Collection of Wines

**WINERY/DISTILLERY** | Attached to the Museum of Viticulture—which traces the long history of winemaking in the Bratislava and Lower Carpathians region—is this beautiful 16th-century wine cellar offering regular tastings. The national collection is made up of Slovakia's "Top 100 Wines," which are chosen from more than 600 entries each year; you can find everything from Tokajs to ice wines. Choose to sample two, four, or eight of the collection's wines and a professional somelier will guide you through the experience. Alternatively, opt for the self-guided, all-you-can-drink "72 wines in 100 minutes" tasting. All tastings are available for individuals or groups, but it's best to call ahead to ensure an English-speaking guide. ☒ *Radničná 577/1, Bratislava* ☎ 918-664-992 ☉ [www.salonvin.sk](http://www.salonvin.sk) ☹ Closed Sun.–Mon.

### ★ St Martin's Cathedral (Katedrála svätého Martina)

**RELIGIOUS SITE** | The enormous golden crown and cushion on top of this beautiful Gothic cathedral reveals that this was once a coronation church. In fact, it was the coronation church for Hungarian (and later Austrian) monarchs for more than 250 years; 19 different royals were crowned here between 1563 and 1830, including Empress Maria Theresa. The church was also one of the city's lines of defense, which explains the chunky walls, the arrow-slit windows, and the exceptionally tall (lookout) tower. Luckily, the interior is more delicate and decorative, with dramatic rib vaults, colorful stained glass windows, and a grand altar showing St. Martin in a traditional Hungarian hussar dress. Next to the cathedral lie the remains of the **Neologická Synagóga** (Neological Synagogue), demolished by the Communist government in the 1970s, and overlooked by the glorious facade of the **Lekáreň u Salvátora** (Pharmacy Salvator). ☒ *Rudnayovo námestie 1, Bratislava* ☎ 02/544-313-59 ☉ [www.dom.fara.sk](http://www.dom.fara.sk).

## 🍴 Restaurants

### ★ Albrecht

\$\$\$\$ | **FRENCH** | One of the city's most elegant fine dining experiences, Restaurant Albrecht near Bratislava Castle serves sumptuous, strictly seasonal French cuisine using the highest quality locally-sourced ingredients; menus often lists individual farms and producers. Head chef Jaroslav Židek is known for his elaborate, multi-course tasting menus, but you can also order the dishes à la carte: opt for the tuna ceviche to start, the lamb back with sheep-cheese ravioli for main, and the plum dumplings to finish. **Known for:** multi-course tasting menus; great value lunch menu; five minutes by taxi from the Old Town. ☎ *Average main:* €30 ☒ *Mudroňova 423/82, Bratislava* ☎ 902-333-888 ☉ [www.hotelalbrecht.sk/restauracia](http://www.hotelalbrecht.sk/restauracia) ☹ Closed Sun.

### Roxor

\$\$ | **BURGER** | Melt-in-the-mouth eco-farm beef, crunchy double-cooked fries, and crisp craft beers are the order of the day at this excellent burger joint. There are half a dozen burger options to choose from, including veggie mushroom and vegan patty ones; all are cooked medium as standard and served with tasty sides like rosemary or garlic fries, kimchi, and coleslaw. **Known for:** Bratislava's best burgers; homemade pineapple-curry mayo; a little way out of the Old Town. ☎ *Average main:* €15 ☒ *Šancová 19, Bratislava* ☎ 02/210-205-00 ☉ [www.roxorburger.sk](http://www.roxorburger.sk).

### Zylinder

\$\$\$ | **AUSTRIAN** | With dishes based on traditional Austro-Hungarian recipes, this well-located café and restaurant makes a pleasant stop for lunch or dinner. Expect everything from traditional Austrian schnitzel and *tafelspitz* (boiled beef served with minced apples) to Hungarian beef goulash and *somlói galuska* (sponge trifle), as well as Slovakian specialties like *halušky* (small potato dumplings with sheep cheese, sautéed bacon, and sour cream). **Known for:** tasty beef broth with noodles; great location on Hviezdoslav Square; big portions and good value for area. ☎ *Average main:* €16 ☒ *Hviezdoslavovo námestie 19, Bratislava* ☎ 903-123-134 ☉ [www.zylinder.sk](http://www.zylinder.sk).

## ☕ Coffee and Quick Bites

### ★ Konditorei Kormuth

\$\$ | **CAFÉ** | It may look unassuming from the street, but step inside and it becomes immediately apparent why this is considered one of Europe's most beautiful cafés. The walls and ceilings throughout the interior are plastered in majestic Renaissance-style frescoes, while seemingly every nook and cranny of the old building is filled with antiques, some dating back to the 16th century. **Known for:** stunningly decorative interior; delicious cakes and pastries; entrance

fee. ☎ *Average main:* €10 ☒ *Sedlárska 363, Bratislava* ☎ 02/544-325-37 ☉ [www.konditoreikormuth.sk](http://www.konditoreikormuth.sk) ☹ Closed Mon.–Tue.

### Koun

\$ | **FAST FOOD** | In recent years, Bratislava has been taken over by ice cream stores, and today it's hard to find an Old Town street without a high-quality gelato option. But if you have to choose only one scoop while you're in town, opt for Koun (pronounced "cone"). **Known for:** incredible lemon cake ice cream; sunny decor and even sunnier staff; half-hidden on a side street off Hviezdoslav Square. ☎ *Average main:* €5 ☒ *Paulínyho 1, Bratislava* ☎ 948-687-795 ☉ [www.koun.sk](http://www.koun.sk) ☹ Closed Mon.

## 🏨 Hotels

### Loft Hotel

\$\$ | **HOTEL** | Standing out from the Old Town crowd with its industrial-style decor incorporating exposed brick walls, distressed wooden floors, shabby leather sofas, and retro advertising prints, Loft offers a different kind of hotel experience. **Pros:** sixth floor rooms have gorgeous garden views; free snacks and wine for guests; popular Fabrika brewpub downstairs. **Cons:** industrial decor isn't to all tastes; underground parking is €20 a day; wood floors can be noisy. ☎ *Rooms from:* €85 ☒ *Štefánikova 864/4, Bratislava* ☎ 901-902-680 ☉ [www.lofthotel.sk](http://www.lofthotel.sk) ☎ 111 rooms ☹ No meals.

### ★ Marrol's Boutique Hotel

\$\$\$ | **HOTEL** | A romantic boutique gem in the heart of the Old Town, Marrol's is set within a 19th-century burgher's house and oozes period charm, with its opulent chandeliers, deep leather armchairs, and charming wood paneling. **Pros:** free minibar full of drinks; lovely plant-covered Summer Terrace; underground parking available. **Cons:** breakfast is nothing special; service isn't always with a smile; noise in corridors carries. ☎ *Rooms*

from: €110 ☎️ Tobručká 6953/4, Bratislava ☎️ 02/577-846-00 🌐 www.hotelmarrols.sk 🚗 54 rooms 🍷 Free breakfast.

### Roset Hotel

\$\$\$ | HOTEL | Built in 1903 in the Secession (Art Nouveau) style, this sophisticated hotel, which is conveniently located by the Old Town, offers 27 spacious and elegant suites, a spa with fitness center, sauna, and jacuzzi, and the time-honored Tulip Café. **Pros:** beautiful turn-of-the-century building; in-suite massages available; incorporates famous old literary café. **Cons:** breakfast is underwhelming; mattresses are a little hard; some rooms need sprucing up. 📄 Rooms from: €115 ☎️ Štúrova Ulica 10, Bratislava ☎️ 917-373-209 🌐 www.rosethotel.sk 🚗 27 rooms 🍷 Free breakfast.

### 🍷 Nightlife

#### Grand Cru Wine Gallery

WINE BARS—NIGHTLIFE | This popular Old Town bar is the perfect place to sample some high-quality Slovakian wines. Amiable owner Martin Pagáč is always on hand to talk you through individual vintages and answer questions. ☎️ Zámočnícka 404/8, Bratislava ☎️ 908-656-259 🌐 www.facebook.com/GrandCruWineGallery.

#### KC Dunaj

DANCE CLUBS | Set within a Communist-era shopping mall but now reclaimed by a younger, hipper crowd, this lively bar and club venue hosts regular live concerts, club nights, theater events, and more. ☎️ Nedbalova 435/3, Bratislava ☎️ 904-330-049 🌐 www.kcdunaj.sk.

#### ★ Kláštorňý pivovar

BREW PUBS/BEER GARDENS | For a great tasting, great value beer, you won't beat the homebrew at this popular brewpub—it's just €3.70 for a whole liter of Monastic Beer served straight from the tap. Enjoy it with tasty Slovak pub food like grilled sausages, baked pork knuckle, and *halušky* (potato dumplings with

sheep's cheese) ☎️ Námestie SNP 469/8, Bratislava ☎️ 907-976-284 🌐 www.klas-tornypivovar.sk.

### UFO

BARS/PUBS | Situated at the top of the observation tower on the UFO bridge, this swanky bar offers the chance to enjoy delicious cocktails, spirits, and wines while overlooking the Danube and the city below. There's also a well-regarded restaurant here, but beware: the sky-high setting also means sky-high prices. ☎️ Most SNP 1, Bratislava ☎️ 02/625-203-00 🌐 www.u-f-o.sk.

### 🎭 Performing Arts

**Slovenské národné divadlo** (Slovak National Theater)

THEATER | Whether at the grand, 18th-century, Neo-Renaissance building in the heart of the Old Town, or at the shiny, art-filled, 21st century building downriver, the Slovak National Theater knows how to put on a show. The regular, high-quality operas, ballets, and drama performances are typically around €20 a ticket. ☎️ New Slovak National Theater, Pribinova 17, Bratislava ☎️ 02/204-722-89 🌐 www.snd.sk.

### 🛒 Shopping

#### BEER

##### 100 Piv

LOCAL SPECIALTIES | A small bottle shop on the edge of the Old Town, 100 Piv has hundreds of beers available to buy, with a big focus on local craft breweries. There are always some beers on tap, so you can try before you buy. ☎️ Medená 111/33, Bratislava ☎️ 948-405-409 🌐 www.100piv.sk.

#### FASHION

##### NOX Vintage

CLOTHING | A favorite with lovers of vintage and retro fashion, this Old Town store has rack upon rack of clothes, bags, and shoes, as well as few items of furniture and homeware. ☎️ Ventúrska 3,

Bratislava ☎️ 905-861-879 🌐 www.facebook.com/NOXvintage ☺️ Closed Sun.

### GIFTS AND SOUVENIRS

#### Slávica

GIFTS/SOUVENIRS | You'll find everything from clothing and jewelry to art prints and ceramics from local producers at this hip design store near Laurence's Gate. ☎️ Laurinská 19, Bratislava ☎️ 917-968-736 🌐 www.slavicadesign.sk.

## Neusiedl am See

50 km (31 miles) southeast of Vienna.

At the north end of the lake for which it is named is a pleasant resort town with good facilities. Direct hourly commuter trains from Vienna have made it very popular, so you won't be alone here. To reach the lake, where you can rent small boats, swim, or just relax on the beach, follow the main street for three blocks east of the Hauptplatz and turn right on Seestrasse. In the town itself, visit the ruins of the 13th-century hill fortress, Ruine Tabor, and the 15th-century parish church near the town hall.

### GETTING HERE AND AROUND

Trains leave from Vienna Central Station frequently every day and take 40 minutes. By car, take the A4 motorway southeast; you'll switch to the A50 then the B51 just north of Neusiedl am See (follow the signs).

### VISITOR INFORMATION

#### CONTACTS Tourism Neusiedl am See.

☎️ Untere Hauptstrasse 7 ☎️ 02167/2229 🌐 www.neusiedlamsee.at.

### 🏨 Hotels

#### Hotel Wende

\$\$\$ | HOTEL | This sprawling three-story hotel complex is close to the lake and has more than standard amenities, whether you want to get a relaxing massage or to rent bicycles and set off

## Bicycling Around Neusiedl



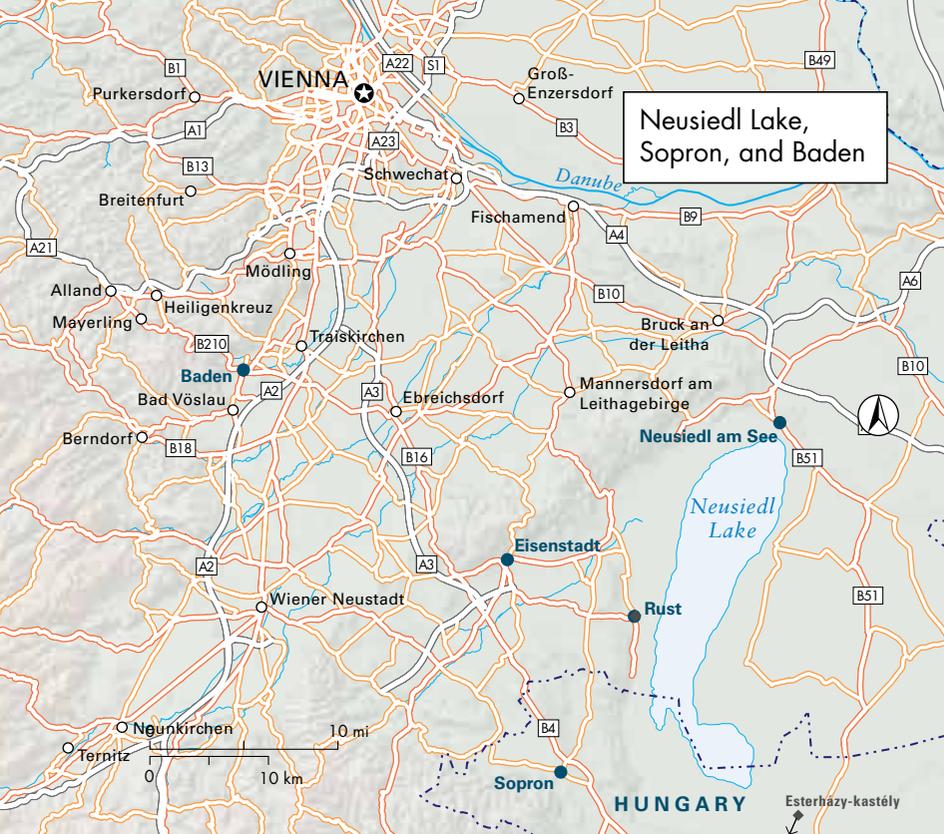
The plains around Neusiedl Lake, upon which sit tiny, undisturbed hamlets amid unspoiled scenery, are perfect for leisurely bicycling. Practically every village has a bike-rental shop (*Fahrradverleih* or *Radverleih*), but on weekends demand is so great that it's a good idea to reserve in advance. A bike route encircles the lake, which means it passes through Hungary (you can shorten the route by taking the ferry between Illmitz beach and Mörbisch). Bike route maps are available at tourist offices.

on the path that begins at its doorstep. **Pros:** friendly and knowledgeable staff; spacious lobby; very good location. **Cons:** little charm; outdated televisions; no air conditioning. 📄 Rooms from: €189 ☎️ Seestrasse 40 ☎️ 02167/8111 🌐 www.hotel-wende.at ☺️ Closed at start of Feb. 🚗 104 rooms 🍷 Free breakfast.

## Eisenstadt

58 km (36 miles) south of Vienna.

Burgenland's provincial capital, Eisenstadt, is a really small town. Nevertheless, it has an illustrious history and enough sights to keep you busy for a half day, if not quite a full one. Although the town has existed since at least the 12th century, it only rose to significance in the 17th century when it became the seat of the Esterházy, a princely Hungarian family that traces its roots to Attila the Hun. The original Esterházy made his fortune by marrying a succession of wealthy landowning widows. Esterházy's support was largely responsible for the Habsburg reign in Hungary under the Dual



## Neusiedl Lake, Sopron, and Baden

Monarchy. At one time the family controlled a far-flung agro-industrial empire, and it still owns vast forest resources. The composer Joseph Haydn lived in Eisenstadt for some 30 years while in the service of the Esterházy family. When Hungary ceded Burgenland to Austria after World War I, its major city, Sopron, elected to remain a part of Hungary, so in 1925 tiny Eisenstadt was made the capital of the new Austrian province.

Eisenstadt's main draw is the former palace, Schloss Esterházy, and the tourist office can tell you about its other attractions, including the Museum of Austrian Culture, the Diocesan Museum, the Fire Fighters Museum, Haydn's little garden house, and an assortment of churches.

### GETTING HERE AND AROUND

Eisenstadt is connected to Vienna and Neusiedl am See by direct train and to Rust and other places throughout Burgenland by bus. By car from Vienna, take the A3 south to the edge of town.

### VISITOR INFORMATION

#### CONTACTS Eisenstadt Tourismstour.

✉ Hauptstrasse 21 ☎ 02682/67390  
🌐 [www.eisenstadt-tourismus.at](http://www.eisenstadt-tourismus.at)

### Sights

#### Haydn-Haus

**HOUSE** | The composer Joseph Haydn lived in the simple house on a street that now bears his name from 1766 until 1778. Now a house museum—the house itself, and especially its flower-filled courtyard with the small back rooms, is quite delightful—it contains several first

editions of his music and other memorabilia. A guided costumed tour involves tales about love and music in the real Haydn's life. ✉ *Joseph-Haydn-Gasse 21* ☎ 02682/719-6000 🌐 [www.haydnhaus.at](http://www.haydnhaus.at) 📄 €5 🕒 Closed mid-Nov.–Mar. and Mon. Apr.–Aug.

#### Österreichisches Jüdisches Museum (Austrian Jewish Museum)

**MUSEUM** | From 1671 until 1938, the streets Wertheimergasse and Unterbergstrasse formed the boundaries of the Jewish ghetto. During that time Eisenstadt had a considerable Jewish population; today the Österreichisches Jüdisches Museum recalls the experience of Austrian Jews throughout history. A fascinating private synagogue in the complex survived the 1938 terror and is incorporated into the museum. ✉ *Unterbergstrasse 6* ☎ 02682/65145 🌐 [www.ojm.at](http://www.ojm.at) 📄 €5 🕒 Closed Nov.–Apr. and Mon.

#### ★ Schloss Esterházy (Esterházy Palace)

**CASTLE/PALACE** | The former palace of the ruling princes reigns over the town. Built in the Baroque style between 1663 and 1672 on the foundations of a medieval castle and later modified, it is still owned by the Esterházy family, who lease it to the provincial government for use mostly as offices. The Esterházy family rooms are worth viewing, and the lavishly decorated Haydn Room, an impressive concert hall where the composer conducted his own works from 1761 until 1790, is still used for presentations of Haydn's works, with musicians often dressed in period garb. The hall is one of several rooms on a guided tour (in English on request if there are at least 10 people) that lasts about 30 minutes. The cellar has the largest wine museum in Austria with 700 objects including a massive wine barrel and historical grape press. A tour of the princess's apartment includes objects relating to three royal women. The park behind the palace is pleasant for a stroll or a picnic, and in late August it's a venue for the Burgenland wine week—Eisenstadt

## Haydn Fully at Rest

Composer Joseph Haydn's body was returned to Eisenstadt for burial at the request of Prince Esterházy in 1821. The head, however, had been stolen by phrenologists and eventually became the property of the Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde, a Viennese musical society. A new marble tomb was built for Haydn in 1932 at Eisenstadt's Bergkirche, but the head was not returned until 1954. In the meantime a substitute head had been placed with the remains. Both skulls are now in the marble tomb.

hosts the "Festival of 1,000 Wines"—when there's a two-hour wine tour and tasting at the palace. ✉ *Esterházyplatz 1* ☎ 02682/719-63004 🌐 [www.esterhazy.at/schloss-esterhazy](http://www.esterhazy.at/schloss-esterhazy) 📄 €12; €28 for all exhibitions and wine museum 🕒 Closed weekdays in mid-Nov.–Mar.

### 🍴 Restaurants

#### ★ Taubenkobel

\$\$\$\$ | **ECLECTIC** | Consistently ranked as one of the top restaurants in Austria, the "Dovecote" is a rambling, elegantly restored 19th-century farmhouse located halfway between Eisenstadt and Rust in the village of Schützen. The seasonally changing seven-course menu has featured dishes such as saddle of lamb with mangold blossoms and asparagus in saffron sauce. **Known for:** fresh herbs taken from nearby meadows; menu that changes seasonally; packages that include wine pairings and hotel stays. 📄 *Average main:* €138 ✉ *Hauptstrasse 27, Schützen am Gebirge* ☎ 02684/2297 🌐 [www.taubenkobel.com](http://www.taubenkobel.com) 🕒 Closed Mon.–Tue., and mid-Nov.–Feb.

## Hotels

### Hotel Ohr

\$\$\$\$ | HOTEL | Personal service is the hallmark of this family-run hotel and restaurant close to the town center, with a selection of comfortable “four-star” rooms attractively furnished in natural woods and whites with pastel accents, along with some slightly older (and smaller) “three-star” rooms. **Pros:** spacious rooms; excellent food in cozy restaurant; bicycles available to rent. **Cons:** no real lobby; a/c in only some rooms; only 10 of the 39 rooms are “four star”.  Rooms from: €170  Rusterstrasse 51  02682/62460  www.hotel-ohr.at  39 rooms  Free breakfast.

## Rust

71 km (44 miles) southeast of Vienna.

Picturesque Rust, a UNESCO World Cultural Heritage site, is easily the most popular village on the lake for the colorful pastel facades of its houses and for lake sports. Tourists flock here in summer to see storks nesting atop the Renaissance and Baroque houses in the well-preserved historic center.

### GETTING HERE AND AROUND

By car from Vienna, take the A4 south then, just after Eisenstadt, take the B52 east about 14½ kilometers (nine miles). Bus service is also available directly from Vienna and from Neusiedl am See (via Eisenstadt).

### VISITOR INFORMATION

#### CONTACTS Tourismusverband Freistadt

Rust.  Conradplatz 1  02685/5020  www.freistadt-rust.at.

## Sights

### Fischerkirche (Fisherman’s Church)

RELIGIOUS SITE | The restored Gothic Fischerkirche is off the west end of the Rathausplatz. Built between the 12th and 16th centuries, it is surrounded

by a defensive wall and is noted for its 15th-century frescoes and an organ from 1705. The church sometimes has classical concerts. Tours are available but must be arranged in advance.  Rathausplatz 16  02685/502  €2, €4 with tour.

### Kremayrhaus Stadtmuseum

MUSEUM | Three decades ago, local arts patron Rudolf Kremayr bestowed to Rust one of the most stunning buildings on the town’s main square. Today, it is the town’s museum, with the lavishly decorated interior home to some of Rust’s most important historical archives. The chimney room, an outbuilding off the courtyard, is where local exhibitions and small concerts are held.  Conradplatz 2  0676/8416–0623.

### Seebad Rust

BEACH—SIGHT | A causeway leads through nearly a mile of reeds to the Seebad beach and boat landing, where you can take a sightseeing boat either as a round-trip or to another point on the lake. You can also rent a boat, swim, or enjoy a waterside drink or snack at an outdoor table.  Ruster Bucht 2  www.seebadrust.at.

### Weingut Feiler-Artinger

WINERY/DISTILLERY | Like many family-run wineries in Rust (most in Austria are family businesses), this one in the heart of town produces white and red sweet wine from the vineyards around Rust. Many are for sale, including a selection of organic wines.  Hauptstrasse 3  02685/237  www.feiler-arteringer.at  Closed Sun.

## Restaurants

For a small town, Rust has a great dining scene that makes the most of the delicious freshwater fish found in Neusiedl Lake. If you’re visiting during summer, look out for *steckerl*, a delicious, locally-caught fish that’s grilled barbecue-style with spices.

### Buschenschank Schandl

\$\$ | AUSTRIAN | The Schandl family of Rust is one of the best-known wine growers of the Neusiedl Lake area; their devotees come for wine tastings and stay for dinner. The simple but satisfying buffet offers a selection of sausages, salads, cheeses, and pickles, as well as a few hot dishes, to complement the wine. **Known for:** generous buffet with sausages and salads; large courtyard for outdoor summer dining; family wine for sale at adjacent shop.  Average main: €15  Hauptstrasse 20  02685/20484  www.buschenschankschandl.at  No lunch weekdays. Closed Tue.–Wed. in Mar.–Jun. and Oct.–Nov.

### Rusterhof

\$\$ | AUSTRIAN | A lovingly renovated burgher’s house—the town’s oldest—at the top of the main square houses an excellent and imaginative restaurant. The menu depends on what’s fresh, and might include grilled fish or Wiener schnitzel made with organic veal. **Known for:** terrace view over main street; fresh and organic menu; four lovely apartments also available.  Average main: €17  Rathausplatz 18  02685/60793  www.rusterhof.com  Closed Mon.

## Hotels

### Hotel Sifkovits

\$\$ | HOTEL | FAMILY | This charming hotel run by the Hallwirth family has lovely and tastefully redecorated rooms in a prime location, close to the lake and a block away from Rust’s bustling center. **Pros:** spacious and welcoming lobby; quiet rooms; large park behind the hotel. **Cons:** rooms facing the street can be noisy; room decor not for everyone; gets booked up early.  Rooms from: €125  Am Seekanal 8  02685/20460  www.sifkovits.at  Closed Dec.–Mar.  27 rooms  Free breakfast.

## Performing Arts

### ★ Oper im Steinbruch (Opera in St. Margarethen Quarry)

OPERA | Three kilometers (two miles) west of Rust, outside the tiny village of St. Margarethen, is Römersteinbruch, a delightful rock quarry used for outdoor opera performances for six weeks during July and August. It’s one of the three largest outdoor opera venues in Europe, seating 7,000 nightly. The opera changes annually—previous operas have included Puccini’s *Turandot* and Bizet’s *Carmen*, with a Passion play running every fifth year—and performances also include a dazzling fireworks display. Ticket prices range from around €40 up to nearly €150. It’s a good idea to bring a seat cushion, if possible, to soften the metal chairs. Bus trips from Vienna and back to see performances can be arranged through several tour agencies. You can buy tickets online or at the ticket office in Eisenstadt.  Römersteinbruch 1  02682/65065  www.operimsteinbruch.at.

## Sopron, Hungary

80 km (50 miles) south of Vienna.

Lying just across the Hungarian border, close to the southern shore of Neusiedler Lake, Sopron is one of Central Europe’s most picturesque cities, packing a frankly incredible array of historic monuments into a very small area.

Sopron is often called Hungary’s most faithful town, as its residents voted to remain part of Hungary (rather than join Austria) in 1921 after World War I. Today’s city of 60,000 was a small Celtic settlement more than 2,300 years ago. During Roman times, as Scarabantia, it stood on the main European north–south trade route, the Amber Road, and also happened to be near the junction with the east–west route used by Byzantine merchants. In AD 896 the Magyars

conquered the Carpathian basin and later named the city Sopron, after a medieval Hungarian warrior; after the Hapsburgs took over the territory during the Turkish wars of the 16th and 17th centuries, they renamed it Ödenburg. The city suffered greatly during World War II, until it was “liberated” by the Soviet Red Army in April 1945. Decades of Communist rule followed, until protests on the nearby Austria-Hungary border in 1989 helped to instigate the fall of the Berlin Wall.

Despite the centuries of upheaval, Sopron’s historic core has survived and been painstakingly restored; the city even won a 1975 Europe Prize Gold Medal for Protection of Monuments. Today, the horseshoe-shaped Belváros (Inner Town), a wondrous mix of Gothic, Baroque, and Renaissance architecture protected by city walls (one set built by Romans, the other by medieval Magyars), attracts visitors from far and wide. Most come on a day-trip from Vienna, or as a stopover between the Austrian and Hungarian capitals.

### GETTING HERE AND AROUND

The easiest way to get to Sopron is by train, with regular services leaving from Vienna’s Central Station. The journey takes around 1¼ hours. You can also reach Sopron by train from Eisenstadt (30 minutes, via Wulkaprodersdorf). Driving from Vienna is easy and takes around an hour: head south on the A3 and B16, which becomes Route 84 once you cross the border.

Sopron is a small city, so it’s easy to navigate on foot. Most of the city sights are in Belváros, but even those outside are still within walking distance. To get to attractions outside the city, like Eszterházy Palace and Széchenyi Mansion, you can take a bus or drive.

### RESTAURANTS AND HOTELS

The selection of quality hotels in Sopron is modest, but always improving. Dining tends to be casual, and many restaurants

have outdoor seating terraces during warmer months, usually from May through September. Both hotels and restaurants are, as a general rule, cheaper in Sopron than in Vienna and around. Prices are quoted in the local currency, Hungarian forints (HUF), though euros are widely accepted. Typically, it’s in the region of 350 HUF to €1, but always check the current exchange rate before you travel.

### What it Costs in Hungarian Florint

\$	\$\$	\$\$\$	\$\$\$\$
<b>RESTAURANTS</b>			
under 2,500 HUF	2,500–5,000 HUF	5,001–7,500 HUF	over 7,500 HUF
<b>HOTELS</b>			
under 25,000 HUF	25,000–37,500 HUF	37,501–50,000 HUF	over 50,000 HUF

### VISITOR INFORMATION

**CONTACTS** **Tourinform.** ☒ *Szent György utca 2, Sopron* ☎ 99/951–975 🌐 [www.turizmus.sopron.hu](http://www.turizmus.sopron.hu).

### Sights

#### **Esterházy-kastély** (*Esterházy Palace*)

**CASTLE/PALACE** | A 30-minute drive east of Sopron in the town of Fertőd, and near the southern shore of Neusiedl Lake, this magnificent yellow baroque and rococo palace is often referred to as the Hungarian Versailles. Built between 1720 and 1760 as a residence for the Hungarian noble family, it was badly damaged in World War II but has since been painstakingly restored. Step through the intricate wrought-iron gate entrance to discover the palace’s 126 lavishly decorated rooms, including the Banqueting Hall with its ceiling fresco of Apollo in his chariot, the beautiful library with almost 22,000 volumes, and the enormous Sala Terrena with its heated marble floor. There’s also a three-story-high concert hall, where classical concerts are held

throughout the summer as part of the International Haydn Festival; Joseph Haydn was the court conductor to the Eszterházy family here for 30 years. Before you leave, take a walk around the ornamental French-style gardens. **▲ Not to be confused with Schloss Esterházy in Eisenstadt, also a 30-minute drive but north, not east. This was the family’s main residence; see the Eisenstadt section for more.** ☒ *Joseph Haydn utca 2, Fertod* ☎ 99/537–640 📞 2,500 HUF.

#### **Fő tér** (*Main Square*)

**PLAZA** | The city’s attractive main square is dominated by the early Gothic Soproni Nagyboldogasszony templom (Blessed Mary Benedictine Church), better known as the Goat Church for reasons both fantastical—it’s said the church was financed with treasure found by a billy goat—and practical—goats feature on the coat of arms of the *actual* church financiers. It’s a real mishmash of styles, with a Gothic choir, a rococo main altar, and a Baroque red-marble pulpit, along with recently-discovered medieval tombs. Outside stands the 18th-century Szentháromság-szobor (Holy Trinity Column), Hungary’s finest plague memorial and among the first anywhere to feature a twisted column.

Facing the square are three very different but equally fascinating museums. Fabricus Ház (Fabricius House) is a beautiful Baroque mansion with an exhibits on ancient city history: highlights include the remains of a Roman bathhouse and the 1,200-year-old Cunpald Goblet. The Storno Ház (Storno House) is Sopron’s finest Renaissance-era building with a collection of furniture, porcelain, sculptures, and paintings belonging to the Stornos, a rags-to-riches dynasty of chimney sweeps-turned-art restorers. types. And the Fehér Angyal Patikamúzeum (Angel Pharmacy Museum) is a real-life 17th century apothecary that now houses a collection of period pharmaceutical tools, books, potions, and lotions. ☒ *Sopron*.

#### **Mária-oszlop** (*Mary’s Column*)

**PUBLIC ART** | With its finely sculpted biblical reliefs, the column is a superb specimen of Baroque design. It was erected in 1745 to mark the former site of the medieval Church of Our Lady, which was destroyed by Sopron citizens in 1632 because they feared the Turks would use its steeple as a strategic firing tower. ☒ *Várkerület 62, Sopron*.

#### **Ó-zsinagóga** (*Old Synagogue*)

**RELIGIOUS SITE** | This medieval synagogue is now a religious museum complete with stunning stained-glass windows, a stone mikvah (a ritual bath for women), and old Torahs on display. Built around 1300, the synagogue endured several incarnations over the centuries, including a stint as a hospital (in the 1400s) and a residential building (in the 1700s); the existing facade dates from 1734. The synagogue was once at the heart of the city’s Jewish ghetto, and a plaque honors the 1,640 Jews of Sopron—85% of the city’s total population—who were murdered by the Nazis. ☒ *Új utca 22, Sopron* ☎ 99/311–327 📞 800 HUF ☺ *Closed Mon. and Oct.–Mar.*

#### **Széchenyi kastély** (*Széchenyi Mansion*)

**HOUSE** | This pretty manor house, situated 13 kilometers (eight miles) southeast of Sopron, is the family seat of the Széchenyi family. Mostly completed in the neoclassical style but heavily rebuilt after World War II, the property is now home to the Széchenyi Museum, which tells the family’s story through reconstructed rooms and period furnishings. The star of the show is Count István Széchenyi, known as the “Greatest Hungarian” for his achievements as a politician, writer, reformer, and generous patron: his money helped establish the Hungarian Academy of Sciences and build the Chain Bridge in Budapest. You’ll find an immodest number of István portraits throughout the property, as well as interactive exhibits on some of his projects. **■ TIP** → **Information within each**



Just over the border in Hungary, Sopron is especially charming in winter when you'll find festive Christmas decorations and markets.

**room is scarce for non-Hungarian speakers, so be sure to pick up an English-language brochure on your way in.** ☎ *Kiscenki utca 7, Sopron* ☎ 30/4471-1248 🌐 [www.szechenyiorokseg.hu](http://www.szechenyiorokseg.hu) ☎ 1,400 HUF 🗄 Closed Mon.

**Szent György utca** (*St. George Street*)  
**NEIGHBORHOOD** | This beautiful Inner Town street runs south from Fő tér to Orsolya tér, where there's an interesting fountain showing Jesus using his crucifix to pierce a snake with an apple. As you walk down the street, you will come across an eclectic mix of architecture co-existing in a surprisingly harmonious fashion. The **Erdody Vár** (Erdody Palace) at No. 16 is Sopron's richest rococo building. Two doors down, at No. 12, stands the **Eggenberg Ház** (Eggenberg House), where the widow of Prince Johann Eggenberg held Protestant services during the harshest days of the Counter-Reformation and beyond. Today, it's home to the **Macskakő Múzeum**, an interactive children's museum about the everyday lives of people living in ancient times. But the street takes

its name from **Szent György templom** (St. George's Church), a 14th-century Catholic church so sensitively "Baroqued" some 300 years later that its interior is still as soft as whipped cream. ☎ *Sopron*.

★ **Tuztorony** (*Fire Tower*)  
**BUILDING** | This symbol of Sopron's endurance—and entranceway to the Inner Town—is 200 feet high, with foundations dating to the days of the Árpád dynasty (9th–13th centuries) and perhaps back to the Romans. The tower is remarkable for its uniquely harmonious blend of architectural styles: it has a Romanesque base rising to a circular balcony of Renaissance loggias topped by an octagonal clock tower that is itself capped by a brass Baroque onion dome and belfry. The upper portions were rebuilt after most of the earlier Fire Tower was, ironically, destroyed by the Great Fire of 1676, started by students roasting chestnuts in a high wind (today a double-headed eagle weathervane helps to predict wind direction; it's said that if the eagles face north and south it's going

to rain). On the inside of the gate, you'll find a depiction of "Hungaria" receiving the loyalty of Sopron's kneeling citizens. Climb the 200-step spiral staircase to the top of the tower for lovely views of the town and surrounding countryside. It's from here that tower watchmen warned of approaching enemies and tolled the alarm for fire or the death of a prominent citizen. And occasionally, musicians would serenade the townsfolk from here. ☎ *Fő tér 5* ☎ 99/311-327 🌐 [www.tuztorony.sopron.hu](http://www.tuztorony.sopron.hu) ☎ 1,400 HUF.

#### **Várfalsétány** (*Bailey Promenade*)

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE** | Starting near the Fire Tower and following the route of Sopron's medieval town walls, the Bailey Promenade makes for a lovely stroll. The oldest part of city walls were built in the 14th century but some sights along the way are even older: look out for ancient gate foundations, remnants of the Roman town of Scarbantian. Some sections of the promenade close overnight. ☎ *Sopron*.

## 🍴 Restaurants

### **Corvinus**

\$ | **HUNGARIAN** | Set on the ground floor of the historic Storno House on Sopron's delightful cobblestone main square, Corvinus combines a café, pub, pizzeria, and restaurant all in one. Among the traditional Hungarian specialties are a meaty soup with a baked-on pastry cap, and roast venison goulash with porcini mushrooms. **Known for:** in beautiful 500-year-old building; cheese-heavy vegan options; good value for central location. ☎ *Average main: 2000 HUF* ☎ *Fő tér 8, Sopron* ☎ 99/505-035 🌐 [www.corvinussetterem.hu](http://www.corvinussetterem.hu).

### **El Gusto**

\$\$ | **INTERNATIONAL** | This attractive and popular café-bistro is a great stop for breakfast, brunch, lunch, and dinner or just a takeaway coffee and ice cream.

Enjoy an international menu of soups, salads, pizzas, paninis, and burgers (along with a few local specialties) in the simple Scandi-style interior, or else sit outside on the pleasant street terrace.

**Known for:** simple but warm decor; burgers and pizza; excellent coffee and cakes. ☎ *Average main: 3,250 HUF* ☎ *Várkerület 79, Sopron* ☎ 70/3723-961 🌐 [www.elgusto.hu](http://www.elgusto.hu).

### ★ **Erhardt**

\$\$\$ | **HUNGARIAN** | On a quiet side street a block from Várkerület, away from the main tourist drag, this excellent restaurant serves delicious, inventive dishes in a choice of beautiful settings: take your pick from the wood-beamed rooms upstairs, the beautiful 18th century brick-vaulted wine cellar below, or the leafy garden terrace outside. The menu features high quality, overwhelmingly meaty and fishy Hungarian fare, like roasted duck breast and paprika catfish (though vegetarian options like delicious barley-stuffed peppers do exist). **Known for:** curd-cheese dumplings with fruit; choice of beautiful settings; combined dinner and wine tasting for 11,600 HUF. ☎ *Average main: 5500 HUF* ☎ *Balfi út 10, Sopron* ☎ 99/506-711 🌐 [www.erhardts.hu](http://www.erhardts.hu).

### **Jégverem Fogadó**

\$\$ | **HUNGARIAN** | A short walk from the Inner Town, this charming restaurant is a perennial favorite for its cozy, rustic interior of wooden-beamed ceilings, cast iron light fittings, and checkered tablecloths, as well as for its "guzzle guts" menu of homemade Hungarian specialties, often with an inventive twist. In warm weather, you can also sit outside in the lovely, leafy courtyard. **Known for:** gigantic portions; poppy seed bread and butter pudding; bargain lunch menus. ☎ *Average main: 3,000 HUF* ☎ *Jégverem utca 1, Sopron* ☎ 99/510-113 🌐 [www.jegverem.hu](http://www.jegverem.hu).

## Hopsz

\$\$ | CAFÉ | Offering something a little different, this cool café and grill is a real bright spot in a rather drab part of town. Sit in the achingly-hip interior—all funky artworks, bold patterns, and bright prints—to enjoy a menu of delicious international dishes, or sit out on the plant pot-covered terrace in summer. **Known for:** cool interior with eclectic artworks; great food early 'til late; a 10-minute walk from the center. 📍 *Average main: 2,800 HUF* ☎ *Gyár utca 1-3, Sopron* ☎ *99/333-355* 🌐 *www.hopszsopron.hu.*

## Hotels

### Hotel Wollner

\$\$ | HOTEL | Tucked inside the city center, this quiet and charming 18th century peach-colored hotel has been restored to its original splendor, with comfortable rooms boasting arched ceilings, comfy beds, and spacious bathrooms. **Pros:** a property with oodles of history; convenient Inner Town location; the garden incorporates medieval town wall. **Cons:** traditional furnishings not to all tastes; no elevator or A/C; no parking facilities. 📍 *Rooms from: 34,000 HUF* ☎ *Templom utca 20, Sopron* ☎ *99/524-400* 🌐 *www.wollner.hu* 🚗 *18 rooms* 🍳 *Free breakfast.*

### Pannonia Hotel

\$\$ | HOTEL | This elegant, antique-filled hotel has a long and illustrious past, starting in the 17th century as the Golden Hind, when it welcomed stagecoaches traveling between Vienna and Budapest. **Pros:** convenient central location; big rooftop terraces with views; rooftop basketball court. **Cons:** some stains on carpets; no tea and coffee in rooms; breakfast isn't included. 📍 *Rooms from: 26,000 HUF* ☎ *Várkerület 75, Sopron* ☎ *99/312-180* 🌐 *www.pannoniahotel.com* 🚗 *79 rooms* 🍷 *No meals.*

## ★ Sopronbánfalvi Kolostor Hotel

(*Pauline-Carmelite Monastery of Sopronbánfalva*)

\$\$\$ | HOTEL | If you're looking for a memorable stay in Sopron, look no further than this extraordinary 12th-century monastery-turned-hotel. **Pros:** this is a truly one-of-a-kind stay; an audio guide introduces the property; Refektórium restaurant is one of Sopron's finest. **Cons:** some rooms have single beds; hotel services are limited; a 40-minute walk (or 10-minute taxi) from the center. 📍 *Rooms from: 46,000 HUF* ☎ *Kolostorhegy utca 2, Sopron* ☎ *99/505-895* 🌐 *www.banfalvakolostor.hu* 🚗 *20 rooms* 🍷 *All-inclusive.*

## 🍷 Nightlife

### Cézár Pince

WINE BARS—NIGHTLIFE | Come for the wine, stay for the decor: this beautiful 17th-century wine cellar sits beneath a gorgeous Gothic building that once played host to the Diet of Hungary (the medieval kingdom's parliament). Today, you can sample a good selection of local vintages, along with a wide choice of meat and cheese platters. ☎ *Hátsókapu utca 2, Sopron* ☎ *99/311-337* 🌐 *www.cezarpince.hu.*

## 🎭 Performing Arts

★ **Fertőrákosi Barlangszínház** (*Fertőrákos Cave Theater*)

CONCERTS | For a unique entertainment experience, it's hard to beat this cave theater, carved out of a limestone quarry eight kilometers (five miles) northeast of Sopron. The 760-seat theater has amazing natural acoustics, which make for memorable classical music performances, pop and rock concerts, and musical theater productions. Arrive an hour early to enjoy the walking trail around the quarry, with lovely lookout points over the southern shore of Lake Neusiedl and a fun paleontological exhibition. ☎ *Fő utca 1, Sopron* ☎ *99/530-404* 🌐 *www.fertorakosikofeje.hu.*

## 🛍 Shopping

### ART Septem

ART GALLERIES | Stylised SEP7EM, this cozy little art gallery and shop showcases works by contemporary Sopron artists, as well as prints of classic Hungarian artworks. All are available to buy. ☎ *Kolostor utca 7, Sopron* 🌐 *www.septem.hu* 🌙 *Closed Sun. and Mon.*

### CERAMICS

#### Esterházy Márkablát

CERAMICS/GLASSWARE | This small shop is devoted to the renowned Herend hand-painted porcelain (the company first gained international acclaim when England's Queen Victoria ordered a dinner set for Windsor Castle in 1851). ☎ *Várkerület 98, Sopron* ☎ *99/508-712* 🌐 *www.herend.com* 🌙 *Closed Sun.*

#### Zsolnay Porcelán Márkablát

CERAMICS/GLASSWARE | If you can't make it to the less expensive factory outlet in Pécs, you can purchase exquisite Zsolnay porcelain here. A tiny room lined with glass cabinets displays the delicate wares. ☎ *Előkapu 11, Sopron* ☎ *99/505-252* 🌐 *www.zsolnay.hu.*

### COSMETICS

#### L'Apotheca Kozmetika

PERFUME/COSMETICS | This cute little boutique sells organic cosmetics—including face creams, shower gels, and body lotions—crafted to recipes by local pharmacist Tímea Glöckner. ☎ *Színház utca 4, Sopron* ☎ *20/298-7494* 🌐 *www.lapotheca.com* 🌙 *Closed Sun.*

### WINE

#### Natura Vinotéka

WINE/SPIRITS | Situated on Várkerület, the main shopping street that partly circles the outside of the Old Town, this is a good place to look for fine Sopron wines, whether the peppery red kéfrankos or the spicy white zöld veltelini. ☎ *Várkerület 24, Sopron* ☎ *30/986-6488* 🌐 *www.sopronivinoteka.hu* 🌙 *Closed Sun.* 📞 *9400.*

## Baden

38 km (24 miles) southwest of Vienna.

The Weinstrasse brings you to the serenely elegant spa town of Baden. Since antiquity, Baden's sulfuric thermal baths have attracted both the ailing and the fashionable from all over the world. When the Romans came across the springs, they dubbed the town Aquae; the Babenbergs revived it in the 10th century; and with the visit of the Russian czar Peter the Great in 1698, Baden's golden age began. Austria's Emperor Franz II spent 31 successive summers here. Later in the century, Emperor Franz Josef was a regular visitor, his presence inspiring many of the regal trappings the city still displays. It was in Baden that Mozart composed his "Ave Verum"; where Beethoven spent 15 summers and wrote large sections of his Ninth Symphony and *Missa Solemnis*; where Franz Grillparzer wrote his historical dramas; and where Josef Lanner, both Johann Strausses (father and son), Carl Michael Ziehrer, and Karl Millöcker composed and directed many of their waltzes, marches, and operettas.

### GETTING HERE AND AROUND

A streetcar was built in the 19th century for the sole purpose of ferrying the rich Viennese from their summer homes in Baden to the opera in Vienna—the last stop is directly in front of the opera house. Today, the modern streetcar still winds its way through Vienna's suburbs on its 50-minute journey to Baden, though things only start to get scenic about 25 minutes before Baden, when the car passes through the wine villages. A faster option is to take the train. It's about a half hour from Westbahnhof, and most trains are double-deckers (so you can sit up top and have a great view of the countryside).

## VISITOR INFORMATION

**CONTACTS Baden.** ✉ [Brusattiplatz 3](mailto:Brusattiplatz3@tourismus.baden.at)  
☎ 02252/86800-600 🌐 [www.tourismus.baden.at](http://www.tourismus.baden.at).

## Sights

### Arnulf Rainer Museum

**MUSEUM** | A former 19th-century bathhouse—one which Emperor Franz Josef frequented on his visits to Baden—was converted in 2009 to a museum highlighting Austria's internationally renowned abstract artist Arnulf Rainer. Exhibits also include other contemporary greats, including Damien Hirst. Rainer's work has been displayed in the Museum of Modern Art in New York and other noteworthy museums. ✉ [Josefsplatz 5](mailto:Josefsplatz5@arnulf-rainer-museum.at)  
☎ 02252/209-196 🌐 [www.arnulf-rainer-museum.at](http://www.arnulf-rainer-museum.at) 🎫 €6.

### Beethoven Haus

**HOUSE** | Known locally and affectionately as Beethoven's *Haus der Neunten*, or Ninth House, since he composed his Ninth Symphony while living at this address, the house was fully restored after workers discovered artwork within that dated back to the time Beethoven lived there. The art, which hung on the walls of Beethoven's summer apartment, has been fully restored as well. ✉ [Rathausgasse 10](mailto:Rathausgasse10@beethovenhaus-baden.at)  
☎ 02252/86800-630 🌐 [www.beethovenhaus-baden.at](http://www.beethovenhaus-baden.at) 🎫 €6  
🕒 Closed Mon.

### Casino Baden

**CASINO—SIGHT** | The ornate Casino Baden—with a bar, restaurant, and gambling rooms—still includes traces of its original 19th-century touches, but has been enlarged and, in the process, overlaid with glitz rivaling that of Las Vegas. Evening attire is expected, and jackets are available on loan at the coat check. Casual dress is only acceptable in the Jackpot Casino. ✉ [Kaiser Franz-Ring 1](mailto:KaiserFranzRing1@casinos.at)  
☎ 02252/44496 🌐 [www.casinos.at/en/baden](http://www.casinos.at/en/baden).

### Kurpark Baden

**CITY PARK** | One of the biggest draws to Baden, outside of the spa, is the vast, lovely, sloping Kurpark almost smack in the middle of town. It was created back in 1792 for Austria's beloved Empress Maria Theresa. But as her highness only occasionally made her way to this Vienna outpost, the locals were free to enjoy it themselves, and they've been doing so ever since. In summer the park is in full flush: concerts are held each weekend afternoon under the hundred-year-old music pavilion, and operettas are performed at the arena (it's fitted with a glass dome, which comes out when it rains.) ✉ [Kaiser Franz-Ring](mailto:KaiserFranzRing@tourismus.baden.at)  
🌐 [www.tourismus.baden.at/historischer-kurpark](http://www.tourismus.baden.at/historischer-kurpark).

### Puppen- und Spielzeugmuseum (Doll and Toy Museum)

**MUSEUM** | Children of all ages will enjoy this enchanting museum, which has four rooms with dolls dating from the late 1700s to the 1950s, alongside other exhibits. ✉ [Erzherzog Rainer-Ring 23](mailto:ErzherzogRainerRing23@puppenmuseum-baden.at)  
☎ 02252/86800-578 🌐 [www.puppenmuseum-baden.at](http://www.puppenmuseum-baden.at) 🎫 €4 🕒 Closed Mon.

## Restaurants

### Rudolfshof

**\$\$ | AUSTRIAN** | Enjoy a walk through the Kurpark, where you'll find this 19th-century hunting lodge. The fine restaurant serves traditional dishes from the region, including Wiener and chicken schnitzel, pork fillet, and venison stew. **Known for:** traditional and hearty Austrian fare; excellent local wine; beautiful views from the terrace. 📍 *Average main:* €16 ✉ [Gamingerg Berg 5](mailto:GamingergBerg5@rudolfshof.at)  
☎ 02252/209-2030 🌐 [www.rudolfshof.at](http://www.rudolfshof.at) 🕒 Closed Mon.–Tues.

## Hotels

### Krainerhütte

**\$\$ | HOTEL** | Located about seven kilometers (four miles) outside Baden in a beautiful wooden area is this beautiful, typical Alpine house with sleek, modern rooms (think lots of balconies and natural wood). **Pros:** beautiful location; great for hiking or outdoor seminars; nice restaurant with vegan options. **Cons:** often gets booked up; some noise from nearby highway; restaurant doesn't serve after 9 pm. 📍 *Rooms from:* €125 ✉ [Helenental 41](mailto:Helenental41@krainerhuetten.at)  
☎ 02252/44511 🌐 [www.krainerhuetten.at](http://www.krainerhuetten.at) 🚗 73 rooms 🕒 Free breakfast.

### Schloss Weikersdorf

**\$\$ | HOTEL** | Set within beautiful grounds, this restored Imperial castle is minutes from the town center, on the edge of a vast public park. **Pros:** helpful staff; beautiful surroundings; sometimes offers special last-minute rates. **Cons:** rooms vary greatly in size; can feel crowded; a/c only in the Residenz wing. 📍 *Rooms from:* €105 ✉ [Schlossgasse 9-11](mailto:Schlossgasse911@schlossweikersdorf.at)  
☎ 02252/48301 🌐 [www.hotelschlossweikersdorf.at](http://www.hotelschlossweikersdorf.at) 🚗 164 rooms 🕒 Free breakfast.

## Klosterneuburg and Korneuburg

12 km (7½ miles) northwest of Vienna.

The quiet, moderate-size town of Klosterneuburg, on the south/west (Vienna) side of the Danube, feels much farther from the big city than just a few miles. In antiquity the area was a Roman fort, and its modern habitation began in the 11th century. Just south of Klosterneuburg lies the charming little vintners' village of Kahlenbergerdorf, an excellent spot to stop and sample the local wines.

To the north of here, just across the river on the north/east (Krems) bank, lies Korneuburg. The town is best known for its spectacular castle, which lies a

short walk from the center, but also has a few other interesting sights that make it worth a stop, including a beautiful neo-Gothic town hall (1864), which dominates the central square and incorporates a 15th-century tower.

## GETTING HERE AND AROUND

Commuter trains from Vienna's Franz-Josefs-Bahnhof and buses from the Heiligenstadt station leave frequently for the short trip to Klosterneuburg. By car from Vienna, follow the riverside Route B14 north.

For Korneuburg, commuter trains go frequently from Vienna's Praterstern and Central stations. Get off at Korneuburg Bahnhof for the town center and Leobendorf-Burg Kreuzenstein for the castle. By car, take the A22 to Exit 16, and then follow Route B3.

There is a regular taxi ferry service between the two towns running April through September. The journey takes five or 10 minutes (depending on direction) and it's a 25-minute walk at either end to reach the town centers.

## VISITOR INFORMATION

**CONTACTS Tourismus Klosterneuburg.**  
✉ [Freizeitzentrum Happyland, In der Au 2-4](mailto:FreizeitzentrumHappyland@tourismus-klosterneuburg.net/en)  
☎ 02243/32038 🌐 [www.klosterneuburg.net/en](http://www.klosterneuburg.net/en).

## Sights

### ★ Burg Kreuzenstein

**CASTLE/PALACE** | Seemingly lifted from the pages of a German fairy tale, Burg Kreuzenstein bristles with storybook turrets and towers. Sitting atop a hillside three kilometers (two miles) beyond Korneuburg, "Castle Cross-stone" is, in fact, a 19th-century architectural fantasy built to conjure up "the last of the knights"—Emperor Maximilian I himself. Occupying the site of a previously destroyed fort, the enormous structure was built by Count Nepomuk Wilczek between 1879 and 1908. Using old elements and Gothic

and Romanesque bits and pieces, the castle was carefully laid out according to the rules of yore, complete with a towering Burgtor, “kennel” corridor (where attackers would have been cornered), Gothic arcades, and tracery parapet walls. Discover the Burghof courtyard, with its half-timbered facade and Baltic loggia, a festival and banquet hall, a library, a stained-glass chapel, vassal kitchens, and the Narwalzahn, a room devoted to hunting trophies (if you’ve ever wanted to see a “unicorn horn,” here’s your chance). Guided tours are available on the hour.

A group of falconers keeps peregrine falcons and other birds of prey near the castle grounds, and there are regular shows April through October. **TIP** → The **quickest and most pleasant way to reach the castle is to take the suburban train (S-Bahn) to Leobendorf, followed by a 45-minute uphill walk. Only cash payment is accepted, and there is no ATM at the castle.** ☒ *Leobendorf bei Korneuburg* ☎ 0664/163-2700 🌐 [www.kreuzenstein.com](http://www.kreuzenstein.com) €12.

### ★ Stift Klosterneuburg

**RELIGIOUS SITE** | The great Augustinian abbey Stift Klosterneuburg dominates the town. The structure has undergone many changes since the abbey was established in 1114, most recently in 1892, when Friedrich Schmidt, architect of Vienna’s City Hall, added neo-Gothic embellishments to its two identifying towers. Inside the abbey church, treasures include the carved-wood choir loft and oratory, the large 17th-century organ, beautifully enameled 1181 Verdun Altar in the Leopold Chapel, stained-glass windows from the 14th and 15th centuries, and a Romanesque candelabra from the 12th century. In an adjacent outbuilding there’s a huge wine cask over which people slide; the exercise, called *Fasslrutsch’n*, takes place during the Leopoldiweinkost, the wine tasting around St. Leopold’s Day on November 15. The

Stiftskeller, with its atmospheric underground rooms, serves standard Austrian fare and wine bearing the Klosterneuburg label. There are several different tours available covering religious artifacts, imperial rooms and treasures, wine making, and the garden. **TIP** → **Guided tours are in German, but audio guides with English and other languages are available.** ☒ *Stiftsplatz 1* ☎ 02243/411-0 🌐 [www.stift-klosterneuburg.at](http://www.stift-klosterneuburg.at) ☎ €9 (additional €2–€5 for tours).

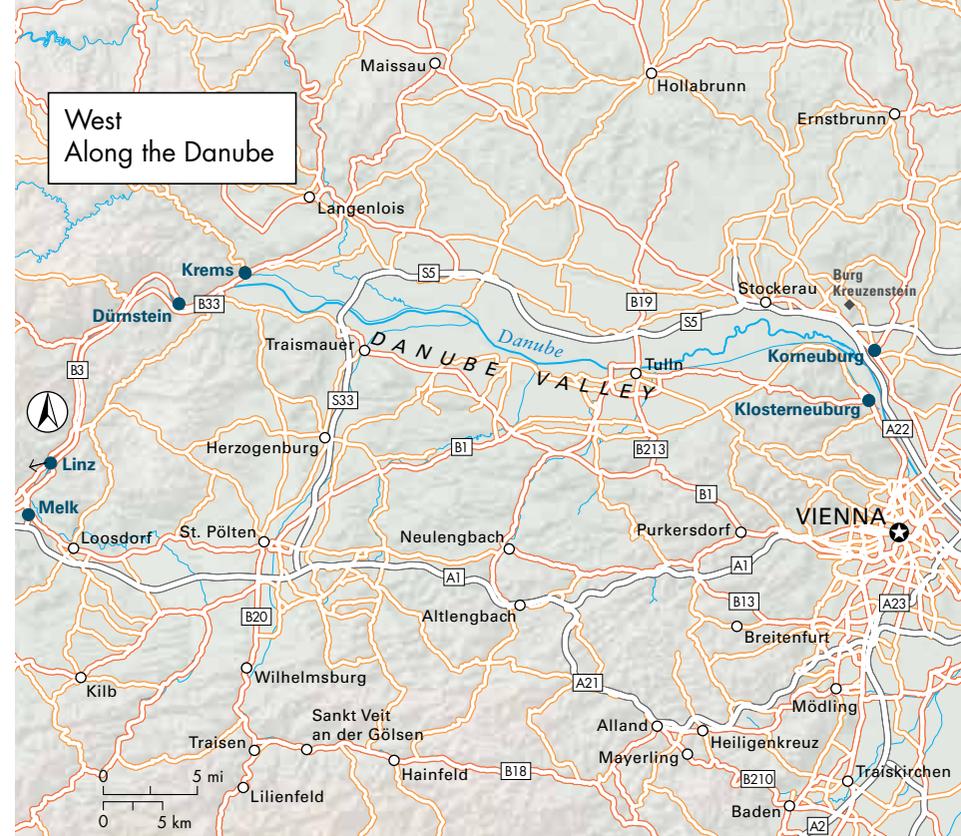
## Krems

80 km (50 miles) northwest of Vienna.

Krems marks the beginning (when traveling upstream) of the Wachau section of the Danube. The town is closely tied to Austrian history; here the ruling Babenbergs set up a dukedom in 1120, and the earliest Austrian coin was struck in 1130. In the Middle Ages, Krems looked after the iron trade, while neighboring Stein traded in salt and wine.

Set at the center of a thriving wine-producing area, charming Krems is perhaps most famed for the cobbled streets of its pedestrianized Altstadt (Old Town), which is virtually unchanged since the 18th century. Highlights here include the Steinertor city gate, the Renaissance-style Rathaus and, up a steep hill, the 13th century Piarist Church, one of the oldest in Lower Austria.

According to Austrian law, any town that houses a jail must receive massive funding for the arts—and Krems fits the bill. Consequently, the town is brimming with culture, most notably with its Kunstmeile, or Arts Mile (🌐 [www.kunstmeile.at](http://www.kunstmeile.at)). Starting at the Dominikanerkirche in the town center, it heads west for 1.6 kilometers (one mile) to the Minoritenkirche. All the big-ticket galleries, like the Karikaturmuseum, Landesgalerie Niederösterreich, and Kunsthalle Krems, are at the western end of the trail.



### GETTING HERE AND AROUND

By car from Vienna, take the A22 to the Knoten Floridsdorf exit, then following the S5 to Krems. Direct trains from Vienna’s Franz-Josefs-Bahnhof to Krems take a little over an hour, while trains from Vienna’s Westbahnhof require a change in St. Pölten.

### VISITOR INFORMATION

**CONTACTS** **Krems Tourismusinformation.**

☒ *Museumkrems, Körnermarkt 14*  
☎ 02732/82676 🌐 [www.krems.info](http://www.krems.info)

### Sights

#### Steinertor

**BUILDING** | The sole survivor of the original four 15th century city gates—the rest of them were razed in the late 1800s, along with the city wall—Steiner Tor remains one of the most recognizable symbols

of Krems. A plaque on one side reveals its three major stages of development—construction in 1480 (on the orders of Holy Roman Emperor Friedrich III), a Baroque refurb in 1754 (under the reign of Maria Theresa), and a significant renovation in the 1950s—while the other side has coats of arms and other decorative adornments. Look out also for the memorial to a catastrophic ice flood in January 1573. ☒ *Obere Landstrasse.*

**Karikaturmuseum (Caricature Museum) MUSEUM** | In 2016, Austrians grieved the death of Manfred Deix, whose world-famous works are housed here (“Deixfiguren” became so popular that the word was added to the German dictionary). More than 250 works from the 20th century to the present can also be viewed here, including a large collection of English-language political satire and

## Wachau Wines



The epitome of Austrian viticulture is found in the Wachau, those few precious kilometers of terraced vineyards along the north bank of the Danube River. There are few nicer ways to spend an afternoon than to travel to the fabled wineries of the valley and sample the golden nectar coaxed from the vines. It's usually possible to stop in and meet the winemaker, who will be happy to pour you a taste from the latest vintage and share some of the secrets of the trade.

Straddling both sides of the Danube is the Kremstal, centering on the medieval town of Krems. This wine-growing region is home to some of the finest white wines in Europe. The elegant, long-lived Rieslings are world-renowned, but the special glory of Austria is the Grüner Veltliner, an indigenous grape that can produce

anything from simple *Heurigen* thirst-quencher to wines of a nobility that rival the best of Burgundy.

Other popular grapes here include the intensely fragrant Traminer and the Grauburgunder (more familiar as Pinot Gris). There are even some full-bodied reds, like Cabernet Sauvignon and Pinot Noir. To sample some of these wines, you may be tempted to make an excursion to one of the nearby wineries like Salomon, Malat, or Zöhrer. Toni Zöhrer runs vineyard tours—his wines have been among the most successful in recent challenges.

A little farther upriver, near Dürnstein, there are even more wineries to discover, including F.X. Pichler, Knoll, and Jamek. For more information on Wachau wineries, visit [www.vinea-wachau.at](http://www.vinea-wachau.at).

caricature. [Steiner Landstrasse 3a](mailto:Steiner Landstrasse 3a)  
☎ 02732/908010 🌐 [www.karikaturmuseum.at](http://www.karikaturmuseum.at) 🎫 €10.

### Kunsthalle Krems

**MUSEUM** | An old tobacco factory is now a showcase for quirky and contemporary art by both known and unknown artists from the 19th to 21st centuries. Notable examples include Martha Jungwirth and Gregor Schöll. Tickets include entry to the Dominikanerkirche in the Old Town, which often holds Kunsthalle exhibitions focusing on current artists from around the world. [Steiner Landstrasse 5](mailto:Steiner Landstrasse 5)  
☎ 02732/908010 🌐 [www.kunsthalle.at](http://www.kunsthalle.at)  
🎫 €10 ☺ Closed Mon.

★ **Landesgalerie Niederösterreich** (State Gallery of Lower Austria)  
**MUSEUM** | When it opened in 2019, the Landesgalerie instantly became the most eye-catching building in Krems. Well, its gracefully swooping, tent-like, zinc-tiled

and glass-dotted roof isn't exactly easy to ignore. Step inside and things get even more interesting, with its 3,000 square meters of exhibition space dedicated to visual artworks from the last two centuries. Visitors can enjoy prints, paintings, photographs, sculptures, and installations from renowned Lower Austrian artists including Leo Navratil and Christa Hauer-Fruhmann. The on-site Restaurant Poldi Fitzka is well worth a visit too. [Steiner Landstrasse 1](mailto:Steiner Landstrasse 1)  
☎ 02732/908010 🌐 [www.lgnoe.at/en](http://www.lgnoe.at/en) 🎫 €10 ☺ Closed Mon.

## 🍴 Restaurants

### Gasthaus Jell

\$\$\$ | **AUSTRIAN** | In the heart of the medieval Altstadt is this storybook stone cottage run by Ulli Amon-Jell (pronounced "Yell"), who serves the tried-and-true recipes of her grandmother and great-grandmother, with a bit of her own

modern flair added to the mix. Snails *au gratin* in garlic herb butter, roast kidneys with bacon and onion, and gazpacho with buttery parmesan dumplings are popular items on the menu. **Known for:** enormous portions; delicious marillenknödel; preserves and other jarred delicacies for sale. ☎ Average main: €18 ☎ *Hoher Markt 8* ☎ 02732/82345 🌐 [www.amon-jell.at](http://www.amon-jell.at) ☺ Closed Mon. No dinner weekends.

### Kaiser von Österreich

\$\$\$\$ | **AUSTRIAN** | At this landmark in Krems's Old Town district, you'll find excellent regional cuisine along with an outstanding wine selection (some of these vintages come from the backyard). Owner-chef Haidinger learned his skills at Bacher, across the Danube in Mautern, so look for fresh river fish on the ever-changing set menus, along with locally-hunted wild boar and venison. **Known for:** fresh and locally sourced produce; selection of gluten-free foods; need to make reservations at least a day ahead. ☎ Average main: €43 ☎ *Körnermarkt 9* ☎ 0800/400-171-052 🌐 [www.kaiser-von-oesterreich.at](http://www.kaiser-von-oesterreich.at) ☺ Closed Sun. and Mon. No lunch.

### Wellen.Spiel

\$\$ | **AUSTRIAN** | This riverside bar-restaurant, overlooking the landing station from which the Danube to Melk cruises depart, makes a lovely spot for breakfast, lunch, or dinner. Local specialties like freshly-caught fish and *flammkuchen* (a pizza-like pie slathered in crème fraîche, onions, and bacon bits) sit alongside no-fuss favorites like burritos, burgers, and steaks. **Known for:** lovely riverside setting; tasty steckerl fish served with grilled vegetables; unpasteurized beers. ☎ Average main: €18 ☎ *Welterbeplatz 1* ☎ 02732/75055 🌐 [www.wellenspiel.at](http://www.wellenspiel.at).

## 🏨 Hotels

### Alte Post

§ | **B&B/INN** | The oldest inn in Krems, which for almost 140 years was a mail-route post house, is centered on an adorable Renaissance-style courtyard topped with a flower-bedecked arcaded balcony and storybook mansard roof. **Pros:** cool historical vibe; excellent restaurant with large portions; ideal Old Town location. **Cons:** old-fashioned; most rooms have shared shower and toilet facilities; restaurant can get very busy. ☎ Rooms from: €95 ☎ *Obere Landstrasse 32* ☎ 02732/822760 🌐 [www.altepost-krems.at](http://www.altepost-krems.at) ☺ Closed Dec.–Mar. ➔ 23 rooms 🍳 Free breakfast.

### Arte Hotel Krems

\$\$\$ | **HOTEL** | Located a little out of the center but very convenient for a host of art galleries including the Kunsthalle Krems, the Landesgalerie Niederösterreich, and the Karikaturmuseum, this hip, youthful hotel offers spacious, comfortable rooms with funky and colorful design elements. **Pros:** near the Arts Mile and cruise terminal; lovely views of surrounding vineyards; breakfast includes home-made bircher muesli. **Cons:** 20-minute walk from center; style over function in places (like desks without plug sockets); no tea or coffee in rooms. ☎ Rooms from: €155 ☎ *Dr.-Karl-Dorrek-Strasse 23* ☎ 02732/71123 🌐 [www.arte-krems.at](http://www.arte-krems.at) ➔ 91 rooms 🍳 Free breakfast.

### LOISIUM Wine and Spa Hotel

\$\$\$\$ | **HOTEL** | The town of Langenlois, about 10 kilometers (six miles) north of Krems, is home to one of the region's most luxurious accommodation options; a luxury hotel and wellness spa set within a sleek, ultramodern complex. **Pros:** lovely setting among vineyards; fun wine tour and tasting; extensive spa facilities. **Cons:** air conditioning is unreliable; modern design not to everyone's taste;

## Danube River Cruises



A cruise up the Danube to the Wachau Valley is a tonic in any season. A parade of storybook-worthy sights—fairy-tale castles-in-air, medieval villages, and Baroque abbeys crowned with “candle-snuffer” cupolas—unfolds before your eyes. Remember that it takes longer to travel north: the trip upstream to Krems, Dürnstein, and Melk will be longer than the return back to Vienna, which is why many travelers opt to return to the city by train, not boat. Keep your fingers crossed: rumor has it that on some summer days the river takes on an authentic shade of Johann Strauss blue.

**Brandner Schifffahrt** Leapfrog ahead by train from Vienna and start your cruise in Krems. A short walk takes you to the Schiffstation Krems piers, where river cruises run by Brandner Schifffahrt from April through October depart at 10:05 am for a ride to glorious Melk Abbey, via Dürnstein.

It's €26.50 one way, or €31.50 return. Other options include special day and evening cruises with oompah band concerts, wine cruises, and the like. There is an occasional “crime cruise” (in German) with a murder mystery to be solved. ✉ *Welterbeplatz 1, Krems* ☎ 07433/259021 🌐 [www.brandner.at](http://www.brandner.at) 📄 €26.50 one way.

**DDSG Blue Danube Schifffahrt** If you want to start your Danube sightseeing cruise in Vienna, DDSG is the company to go with. Boats depart from the company's piers at Handelskai 265 (by the Reichsbrücke bridge). There are thematic and brunch cruises as well, and you can also get trips from Krems to Melk. The ticket office is at the Vienna piers (take the U-Bahn line U1 to Vorgartenstrasse). Wannabe captains can also steer the ship for 15 minutes, while the real captain observes. ✉ *Handelskai 265, Vienna* ☎ 01/58880 🌐 [www.ddsg-blue-danube.at](http://www.ddsg-blue-danube.at) 📄 €59 round-trip.

minimum two-night stay on summer weekends. 📄 *Rooms from: €305* ✉ *Loisium-Allee 2, Langenlois* ☎ 02734/77100 🌐 [www.loisium.com](http://www.loisium.com) 🚗 82 rooms 🍷 Free breakfast.

## Dürnstein

85 km (53 miles) northwest of Vienna.

If a beauty contest were held among the towns along the Wachau Danube, chances are Dürnstein would be the winner—as you'll see when you arrive along with droves of tourists. The town is small, so leave the car or ship and walk the narrow streets. The main street, Hauptstrasse, is lined with picturesque 16th-century residences.

If you want to enjoy Dürnstein fully, without the crowds of day-trippers, stay overnight. Particularly during the summer solstice, when hundreds of boats bearing torches and candles sail down the river at twilight to honor the longest day of the year—a breathtaking sight best enjoyed from the town and hotel terraces over the Danube. In October or November the grapes from the surrounding hills are harvested by volunteers from villages throughout the valley—locals garnish their front doors with straw wreaths if they can offer tastes of the new wine, as members of the local wine cooperative, the Winzergenossenschaft Wachau.

## GETTING HERE AND AROUND

Dürnstein is eight kilometers (five miles) west of Krems on Route B3. Buses go from Krems/Donau Bahnhof at least once an hour in the daytime. It is also a stop on the Krems to Melk cruise route.

## VISITOR INFORMATION

**CONTACTS Fremdenverkehrsverein Dürnstein-Loiben** . ✉ *Dürnstein 32* ☎ 02711/200 🌐 [www.duernstein.at](http://www.duernstein.at).

## Sights

★ **Richard the Lionheart Castle** (*Ruine Dürnstein*)

**CASTLE/PALACE** | It may involve a steep, 30-minute climb up to 500 feet above the town, but the ruins of this famous castle—and its spectacular views up and down the Danube—make it well worth the effort. The name (in English at least) comes from the fact the castle once held Richard the Lionheart of England, who was captured by Leopold V on his way back home from the Crusades. It's said that Leopold had been insulted by Richard while they were in the Holy Land, so when the English nobleman was shipwrecked and had to head back home through Austria dressed (clearly not very convincingly) as a peasant, Leopold pounced. Richard was subsequently imprisoned in the tower of the castle for four months (1192–1193), before Leopold turned his prisoner over to the emperor, Henry VI. Henry held him for months longer until ransom was paid by Richard's mother, Eleanor of Aquitaine. ✉ *Dürnstein*.

## Stiftskirche

**RELIGIOUS SITE** | Set among terraced vineyards, the town is landmarked by its gloriously Baroque Stiftskirche, dating from the early 1700s, which sits on a cliff overlooking the river. This cloister church's combination of luminous blue facade and stylish Baroque tower is considered the most beautiful of its kind in Austria. ✉ *Dürnstein 1* 🌐 [www.stift-duernstein.at](http://www.stift-duernstein.at).

## Restaurants

### Loibnerhof

\$\$\$\$ | **AUSTRIAN** | It's hard to imagine a more idyllic setting for a memorable meal than this lovely restaurant in Unterloiben, a five-minute drive southeast of Dürnstein—especially if the weather is nice and tables are set out in the fragrant apple orchard. One of the oldest restaurants in the area, its kitchen offers inventive variations on regional themes, like Wachau fish soup, crispy roast duck, and foie gras parfait. **Known for:** unique Butterschnitzel (panfried veal with pork); outdoor dining at apple orchard; historic atmosphere. 📄 *Average main: €30* ✉ *Unterloiben 7* ☎ 02732/82890 🌐 [www.loibnerhof.at](http://www.loibnerhof.at) 🕒 *Closed Mon.–Tue. and Jan.*

## Hotels

### ★ Gasthaus Prankl

\$\$ | **HOTEL** | **FAMILY** | Located about a third of the way between Durnstein and Melk in the charming town of Spitz, the Gasthaus Prankl is a Danube gem, located in an old shipmaster's house dating back to 1680. **Pros:** romantic ambience; divine Danube views; huge rooms. **Cons:** only one room is wheelchair accessible; restaurant closes at 8:30 pm; Spitz is short on attractions. 📄 *Rooms from: €130* ✉ *Hinterhaus 16, Spitz* ☎ 02713/2323 🌐 [www.gasthaus-prankl.at](http://www.gasthaus-prankl.at) 🚗 8 rooms 🍷 Free breakfast.

### Richard Löwenherz

\$\$\$\$ | **B&B/INN** | Built up around the former church of a vast 700-year-old convent, this noted inn overlooks the Danube. **Pros:** überromantic; outstanding restaurant serves regional specialties; heated swimming pool in garden. **Cons:** rooms can get hot in summer; no elevator; bathrooms are bland. 📄 *Rooms from: €214* ✉ *Dürnstein 8* ☎ 02711/222 🌐 [www.richardloewenherz.at](http://www.richardloewenherz.at) 🕒 *Closed Nov.–mid-Apr.* 🚗 37 rooms 🍷 Free breakfast.

### Sänger Blondel

\$\$ | B&B/INN | Nearly under the shadow of the Baroque spire of Dürnstein's parish church, this popular hotel-restaurant welcomes you with a lovely, sunny-yellow, flower-bedecked facade. **Pros:** great value for money; beautiful garden; helpful staff can suggest excursions. **Cons:** no elevator; outdated room style; rooms could be bigger. 📍 *Rooms from: €129* 📍 *Dürnstein 64* 📞 *02711/253* 🌐 *www.saengerblondel.at* 🕒 *Closed Nov.–mid-Mar.* 🛏️ *16 rooms* 🍳 *Free breakfast.*

### ★ Schloss Dürnstein

\$\$\$\$ | HOTEL | One of the most famous hotels in Austria, this 17th-century early-Baroque castle on a rocky terrace with exquisite views over the Danube was once the preserve of the princes of Starhemberg. **Pros:** an elegant and historic property; great indoor and outdoor pools; exquisite views from the terrace. **Cons:** no air-conditioning; very expensive for the area; some bathrooms are small. 📍 *Rooms from: €25976* 📍 *Dürnstein 2* 📞 *02711/212* 🌐 *www.schloss.at* 🛏️ *47 rooms* 🍳 *Free breakfast.*

## Melk

86 km (54 miles) west of Vienna.

One of the most impressive sights in all of Austria, the abbey of Melk is best approached in mid- to late afternoon, when the setting sun ignites the abbey's ornate Baroque yellow facade. As you head eastward paralleling the Danube, the abbey, shining on its promontory above the river, comes into view. It easily overshadows the town, but remember that the riverside village of Melk itself is worth exploring. A self-guided tour (in English, from the tourist office) will point you toward the highlights and the best spots from which to photograph the abbey.

### GETTING HERE AND AROUND

To reach Melk from Vienna, drive on the A1 west or take one of the regular trains from Westbahnhof. From Krems, drive south on the B3, take a bus from Krems/Donau Bahnhof or, best of all, take to the water on a boat cruise (three hours).

### VISITOR INFORMATION

#### CONTACTS Wachau Info-Center Melk.

📍 *Kremsler Strasse 5* 📞 *02752/51160.*

### Sights

#### ★ Stift Melk (Melk Abbey)

**RELIGIOUS SITE** | Part palace, part monastery, part opera set, this masterpiece of Baroque architecture looms high above the Danube thanks to its upward-reaching twin towers, its grand 208-foot-high dome, and, of course, its site high up on a rocky outcrop. The Benedictine abbey has a history that extends back to its establishment in 1089, but the glorious building you see today is architect Jakob Prandtauer's reconstruction, completed in 1736, in which some earlier elements are incorporated.

A tour of the building includes the main public rooms: a magnificent library, with more than 100,000 books, nearly 2,000 manuscripts, and a superb ceiling fresco by the master Paul Troger; the Marmor-saal, whose windows on both sides enhance the ceiling frescoes and give them a curved effect; and the glorious *Stiftskirche* (abbey church) of Saints Peter and Paul, an exquisite example of the Baroque style. Look out for some quirky features along the way, like a "reusable coffin" that subtly opens at the bottom, and the hidden door in the library. There are guided tours in English every day at 3 pm. Be sure to leave time for exploring the gardens, a lovely mix of manicured lawns and wild woodland with amazing river views. 📍 *Abt-Berthold-Dietmayr-Strasse 1* 📞 *02752/5550* 🌐 *www.stiftmelk.at* 🕒 *€12.50 (€14.50 with tour).*

### Hotels

#### Hotel zur Post

\$\$\$ | HOTEL | Situated right in the center of town, this typical village hotel combines the traditional friendliness of family management with spacious, comfortable, and pleasantly furnished rooms. **Pros:** close to the abbey; friendly and accommodating; in-house sauna. **Cons:** parking area behind the hotel is small; noise from the abbey's bells can be intrusive; rooms with a/c cost extra. 📍 *Rooms from: €148* 📍 *Linzer Strasse 1* 📞 *02752/52345* 🌐 *www.post-melk.at* 🕒 *Closed Jan.* 🛏️ *30 rooms* 🍳 *Free breakfast.*

## Linz

185 km (115 miles) west of Vienna, 132 km (82 miles) northeast of Salzburg.

The capital of Upper Austria—set where the Traun River flows into the Danube—is a fascinating mix of the old and new. On the one hand, Austria's third-largest city has been casting a spell for centuries, thanks to the beautiful old houses on the vast medieval square, its Baroque cathedral with twin towers (and a fine organ over which composer Anton Bruckner once presided), and its unique historic railroad track that leads to the top of the Pöstlingberg. But on the other hand, it's also one of Austria's most modern, cosmopolitan, and cultural cities, with groundbreaking theaters and concert halls, hi-tech museums and galleries, and a dedication to creating a bike-friendly, traffic-free city center. Every September, Linz hosts the internationally renowned Ars Electronica Festival, designed to promote artists, scientists, and the latest technical gadgets. It's just one of many reasons Linz was named a UNESCO City of Media Arts in 2014.

If you plan to see a lot while you're in the city, consider purchasing the **Linz Card**, available online or at the tourist office.

Valid for public transportation and free entry into some museums, including the Ars Electronica Center and the Schlossmuseum, the card also provides discounts on entry to the zoo, botanical gardens, St. Florian's Abbey, and other venues. The card comes in three versions: one day (€16), two day (€27, including a round-trip on the Pöstlingbergbahn), and three day (€35, including the Pöstlingbergbahn and a €5 restaurant voucher).

### GETTING HERE AND AROUND

Linz Airport is served by Austrian Airlines, Lufthansa, and Ryanair. Regular flights connect with Vienna, Frankfurt, London Stansted, and more. The Linz airport is in Horsching, about 12 kilometers (7½ miles) southwest of the city. Buses run between the airport and the main train station according to flight schedules. High speed trains connect to cities across Austria, as well as international destinations like Munich in Germany and Prague in the Czech Republic.

The city center is easy to manage on foot. The heart of the city—the Altstadt (Old Town)—has been turned into a pedestrian zone; either leave your car at your hotel or use the huge parking garage under the main square in the center of town. Distances are not great, and you can take in the highlights of the city in half a day; though longer is better.

Easy-to-use trams take visitors to sites of interest not directly in the city center. If in doubt, grab a cab; there are many taxi stands in Linz. From Linz, you can also take the delightful LILO (Lizner Lokalbahn) interurban line, which makes the run up to Eferding.

#### AIRPORT INFORMATION LILO (Linz

Lokalbahn). 📞 *0732/771670* 🌐 *www.linzer-lokalbahn.at*. **Linz Airport.** (Blue Danube Airport Linz) 📍 *Flughafenstrasse 1* 📞 *07221/6000* 🌐 *www.linz-airport.com*. **ÖBB.** 📞 *05/1717* 🌐 *www.oebb.at*.



The white marble Holy Trinity column in Linz's Main Square was erected in gratitude for catastrophes the city had survived and as protection again fire, war, and plague.

### VISITOR INFORMATION

**CONTACTS** **Linz Tourism**. ☒ *Altes Rathaus, Hauptplatz 1* ☎ 0732/7070-2009 🌐 [www.linztourismus.at](http://www.linztourismus.at).

### Sights

#### Alter Dom (Old Cathedral)

**RELIGIOUS SITE** | Hidden away off the Graben, a narrow side street off the Taubenmarkt above the Hauptplatz, is this Baroque gem (1669–1678). The most striking feature of the Old Church, or Ignatiuskirche as it's also known, is its single nave with side altars. Anton Bruckner was the organist here from 1856 to 1868. ☒ *Domgasse 3* 🌐 [www.dioezese-linz.at](http://www.dioezese-linz.at).

#### Altes Rathaus (Old Town Hall)

**GOVERNMENT BUILDING** | At the lower end of the main square, the original 1513 building was mostly destroyed by fire and replaced in 1658–1659. Its octagonal corner turret and lunar clock, and some vaulted rooms, remain, and you can detect traces of the original Renaissance

structure on the Rathausgasse facade. The present exterior dates from 1824. The approach from Rathausgasse 5, opposite the Kepler Haus, leads through a fine, arcaded courtyard. On the facade here you'll spot portraits of Emperor Friedrich III, the mayors Hoffmandl and Prunner, the astronomer Johannes Kepler, and the composer Anton Bruckner. The building houses a museum dedicated to the history of Linz and a rather odd museum of dentistry. ☒ *Hauptplatz 1*.

#### ★ Ars Electronica Center

**MUSEUM** | **FAMILY** | Just across the Nibelungen Bridge from the Hauptplatz, this highly acclaimed "Museum of the Future," opened in 2009, pays tribute to the confluence of art, technology, and society. Permanent features at the museum include the 3-D cinema room, which allows you to fly over Renaissance cathedrals or explore ancient civilizations, as well as exhibits on the latest developments in robotics and the origins of the universe—all with English explanations. As well as its permanent exhibits, the

center also hosts annual festivals, with a different theme each year. Allow at least half a day to experience all the cybersites here. When you need a break, visit the Cubus Café Restaurant Bar on the third floor for refreshments and a spectacular view overlooking the Danube and Lentos Kunstmuseum opposite. ☒ *Ars-Electronica-Strasse 1* ☎ 0732/72720 🌐 [www.ars.electronica.art](http://www.ars.electronica.art) ☎ €11.50 ☺ *Closed Sun. and Mon.*

#### Dreifaltigkeitssäule (Trinity Column)

**MEMORIAL** | One of the symbols of Linz is the 65-foot Baroque column in the center of the Hauptplatz. Made in 1723 from white Salzburg marble, the memorial offers thanks from an earthly trinity—the provincial estates, city council, and local citizenry—for deliverance from the threats of war (1704), fire (1712), and plague (1713). On Saturdays, from March through October, there's a popular flea market centered around the column, while on Tuesdays and Fridays there is a farmers' market. ☒ *Hauptplatz*.

#### Landhaus

**GOVERNMENT BUILDING** | A magnificent renaissance building erected in the 16th century, the Landhaus is today the seat of the Upper Austrian provincial government. Look inside to see the arcaded courtyard with the Planet Fountain (honoring Johannes Kepler, the astronomer who taught here when it was the city's college) and the Hall of Stone on the first floor, above the barrel-vaulted hall on the ground floor. This hall, the Steinerner Saal, was probably the setting for a noted concert given by the Mozart children in October 1762, from which Count Pálffy hurried back to Vienna to spread the word about the musical prodigies. Adjoining the building is the **Minoritenkirche**, or Church of the Minor Friars. Once part of the monastery, the present building dates from 1758 and has a delightful Rococo interior with side-altar paintings by Kremser Schmidt and a main altar by Bartolomeo Altomonte. ☒ *Landhausplatz 1*.

#### Lentos Kunstmuseum

**MUSEUM** | Taking its name from the ancient Celtic settlement that was the origin of the city of Linz, this contemporary art gallery hugs the banks of the Danube on the Altstadt side of the river. Designed by Zurich architects Weber and Hofer, the building alone is worth a visit: its long, low-slung "shoe-box" gray-glass structure picks up the reflection of the water and, at night, it's brightly lit in shimmering blue or red. Inside, the collection contains an impressive number of paintings by Austrian Secession maesters Klimt, Schiele, and Kokoschka, along with works by other artists, including sculptures by Alfred Hrdlicka and one of the famous silkscreen portraits of Marilyn Monroe by Andy Warhol. All in all, the museum has about 1,500 artworks, more than 10,000 sketches, and nearly 1,000 photographs. The gallery's excellent café-bar-restaurant has an outdoor terrace with beautiful views of the river. ☒ *Ernst-Koref-Promenade 1* ☎ 0732/7070-3600 🌐 [www.lentos.at](http://www.lentos.at) ☎ €8 ☺ *Closed Mon.*

#### Mural Harbor

**PUBLIC ART** | Just a 30-minute walk from the Old Town but a whole world away, Linz's old industrial Hafenviertel (Harbor Quarter) is now home to one of Europe's largest open-air graffiti galleries. Almost every inch of the area's old warehouses, containers, and other industrial facades have been taken over by colorful and evocative works by international street artists like Arys, Lors, Nychos, and Roa, as well as local Austrian talent. There are about 300 artworks altogether, and you can see them all on a two-hour guided tour (€20), although this is currently only available in German. Alternatively, just stroll up and down Industriezeile yourself—many of the most impressive artworks are visible from the street. ☒ *Mural Harbor Gallery, Industriezeile 40* ☎ 0664/6575-142 🌐 [www.muralharbor.at](http://www.muralharbor.at).

### Neuer Dom (New Cathedral)

**RELIGIOUS SITE** | In 1862, the bishop of Linz engaged one of the architects of Cologne cathedral to develop a design for a grand cathedral in the French neo-Gothic style to accommodate 20,000 worshippers, at that time one-third of the population of Linz. According to legend, the tower was not to be higher than that of St. Stephen's in Vienna. The result was the massive 400-foot tower, shorter than St. Stephen's by a scant 6½ feet. Nevertheless, the "New Cathedral"—also known as the Mariendom or Maria-Empfängnis-Dom—was, and remains, the largest cathedral in the country. It contains gorgeous stained-glass windows depicting scenes from Linz's long history, and you can also climb the tower for lovely views over the city. There are also regular organ recitals held here; check the schedule online. ☒ *Herrenstrasse 26* ☎ 0732/946100 🌐 [www.mariendom.at](http://www.mariendom.at).

### Nordico

**MUSEUM** | At the corner of Dametzstrasse and Bethlehemstrasse you'll find the city museum. The building dates from 1610, while its extensive collection of art, photography, and archaeology follows local history from pre-Roman times to the mid-1880s. ☒ *Dametzstrasse 23* ☎ 0732/7070-1912 🌐 [www.nordico.at](http://www.nordico.at) ☎ €6.50 ☺ Closed Mon.

### ★ Pöstlingberg

**VIEWPOINT** | **FAMILY** | When you want to escape the hustle and bustle of Linz, just hop on the electric railway Pöstlingbergbahn for a scenic ride up to the famous mountain belvedere, the Pöstlingberg. The narrow-gauge marvel has been making the journey since 1898, and today the line extends to Hauptplatz. Europe's steepest non-cog mountain railway gains 750 feet in elevation in a journey of roughly four kilometers (2½ miles) in just 20 minutes, with neither pulleys nor cables to prevent it from slipping. Halfway up is the Linz Zoological Garden and a children's petting zoo, but it's at the top where you'll enjoy the best

views, with the city and the wide sweep of the Danube filling the foreground and the snowcapped Alps on the horizon. Also here is the Church of the Seven Sorrows of the Virgin (Sieben Schmerzen Mariens), an immense and opulent twin-towered Baroque pilgrimage church (1748) visible for miles around. Kids will enjoy the Grottenbahn, or Dragon Express, where they're whisked through a world of dwarves, forest creatures, and other fairy-tale folk, while adults can drink in the views—along with a glass of chilled white wine—from the terrace of the Pöstlingberg Schlössl restaurant. ☒ *Pöstlingbergbahn Bergstation, Am Pöstlingberg 9* ☎ 0732/3400-7506 🌐 [www.linzag.at/poestlingberg](http://www.linzag.at/poestlingberg) ☎ €4 one way, €6.70 round-trip.

### Schlossmuseum (Castle Museum)

**CASTLE/PALACE** | The massive four-story Linz Schloss (Linz Castle) was rebuilt as a palace by Friedrich III around 1477, literally on top of a castle that dated from 799. Today, its south wing is a modern, glass and steel building that contains one of the best provincial museums in the country. The Schlossmuseum's permanent exhibition traces the development of art, culture, science, and technology in Upper Austria from prehistory, through the Romans, to the Middle Ages, while temporary exhibitions do a deep-dive on particular aspects of local history. Look out for Beethoven's Hammerklavier among the historical musical instruments. Outside, check out the **Friedrichstor** (the Frederick Gate), with the *A.E.I.O.U.* monogram—some believe it stands for the Latin sentence meaning "All Earth pays tribute to Austria"—then stop for a drink or a bite in the **Schloss Café**, with its lovely shaded terrace affording lordly views of the Danube and the opposite bank. ■ **TIP** → **Getting up to the castle requires a short uphill walk. Avoid the steep and unshaded steps off Römerstrasse and opt for the gentler walk up Hofgasse instead.** ☒ *Schlossberg 1* ☎ 0732/772-052-300 🌐 [www.oelkg.at](http://www.oelkg.at) ☎ €6.50 ☺ Closed Mon.

### Stadtpfarrkirche

**RELIGIOUS SITE** | This city parish church dates from 1286 and was rebuilt in Baroque style in 1648. The tomb in the right wall of the chancel contains Frederick III's heart and entrails (the corpse is in Vienna's St. Stephen's Cathedral). The ceiling frescoes are by Altomonte, and the figure of Johann Nepomuk (a local saint) in the chancel is by Georg Raphael Donner, with grand decoration supplied by the master designer Hildebrandt. ☒ *Pfarrplatz 20* ☎ 0732/776120 🌐 [www.dioezese-linz.at/pfarre/4208](http://www.dioezese-linz.at/pfarre/4208).

### ★ Stift St. Florian (St. Florian Abbey)

**RELIGIOUS SITE** | Located 14 kilometers (8½ miles) southeast of Linz, this palatial Augustinian abbey—one of the most spectacular Baroque showpieces in Austria—was built in 1686 to honor the spot on the River Enns where St. Florian was drowned by pagans in 304. Landmarked by three gigantic "candle-snuffer" cupolas, it's centered on a mammoth **Marmor-saal** (Marble Hall), covered with frescoes honoring Prince Eugene of Savoy's defeat of the Turks, and a sumptuous **library** filled with 140,000 volumes. Guided tours of the abbey also take in the magnificent, three-story **figural gateway**, covered with symbolic statues; the **Kaiserszimmer**, a suite of 13 opulent salons with the "terrifying bed" of Prince Eugene (it's adorned with wood-carved figures of captives); and the over-the-top **abbey church**, home to an enormous organ once played by composer Anton Bruckner. You'll also see one of the great masterworks of the Austrian Baroque, Jakob Prandtauer's **Eagle Fountain Courtyard**, with its richly sculpted figures. If you find one day isn't enough to see it all, there are also rooms where you can spend the night in the abbey grounds (from €104 per night, including breakfast). Getting to the abbey is easy: there are regular buses from Linz's Volksgarten. ☒ *Stiftstrasse 1, St. Florian* ☎ 07224/89020 🌐 [www.stift-st-florian.at](http://www.stift-st-florian.at) ☎ Tour €10.50 (€14 incl. Imperial Apartments).

## 🍴 Restaurants

### ★ Herberstein

**\$\$\$\$** | **EUROPEAN** | Tucked away inside the historic Kremsmünsterhaus, this elegant restaurant rocks a mod-retro look with cozy tables, muted lighting, and attractive stonework. The cuisine is Austrian with a touch of Asia, as evidenced by the selection of wok dishes and an excellent sushi bar. **Known for:** delicious corn cream soup; courtyard seating; sushi making classes available. ☎ *Average main: €25* ☒ *Altstadt 10* ☎ 0732/786161 🌐 [www.herberstein-linz.at](http://www.herberstein-linz.at) ☺ Closed Sun. No lunch.

### Muto

**\$\$\$\$** | **FUSION** | There's a reason why the two-man creative team at this innovative Old Town restaurant chose the name "Muto." Meaning "transform" in Latin, it reflects their food philosophy; taking quality regional and seasonal ingredients and transforming them into delicious dishes with unusual and surprising flavor and texture combinations. The two seven-course menus (one for meat-eaters at €75 and one for vegetarians at €65) are always changing—just one more way in which this restaurant constantly surprises. **Known for:** innovative and playful dishes; cozy and casual interior; unlike anywhere else in Linz. ☎ *Average main: €75* ☒ *Altstadt 7* ☎ 0732/770377 🌐 [www.mutolinz.at](http://www.mutolinz.at) ☺ Closed Sun.–Tue. No lunch.

### Promenadenhof

**\$\$\$** | **AUSTRIAN** | The atmosphere here is that of a spacious, contemporary Gasthaus, with a fabulous roofed garden filled with flowers. The varied menu of regional cuisine is reasonably priced and has a touch of the Mediterranean, with plenty of vegetarian options available. **Known for:** delicious Linzertorte; excellent service; wine from the cellar available by the glass. ☎ *Average main: €20* ☒ *Promenade 39* ☎ 0732/777661 🌐 [www.promenadenhof.at](http://www.promenadenhof.at) ☺ Closed Sun.

★ **Verdi**

\$\$\$ | AUSTRIAN | It may be some way out of town, but the exquisite food, intimate atmosphere, and gorgeous views at this fine dining restaurant make it worth a special trip. Passionate owner-chef Erich Lukas crafts clever, seasonal set menus that combine Austrian and Mediterranean influences to great effect. **Known for:** seasonal menus using local ingredients; terrace seating in summer; gets booked up very quickly. ☎ *Average main:* €35 ☎ *Pachmayrstrasse 137* ☎ 0732/733005 ☺ Closed Sun.–Mon. No lunch.

☕ **Coffee and Quick Bites**☕ **Café Traxlmayr**

\$ | CAFÉ | One of Austria's grand old coffeehouses, this is the only one of its kind in Upper Austria. It's the perfect place to savor a cup of coffee, read the newspapers, and enjoy a light meal. **Known for:** grand coffeehouse atmosphere; delicious homemade cakes; outside terrace in summer. ☎ *Average main:* €6 ☎ *Promenade 16* ☎ 0732/773353 ☎ www.cafe-traxlmayr.at.

🏨 **Hotels**★ **Arte Hotel Linz**

\$\$ | HOTEL | Around the corner from Ars Electronica Center and just across the river from the Old Town, this avant-garde boutique hotel offers stylish and spacious bedrooms with quirky light fixtures and tailor-made artworks by local creatives. **Pros:** bright and cheerful decor; peaceful location away from the crowds; has a (small) gym and sauna. **Cons:** breakfast buffet not included and a bit sparse; decor feels a bit cheap in places; artworks divide opinion. ☎ *Rooms from:* €110 ☎ *Fiedlerstrasse 6* ☎ 0732/733733 ☎ www.arte-linz.at 🚗 73 rooms 🍷 No meals.

★ **Schwarzer Bär**

\$\$\$ | HOTEL | The birthplace of the renowned Mozart tenor Richard Tauber (1891–1948), the “Black Bear” is a traditional house filled with memorabilia on a side street in the center of the Old Town, a block from the pedestrian zone. **Pros:** great Old Town location; on-site underground parking; good bistro and rooftop bar. **Cons:** variance in room size; street noise can be heard from some rooms; friendly service not guaranteed. ☎ *Rooms from:* €140 ☎ *Herrenstrasse 11* ☎ 0732/772477 ☎ www.linz-hotel.at 🚗 50 rooms 🍷 Free breakfast.

🍷 **Wolfinger**

\$\$\$ | HOTEL | Set within a 500-year-old former nunnery, the centrally located Wolfinger has been a hostelry since the late 1700s, and that gives the interior some real charm. **Pros:** great location for museums and restaurants; charming rooms; very helpful and friendly staff. **Cons:** old fittings in some rooms; a few rooms share bathrooms; no a/c. ☎ *Rooms from:* €149 ☎ *Hauptplatz 19* ☎ 0732/7732–910 ☎ www.hotelwolfinger.at 🚗 50 rooms 🍷 Free breakfast.

🍷 **Nightlife**

Linz is far livelier than even most Austrians realize. The city's most happening neighborhood, known as the Bermuda Triangle, has dozens of hip bars and lounges centered around three narrow Old Town streets—Klosterstrasse, Altstadt, and Hofgasse—while the OÖ Kulturquartier off Landstrasse has recently become another popular late-night hangout spot.

★ **Boiler Room**

**BARS/PUBS** | The city's coolest cocktail bar can be found within this long and atmospheric vaulted cellar just off the Hauptplatz. Expert mixologists serve an array of unique, crafty cocktails, incorporating everything from port wine to peanut butter. ☎ *Domgasse 5* ☎ 0676/944–2019 ☎ www.boiler-room.at.

★ **Casino Linz**

**CASINOS** | Located in the Hotel Schillerpark, the casino has roulette, blackjack, poker, and slot machines (and a formal dress code). The less formal Jackpot Casino does not require a jacket and tie. Note that a passport is required for entry. The Jackpot Café, located on the ground floor, is open until late. ☎ *Rainerstrasse 2–4* ☎ 0732/654487 ☎ www.casinos.at/linz.

★ **Easy Bar**

**BARS/PUBS** | This cocktail bar has been a mainstay of the Linz bar scene for about three decades and is still going strong. ☎ *Baumbachstrasse 14* ☎ 732/770090 ☎ www.cocktailbareasy.at.

★ **Josef**

**BARS/PUBS** | This hopping establishment has its own home-brewed beer on tap, light snacks, and hearty regional dishes, and is open every day (except Sundays) from 11 am until 1 am. ☎ *Landstrasse 49* ☎ 0732/773165 ☎ www.josef.eu.

★ **Paul's**

**BARS/PUBS** | Virtually in the shadow of the New Cathedral, this hip stone-and-glass bar serves a great selection of Austrian wines and beers, including their own (superb) pale ale. They're open from early 'til late and do good food (including mean burgers) all day long—come at lunch for the bargain set menu (€11 for three courses). ☎ *Herrenstrasse 36* ☎ 0732/783338 ☎ www.pauls-linz.at.

🎭 **Performing Arts**★ **Brucknerhaus**

**CONCERTS** | A vast array of concerts and recitals are presented in the noted Brucknerhaus, the modern hall on the south bank of the Danube. Every September it's home to the International Bruckner Festival. The venue also hosts some events for Ars Electronica, a festival that explores art, science, and society. ☎ *Untere Donaulände 7* ☎ 0732/775230 ☎ www.brucknerhaus.at.

★ **Landestheater Linz**

**ARTS CENTERS** | Designed by British architect Terry Pawson and considered Europe's most state-of-the-art opera house, the Landestheater—also known as the Musiktheater am Volksgarten—is now the stage for hit musicals and orchestra and choir performances, along with hosting a youth theater. The Main Hall seats 1,200 with several smaller halls seating up to 270 each. The remarkable Sound Foyer was created in cooperation with Ars Electronica Future Lab. Visitors to the theater, whether they see a show or not, are welcome to stop in and experience the technological wonder of the so-called sound path. ☎ *Am Volksgarten 1* ☎ www.landestheater-linz.at.

★ **Posthof**

**ARTS CENTERS** | Located at the docks near the Mural Harbor Gallery, the Posthof has been one of the largest venues for contemporary arts not only in Austria, but in all of Europe, for more than 30 years. It's a multidisciplinary arts center, offering live music (of all genres, from reggae to techno), cabaret, dance, theater, literature, and more. Some 220 events are hosted each year throughout the September through June season. ☎ *Posthofstrasse 43* ☎ 0732/781800 ☎ www.posthof.at.

🛍️ **Shopping**

Linz is a good place to shop; prices are generally lower than those in resorts and the larger cities, and selections are varied. The major shops are found in the main square and the adjoining side streets, in the old quarter to the west of the main square, in the pedestrian zone of the Landstrasse and its side streets, and in the Hauptstrasse of Urfahr, over the Nibelungen Bridge across the Danube. A helpful list of boutique shops can be found on the Linz Labyrinth website (☎ www.linzlabyrinth.at).

## GIFTS AND SOUVENIRS

### O. Ö. Heimatwerk

**GIFTS/SOUVENIRS** | This is a good option if you're looking for local handmade goods and good-quality souvenirs. You'll find silver, pewter, ceramics, fabrics, and some clothing. In the summer, be on the lookout for good discounts. ✉ *Landstrasse 31* ☎ *0732/773377* 🌐 *www.ooe-heimatwerk.at* ☺ *Closed Sun.*

## HANDICRAFTS

### 'S Fachl

**GIFTS/SOUVENIRS** | This quirky little Hauptplatz store, part of a small chain operating throughout Austria, Germany, and Switzerland, gives over its shelves (well, its stacked fruit crates) to a variety of small local producers. The handicrafts for sale are forever changing, but there's always something worth popping in for, whether its clothes, jewelry, beauty products, stationery, or craft beer. ✉ *Hauptplatz 24* ☎ *0676/4203-016* 🌐 *www.fachl.at* ☺ *Closed Sun.*

## JEWELRY

### Atelier Almesberger

**JEWELRY/ACCESSORIES** | Also known as Donau Stein Design (Danube Stone Design), this shop creates little works of wearable art from stones found along the river's shore. ✉ *Hofgasse 7* ☎ *0670/6079-858* 🌐 *www.donausteindesign.com* ☺ *Closed Sun.*

## Activities

### BICYCLING

Cyclists appreciate the relatively level terrain around Linz, and within the city there are 200 kilometers (125 miles) of marked cycle routes. Cycling at slow speeds is also allowed in the city's pedestrian zones. The international Donauradweg, or Danube Cycling Path, runs from Germany through Linz and to the Black Sea. Get bike maps from the tourist office.

### Donau Touristik

**BICYCLING** | Rent bikes here, or book a guided cycling tour along the Danube River. Bikes rented in Linz can be returned at several points along the Danube Cycling Path. ✉ *Lederergasse 4-12* ☎ *0732/2080* 🌐 *www.donaureisen.at.*