

Austria

HIGHLIGHTS

- **KunstHausWien** Take in art from a completely different standing (literally) at Vienna's popular gallery by Friedensreich Hundertwasser (p81)
- **Salzburg** Relive scenes from *The Sound of Music* on a fabulously kitsch tour in the picture-postcard city (p92)
- **Innsbruck** Experience Tirolean culture with plenty of recreational opportunities and nightlife on the side (p97)
- **Hohe Tauern National Park** Roadtrip along one of the world's most scenic highways (p101)
- **Kunsthaus Graz** Gaze at the extraterrestrial, spaceship-shaped building in Graz, dubbed by locals 'the friendly alien' (p89)

FAST FACTS

- **Area** 83,870 sq km
- **ATMs** Available everywhere
- **Budget** €40-50 per day
- **Capital** Vienna
- **Country codes** ☎ 43, international access code ☎ 00
- **Famous for** apple strudel, Wiener schnitzel, Adolf Hitler, Arnold Schwarzenegger and Freudian psychoanalysis
- **Head of State** President Heinz Fischer
- **Languages** German (Slovene, Croat and Hungarian are also official languages in some southern states)
- **Money** Euro (€); A\$1 = €0.50; CA\$1 = €0.68; ¥100 = €0.66; NZ\$1 = €0.51; UK£1 = €1.47; US\$1 = €0.78



- **Phrases** *Grüss Gott* (hello), *servus* (hello and goodbye), *ba ba* (bye bye)
- **Population** 8.1 million
- **Time** GMT/UTC + 1

TRAVEL HINTS

Make lunch your main meal, when there are cheap *Tagesmenüs* (daily specials/menus). Make sure to have a shot of schnapps after your meal like the locals do.

ROAMING AUSTRIA

Many backpackers arrive on a train from Zürich or Munich, stop at Salzburg, move on to Vienna and head straight to Eastern Europe. With more time, stop first in Innsbruck and later visit the Salzkammergut lakes district south of Salzburg. Graz makes a good budget stopover en route to Hungary or Slovenia.

Mozart's symphonies waft through the cobbled streets of Salzburg like Julie Andrews floating around the picturesque Austrian countryside: Austria's story is surely an opera, a concerto, a work in progress, complete with elaborate sets and a plot that's as bloody as it is beautiful. Monarchs, political instability, assassinations and the Great War narrate just one side of the story,

however. The other is the country's incredible natural beauty blanketed in an edifying patchwork of depth and character like none other. Gorgeous enough to make you gasp, its snow-capped peaks stare back with jagged smiles. Graceful old cities exude genteel airs of time long past and even the smallest rural villages are cultural reservoirs rich in history. In Austria the past is an integral feature of the present and hints of its forthcoming destiny as a country prove that it can change as the world around it changes without sacrificing its heritage and traditions.

HISTORY

Austria is a little nation with a big past. It may be hard to believe this diminutive, land-locked Alpine country, bordering eight other states, was once the epicentre of the mighty Habsburg Empire and in the 20th century a pivotal player in the outbreak of WWI. In the 1866 Austro-Prussian War, the empire lost territory that was soon afterwards amalgamated into Germany.

The death knell came soon after Slavic separatists assassinated the heir to the throne, Archduke Franz Ferdinand, in Sarajevo on 28 June 1914. Austria-Hungary's resultant declaration of war on Serbia escalated into the 'Great War' (WWI); defeat in 1918 saw the empire broken up and today's small republic of Austria formed.

Nazis from neighbouring Germany assassinated Austrian Chancellor Dolfuss and installed a puppet regime in 1936. With Hitler, a native Austrian, as German Chancellor, there was little resistance; a national referendum supported the two countries' *Anschluss* (Union).

Heavily bombed during WWII, Austria has since worked hard to be a good global citizen by maintaining its neutrality. However, echoes of its fascist past have regularly come back to haunt it. In the 1980s rumours surfaced President Kurt Waldheim had been involved in war crimes in WWII. In the late 1990s other European nations briefly imposed sanctions when the far-right Freedom Party (FPÖ) and its controversial leader, Jörg Haider, joined the national government. Joining the EU in 1995, Austria has persevered despite political setbacks and has taken its turn at the presidency of the Council of the EU; also, the headquarters or regional centres of many international organisations (including the UN) are in Vienna.

The new Alliance for Austria's Future elected Haider as its leader in Salzburg in 2005. After a split in the Freedom Party he once led and the defection of the majority conservatives to Mr. Haider's new political party, the far-right politician looks confident to stay in office.

In 2006 Austria opposed offering Turkey full membership in the EU because of the strong Christian stance the country has taken since the 16th century, when the country stood with Christian Europe against the Ottoman Empire. Austrian diplomats are proposing Turkey be offered a 'partnership' with the EU instead of full membership. Turkey, however, has said it will walk away from such a proposal.

More bizarre news came out of Austria in 2006: Natascha Kampusch, an 18-year-old Austrian girl, made international headlines after escaping an eight-year kidnap ordeal that had kept her locked a small, windowless basement room in the commuter town of Strasshof, 25km outside Vienna. Kampusch fled when her abductor was distracted by a phone call, and ran to a neighbour's house for help. Her kidnapper, identified as Wolfgang Přiklopil, 44, committed suicide by jumping under a train a few hours later.

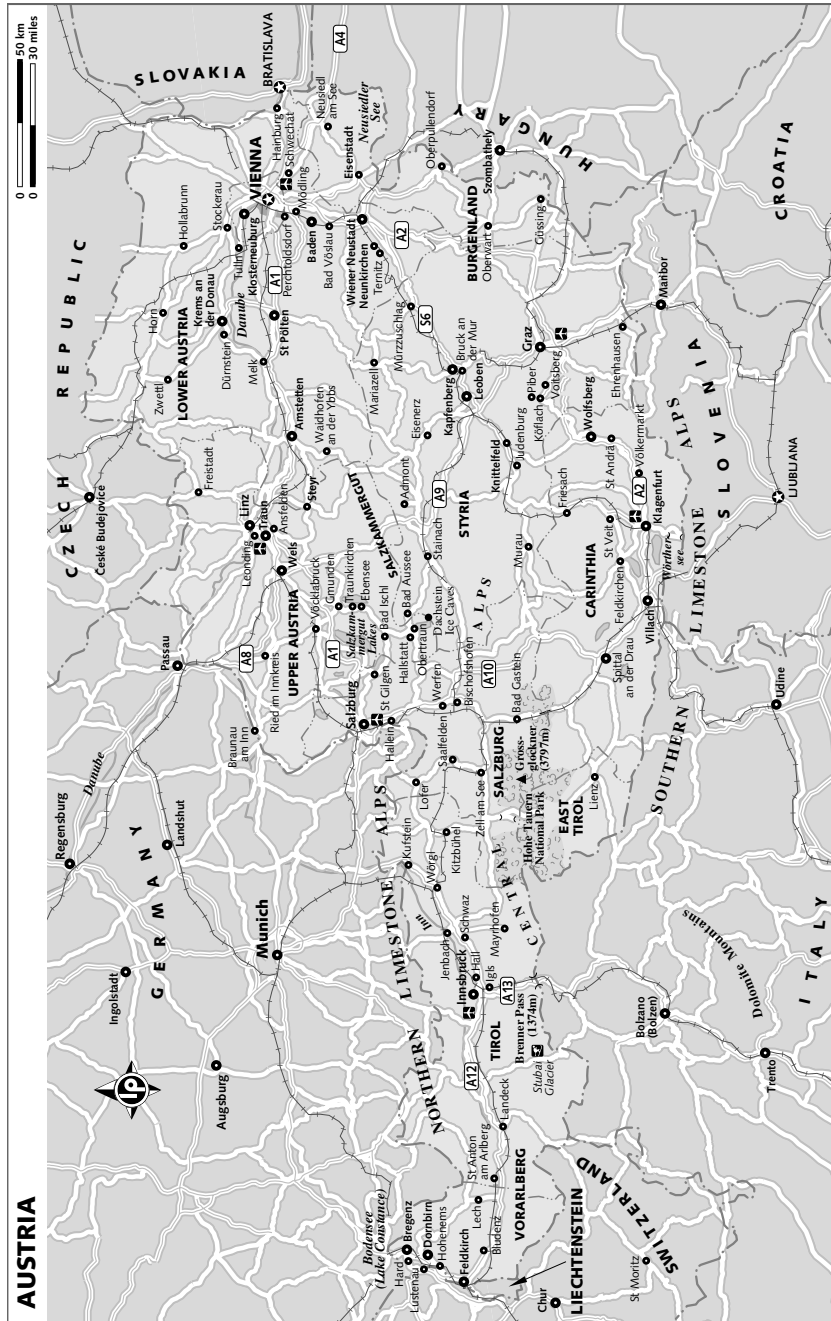
THE CULTURE

At first Austrians seem reserved and even slightly suspicious of strangers, and not generally regarded for outward displays of friendliness. However when you get to know them better, most are friendly and exhibit genuine interest in sharing a multifaceted culture with the rest of the world. Politeness and formality are highly esteemed and expected, especially among the older generation.

Vienna has always been a paradox, mixing Austrian conservatism with a large dollop of decadence. The scene you might find at Viennese balls – grand old society dames flirting with drag queens – aptly reflects this. The capital's pervading humour, *Wiener Schmääh*, is quite ironic and cutting, but is also meant to be charming. In essence, it's quite camp.

ARTS

Beethoven, Brahms, Haydn, Mozart, Schubert and other European composers were drawn to Vienna by the Habsburgs' generous patronage during the 18th and 19th centuries. The waltz originated in this city, and was perfected by Johann Strauss junior (1825–99).



READING UP

Graham Greene's evocative spy story *The Third Man* is set in Vienna, as is John Irving's *Setting Free the Bears*. Arthur Schnitzler's *Traumnovelle* (Dream Story) inspired – and is better than – the Stanley Kubrick film *Eyes Wide Shut*. Football fans might recognise Peter Handke's *Der Angst des Tormanns beim Elfmeter* (The Goalie's Fear of the Penalty Kick).

In the early 20th century, Vienna was also a city of design and painting. The Vienna Secessionist movement, the equivalent of Art Nouveau (*Jugendstil*), created such talents as artist Gustav Klimt and architect Otto Wagner.

Today, Austria's fine musical tradition has moved in the wholly different direction of chilled, eclectic electronica and dub lounge. Celebrity DJs Kruder & Dorfmeister have had the greatest global success, but the scene is loaded with other talent, including Pulsinger & Tunakan, the Vienna Scientists and the Sofa Surfers.

ENVIRONMENT

More than half of Austria is mountainous, with three chains running west to east: the Northern Limestone Alps, the Central Alps (which include the country's highest mountain, the 3797m Grossglockner) and the Southern Limestone Alps. The landscape around the Danube Valley in the northeast, and Graz to the southeast, is flat.

Only 3% of Austria's landmass is national park, but that does include the largest national park in the Alps, Hohe Tauern. Many species of alpine wildflowers are found here, while the bearded vulture and lyre-horned ibex have been reintroduced. Marmots can be spotted in other national parks.

The Austrian people are highly environmentally conscious and enjoy the unspoilt beauty of their country.

TRANSPORT

GETTING THERE & AWAY

Air

Austria is well served by low-cost airlines. **Ryanair** (☎ 0900 210 240; www.ryanair.com) flies from London to Graz, Klagenfurt, Linz and Salzburg, and **Air Berlin** (☎ 0820 400 011; [.com\) flies to Vienna from Germany. **Sky Europe** \(☎ 01-998 555 55; \[www.skyeurope.com\]\(http://www.skyeurope.com\)\) operates across Central and Western Europe.](http://www.airberlin</p>
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However, its 'Vienna' airport is far from the city – in Slovakia, actually. To compete, the national carrier **Austrian Airlines** (☎ 05-1789; www.aua.com) regularly offers special deals.

Boat

Hydrofoils run to Bratislava and Budapest from Vienna (see p86). Other boats go from Linz to Passau in Germany (see p87).

Bus

There are comprehensive bus services to Eastern European cities small and large – from the likes of Belgrade, Sofia and Warsaw, to Banja Luka, Mostar and Sarajevo. Other services go as far afield as England, the Baltic States, Germany, the Netherlands and Switzerland.

Vienna is the main departure point for services operated by **Eurolines** (www.eurolines.at, in German), although some also leave from Salzburg and Graz as well as other provincial cities. For information on Eurolines departure points in Vienna, see p86.

Car & Motorcycle

Austria levies fees for its entire motorway network. Tourists must buy a 10-day pass (€7.60/4.30 per car/motorcycle), a two-month pass (€21.80/10.90) or a yearly pass (€72.60/29) and clearly display the toll label (*Vignette*) on their vehicle. Passes are available at borders or from petrol stations. Otherwise, there's an on-the-spot fine of up to €220. For details, see www.oesag.at.

Train

The main rail services include the route from Vienna's Westbahnhof to Munich, via Salzburg, Innsbruck and Bregenz. Most trains to the Czech Republic leave from Südbahnhof in Vienna, although to Český Krumlov it's easiest to travel from Linz. Express services to Italy go via Innsbruck or Villach; trains to Hungary and Slovenia are routed through Graz.

GETTING AROUND

Air

Austrian Airlines (www.aua.com) and its subsidiary, **Tyrolean Airlines** (www.tyrolean.at), operate regular internal flights, but train, bus or car usually suffices in such a small country.

EMERGENCY NUMBERS

- Alpine Rescue ☎ 140
- Ambulance ☎ 144
- Doctor ☎ 141 (after hours)
- Fire ☎ 122
- Police ☎ 133
- Roadside Assistance ☎ 120

Bicycle

There are many national cycling paths. Private operators and hostels rent bikes; be prepared to pay anything from €15 to €30 a day. Vienna has cheap city bikes.

You can pay separately to take your bike on slow trains (€2.90/7.50/22.50 per day/week/month); on fast trains, it costs €6.80 a day, if space allows. Booking is advisable.

Boat

Services along the Danube (see p87) are mainly pleasure cruises, but provide a leisurely, scenic way of getting from A to B.

Bus

Services to less accessible regions such as the Salzkammergut or Hohe Tauern National Park are limited. In environmentally friendly Austria, only train services exist between major cities. Some 70 international coach services travel to or through Austria, and multiple routes with timetables and prices can be found in the Austrian bus guide at the Austrian National Tourist Office. For further information, contact **Postbus** (☎ 1 794 440; www.postbus.at).

Car & Motorcycle

All the multinational hire firms are here, but ask tourist offices about local agencies, which are usually cheaper. The minimum age for renting small cars is 19 years, and 25 for larger 'prestige' cars. Customers must have held a licence for at least a year. Many contracts forbid taking cars outside Austria, particularly into Eastern Europe.

Whether you hire a vehicle or bring your own, you must pay a tax to drive on motorways and affix a *vignette* to your windscreen.

Headlights must be switched on at all times, and crash helmets are compulsory.

Train

The efficient state network **ÖBB** (www.oebb.at) is supplemented by a few private lines. Eurail and Inter-Rail passes are valid on the former, but only sometimes on the latter. There is no supplement on Eurail and Inter-Rail passes for national travel on faster Eurocity (EC) and Intercity (IC) trains. Tickets purchased on the train cost about €3 extra. Within Austria, anyone can buy a *Vorteilscard*, which reduces fares by 45% and is valid for a year. At €19.90/99.90 per person aged under 26/over 26, it's of most interest to under 26s.

Nationwide train information is available by ringing ☎ 05 1717 (local rate).

VIENNA

☎ 01 / pop 1.6 million

The Ottomans referred to Vienna (Wien) as the city of the 'golden apple', but this crossroads of Eastern and Western Europe is more akin to a big wedding cake: a vivacious, multilayered concoction, stuffed with galleries, museums, exhibitions and a sensation of resuscitated times past. The demarcation between antiquity and contemporary is hazy, but Vienna's architecture is only the proverbial icing on this beguiling marvel. The flavour of this place is as elaborate as its heritage and many centuries in the making. The narrative of the Habsburg dynasty can be traced through the rooms of the Hofburg palace, while the legacy of Art Nouveau artists Gustav Klimt and Egon Schiele is on show at the Oberes Belvedere and the Leopold Museum.

ORIENTATION

Many sights are in the Innere Stadt (inner city), encircled by the Danube Canal (Donaukanal) to the northeast and broad boulevards called the Ring or Ringstrasse.

In addresses, the number of a building follows the street name. Any number before the street name denotes the district, of which there are 23. District 01 (the Innere Stadt) is the most central. Generally, the higher the district number, the further out it is.

INFORMATION

Internet Access

Bignet (Map p84; ☎ 503 9844; Kärntner Strasse 61; per 30min €3.90)

Speednet Café (Map p80; ☎ 892 56 66; 15 Europlatz 1, Westbahnhof; per 30min €3.30) Conveniently located inside the train station.

Surfland Internetcafé (Map p84; ☎ 512 77 01; Krugerstrasse 10; initial charge €1.50, plus per min €0.08)

Medical Services

For out-of-hours dental treatment, call ☎ 512 20 78.

Allgemeines Krankenhaus (Map p80; ☎ 404 00; 09, Währinger Gürtel 18-20) General hospital.

Post

Main post office (Map p84; Hauptpost 1010; 01, Fleischmarkt 19; ☎ 24hr)

Tourist Information

Jugend-Info Wien (Vienna Youth Information; Map p84; ☎ in Austria 17 99; 01, Babenbergerstrasse 1; ☎ noon-7pm Mon-Sat) Can get various reduced-price tickets for 14- to 26-year-olds.

Tourist-info Zentrum (Main tourist office; Map p84; ☎ 245 55; www.wien.info; 01, cnr Albertinaplatz & Maysedergasse; ☎ 9am-7pm)

Travel Agencies

STA Travel (☎ 9am-5.30pm Mon-Fri) Garnisonsgasse (Map p80; ☎ 401 48-0; 09; Garnisonsgasse 7); Türkenstrasse (Map p84; ☎ 401 48-7000; 09; Türkenstrasse 6B); Karlsgasse (Map p84; ☎ 502 43-0; 04; Karlsgasse 3)

SIGHTS & ACTIVITIES

Vienna's ostentatious buildings and beautiful parks make it a lovely city for strolling. Catch tram 1 or 2 around the Ringstrasse (the road circling the centre) to acquire a taste of the city. It passes the neo-Gothic **Rathaus** (Town Hall; Map p84), the Greek Revival-style **Parlament**, and the 19th-century **Burgtheater** – you can even glimpse the baroque **Karlskirche** (St Charles' Church) from the tram. There's also a concrete **Holocaust memorial** by Rachel Whiteread in Judenplatz, Austria's first monument of its kind. Look closely and you'll notice the sides are constructed of cement books facing open-end out, perhaps to convey a lack of closure coupled with an enduring remembrance for the holocaust victims.

Walk along **Graben**, past the knobbly **Pet-säule** (Plague Column), commemorating the end of the plague, and turn left into **Kohlmarkt**, where you'll be greeted by the impressive **Hofburg** (Imperial Palace), the Habsburgs' city-centre base. Walk towards it and wander around this large complex's nooks and

crannies. There are several museums inside. If you're going to visit any, head for the **Kaiser-appartements & 'Sissi' Museum** (Map p84; ☎ 535 75 75; adult/concession €7.50/5.90; ☎ 9am-5pm). Get the audio guide (free), which tells the strange life story of Empress Elisabeth ('Sissi'), wife of Kaiser Franz Josef.

While in the neighbourhood, make a detour to the **Kaisergruft** (Imperial Vault; Map p84; 01, Neuer Markt/Tegethofstrasse; adult/concession €4/1.50) where the remains of several Habsburgs, including Sissi, lie. Though she's been dead for more than a century, Sissi's fans still leave flowers – an indication of the place's weird, cultish *Six Feet Under* feel.

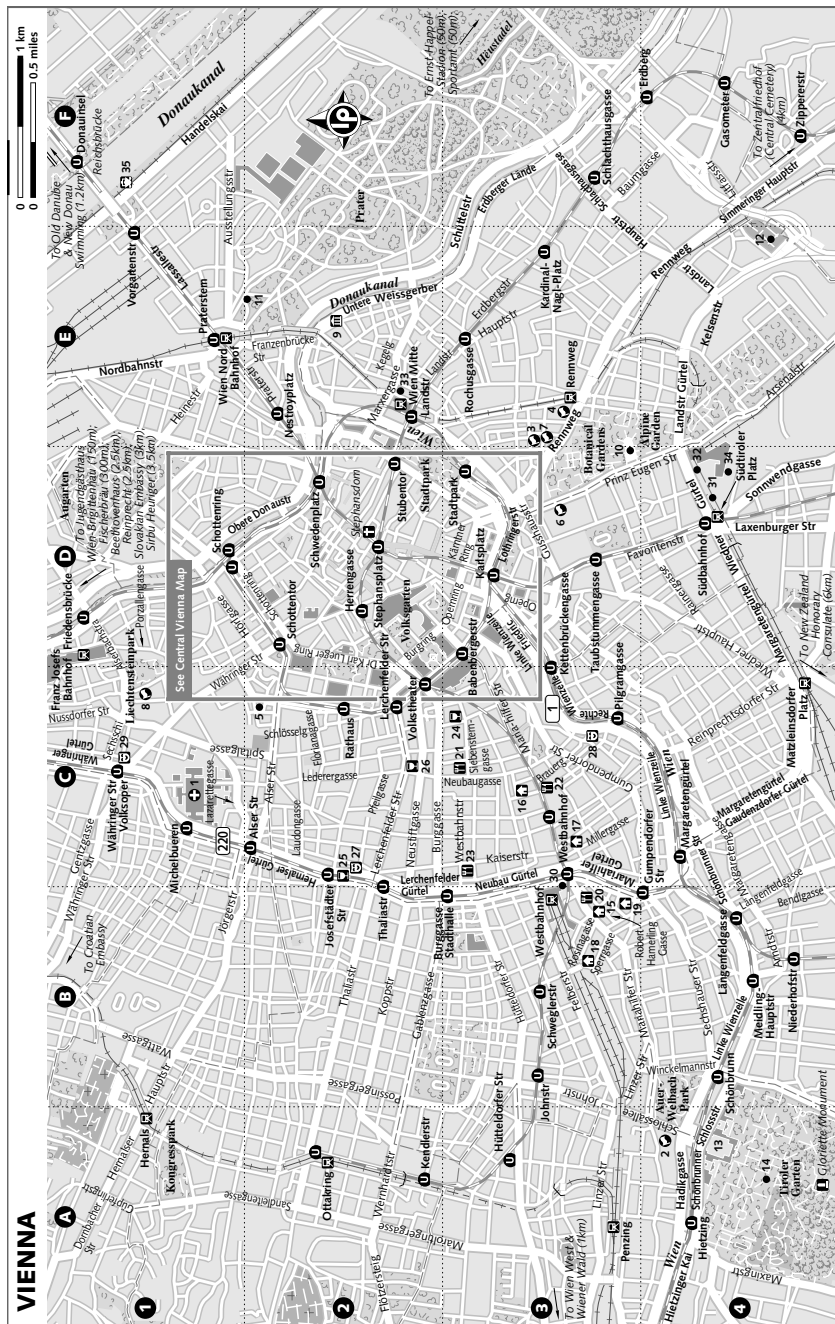
Museums & Galleries

If you plan to see just one Viennese museum, the traditional choice is **Oberes Belvedere** (Upper Belvedere; Map p80; ☎ 795 57-134; 03, Prinz Eugen Strasse 37; adult/concession €6/3; ☎ 10am-6pm Tue-Sun Apr-Oct, 10am-5pm Tue-Sun Nov-Mar). This baroque palace is home to Gustav Klimt's famous and beautiful *The Kiss* and *Judith*, and has a fine, manageably sized collection of Impressionist and other early-20th-century works. The museum is now five Klimts short as a result of the 2005 conclusion to a lengthy lawsuit against the Austrian government, which awarded the paintings to Maria Altmann, the descendent of Adele Bloch-Bauer, who owned the paintings before they were stolen by the Nazis. One of the five, Klimt's first portrait of Bloch-Bauer, was later sold for US\$135 million, making it the world's most expensive painting.

GETTING INTO TOWN

Most hostels are near Westbahnhof, where trains arrive from Western and northern Europe. The easiest way to get to this area from **Wien Schwechat airport** (☎ 7007-0; www.viennaairport.com) is to hop on an airport bus (€6), which runs every 20 to 30 minutes, 24 hours a day.

The fastest transport from Schwechat into the centre is **City Airport Train** (☎ 25 250; www.cityairporttrain.com), which takes 15 minutes from the airport to Wien Mitte, costs €8 one way. The S-bahn (S7) does the same journey (one-way €3, 25 minutes). Taxis cost about €32; **C&K Airport Service** (☎ 444 44) has a €23 fixed fare.



AUSTRIA

VIENNA

INFORMATION		Schönbrunn Maze..... 14 A4		Rhiz..... 25 C2	
Allgemeines				Shebeem..... 26 C2	
Krankenhauses.....	1 C1	SLEEPING ☒		ENTERTAINMENT ☒	
Czech Republic Embassy.....	2 A4	Hotel Ruthensteiner.....		15 B3	
German Embassy.....	3 E3	Pension Hargita.....		16 C3	
Italian Embassy.....	4 E3	Westend City Hostel.....		17 C3	
STA Travel.....	5 C2	Wombat's - The Base.....		18 B3	
Swiss Embassy.....	6 D3	Wombat's - The Lounge.....		19 B3	
UK Embassy.....	7 E3				
US Embassy.....	8 C1				
SIGHTS & ACTIVITIES		EATING ☒		TRANSPORT	
KunstHausWien.....	9 E2	Sato Turkish Café.....		Airport bus pick-up/drop-off.....	
Oberes Belvedere.....	10 D3	KunstHausWien.....		20 B3	
Reisenrad.....	11 E2	Schneitzwirt Schmidt.....		21 C3	
St Marxer Friedhof.....	12 E4	Trzesniewski.....		22 C3	
Schloss Schönbrunn.....	13 A4	Vegetasia.....		23 C3	
		DRINKING ☒		Eurolines Office.....	
		Centimeter.....		24 C3	
				Eurolines Office.....	
				34 D4	
				G Glaser.....	
				Hydrofoil and Boat Wien Landing	
				Stage.....	
				35 F1	

The **Museumsquartier** (Map p84; ☎ 523 04 31; 07, Museumsplatz 1) is another must-see in Vienna. Architecturally stunning and modern, it's renowned for the **Leopold Museum** (Map p84; ☎ 525 70-0; adult/student €9/5.50; ☎ 10am-7pm Wed-Mon, 10am-9pm Fri), which houses the world's largest collection of Egon Schiele paintings, with some minor works by Klimt and Kokoscha.

There's also the much-lauded **Museum Moderner Kunst** (Museum of Modern Art; Map p84; ☎ 525 00; adult/concession €8/6.50; ☎ 10am-6pm Tue & Wed, Fri-Sun, 10am-9pm Thu), which is an architecture centre, city art gallery and much, much more.

Friedensreich Hundertwasser transformed this formerly inconspicuous factory into a fairytale art gallery called the **KunstHausWien** (Map p80; ☎ 712 04 91; 03, Untere Weissgerberstrasse 13; admission €9, half-price Mon; ☎ 10am-7pm). Redolent of Anton Gaudí's buildings in Barcelona, irregular elements such as uneven floors, misshapen windows, and amalgamations of glass, metal, brick, and ceramic tile almost literally sweep you off your feet. To get to this amazing place take train N or O to Radetzkyplatz.

Albrecht Dürer's *Hare* and a few Michelangelos are joined by superbly curated modern exhibitions at the **Albertina** (Map p84; ☎ 534 83-540; www.albertina.at; 01, Albertinaplatz 1A; adult/student €9/6.50; 10am-6pm Thu-Tue, 10am-9pm Wed).

At **Haus der Musik** (House of Music; Map p84; ☎ 516 48 51; www.hdm.at; 01, Seilerstätte 30; adult/concession €10/8.50; ☎ 10am-10pm) make your own music in this mind-blowing array of interactive exhibits.

Sigmund Freud Museum (Map p84; ☎ 319 15 96; 09, Berggasse 19; admission €5; ☎ 9am-6pm Jul-Sep, 9am-5pm Oct-Jun) is the former home of the father of psychoanalysis.

Schloss Schönbrunn

The Habsburgs' 1440-room summer palace, **Schloss Schönbrunn** (Map p84; ☎ 811 13-0; 13, Schönbrunner Schlosstrasse 47; self-guided 22-/40-room tours adult €8/10.50, student €6.90/8; ☎ 8.30am-5pm Apr-Oct, 8.30am-4.30pm Nov-Mar), won't be to everyone's taste. On a sunny day, however, no opportunity should be missed to laze around its Versailles-like gardens (admission free). There's a **maze** (adult/concession €2.10/1.45) and similar attractions. Get there on U-Bahn 4.

Riesenrad

Anyone who's seen *The Third Man* will recognise the **Riesenrad** (Giant Wheel; Map p80; admission €7.50) in the Prater amusement park; it's where Orson Welles ad-libbed his immortal speech about peace, Switzerland and cuckoo clocks.

Cemeteries

Beethoven, Schubert, Brahms and Schönberg have memorial tombs in the atmospheric **Zentralfriedhof** (Central Cemetery; 11, Simmeringer Hauptstrasse 232-244), about 4km south of the centre. Mozart also has a monument here, but he is actually buried in the **St Marxer Friedhof** (Cemetery of St Mark; Map p80; 03, Leberstrasse 6-8).

Naschmarkt

Saturday is the busiest day at this **market** (Map p80; 06, Linke Wienzeile; ☎ 6am-6pm Mon-Sat), when the week's food and clothing stalls are joined by a flea market.

Water Sports

You can swim and sail in the stretches of water known as the **Old Danube**, located northeast of the Donaustadt island, and also in the **New Donau**, which runs parallel to and just north of the Donaukanal (Danube Canal).

AUSTRIA

TOURS

The tourist office publishes, *Wiener Spaziergänge*, a list of guided walks. **Vienna Walks** (☎ 774 89 01; <http://viennawalks.tix.at>) organises **Third Man tours** (adult/concession €16/13.50; ☎ 4pm Mon & Fri), including through the city's sewers. It also has a **tour of Jewish Vienna** (adult/concession €11/10; ☎ 1.30pm Mon).

Some boat operators also conduct tours.

FESTIVALS & EVENTS

Wiener Festwochen (Vienna Festival; Map p84; ☎ 589 22-22; www.festwochen.or.at) Features performing-arts programmes from mid-May to mid-June; Vienna's Marathon often coincides with Festwochen's start, and the city can be totally booked around that time.

Donauinselfest At the end of June, look out for free rock, jazz and folk concerts.

Christkindlmarkt (Christmas market) Vienna's traditional takes place in front of the city hall between mid-November and 24 December.

SLEEPING

Vienna has lots of budget choices, although rooms fill quickly in the summer, so book ahead.

Wien West (☎ 914 23 14; www.wiencamping.at; Hüttelbergstrasse 80; camps site per adult/tent Sep-Jun €5/3.50, Jul-Aug €6/3.50, 2-/4-person cabins Apr-Oct €27/37; closed Feb) On the edges of the Wiener Wald (Vienna Woods) this well-equipped site has modern facilities, and even a wireless internet hot spot. Take U4 or the S-Bahn to Hütteldorf, then bus 148 or 152.

our pick Hostel Ruthensteiner (Map p80; ☎ 893 42 02; www.hostelruthensteiner.com; 15, Robert Hamerling Gasse 24; dm/d from €12.50/25; ☎ ☎) If stars were given out for hostels, the first truly independent backpackers in central Europe would be a five. The über-friendly owners, Erin and Walter, have been catering to travellers for 34 years. Start with a quirky low-key vibe then add in an immaculate, modern facility with more renovations in progress, mix in a strong dose of personality and options galore and you'll have a feel for this place. A beautifully handmade wooden bar, music-lounge room, and lovely garden area also enhance the surroundings.

Jugendgästhaus Wien-Brigittenau (☎ 332 82 94; jgh1200wien@chello.at; 20, Friedrich Engels Platz 24; dm from €15) This Hostelling International (HI) hostel is popular with school groups. To get here take the U6 to Handelskai and then bus 11A one stop to Friedrich Engels Platz.

Wombat's (☎ 897 23 36; www.wombats.at; dm/d €18/24; ☎ ☎) The Base (Map p80; 15, Grangasse 6); The Lounge (Map p80; 137, Mariahilferstrasse) Top-flight cleanliness and comfort fuse with a gregarious party bar to make Wombat's immensely popular. The mixed-gender dorms have secured entry, wooden bunk beds and modern bathrooms. It's where the hip kids stay – if they remember to do something as terminally un-hip as book ahead. In addition to the original location (the Base), Wombat's has opened another hostel (the Lounge) on the main shopping route. It's very easy to find and has an unmistakable conviviality, taking its cue from what made the first one so popular.

Westend City Hostel (Map p80; ☎ 597 67 29; www.westendhostel.at; 6, Fügergasse 3; dm €18, s/d €41/49; ☎ ☎) The weirdest thing behind the pale purple façade isn't the fact that this was once a bordello. It's the particle board-encased en suite bathrooms in some of the mixed dorms; these bathrooms have extra mattresses on their mezzanine roof. Still, the place is well located and friendly.

Pension Hargita (Map p80; ☎ 526 19 28; www.hargita.at; 07, Andreasgasse 1; s/d from €38/53) One of the cleanest and most charming budget pensions in Vienna. Rooms have aqua blue or sunny yellow features and include breakfast.

EATING

Cheap student cafeterias include **Technical University Mensa** (Map p84; 04, Resselgasse 7-9; mains €3.20-4.80; ☎ 11am-2pm Mon-Fri) and **University Mensa** (Map p84; 7th fl, 01, Universitätsstrasse 7; mains €4.20-4.80; ☎ 11am-2pm Mon-Fri Sep-Jun).

Vegetasia (Map p80; ☎ 523 10 91; 07, Kaiserstrasse 45; mains €6.50-22) Flavourful and eclectic combinations of fresh vegetables, Asian spices, and pure vegetable-based homemade dishes will bring gastric delight to anyone wanting to avoid *Fleisch* (meat) in their diet.

OH Pot, OH Pot (Map p84; ☎ 319 42 59; 09, Währinger Strasse 22; lunch/dinner hotpots €6.20/8.20) Painted in warm Mediterranean colours, this sweet boho restaurant has decent ethnic stews (hotpots) on the menu. Whether African Asian, central European or South American, they all come with either soup or salad. The best deal is from 3pm to 6pm, when prices drop to €4.95.

Ra'an (Map p84; ☎ 319 35 63; 09, Währinger Strasse 6-8; lunch €5.80, dinner €6.50-12.60) Ra'an looks like a cool noodle bar and has what listings magazine *Falter* has decreed the 'cutest cardboard lunch boxes in town'. The menu ranges from sushi

and rice dishes at lunch to more elaborate Thai and Vietnamese in the evening.

Sato Turkish Café (Map p80; ☎ 897 58 54; 15, Mariahilferstrasse 151; mains €3-13; ☎ ☎ 8am-midnight) This restaurant entices clientele with generous portions of bona fide Turkish cuisine, an easy atmosphere, and inexpensive daily menus (*Tagesmenüs*) sure to satisfy every taste and budget.

Schnitzelwirt Schmidt (Map p80; ☎ 92, Neubaugasse 52; schnitzel from €5.10; ☎ ☎ Mon-Sat) With fabulously grumpy waiters – who shout at you if you get in their way – and huge Wiener schnitzels, this buzzing place lets you experience the authentic Vienna of today.

Trzesniewski (Map p84; ☎ 512 32 91; 01, Dorotheergasse 1; sandwiches €0.80) You can really feel like one of the Austrian emperor's minions on the way home from the factory at this stand-up café. It sells tiny open sandwiches, usually featuring egg or fish of some description, which you wash down with a tiny *Pfiff* (125mL) beer.

DRINKING

Bars

The area around Ruprechtsplatz, Seitenstetengasse and Rabensteig near Schwedenplatz is dubbed the **Bermudadreieck** (Bermuda Triangle; Map p84) for the way drinkers disappear into its numerous pubs and clubs. Venues are lively and inexpensive, but not particularly atmospheric.

In summer a stretch of Danube near the Reichsbrücke known as the Copa Cagrana comes alive with open-air bars, cafés and restaurants.

Centimeter (Map p80; ☎ 524 33 29; www.centimeter.at; 07, Stiftgasse 4) This is the most conveniently located of a city-wide chain, in the charming 'Spittelberg' area of cobbled streets, bars and restored Biedermeier houses. It's a rollicking establishment selling Austrian food and lots of beer (sold by the centimetre).

Crossfield's Aussie Pub (Map p84; ☎ 241 000; 01, Maysedergasse 5) There's a saying on some of the touristy shirts – 'there's no kangaroos in Austria'. Well this 'no worries' pub proves the opposite with upstairs and downstairs bar areas serving Australian, import, and local beers, plus enough outback charm to make you forget what country you're in. Grub such as crocodile, ostrich fillet, grilled grasshoppers (for the adventurous), and plenty of 'roo any way you like it makes this place one of our and many English-speaking travellers favourites.

Sheben (Map p80; ☎ 524 79 00; 07, Lerchenfelder Strasse 45-47) This Africana-inspired pub remains a popular evening spot for English-speaking travellers, expats and internationals alike. Major football matches, decent music and activities such as nightly quizzes of the trivial pursuit variety all create a lively atmosphere.

Rhiz (Map p80; ☎ 409 25 05; Lerchenfelder Gürtel 37-38) One of the bars lining the U-Bahn arches near the Gürtel, this is a hip mecca of Vienna's electronic music scene.

Coffee Houses

The *Kaffeehaus* (coffee house) is an integral part of Viennese life. Everyone has a favourite. Try one of these:

our pick Café Prückel (Map p80; ☎ 512 61 15; 01, Stubenring 24) A 1950s-style café that's the epitome of shabby chic in this traditional Viennese coffeehouse that's been around some 100 years.

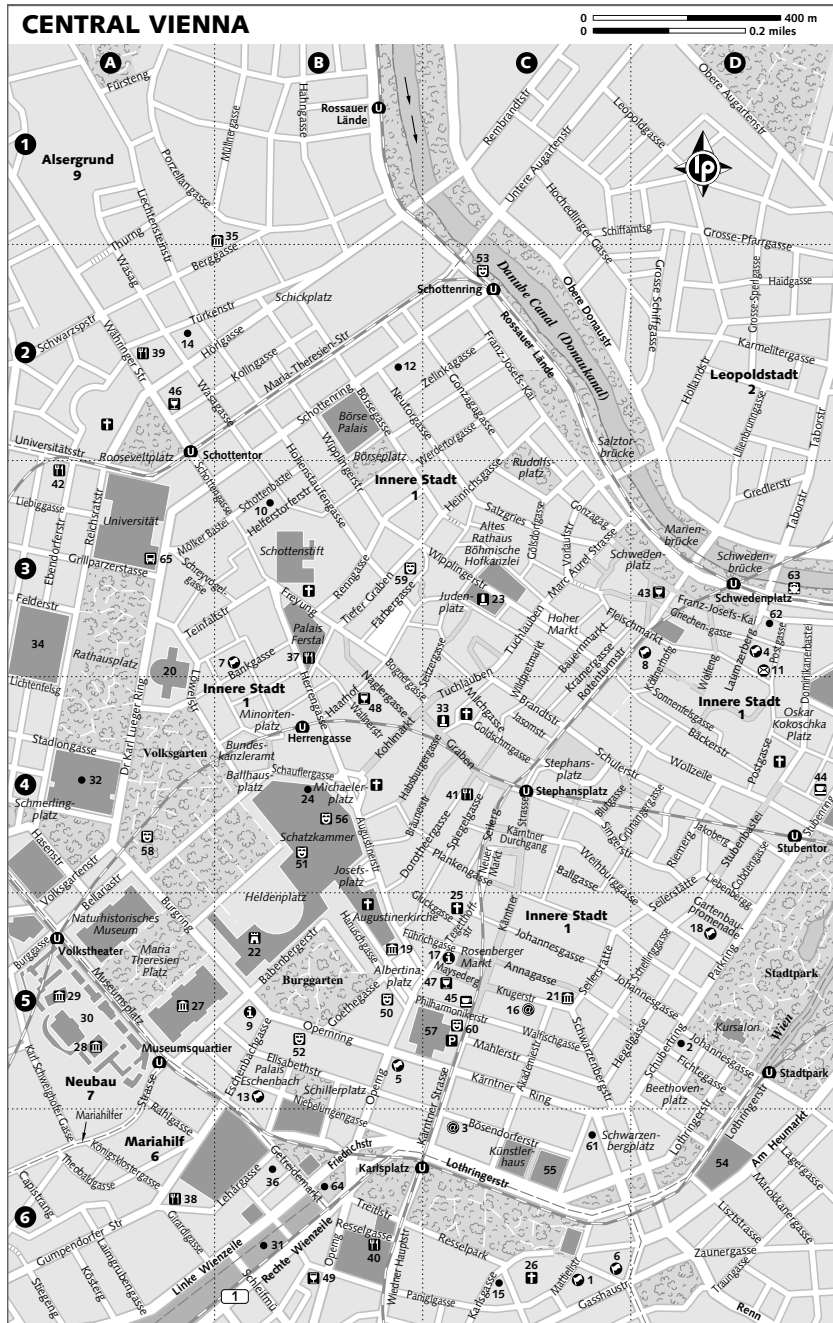
Café Sacher (Map p84; ☎ 151 4569; 01, Philharmonikerstrasse 4; ☎ ☎ 8am-midnight; kitchen closes 11.30pm) Expensive but popular, this café is home to arguably the world's most famous chocolate cake, the Sacher Torte, which is baked fastidiously in-house. Savour a slice of this exquisite speciality, which has been a well-kept secret since 1832. Wash it all down with an Original Sacher Café coffee and enjoy the conservatory, which faces the Opera and in summer is transformed into a huge terrace.

Café Sperl (Map p84; ☎ 586 4158; 06, Gumpendorfer Strasse 11; ☎ ☎ closed Sun to 3pm, all day Sun Jul & Aug) With its scuffed, but original, 19th-century fittings and cast of slacker patrons playing chess and reading the newspapers, this is exactly how you want a coffee house to be. Under the high ceiling and old-fashioned lights, wooden panelling reaches up to meet mustard-coloured wallpaper, battered wooden legs hold up red-patterned chairs and a few billiard tables add a modern twist.

Café Central (Map p84; ☎ 533 3763; 01, Herrengasse 14; ☎ ☎ closed Sun) A lot more commercialised than when Herr Trotsky, Freud and Beethoven drank here, we dare say, but still appealing with vaulted ceilings, palms and baroque architecture.

Heurigen

In the suburbs to the north, south and west of the city, you'll find Vienna's renowned wine taverns (*Heurigen*). Selling 'new' wine produced on the premises, plus food, they



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have a lively atmosphere – and sometimes strolling musicians wandering between their outdoor picnic tables. Opening times are approximately 4pm to 11pm, and wine costs less than €2.50 a *Viertel* (0.25L).

The *Heurigen* areas of Nussdorf and Heiligenstadt are near the terminus of tram D. In 1817 Beethoven lived in the **Beethovenhaus** (19, Pfarrplatz 3, Heiligenstadt). There are several *Heurigen* in a row where Cobenzlgasse and Sandgasse meet, of which **Reinprecht** (☎ 320 14 71; 19, Cobenzlgasse 22) is the best, even if still rather touristy.

If you don't have time to venture out into the suburbs, you can get a genuine taste of the *Heurigen* experience at **Esterházykeller** (Map p84; ☎ 533 34 82; Haahof 1; ☎ 11am-11pm Mon-Fri, 4-11pm Sat & Sun). After descending sharply down a steep stairwell, aromas of dank air, hints of pipe and cigar smoke mingle with mugs of wine and food befall olfactory senses in this truly 'underground' *Heurigen* that's as authentic as it gets. Dating from 1683, it was also allegedly used as a way for Viennese to gather provisions during the unsuccessful Turkish siege, by tunnelling under the wall that enclosed the city.

CLUBBING

Flex (Map p84; ☎ 533 75 25; Donaukanal, via Augartenbrücke) Along a fairly urban-looking stretch of the Danube Canal, Vienna's leading club

buzzes every night, with visiting or local bands and top-name DJs. There's also a cool café area, where you can surf the internet and choose your own theme music from a massive sound archive of 1000 CDs.

Volksgarten (Map p84; ☎ 533 05 18; 01, Burgring 1) This atmospheric 1950s building has been given a new high-tech dance floor and retractable roof, but retains a traditional curved salon facing the Volksgarten (People's Park) in which it's located. Friday and Saturday are the biggest nights. Be warned that drinks can be expensive.

Chelsea (Map p80; ☎ 407 93 09; Lerchenfelder Gürtel 29-31) This place is more underground, with frequent indie bands or DJs.

Roxy (Map p84; ☎ 961 88 00; 04, Operngasse 24; ☎ Tue-Sat) Often leading the way, or at least keeping pace, with Vienna's progressive clubbing scene. Its tiny dance floor is therefore regularly bursting at the seam. The sounds range from jazz to world.

Gay & Lesbian Venues

Rosa Lila Villa (Map p80; ☎ 586 81 50; 06, Linke Wienzeile 102) The leading venue of Vienna's gay scene is this pink-and-purple information centre with a popular bar and restaurant.

Why Not? (Map p84; ☎ 535 11 58; 01, Tiefer Graben 22; ☎ Wed-Sun) A popular gay and lesbian bar-disco, except on Wednesday nights when its men only.

ENTERTAINMENT

Falter (€2.05) and the tourist office's *Vienna Scene* have up-to-date listings.

Cinema

Burgkino (Map p84; ☎ 587 84 06; 01, Opernring 19) Screenings every Friday evening and Sunday afternoon of *The Third Man* allow you to revisit this classic film in the city where it's set.

Classical Music

There are no performances in July and August. Ask the tourist office for details of free concerts at the Rathaus or in churches.

You can buy tickets for the following venues, at little or no commission, at the **Bundestheaterkassen** (state ticket office; Map p84; ☎ 514 44-78 80; www.bundestheater.at; 01, Goethegasse 1) or **Wien Ticket** (Map p84; ☎ 588 85), in the hut by the Staatsoper. However, the cheapest deals are the standing-room tickets that go on sale at each venue an hour before the performance is due to start. You might need to queue three hours before that for major productions. An hour before curtain-up, unsold tickets also go on sale cheap (from €3.70) to students under 27 (student ID plus international student card necessary).

Staatsoper (State Opera; Map p84; ☎ 514 44-29 60; 01, Opernring 2; seats €5.50-220, standing room €3.70) Performances here are lavish, formal affairs, where you can watch Viennese high society in all its finery.

Volkoper (People's Opera; Map p80; ☎ 514 44-36 70; 09, Währinger Strasse 78; seats €17-75, standing room €1.50-24) Putting on more modern performances, the 'people's opera' is a little more relaxed in atmosphere.

Musikverein (Map p84; ☎ 505 18 90; www.musikverein.at; 01, Bösendorferstrasse 12; seats €16-110, standing room €5-7) The opulent (unofficial) home of the world-class Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra is said to be acoustically perfect. Here, standing tickets can be bought three weeks in advance at the box office.

Lipizzaner Museum & Spanish Riding School

The famous Lipizzaner stallions strut their stuff in the **Spanish Riding School** (Map p84; tickets@srs.at; Michaelerplatz 11010; seats €45-145, standing room €24-25) near the Hofburg. Ask in the adjacent museum about seats. Same-day tickets can be bought for **training sessions** (tickets €11.50; ☎ 10am-noon Tue-Sat Feb-Jun & Sep-Dec) or the weekly **final rehearsal** (€20; ☎ Fri or Sat).

Vienna Boys' Choir

The Wiener Sängerknaben perform weekly at the **Burgkapelle** (Music Chapel; Map p84; ☎ 533 99 27; hofmusikkapelle@asn-wien.ac.at; Swiss Courtyard, Hofburg; seats €5.50-30, standing room free; ☎ performances at 9.15am Sun mid-Sep-Jun). Tickets are available on Friday and from 8.15am Sunday before performances. They often put on shows in the **Konzerthaus** (Map p84; ☎ 24 20 02; 03, Lotheringerstrasse 20; ☎ performances 3.30pm Fri May, Jun, Sep & Oct).

GETTING THERE & AWAY

Air

Vienna is a major hub between Western and Eastern Europe. Flights also leave for regional Austrian cities. Check with **Austrian Airlines** (Map p84; ☎ 05-17 89; www.aaa.com; 01, Kärntner Ring 18).

Boat

In summer, hydrofoils travel east to Bratislava (one-way/return €23/39) and Budapest (€79/99). Book through **DDSG Blue Danube** (Map p84; ☎ 588 80-0; www.ddsg-blue-danube.at; 01, Friedrichstrasse 7) or **G Glaser** (Map p80; ☎ 726 08 20; www.members.aon.at/danube; 02, Handelskai 265). Both also offer slower ferry services westwards.

Bus

Bus operator **Eurolines** (www.eurolines.at) has a few locations. Most buses leave from its **Südbahnhof terminal** (Map p80; ☎ 796 85 52; 03, Arsenalstrasse; ☎ 7am-7pm), including those to Budapest (one-way/return €28/46, 3½ hours).

However, services to Bratislava (one-way/return €4.90/10, 1½ hours) leave from outside its other **Eurolines office** (Map p80; ☎ 798 29 00; 03, Erdbergstrasse 202; ☎ 7am-7pm).

Eurolines services to Prague (one-way/return €22/44, five hours) depart from a **third terminal** (Map p84; ☎ 93000-34305; 01, Rathausplatz 5).

Car & Motorcycle

The Gürtel is an outer ring road that joins up with the A22 on the Danube's north bank and the A23 southeast of town. All the main road routes intersect with this system, including the A1 from Linz and Salzburg, and the A2 from Graz.

Train

Westbahnhof has trains to western Austria, plus Western and northern Europe. Some services to Salzburg continue to Munich and terminate in Paris (14½ hours). To Zürich,

there are two day trains (€77.70, nine hours) as well as one night train (€77.70, plus charge for fold-down seat or couchette). Eight trains a day go to Budapest (€37.60, 3½ hours).

Südbahnhof has trains to Italy (eg Rome, via Venice and Florence), Slovakia, the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland, and southern Austria. Five trains daily go to Bratislava (€15.40, 1½ hours) and four to Prague (€40.70, five hours), with two continuing to Berlin (10 hours in total).

Wien-Mitte Bahnhof handles local trains only and Franz Josefs Bahnhof has local and regional trains.

For information, call ☎ 05-17 17.

GETTING AROUND

Underground (U-Bahn), tram, suburban train (S-Bahn) and bus routes are outlined in the free tourist office map.

All advance-purchase tickets must be slotted into the validation machines at the entrance to U-Bahn stations or on trams and buses. Singles cost €1.50 from automatic machines before you board, or €2 on-board.

Daily passes (*Stunden-Netzkarte*) cost €4/5 (8am to 8pm, valid for 24 hours from first use); a three-day pass costs €12 (valid for 72 hours).

You will need a Maestro debit card to use Vienna's cheap **city bikes** (☎ 0810 500 500; www.citybikewien.at, in German; €2 deposit, bike rental free first hr, roughly €2 per hr afterwards). Check the website for locations.

THE DANUBE VALLEY

Terraced vineyards, ruined castles and medieval towns line the River Danube's most picturesque stretch between Krems and Melk.

Boats operate from early April to late October. **DDSG Blue Danube** (Map p84; ☎ 01-588 80-0; www.ddsg-blue-danube.at; 01, Friedrichstrasse 7, Vienna) has three departures daily (one daily in October) via the Wachau. From Melk to Krems (1½ hours downstream) or from Krems to Melk (three hours upstream) costs €16/22 one-way/return.

Ardagger (☎ 07479-64 64-0; dsa@pgv.at) connects Linz and Krems three times a week in summer. **Wurm & Köck** (☎ 070-783 607; www.donauschiffahrt.de, in German; Untere Donaulände 1, Linz) has services Tuesday to Sunday between Linz and Passau in Germany (six hours), which

stop in the Wachau. **G Glaser** (Map p80; ☎ 01-726 08 20; www.members.aon.at/danube; 02, Handelskai 265, Vienna) sails between Passau and Budapest, stopping at Krems and Melk.

Most operators carry bicycles without charge along these routes.

KREMS AN DER DONAU

☎ 02732 / pop 24,000

Quaint as it is, Krems is unlikely to be more than a stopover on a boat or bike trip through the Danube Valley. There's riverside camping at **ÖAMTC Camping Krems** (☎ 84 455; Wiedengasse 7; camp sites per person/car/tent €5/4/4; ☎ Apr-Oct) and an **HI Jugendherberge** (☎ 83 452; Ringstrasse 77; dm from €15; ☎ Apr-Oct) with basic facilities.

The **tourist office** (☎ 82 676; www.tiscovers.com/krems; Kloster Und, Undstrasse 6; ☎ 9am-6pm Mon-Fri, 10am-noon & 1-5pm Sat, 10am-noon & 1-4pm Sun Apr-Oct) can offer more accommodation details.

The boat station (*Schiffsstation*) is a 20-minute walk west from the train station along Donaulände. Between three and five buses leave daily from outside the train station to Melk (€8.50, one hour five minutes). Trains to Vienna (€10.50, one hour, multiple daily) arrive at Franz Josefs Bahnhof.

MELK

☎ 02752 / pop 6500

Featured in the epic medieval German poem *Nibelungenlied* and Umberto Eco's best-selling novel *The Name of the Rose*, Melk's impressive Benedictine monastery endures as a Wachau landmark of international acclaim.

Walk straight ahead from the train station along Bahnhofstrasse and turn right into Rathausplatz at the bottom of the hill, following the signs to the **tourist office** (☎ 523 07-410; melk@smaragd.at; Babenbergerstrasse 1; ☎ 9am-noon & 2-6pm Mon-Fri, 10am-2pm Sat Apr-Jun, Sep & Oct, 9am-7pm Mon-Sat, 10am-2pm Sun Jul & Aug).

On a hill overlooking the town is the ornate golden abbey **Stift Melk** (☎ 555 232; www.stiftmelk.at; adult/student €7/4.10, guided tours €1.80; ☎ 9am-6pm May-Sep, 9am-5pm Oct-Apr, guided tours only Nov-Mar). Home to monks since the 11th century, the current building was erected in the 18th century after a devastating fire. It's an elaborate example of baroque architecture, and most often lauded for its imposing marble hall and beautiful library, but just as unforgettable for the curved terrace connecting these two rooms.

Jugendherberge (☎ 52 681; Karl Strasse 42; dm €17; ☹ Mar-Oct, check-in 5-9pm) is a modern and comfy HI hostel, although it often plays host to large groups. Call ahead.

On the west bank of the canal, **Camping Melk** (☎ 53 291; Kolomania 3; camp sites per person/tent/car €3.75/2.75/2; ☹ Mar-Oct) is a tranquil spot. If you get hungry, there is an attached restaurant, where you'll also find the reception.

Gasthof Goldener Stern's (☎ 52 214; Sternegasse 17; s/d from €22/44) cheaper 'student' rooms for budget travellers share bathrooms but are clean and excellent value. The place has a welcoming feel and a secluded location above the main square.

Pasta e Pizza (☎ 53 686; Jakob Prandtauerstrasse 4; pizzas €6-8) offers heaps of pizza and pasta dishes in cheerful environs.

Self-caterers should stock up at the **Spar supermarket** (Rathausplatz 9).

Boats leave from the canal by Pionierstrasse, 400m behind the monastery. Trains to Vienna Westbahnhof (€12, 70 to 90 minutes) are direct or via St Pölten.

LINZ

☎ 070 / pop 208,000

Austria's second-largest city is industrial by nature and largely overlooked by tourists. It was discovered years ago that its small, old-town centre couldn't compete with Vienna or Salzburg. Linz's biggest claims to 'fame' were being Adolf Hitler's favourite town and having a type of cake – Linzer torte – named after it. So the city carved a niche for itself by becoming technologically industrial as well. With a world-leading cyber-centre, a stunning first-rate contemporary art gallery and appealing attractions for kids proves Linz certainly has the ability to please and interest.

Information

INTERNET ACCESS

Ars Electronica Center (www.aec.at; Hauptstrasse 2; adult/student €6/3, free access; ☹ 9am-5pm Wed & Thu, 9am-9pm Fri, 10am-6pm Sat & Sun) For more information see right.

Bignet (Graben 17; per 30min €3.70; ☹ 10am-midnight)

TOURIST INFORMATION

Tourist office (☎ 707 017-77; www.linz.at; Hauptplatz 1; ☹ 8am-7pm Mon-Fri, 10am-7pm Sat & Sun May-Oct, to 6pm Nov-Apr)

GETTING INTO TOWN

There's a Ryanair shuttle bus (€2.20, 20 minutes) from the airport to the train station. From here, take tram 3 (€0.70) to the main square, Hauptplatz.

Sights & Activities

Architecturally eye-catching and artistically impressive, the riverside **Lentos Kunstmuseum Linz** (☎ 7070 3600; www.lentos.at; Ernst Koref Promenade 1; admission €7; ☹ 10am-6pm Wed-Mon, to 8pm Thu) is an important new addition to the Linz scene. It's built a little like an asymmetric tray table with legs on either side. Behind its partially reflective glass façade lie works by Klimt, Schiele, Picasso, Kokoscha, Matisse, Haring, Warhol and more. When lit up at night, the building looks spectacular.

Strapped to the ceiling in a virtual-reality headset at the **Ars Electronica Center** (☎ 72 72-0; www.aec.at; Hauptstrasse 2; adult/student €6/3; ☹ 9am-5pm Wed & Thu, 9am-9pm Fri, 10am-6pm Sat & Sun), you feel like you're 'flying' over Linz. You can also travel through space and time in the 'Cave' virtual environment or enjoy a drink in the **Sky Loft Media Bar** (☹ closed Sun).

Linz has several famous festivals; see p103.

Sleeping

Jugendherberge (☎ 782 720; zentral@jutel.at; Kapuzinerstrasse 14; dm under/over 19 €12/15; ☹ Apr-Oct) Dorms are rather cramped and reception keeps bewildering hours (phone ahead), but it's cheap and central.

Wilder Mann (☎ 656 078; wilder-mann@aon.at; Goethestrasse 14; s/d/t r from €36/60/77, with shared bathroom from €26/44/53) Despite first impressions, rooms at this boarding-house style place are reasonably comfy and bathrooms clean. Avoid the top floor, where frosted-glass door panels let in hall light.

Pichlinger See (☎ 305 314; Wiener Bundesstrasse 937; per adult/camp site €4/9; ☹ Apr-Oct) Camping ground southeast of town.

Eating and Drinking

Etagen Biesel (Domgasse 8; mains €6.70-12) The large 'thank-you' notes from previous customers immediately convey a lively, friendly atmosphere. Homey Austrian lunches and dinners are served among rustic décor.

Café Traximayr (☎ 773 353; Promenadestrasse 16) The menu of this elegant coffee house doesn't

list Linzer torte (a nutty sponge filled with strawberry jam), so just ask.

p'aa (☎ 776 461; Altstadt 28; mains €8-12) Serving mainly vegan cuisine in an elegant interior, p'aa has an eclectic mix of Tibetan, Indian and Mexican. Sit on the cobblestones outside or inside under low arched ceilings.

Stiegelbräu zum Klosterhof (Landstrasse 30; mains €11-17.50) A huge beer garden and a fine gastronomic reputation, it's as popular for business lunches as it is for tourist outings.

Getting There & Around

Ryanair (www.ryanair.com) flies daily from London Stansted to **Linz airport** (www.flughafen-linz.at). Linz is halfway between Salzburg (€17.70 by train) and Vienna (€23.50), both between 1¼ and two hours away. Trains go every day to Český Krumlov in the Czech Republic.

Around the city, it's €0.70 per journey or €3 for a day card for the train. Some bus services stop early evening.

THE SOUTH

Austria's two main southern states, Styria (Steiermark) and Carinthia (Kärnten) often feel worlds apart from the rest of the country. Elements of Italian, Slovenian and Hungarian culture are present everywhere, and residents have historical connections with each of those countries. Styria is a blissful amalgamation of genteel architecture, rolling green hills, vine-covered slopes and soaring mountains. Its capital, Graz, is one of Austria's most attractive cities (with some of the highest standards of living in Europe).

GRAZ

☎ 0316 / pop 250,000

It used to be Arnie's home turf, but since the highly controversial execution of Tookie Williams in California in 2005, Graz wants nothing more to do with the 'Governator' – the provincial capital of Styria even took Schwarzenegger's name off official town documents and renamed the stadium christened after him.

Arnie or no Arnie, this soothing village offers something for everyone. Both funky and laid-back at the same time, the futuristic, bluish-blob-like Kunsthau will make you think the aliens have landed nearby. There's so much to do and see in Graz that it's feasible to say your hotel room will not enjoy much

use. Experience the unique blend of Mediterranean and medieval atmosphere of the Old Town and see why it leaves such an indelible impression on other travellers.

Orientation

Trams 3, 6 and 14 run from the train station to the central Hauptplatz. Several streets radiate from this square, including the café-lined Sporgasse and the main pedestrian thoroughfare, Herrngasse. This thoroughfare leads to Jakominiplatz, a major transport hub.

The train station is a short 1km walk west of town. Cross the River Mur via Kepler Brücke bridge and follow the signs.

Information

Medien.kunstbar (Kunsthau Graz, Lendkai 1;

☹ 10am-6pm Tue-Sun, 10am-8pm Thu) Free access.

Main post office (Hauptpostamt 8010; Neutorgasse 46;

☹ 7.30am-8pm Mon-Fri, 8am-noon Sat)

Graz Tourismus (☎ 80 75-0; www.graztourismus.at;

Herrngasse 16; ☹ 9am-6pm Mon-Sat, 10am-6pm Sun)

Tourist information counter (☎ 80 75-21;

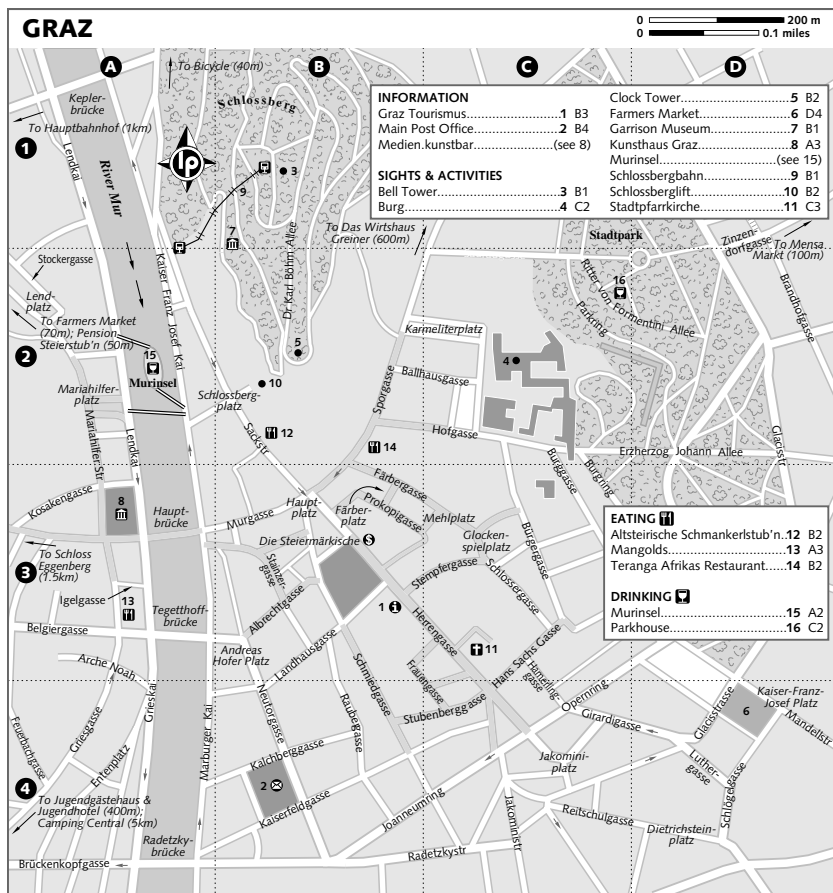
Hauptbahnhof; ☹ 8.30am-1pm & 2-5.30pm Mon-Wed & Fri, 8.30am-1pm & 2-6.30pm Thu)

Sights & Activities

Bring your camera; Graz's numerous free sights make it brilliant for those on a tight budget. Climb the 260 steps up the **Schlossberg** (Castle Hill) for an overview of the city and to explore the medieval **clock tower** (with its back-to-front hands), **bell tower**, **bastion** and **garrison museum** on top. Alternatively, you can ascend in the glass **Schlossberglift** hewn into the hill or take the **Schlossbergbahn** funicular railway (both €1.60).

From this vantage point, you can't help but notice the bubble-shaped **Kunsthau Graz** (☎ 8017 9200; www.kunsthau-graz.at; Lendkai 1; adult/senior/student €6/4.50/2.50; ☹ 10am-6pm Tue, Wed & Fri-Sun, to 8pm Thu). Notice anything extraterrestrial? This creation by UK architects Colin Fournier and Peter Cook is referred to by locals as the 'friendly alien'. It's also been compared to a mutant bladder and a spaceship but there's general agreement that it's one of Europe's leading modern buildings. Whatever the temporary exhibitions – and these are often very good – it's the structure that's the main star.

Equally fun is the glass, concrete and steel **Murinsel** (☹ 24hr, café 9am-11pm Sun-Wed, 9am-2am



Thu-Sat), an artificial island in the River Mur. Shaped like an open seashell, its outer swirl is an amphitheatre, and the inner sanctum a trendy café-bar.

Highlights in the old town centre include the **Burg complex** (Hofgasse); left of the door marked 'Stiege III', there's a **double-winding staircase** resembling a perspective-defying drawing by MC Escher. Take a look at the sculptured wood façade of **Hofcafé Edegger-Tax** (Hofgasse 8).

The **Stadtpfarrkirche** (Herrengasse 23) is (in)famous for the stained-glass window behind the altar depicting Hitler and Mussolini looking on as Jesus is tortured.

Graz's **farmers markets**, at Kaiser-Franz-Josef Platz in the centre and at Lendplatz

west of the Mur River, offer seasonal produce, sometimes including pussy willow and schnapps. They are open mornings Monday to Saturday.

Sleeping

Jugendgästehaus & Jugendhotel (☎ 708 350; www.jfgh.at; Idlhofgasse 74; hostel dm/d €18.50/55, hotel r from €47, 1st night surcharge €3; ☎ reception 7am-10pm Mon-Fri, 7-10am & 5-10pm Sat & Sun) Ultra-modern and comfortable, with en suite rooms, spacious reception-restaurant areas in uplifting pastel colours, and full wheelchair access. Individual travellers are accommodated in the hostel wing, groups and families in the hotel section. It's 10 minutes on foot from the train station.

Pension Steierstub'n (☎ 716 855; www.pension-graz.at; Lendplatz 8; s/d/tr from €39/70/100) A favourite choice of ours in Graz, the young, friendly owners put fresh flowers and fruit in the simple, modern rooms and place local pumpkin seeds, rather than chocolates, on your pillow. The relaxed Styrian restaurant below serves tasty food and there's free loan of bicycles.

Camping Central (☎ 378 51 02; fax 697 824; Martinhofstrasse 3; powered camp sites for 1/2 people €13/20; ☎ Apr-Nov; ♿) Beside the tree-shaded, trimmed lawn here there's a huge outdoor swimming pool. About 6km southwest of the centre, the camping ground also has excellent shower and laundry facilities. To get there, take bus 32 from Jakominiplatz.

EATING

With green, leafy salads dressed in delicious pumpkinseed oil, lots of polenta, fish specialities and *Pfandl* (pan-grilled) dishes, Styrian cuisine feels lighter and healthier than most regional Austrian cooking.

Mensa Markt (Schubertstrasse 2-4; set menus €3.70-4.30) This spot by the university has a range of inexpensive takeaway.

Mangolds (Griesgasse 11; salad per 100g from €1.05; ☎ 11am-8pm Mon-Fri, 11am-4pm Sat) Offers and ultra-healthy and reasonably cheap vegetarian buffet fare.

Altsteirische Schmankerlstub'n (☎ 823 211; Sackstrasse 10; mains €7.50-18.00) Tucked down a passageway off Sackstrasse, this rustic place serves Styrian staples, including *Bauernschmaus* (roast pork with blood sausage, sauerkraut and dumplings) and *Ochsenfetzen* (beef strips with sour cream and roast potatoes).

our pick Teranga Afrikas Restaurant (☎ 818 306 56; Sporgasse 16; mains around €11) Do you find that Styrian cuisine isn't far enough from the sometimes bland Austrian fare and don't mind adventurous arrangements? Then head into a rarely marked alleyway, where it looks like you are going nowhere at all, and enter the last door on the left. Inside you'll find a simple dining room with five tables, two bar stools, sparse African décor and one of the most surprising things – no written menu. The cuisine is from West Africa. There are usually two choices – one meat, one vegetarian – which vary nightly, but always include soup. Ask if they have the spicy mango soup with yams – it was excellent. Credit cards are not accepted.

Drinking

Graz, like Vienna, has a 'bar zone' known as the Bermudadreieck. It's located between Sporgasse, Färbergasse and Stempfergasse. There are other clusters of hip bars at the top of Sporgasse and behind the Kunsthaus.

Murinsel (☎ 818 669) You'll never again drink anywhere quite like the Murinsel, so at least start the evening in this shimmering, fluorescent-lit platform in the middle of the river. There are DJs some evenings.

Parkhouse (☎ 827 434; Stadtpark 2) Join the crowd at this atmospheric and friendly place in the city park if you're looking to party minus any type of pretentious vibe.

Getting There & Around

Ryanair (www.ryanair.com) flies daily from London Stansted to **Graz airport** (☎ 290 20; www.flughafen-graz.at). Direct IC trains to train destination include Salzburg (€36.50, 4¼ hours), Vienna (€26.90, 2¾ hours), Ljubljana (€34.30, four hours) and Budapest via Szentgotthard and Szombathely (€55.20, 6½ hours).

Public transport tickets (single/daily passes €1.60/3.20) cover trams, buses and transport up the castle hill.

KLAGENFURT

☎ 0463 / pop 88,000

This sunny provincial capital on the water makes a handy base for exploring the Wörthersee's lakeside villages and elegant medieval towns to the north.

The **tourist office** (☎ 537-22 23; www.info.klagenfurt.at; Rathaus, Neuer Platz; ☎ 8am-8pm Mon-Fri, 10am-5pm Sat & Sun May-Sep, 8am-6.30pm Mon-Fri, 10am-3pm Sat & Sun Oct-Apr) is in the centre, about 1km north of the train station. Walk down Bahnhofstrasse and then turn left into Paradiesgasse, or take bus 40, 41 or 42 to Heiligengeistplatz, right by Neuer Platz. For the Wörthersee, take bus 10, 11, 12, 20, 21 or 22, all of which depart from Heiligengeistplatz.

The **Wörthersee**, 4km west of the centre, is one of the region's warmer lakes, thanks to subterranean thermal springs: the average water temperature between June and September is 21°C. Events from go-kart rallies to avant-garde festivals of tattoo and body painting assure you'll never be left without something to see. The 50km **cycle path** around the lake is one of the 'Top 10' in Austria. There is a *Fahrad Verleih* (Rent a Bike) scheme in the summer; rent a standard bicycle at one of

several outlets round the lake and return it at any other outlet (€5/9/35 per five hours/24 hours/week). Mountain and road bikes are both available, and you can also arrange to return the bike to the same location, although it costs a few euros more.

Hotels in the city centre are unexpectedly expensive, so budget travellers usually stay near the lake. When you check into your accommodation in Klagenfurt, ask for a copy of your Gästekarte (guest card), which entitles you to a range of discounts on local attractions and on public transport. The **Jugendherberge** (☎ 230 020; jgh.klagenfurt@oejhw.or.at; Neckheimgasse 6; dm €17.50, d €42; ☎ reception 7-11am & 5-10pm; 📺) hostel is modern and clean. It is near the university. Take bus 12 to get there. Try and book ahead as it's often full with school groups.

There's a **University Mensa** (Universitätsstrasse 90; mains from €4.20; ☎ 11am-2.30pm Mon-Fri) near the hostel. In town, you can get hot meals from the stalls in the **Benediktinerplatz market** (meals from €4) or **Zum Augustin** (☎ 513 992; Pfarrhofgasse 2; mains €7-16), a smoky brewery that makes its own beer. It is popular with the after-work crowd, serves a decent range of regional food and has a pleasant cobblestone patio.

Ryanair (www.ryanair.com) flies from London several times per week. Trains to Graz go via Bruck an der Mur, departing roughly every two hours (€28, five hours). Trains to western Austria, Italy and Germany go via Villach, 40 minutes away.

Bus drivers sell single tickets (€1.50). Daily passes cost €3.30. To get the airport, take bus 42. **Zweirad Impulse** (☎ 516 310) hires bikes.

SALZBURG

☎ 0662 / pop 145,000

The joke 'if it's baroque, don't fix it' would make a perfect maxim for Salzburg; the tranquil old town burrowed in below steep hills looks much the same as it did when Mozart lived here 250 years ago. Second only to Vienna in numbers of visitors, ornate 17th-

century buildings still shadow the narrow, cobbled streets, while gorgeous manicured grounds surround the baroque Schloss Mirabell.

By night, the medieval Hohensalzburg fortress hovers in an arc of lights above the city. By day, the warren of courtyards, plazas, fountains and churches below is fully revealed. Visitors still tour movie locations used for *The Sound of Music* in and around Salzburg, Austria's charming capital of kitsch.

ORIENTATION

The pedestrianised old town, with most attractions, is south of the River Salzach. On the north bank is the new town plus Mozart's Wohnhaus and Schloss Mirabell.

INFORMATION

Bignet (Judengasse 5-7; per hr €4; ☎ 9am-11pm, 9am-midnight summer) Internet access.

Main post office (Hauptpostamt 5010; Residenzplatz 9; ☎ 7am-7pm Mon-Fri, 8-10am Sat)

Main tourist office (☎ information 889 87-330, hotels 889 87-314; www.salzburg.info; Mozartplatz 5; ☎ 9am-6pm May, Jun, Sep & Oct, 9am-7pm Dec, Jul & Aug, 9am-6pm Mon-Sat Nov & Jan-Apr)

SIGHTS & ACTIVITIES

A Unesco World Heritage site, Salzburg's old town is entrancing both at ground level and from the hills above.

Residenzplatz, with its horse fountain in the centre, is a good starting point for exploration. Head south to the **Dom** (Cathedral), with its bronze doors symbolising faith, hope and charity. From the cathedral, head west along Franziskanergasse and turn left into a courtyard for **St Peterskirche**. Among the lovingly tended graves in this abbey's grounds is the entrance to the **Katakomben** (Catacombs; adult/student €1/0.70; ☎ 10.30am-5pm summer, 10.30am-3.30pm winter). The **Stift Nonnberg** (Nonnberg Abbey) is back east of the **Festung Hohensalzburg** and where *The Sound of Music* first finds Maria.

You can also walk along the crest of the hill behind the old town. Climb the steps from Toscanini Hof, behind the **Festival Halls**, or take the **Mönchsberg lift** (one-way/return €1.30/2.60) from Anton Neumayr Platz.

On the north side of the river, follow the stairs from Linzer Gasse 14 to the lookout at the **Kapuzinerkloster** (Capuchin Monastery).

Festung Hohensalzburg

The many archbishop-princes who ruled Salzburg lived in the **fortress** (☎ 842 430-11; www.salzburg-burgen.at; Mönchsberg 34; grounds only €4, with interiors & audio guide €7.50; ☎ 9am-6pm 15 Mar-14 Jun, 9am-7pm 15 Jun-14 Sep, 9am-5pm 15 Sep-14 Mar). The current incarnation dates from 1077 and houses ornate state rooms, torture chambers and museums.

It takes 15 minutes to walk up, or catch the funicular **Festungsbahn** (☎ 849 750; Festungsgasse 4; adult/concession one-way, incl admission to fortress grounds €5.60/5; ☎ 9am-9pm May-Sep, 9am-5pm Oct-Apr).

Schloss Mirabell

The formal **gardens**, with their tulips, crocuses and Greek statues, are the main drawcard at this palace, built by the prince-archbishop Wolf Dietrich for his mistress in 1606. Standing at the western end and looking east towards the fortress gives you an iconic Salzburg view. Having featured in *The Sound of Music*, the gardens are now popular for weddings and open-air concerts.

Museums

Although Mozart is a major Salzburg attraction, the man himself couldn't wait to leave. Consequently, **Mozart's Geburtshaus** (birthplace; ☎ 844 313; Getreidegasse 9; adult/concession €5.50/4.50; ☎ 9am-6pm Sep-Jun, 9am-7pm Jul & Aug, last entry 30min before closing) and his **Wohnhaus** (residence; ☎ 874 227-40; Makartplatz 8; adult/concession €5.50/4.50; ☎ 9am-6pm Sep-Jun, 9am-7pm Jul & Aug, last entry 30min before closing) only cover his early years before he left town in 1780 at the age of 24. A combined ticket for both museums is €9 (concession €7). The more extensive Wohnhaus houses the **Mozart Sound & Film Museum** (admission free).

The **Museum der Moderne Rupertinum** (☎ 8042 2541; www.museumdermoderne.at; Mönchsberg; prices vary; ☎ 10am-6pm Tue-Sun, to 9pm Wed) adds a contemporary touch to historic Salzburg. Ask the tourist office about other museums.

TOURS

Sound of Music Tours

How much fun you have on these depends on entering into the kitsch, attitude necessary. Tours take three to four hours, mostly in neighbouring Salzburgmergut.

Salzburg Sightseeing Tours (☎ 881 616) and **Panorama Tours** (☎ 874 029) both operate from Mirabellplatz, with €33 tours leaving at 9.30am and 2pm daily. Alternatively, you can get a €4

discount by waiting for the tours to pick you up at the HI Jugendgästehaus at 8.45am or 1.30pm; you don't need to be a hostel guest.

Boat Tours

In summer, **Salzburg Schifffahrt** (☎ 825 769-12) does 40- to 50-minute **round-trip river cruises** (€11) and trips to **Schloss Hellbrunn** (€14; ☎) at 12.45pm year-round, 9.30am & 12.30pm Jul & Aug). Boats leave from the city side of the Makart Bridge at the Salzach Insel boat landing.

FESTIVALS & EVENTS

The famous **Salzburg Festival** (www.salzburgfestival.at) of classical music is held from late July to late August. Book online well in advance if you want cheap tickets. In 2006 Salzburg held a huge bash for the 250th anniversary of Mozart's birth.

SLEEPING

Naturfreundehaus (☎ /fax 841 729; Mönchsberg 19; dm €13.50; ☎ mid-Apr-mid-Oct, curfew 1am) The dorms at this hill-top place are little more than glorified cupboards, but you wake to such amazing views (see opposite for directions on climbing the hill). The Stadttal café is also here.

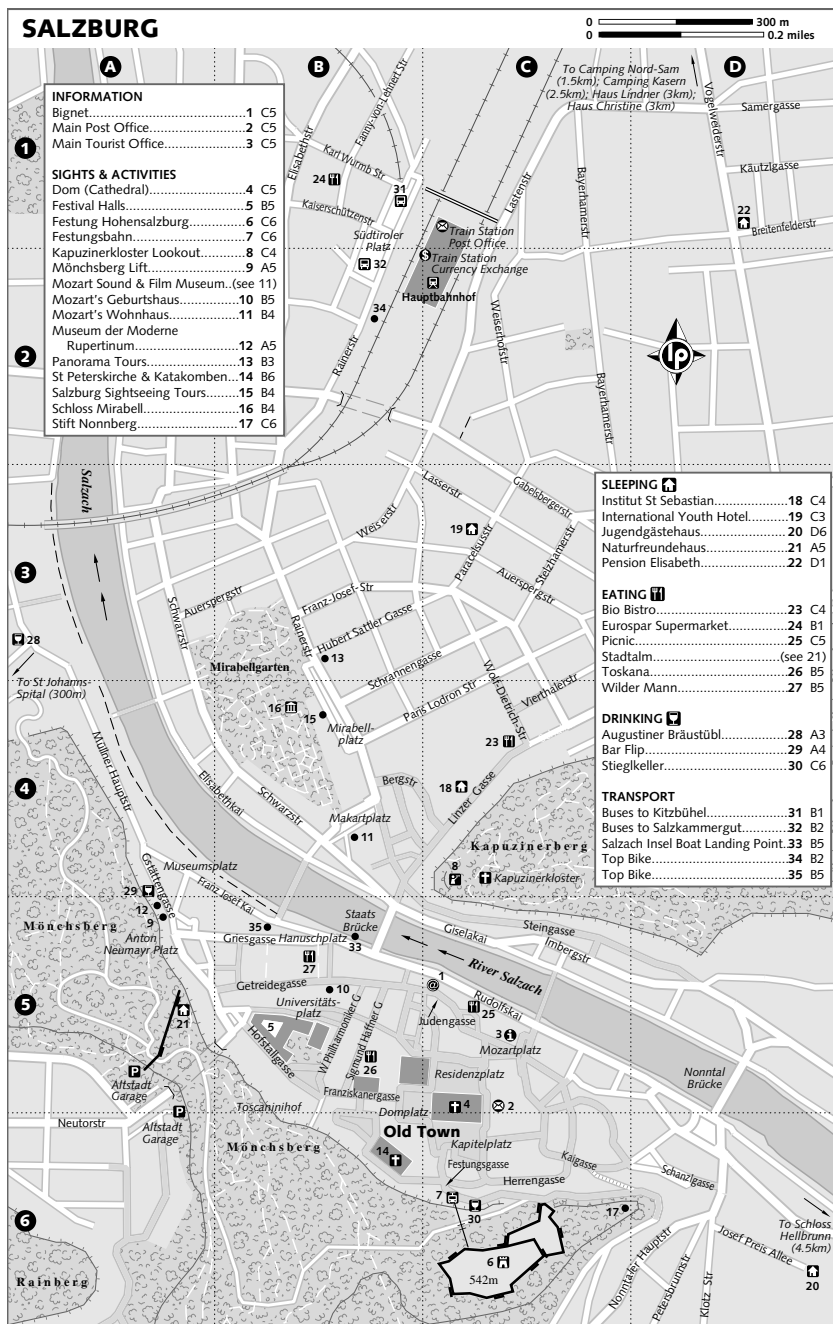
International Youth Hotel (YoHo; ☎ 879 649; www.yoho.at; Paracelsusstrasse 9; 8-bed dm with shared bathroom from €16, s/d/tr per person with shared bathroom €28/21/19) If you're hankering for a lively bar scene with cheap beer, friendly staff and regular events, including daily screenings of *The Sound of Music*, this sociable hostel is for you. Book ahead over the internet - phone reservations are accepted only one day in advance for its fairly spartan, but spotless, rooms. Reception does not close during the day.

Jugendgästehaus (☎ 842 670-0; jgh.salzburg@jgh.at; Josef Preis Allee 18; dm from €18, d €36, with shared bathroom from €14, 1st-night surcharge €2.50; ☎ check-in from 11am, access to rooms from 1pm) Lots of Austrians and families stay at this comfy HI hostel that is also popular with backpackers. The eight-bed dorms feel a bit like a boarding school, but the en suite four-bed dorms and doubles on the floors above could belong to a nice budget hotel.

Institut St Sebastian (☎ 871 386; www.st-sebastian-salzburg.at; Linzer Gasse 41; dm €18, s/d €36/57, with shared bathroom €31/51) Through the gate marked 'Feuerwache Bruderhof', on Linzer Gasse, Institut St Sebastian is closer to the action than any other Salzburg hostel-style accommodation. In fact, when the church bells ring next

GETTING INTO TOWN

Bus 2 goes to Salzburg airport from the train station. It's easy to walk from the train station into town.



door, you'll find this student abode is too close to the action. Don't expect much of a social atmosphere, there's no bar or comfortable lounge. There is a roof terrace and kitchen.

Haus Lindner (☎ 456 681; info@haus-lindner.at; Panoramaweg 5; d/tr €30/45) Akin to staying at a friendly aunt's, this large and popular place has homey, comfortable rooms, serves breakfast and offers kitchen facilities.

Pension Elisabeth (☎ 871 664; Vogelweiderstrasse 52; s/d from €35/42) A small, friendly budget hotel; bright rooms come with white duvets, coloured upholstered chairs and wooden floors. The pension is near the Breitenfelderstrasse stop of bus 15, which heads for town every 15 minutes. Beware in high season there can be price increases for single night stays.

Camping Kasern (☎ /fax 450 576; campingkasern@aon.at; Carl Zuckmayer Strasse 4; camp sites per adult/car/tent €4.50/3/3; ☎ Apr-Oct) Just north of the A1 Nord exit.

Camping Nord-Sam (☎ 660 494; www.camping-nord-sam.com; Samstrasse 22A; camp sites per adult/car & tent €5.50/8; ☎ Easter & May-Sep) Slightly closer to town.

EATING

There are market stalls and fast-food stands on Universitätsplatz and Kapitelplatz. A **Eurospar supermarket** (☎ Mon-Sat) is opposite the train station.

Bio Bistro (☎ 870 712; Wolf-Dietrich-Strasse 1; mains €5.50) Vegetarian and vegan food is prepared fresh daily along with Eastern 'holistic' specialities and salads.

Picnic (Judengasse 15; mains €5-11; ☎ open daily May-Sep, closed Tue Oct-Apr) This charming grotto of vintage advertising signs and plastic flowers is great for sandwiches and pizzas and keeps longer hours than most. Give the gratins a miss however.

Wildler Mann (☎ 841 787; Getreidegasse 20; mains €5.20-12; ☎ Mon-Fri) Traditional Austrian food in a friendly, bustling environment, in the

passageway off Getreidegasse. Tables, both inside and out, are often so packed it's almost impossible not to get chatting with fellow diners.

Stadlalm (☎ 841 729; Mönchsberg 19C; mains €6-10; ☎ 10am-5pm Tue-Sun Apr-Oct) The meals are standard Germanic fare – wurst, Wiener schnitzel and *Züricher Geschnetzeltes* (veal in cream sauce). You won't care, though, with such fantastic views.

Toskana (Sigmund Haffner Gasse 11; snacks €3.50-4.20; ☎ 8.30am-5pm Mon-Thu, 8.30m-3pm Fri) Some of the town's cheapest eats are available at the university *Mensa*.

DRINKING

On weekend evenings, the crowds stream along Rudolfskai, Salzburg's most famous stretch of bars, clubs, Irish pubs and discos. However, most punters are barely out of, or still in, their teens. **Augustiner Bräustübl** (☎ 431 246; Augustinergasse 4-6; ☎ 3-11pm Mon-Fri, 2.30-11pm Sat & Sun) It's Oktoberfest year-round at this huge hill-side warren of beer halls. Well, perhaps it's not always *quite* so boisterous, but the local monks' brew – served in generously sized ceramic mugs – certainly keeps the huge crowd humming.

Stieglkeller (Festungsgasse 10; ☎ 10am-10pm Apr-Oct) Below the fortress, this beer hall's best feature is its terrace overlooking the town.

Bar Flip (☎ 843 643; Gstättengasse 17) This is a dark, low-ceiling student bar serving cocktails and cheap beer.

GETTING THERE & AWAY

The **airport** (☎ 85 80-0; www.salzburg-airport.at) handles flights to European cities, including to London on low-cost **Ryanair** (www.ryanair.com).

Fast trains leave for Vienna (€36.50, 3¼ hours) via Linz each hour. The express service to Klagenfurt (€27.70, three hours) runs via Villach. The quickest way to Innsbruck (€29.50, two hours) is by the 'corridor'

HANG(AR) TIME AT SALZBURG AIRPORT

Whether you have time to kill and want to get out of the airport or Salzburg is your final stop, it's worth a trip to check out the **Hangar-7** (☎ 662 2197; www.hangar-7.com; Wilhelm-Spazier-strasse 7A, Salzburg airport). This huge, clear-plexi-enclosed airplane hangar is large enough to house a Douglas DC6 jumbo jet, a B-52 bomber, a plethora of assorted Formula One racing cars, motorcycles, and other cool historical aircraft. There's also a café where you can recharge your engine. Red Bull's founder and motorsports/aviation enthusiast, Dietrich Mateschitz came up with the idea for his energy drink in 1984, after drinking a locally-brewed tonic in Thailand.

train through Germany, via Kufstein. There are regular trains to Munich (€25.80, two hours).

Bus services to the Salzkammergut region leave to the left of the main station exit. Destinations include Bad Ischl (€7.60, 1¼ hours). Other buses, including to Kitzbühel, depart from Südtiroler Platz, across from the train station post office. There are timetable boards at each departure point and a bus information office in the train station.

GETTING AROUND

Bus drivers sell singles for €1.70. Other tickets, including day passes (€3.20), must be bought from the automatic machines at major stops or *Tabak* (tobacco) shops.

Top Bike (☎ 0676-476 7259; www.topbike.at) rents bikes at the Intertreff Café, outside the train station, and on the main city bridge.

AROUND SALZBURG

HELLBRUNN

Ingenious trick fountains are the highlight at the 17th-century **Schloss Hellbrunn** (☎ 820 372-0; www.hellbrunn.at; Fürstenweg 37; adult/student €7.50/5.50; ☎ 9am-4.30pm Apr & Oct, 9am-5.30pm May, Jun & Sep, 9am-10pm Jul & Aug). So expect to get wet! Admission includes a palace tour; other parts of the garden (without fountains) are open year-round and free to visit.

City bus 55 runs to Hellbrunn from the train station, via Rudolfskai. You can also catch a boat (see p93).

WERFEN

☎ 06468 / pop 3000

The world's largest accessible ice caves, the **Eisriesenwelt Höhle** (Giant Ice Caves; ☎ 56 46; www.eisriesenwelt.at; adult/concession with cable car ride up €17/15, without cable car €8/7; ☎ 1 May-26 Oct) houses

elaborate and beautiful ice formations. Take warm clothes as it gets cold during the 75-minute tour.

The **tourist office** (☎ 53 88; www.werfen.at; Markt 24; ☎ 9am-5pm Mon-Fri mid-Aug-mid-Jul, 9am-7pm Mon-Fri, 5-7pm Sat mid-Jul-mid-Aug) can provide further details.

Werfen can be reached from Salzburg by Hwy 10 or by train (€7.40, 50 minutes). A minibus (return €6.50) from the train station leads to the cave car park, where you can walk to the cable car (adult/concession return €9/8).

SALZKAMMERGUT

The Salzkammergut is Austria's Lakes District. An idyllic spot for hiking, water sports and even winter skiing, it boasts salt mines (for which it's named), ice caves, mountains and more than 80 lakes.

Bad Ischl is the region's transport hub, but Hallstatt is its true jewel. For info, visit **Salzkammergut Touristik** (☎ 06132-240 00-0; www.salzkammergut.co.at; Götzstrasse 12, Bad Ischl; ☎ 9am-8pm).

HALLSTATT

☎ 06134 / pop 1150

There's evidence of human settlement at Hallstatt as long as 4500 years ago – and who wouldn't want to move into such a breathtaking location as early as possible? The somewhat touristy village, now a Unesco World Heritage site, clings to a steep mountainside beside a placid lake.

Orientation & Information

Seestrasse is the main street. Turn left from the ferry to reach the **tourist office** (☎ 82 08; hallstatt@inneres-salzkammergut.at; Seestrasse 169; ☎ 9am-noon & 1-5pm Mon-Fri year-round, 10am-5pm Sat May-Oct, 10am-2pm Sun Jul & Aug). The **post office** (Postamt 4830; Seestrasse 160) is around a bend in the road, and changes money.

Sights & Activities

Hallstatt is rich with archaeological interest. Two thousand graves, dating from 1000 BC to 500 BC, were discovered near the mine. Don't miss the macabre **Beinhaus** (Bone House; ☎ 82 79; Kirchenweg 40; admission €1; ☎ 10am-6pm 1 May-27 Oct) near the village parish church; it contains rows of neatly stacked skulls painted with flowery designs and the names of their former owners.

These human remains have been exhumed from the too-small graveyard since 1600 in a practice that recalls the old Celtic pagan custom of mass burial. The last skull in the collection was added in 1995. Gross.

Salt mining was Hallstatt's principal activity for millennia, and a **funicular** (one-way/return €5.50/7.50) goes uphill to the **Salzbergwerk** (Saltworks; ☎ 84 00; admission €14; ☎ 9am-4pm late Apr-early Sep, 9am-3.30pm mid-Sep-26 Oct). There are two scenic hiking trails from here; ask the tourist office for details.

Around the lake at Obertraun are the **Dachstein Rieseneishöhle** (Giant Ice Caves; admission €8, with cave €12.30; ☎ early May-mid-Oct), including the arch-ceiling, stone **Mammoth Cave**.

Sleeping & Eating

Some private rooms are available during the busiest months of July and August only; others require a minimum three-night stay. The tourist office will telephone around for you without charge.

Campingplatz Krausner-Höll (☎ 83 22; Lahnstrasse 7; camp sites per adult €8; ☎ 15 Apr-15 Oct) This camping ground is conveniently located south of the centre.

Gasthof zur Muhle (☎ 83 18; www.toeroe.f@magnet.at; Kirchenweg 36; dm €13) On the Hallstatt hillside and overlooks the lake, it is popular with independent travellers. Dorms are rather basic however.

Gasthof Hallberg (☎ 82 86; www.poension-hallberg.at; Seestrasse 113; s/d from €45/60) This is an excellent value guesthouse. The best rooms are light and airy, furnished with pale wood and boast superb lake views on both sides. Even the more ordinary rooms are still great quality with many featuring quaintly sloping ceilings and mountain views.

Pferdestall (☎ 20 00; Seestrasse 156; mains €7.50-20) This one-time stable has tables that have been built into the old horse stalls complete with wooden partitions and iron bars. This small bar and trattoria turns out cheap pizza and pasta along with some pricier meat dishes.

Getting There & Away

About six buses a day run to/from Bad Ischl. You alight at 'Lahn', just south of the road tunnel. Services finish very early and the last guaranteed departure from Bad Ischl is 4.10pm. There are at least nine train services a day from Bad Ischl (€2.90, 50 minutes). The train station is across the lake from the village,

but the ferry captain waits for trains to arrive before making the short crossing (€1.90). Though trains run later, the last ferry departs the train station at 6.30pm (leaving Hallstatt at just after 6pm).

TIROL

Mountain ranges converge in picture-perfect Tirol (also spelled Tyrol). The place easily captures quintessential Alpine scenery. In the northeast and southwest are superb ski resorts. In the southeast, separated somewhat from the main state since part of South Tirol was ceded to Italy at the end of WWI, lies the protected natural landscape of the Hohe Tauern National Park, and Grossglockner (3797m), the country's highest peak. Back further west, in the middle of the main state, Innsbruck is the region's jewel.

INNSBRUCK

☎ 0512 / pop 111,000

Nearly everywhere you move in Innsbruck, majestic snow-capped mountains dominate your view. True, when you're in the narrow, covered streets of the medieval town they may disappear from sight. However, once you've seen the famous Golden Roof and re-emerge, there they are still. It's hard to resist the urge to get up high – to the reopened winter Olympics stadium and the new Bergisel ski-jump tower, or on an all-day hike.

Orientation

Innsbruck lies in the valley of the River Inn, scenically squeezed between the northern chain of the Alps and the Tuxer mountain range to the south. The town centre is compact, with the Hauptbahnhof only a 10-minute walk from the pedestrian-only, old town centre (Altstadt).

Information

Internetcafé Moderne (Maria Theresien Strasse 16; per min €1.80)

Main post office (Hauptpostamt 6010; Maximilianstrasse 2; ☎ 7am-9pm Mon-Fri, 7am-3pm Sat, 8am-7.30pm Sun)

Main tourist office (☎ general information 598 50, tickets & packages 53 56, hotel reservations 562 000-0; www.innsbruck.info; Burggraben 3; ☎ 9am-6pm) Accommodation booking fee €3.

Tourist counter (Train station lower concourse, ☎ 7am-7pm)

TIP!

Throughout the year, resorts have a holiday or guest card (*Gästekarte*) offering region-wide discounts; ask your hotel, hostel or camping ground for this. Alternatively, buy the Salzkammergut Card (€4.90, available May to October), which provides a 25% discount on sights, ferries, cable cars and some buses.

ALPINE SUMMER WALKING

The magnificent views! The fresh air! The majestic mountains around Innsbruck turn even confirmed urban dwellers into instant nature freaks. And if this happens to you, or you're already a convert, Innsbruck offers overnight guests (via the Club Innsbruck card; see opposite) free guided mountain hikes. From June to September, different hikes leave at 9am daily from the Congress Centre. There are also Sunrise Hikes departing at 4.45am Friday and night-time lantern walks from 7.45pm on Tuesday. For details, contact the **AlpinSchule Innsbruck** (☎ 546 000; www.asi.at, in German) or the **tourist office** (☎ general information 598 50, tickets & packages 53 56; www.innsbruck.info; Burggraben 3; ☎ 9am-6pm). You need to book by 4.30pm the previous day.

Out of season, the tourist office can offer advice on individual hikes. One good starting point is the top of the Hungerbergbahn funicular railway near the **Alpenzoo** (Alpine Zoo; ☎ 292 323; www.alpenzoo.at; Weiherburggasse 37; adult/student €7/5; ☎ 9am-6pm, closes 5pm winter).

Sights & Activities OLD TOWN

The best thing to do among the warren of streets and covered walkways in Innsbruck's medieval town is simply to wander around and soak up the atmosphere. Most people usually start at the famous **Goldenes Dachl** (Golden Roof). Built by Emperor Maximilian I in the 16th century as a display of wealth, it comprises 2657 gilded copper tiles.

The other attraction where crowds rightly congregate is the **Hofkirche** (Imperial Church; ☎ 584 302; Universitätsstrasse 2; adult/student under 27 €2.20/1.45, admission free Sun & holidays; ☎ 9am-5pm Mon-Sat, before 8am, noon-3pm & after 5pm Sun), which contains Maximilian's 'sarcophagus' (actually empty). You're now forbidden to touch the 28 giant statues of Habsburgs around the cask, but numerous inquisitive hands have already polished parts of the dull bronze, including Kaiser Rudolf's codpiece!

While in this neighbourhood, have a wander through the pleasant **Hofgarten** city-centre park.

Innsbruck offers other museums, but most are eminently missable. But don't miss **Swarovski Kristallwelten** (Crystal Worlds; ☎ 05224-51080; www.swarovski.com/kristallwelten; Kristallweltenstrasse 1; adult/child €8/free; ☎ 9am-6pm). Enter behind sparkling crystalline eyes and the waterfall-spewing mouth (frozen in winter) of a giant cranium, and an interactive exhibition awaits further inside. It features the works of Eno, Warhol and Dali. Navigate your way through numerous black curtains and into ambient sound rooms, trippy interactive exhibits and one-of-a-kind fusions of crystals, lights, sounds and mirrors. The centre is in Watten and best reached by bus (€8.50 return, 30 minutes).

BERGISEL TOWER

No time to go hiking? A short cut (albeit more expensive) to the same sort of views is a visit to the futuristic **Bergisel tower** (☎ 589 259; admission €7.90; ☎ 9am-5pm, to 6pm Jun-Nov). Atop the refurbished Winter Olympics ski-jump stadium, which helped host the games in 1964 and 1976, this new tower houses a **café** as well as a **viewing platform**. Take tram 1 (direction Bergisel) or tram 6 (direction Igls) from Museumstrasse. At the stop, follow the signs to Bergisel, ascending the fairly steep path for 15 minutes.

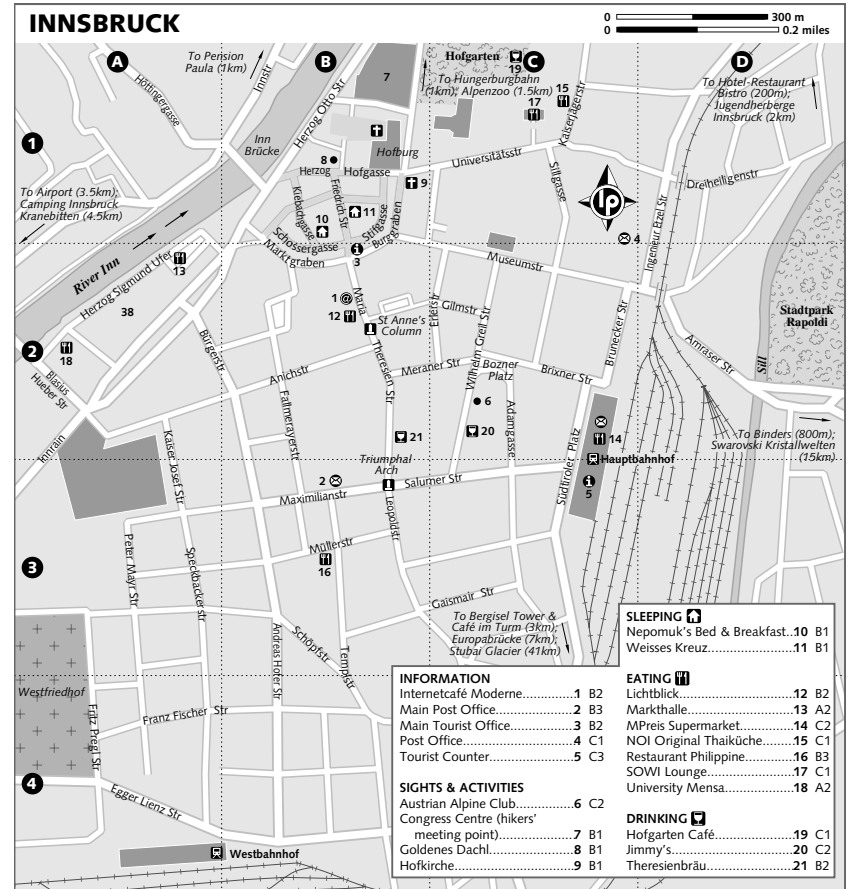
SKIING

You can ski or snowboard year-round at the **Stubai Glacier** 40km south of Innsbruck. A day pass will cost you €34.50 (€24.10 in summer). Catch the white IVB Stubaital-bahn bus, departing roughly every hour from near the train station. The journey takes 80 minutes and the last bus back is usually at 5.30pm. Several places, including the **tourist office** (☎ 53 56; tours €49), offer well-priced packages to the glacier. In winter, you can catch a free ski bus that runs from various hotels up to the snow.

The ski region around Innsbruck continues to improve, with new areas being opened up and refurbished. A one-day ski pass is around €26. Downhill equipment rental starts at €15.

GETTING INTO TOWN

Buses 600, 630 and 631 (€1.60) leave from outside the airport terminal for the train station and continue downtown to Hauptplatz or Jakominiplatz.



Sleeping

The tourist office has lists of private rooms in Innsbruck from €20 per person. If you're staying at a hostel or hotel, ask for the complimentary Club Innsbruck card. It provides various discounts and benefits.

Camping Innsbruck Kranebitten (☎ 284 180; www.campinginnsbruck.com; Kranebitter Allee 214; camp sites per adult/tent/car €5.40/3.40/3.40) In an idyllic location 5km from the historical centre of town, under the mountains, this camping ground is open year-round and has a restaurant, bike rental and shuttle service into town.

Jugendherberge Innsbruck (☎ 346 179; www.jugendherberge-innsbruck.at; Reichenauerstrasse 147; dm €11.50-14.50, d with shared bathroom €46; ☎ closed 10am-3pm summer, 10am-5pm rest of year, curfew 11pm; ☎)

This hostel still seems stuck in the Soviet era, even though Austria never had one. Seen from afar, it's a huge, concrete and pebble-dash monstrosity, but its dorms are quite modestly sized. Prices include breakfast. To get here, take bus O (direction Olympisches Dorf/Josef Kerschbaumer Strasse) from Museumstrasse.

Nepomuk's Bed & Breakfast (☎ 584 118; Kiebachgasse 16; dm/d with shared bathroom €25/30) At the time of research this was the newest kid in one of the oldest buildings on the block. The staircase has been around since the year 1800, but the charming rooms are newly remodelled (of which there are only 10), and the breakfast (included) in the wonderful attached patisserie downstairs will get your day going.

We believe this place will become an instant favourite.

Pension Paula (☎ 292 262; www.pensionpaula.at; Weiberburggasse 15; s/d €36/58, with shared bathroom €29/49) This hill-top *pension* looks out over the city, with views from the front rooms and the outdoor seating next to the buffet breakfast room. Rooms are fairly humble, but most bathrooms are quite new.

Binders (☎ 33 436-0; www.binders.at; Dr Glatz Strasse 20; s/d €43/64, with shared bathroom €40/54;) East of the main train station, Binders is a rare thing: a designer hotel for those on a budget. Brightly coloured lampshades, pillows or armchairs create a splash against a neutral, modern background. Just east of town, this is excellent value for money.

Hotel-Restaurant Bistro (☎ 346 319; www.tiscover.at/hotel-bistro; Pradlerstrasse 2; s/d €42/84) This small family-run hotel won't win any interior design awards; it's plain, business-like and unassuming. However, rooms are comfortable and offer good value for money, and the staff are welcoming and friendly.

Weisses Kreuz (☎ 59 479; www.weisseskreuz.at; Herzog Friedrich Strasse 31; s/d from €62/96, with shared bathroom from €35/66; ☒) Creaky, atmospheric but comfortable nevertheless, this hotel once played host to Mozart.

Eating

There is an **MPreis Supermarket** (☒ 6am-9pm) in the train station and a large indoor food market by the river in **Markthalle** (Herzog Sigmund Ufer; ☒ 8am-4pm Mon-Fri & Sat morning). Otherwise, if you're looking for cheap eats, pop across the river to Innstrasse, which is lined with

kebab shops, takeaway pizzerias and cut-price Indian restaurants.

University Mensa (Herzog Sigmund Ufer 15; mains €3.90-5; ☒ 11am-2pm Mon-Thu, 11am-1.30pm Fri) The priceless views of the mountains surrounding Innsbruck are the real deal at this otherwise undistinguished student canteen.

SOWI lounge (Universitätsstrasse 15; mains from €3.20-5; ☒ 8am-5pm Mon-Thu, 10am-3pm Fri) Less scenic but with more appetising-looking food than the *Mensa*.

Restaurant Philippine (☎ 589 157; Müllerstrasse 9; daily menus €6.80 & €7.80; ☒ 11.30am-2pm & 6.30-8pm Mon-Sat) Although it touts itself as a veg outlet, this restaurant also serves fish.

NOI Original Thaiküche (☎ 589 777; Kaiserjägerstrasse 1; mains €4-11; ☒ lunch & dinner Mon-Fri, dinner Sat) Serves delicious Thai staples, such as soups, noodle dishes and curries. It's small, but in summer there are lots of outdoor tables with brightly coloured chairs.

Drinking

Pick up a copy of *Innsider*, found in cafés across town.

Jimmy's (☎ 570 473; Wilhelm Greil Strasse 17) Very cool, very industrial looking, Jimmy's is the hub of Innsbruck's hip nightlife. It features lots of metal and exposed stone, and a Buddha on the wall that oversees the proceedings.

Hofgarten Café (☎ 588 871; Rennweg 6A) Under the trees in summer, or in the spacious interior, this café-bar-restaurant in the middle of the palace gardens (despite the misleading address) remains a convivial and atmospheric place to carouse. Drinks are reasonably cheap.

Elferhaus (☎ 582 875; Herzog-Friedrich Strasse 11) Tunnelling into a slab of rock, this cool *bierhaus* has a vibe that gets lively late, when the mostly college crowd shows up.

Treibhaus (☎ 586 874; Angerzellgasse 8) An arty joint that hosts live music ranging from urban groove to ska, short-film festivals and the like. On Sunday, there's a 'jazz breakfast' from 10.30am and a 'five o'clock tea'.

Bacchus (☎ 940 210; Salumerstrasse 14) A mixed-gay club that attracts what German speakers succinctly call *ein gemischtes Publikum* (all ages, all tastes and all looks).

Getting There & Away

Austrian Airlines (code 0S; www.aua.com) has multiple flights per week from London Gatwick to **Innsbruck airport** (☎ 22 525).

Fast trains depart seven times a day for Bregenz (€25.10, 2¼ hours) and every two hours to Salzburg (€29.50, two hours). Regular express trains head to Munich (via Kufstein; two hours) and south to Verona (3½ hours). Connections are hourly to Kitzbühel (€12.20, 1¼ hours). Rail-pass holders might need to pay a surcharge for travelling through Italy en route to Lienz. Check before boarding.

Heading south by car through the Brenner Pass to Italy, you'll hit the A13 toll road (€7.99). Toll-free Hwy 182 follows the same route, although it is less scenic.

Getting Around

Single bus tickets cost €1.60; a 24-hour pass is €3.20. To get to the airport, take bus F, which leaves from opposite the main train station and passes through Maria Theresien Strasse. A taxi costs around €10.

KITZBÜHEL

☎ 05356 / pop 8600

Kitzbühel began life in the 16th century as a silver and copper mining town and today continues to preserve a charming medieval centre despite its other persona – as a fashionable and prosperous winter resort. It's renowned for the white-knuckled Hahnenkamm downhill ski race in January on its excellent slopes.

The **tourist office** (☎ 621 55-0; www.kitzbuehel.com; Hinterstadt 18; ☒ 8.30am-6pm Mon-Fri, 9am-6pm Sat) is in the centre, about 1km from the train station (follow the signs). Ask here about homestays or other cheap accommodation.

Pension Hörli (☎ /fax 63 144; Josef Pirchl Strasse 60; s/d €20/40, with shared bathroom €18/36) is the closest place to the train station. It's cheap, friendly and more comfortable than its jumble-sale décor first suggests.

Huberbräu Stüberl (☎ 65 677; Vorderstadt 18; mains €6.20-12.50) is a Kitzbühel 'must', although so many diners come for the Austrian food and beer that the service can be rather offhand.

On Bichlstrasse (corner of Ehrenbachgasse) there's a **Spar supermarket** (☒ Mon-Sat), while grocery store **Asia Markt** (Josef Pirchl Strasse 16; meals €4-7; ☒ Mon-Sat) serves light weekday lunches and early evening meals.

Direct trains to Innsbruck (€12.20, one to two hours, depending on the service) only leave Kitzbühel every two hours or so, but there are hourly services to Wörgl, where you can change for Innsbruck. Trains to Salzburg (€20.80, two hours) leave roughly

hourly. Slower trains stop at Kitzbühel-Hahnenkamm, which is closer to the centre than the main Kitzbühel stop.

Getting to Lienz by public transport is awkward. The train is slow and the bus is infrequent (€12.50, two hours). There are four bus departures Monday to Friday and two each on Saturday and Sunday.

LIENZ

☎ 04852 / pop 13,000

With the jagged Dolomite mountain ranges crowding its southern skyline, the capital of East Tirol is a scenic staging point for travels through the Hohe Tauern National Park.

Staff at the **tourist office** (☎ 652 65; www.lienz-tourismus.at; Europaplatz 1; ☒ 8am-6pm Mon-Fri, 9am-noon Sat, 9am-noon Sun summer & winter high seasons) will find rooms free of charge, or you can use the hotel board (with free telephone) outside.

There is downhill skiing nearby, but the area is more renowned for its cross-country skiing; Lienz fills up for the annual Dolomitenlauf cross-country skiing race in mid-January.

In summer, hiking is good in the mountains. The cable cars are closed in April, May, October and November.

Lienz has an excellent camping ground, **Comfort-Camping Falken** (☎ 64 022; Eichholz 7; camp sites with/without electricity €10.50/8, plus per adult €6; ☒ mid-Dec-Oct), with good washing facilities, a restaurant and marvellous mountain views.

Gästehaus Masnata (☎ 655 36; Drahtzuggasse 4; apt per person €19-20) is another good choice.

There are ADEG supermarkets on Hauptplatz and Tiroler Platz. **Pick Nick Ossi** (☎ 71 091; Europaplatz 2; snacks €3-7) offers salads, pizzas and other fast food.

Try regional dishes at **Adlerstüberl** (☎ 625 50; Andrä Kranz Gasse 5; mains from €7.80), which is popular for its daily specials.

Except for the 'corridor' route through Italy to Innsbruck, trains to the rest of Austria connect via Spittal Millstättersee to the east. Trains to Salzburg (€26.90) take at least three hours. Villach, between Spittal and Klagenfurt, is a main junction for rail routes to the south. To head south by car, you must first divert west or east along Hwy 100.

HOHE TAUERN NATIONAL PARK

The largest national park in the Alps, Hohe Tauern (1786 sq km) is a hiking paradise where the flora and fauna are protected. The park contains

the **Grossglockner** (3797m), Austria's highest mountain, which towers over the 10km-long Pasterze Glacier. The best viewing point is **Franz Josefs Höhe**, reached from Lienz by bus between mid-June and late September (round-trip fare €10.20, plus a €2.70 toll for the park).

Buses go via Heiligenblut, where there's a **HI Jugendherberge** (☎ 04824-2259; Hof 36; 📍 mid-Dec-mid-Oct) and other accommodation available.

The **Grossglockner Hochalpenstrasse** (Hwy 107; www.grossglockner.at) through the park is considered one of the world's most scenic. The road winds upwards for 2000m past waterfalls, glaciers and Alpine meadows.

VORARLBERG

Vorarlberg is Austria's western panhandle. Angling down from the Alps to the shores of Lake Constance (Bodensee), it provides a convenient gateway to Germany, Liechtenstein or Switzerland.

The Arlberg region, shared by Vorarlberg and neighbouring Tirol, has some of the best skiing in Austria. **St Anton am Arlberg** is the largest resort. There are good medium-to-advanced runs here, as well as nursery slopes on Gampen and Kapall. The **tourist office** (☎ 05446-226 90; www.stantonamarlberg.com), on the main street, has details. Head diagonally left from the train station to find it.

A ski pass valid for St Anton and neighbouring St Christoph Lech, Zürs and Stuben costs €38 for one day and €180 for six.

Accommodation is mainly in small B&Bs. Many budget places (prices from €29 per person in the winter high season) are booked months or even years in advance.

St Anton is on the main railway route between Bregenz (€14.30) and Innsbruck (€13.10), less than 1½ hours from both. It's close to the eastern entrance of the Arlberg Tunnel, the toll road connecting Vorarlberg and Tirol.

AUSTRIA DIRECTORY

ACCOMMODATION

Reservations are recommended at Christmas and Easter, and during summer; they are binding on both sides.

If you pitch a tent outside an established camping ground, you need the property

owner's approval; on public land it's illegal. Outside Vienna, Tirol and protected areas, free camping is allowed in a campervan, but only if you don't set up equipment outside the van.

Hostels generally cost from €13 to €20. If you want a break from dorms, many householders rent out rooms in their homes (€15 to €30 per person). Ask the tourist office or look out for *Zimmer frei* (rooms vacant) signs. Prices quoted in this chapter are for the high summer season (or winter in ski resorts) and include all taxes and breakfast, unless otherwise stated.

Some useful organisations:

Austrian Camping Club (Österreichischer Camping Club; Map p84; ☎ 01-71 199-1272; Schubertring 1-3, A-1010 Vienna)

Junge Hostels Austria (Map p84; ☎ 01-533 18 33; www.jungehotels.at; 01, Helfferstorferstrasse 4, Vienna)

Österreichischer Jugendherbergsverband (Map p84; ☎ 01-533 53 53; www.oehjv.or.at; 01, Schottenring 28, A-1010 Vienna)

ACTIVITIES

Austria has some of the world's best skiing and snowboarding, particularly in Tirol and Vorarlberg. Count on spending €20 to €38 for a daily ski pass (to ride the ski lifts). Rental generally starts at €15 for downhill equipment or €13 for cross-country skis; rates drop for multiple days.

Most tourist offices sell maps of hiking routes. Mountain paths have direction indicators and often markers indicating their level of difficulty. Those paths marked with a red-white-red marker mean you need sturdy hiking boots and a pole; a blue-white-blue marker indicates the need for mountaineering equipment. The **Austrian Alpine Club** (Österreichischer Alpenverein, ÖAV; ☎ 0512-587 828; office@alpenverein-ibk.at; Wilhelm Greil Strasse 15, A-6010 Innsbruck) maintains a list of alpine huts, for overnight stays.

Cycling is popular. Spas and swimming are too; Austrians will take any opportunity to get their kit off and get back to nature.

BUSINESS HOURS

Banks 🕒 usually 9am-12.30pm & 1.30-3pm Mon-Fri, to 5.30pm Thu

Shops 🕒 9am-6pm Mon-Fri, 9am-1pm or 5pm Sat. However, grocery stores may open at 6am, and other shops don't close their doors until 7.30pm. In smaller cities, there's sometimes a two-hour lunch break.

DANGERS & ANNOYANCES

Pickpockets work Vienna's two main train stations and pedestrian centre.

Take care in the mountains; helicopter rescue is expensive unless you are covered by insurance (assuming they find you in the first place).

EMBASSIES & CONSULATES

Embassies & Consulates in Austria

Only embassies (*Botschaften*) and consulates (*Konsulate*) in Vienna issue visas. In an emergency, you may be redirected to a limited-hours consulate in a nearer city.

Australia (Map p84; ☎ 01-506 74-0; www.australian-embassy.at; 04, Mattiellistrasse 2-4)

Canada (Map p84; ☎ 01-531 38-3000; www.kanada.at; 01, Laurenzerberg 2)

Croatia (☎ 01-484 8783-0; 17, Heubergg 10)

Czech Republic (Map p84 ☎ 01-894 3741; 14, Penzingerstrasse 11-13)

France (Map p84; ☎ 01-502 75-0; www.ambafrance-at.org; 04, Technikerstrasse 2)

Germany (Map p80; ☎ 01-711 54-0; 03, Mettemichgasse 3)

Hungary (Map p84; ☎ 01-537 80-300; 01, Bankgasse 4-6)

Ireland (Map p84; ☎ 01-715 4246-0; 01, Rotenturmstrasse 16-18)

Italy (Map p80; ☎ 01-712 5121-0; 03, Rennweg 27)

Netherlands (Map p84; ☎ 01-589 39; 01, Operring 5)

New Zealand Honorary consul (☎ 01-318 85 05); Embassy (☎ Berlin 030-206 210).

Slovakia (☎ 01-318 9055-200; 19, Armbrustergasse 24)

Slovenia (Map p84; ☎ 01-586 1309; 01, Nibelungengasse 13)

Switzerland (Map p80; ☎ 01-795 05-0; 03, Prinz Eugen Strasse 7)

UK (Map p80; ☎ 01-716 13-0; www.britishembassy.at; 03, Jaurésgasse 12)

USA Embassy (Map p80; ☎ 01-313 39-0; www.usembassy.at; 09, Boltzmanngasse 16); Consulate (Map p84; ☎ 512 58 35; 01, Gartenbaupromenade 2) For visas.

Austrian Embassies & Consulates Abroad

For a complete list visit www.auslandsoesterreicher.at and click on 'Österreichische Botschaften und Konsulate' under 'Kontakte'. Otherwise, contact the following:

Australia (☎ 02-6295 1533; www.austriaemb.org.au; 12 Talbot St, Forrest, ACT 2603)

Canada (☎ 613-789 1444; www.austro.org; 445 Wilbrod St, Ottawa, Ontario K1N 6M7)

France Embassy (☎ 01 40 63 30 63; www.aussenministerium.at/paris; 6 rue Fabert, 75007 Paris); Consulate (☎ 01 40 63 30 90; 17 Ave de Villars, 75007 Paris)

Germany (☎ 030-202 870; www.oesterreichische-botschaft.de; Stauffenbergstrasse 1, Berlin D-10785)

Ireland (☎ 01-269 4577; dublin-ob@bmaa.gov.at; 93 Ailesbury Rd, Dublin 4)

Netherlands (☎ 70-324 5470; den-haag-ob@bmaa.gov.at; van Alkemadealaan 342, 2597 AS Den Haag)

New Zealand Consulate (☎ 04-499 6393; diessl@ihug.co.nz; Level 2, Willbank House, 587 Willis St, Wellington)

UK (☎ 020-7235 3731; www.austria.org.uk; 18 Belgrave Mews West, London SW1X 8HU)

USA (☎ 202-895-6700; www.austria.org; 3524 International Court NW, Washington, DC 20008)

FESTIVALS & EVENTS

The website of the **Austrian National Tourist Office** (www.austria-tourism.at) displays a comprehensive list, which you can access by clicking on 'Events'. The following are some of Austria's major festivals:

February

Fasching This Shrovetide carnival before Lent involves parties, waltzes and a parade.

May

Festwochen The Vienna Festival focusses on classical musical, theatre and other performing arts.

July

Bregenz Festspiele Opera with a difference – performed on a floating stage on Lake Constance, Bregenz.

Pflasterspektakel Linz street performers' festival, especially popular with kids.

Salzburger Festspiele Austria's leading classical musical festival, held in Salzburg, attracts major stars like Simon Rattle and Plácido Domingo.

September

Ars Electronica Festival A celebration of weird and wonderful technological art and computer music, held in Linz.

Bruckner Festival This highbrow classical musical festival, also in Linz, pays homage to native son Bruckner.

November

Christmas Markets Quint stalls selling traditional decorations, foodstuffs, mulled wine and all manner of presents herald the arrival of the festive season (particularly in Vienna and Salzburg).

December

Kaiserball The Imperial Ball kicks off Vienna's three-month season of balls combining glamour and high society with camp decadence.

Krampus St Nicholas, his friend Krampus (Black Peter) and an array of masked creatures cause merriment and mischief, in a parade that harks back to pagan celebrations (in Innsbruck and elsewhere).

HOLIDAYS

New Year's Day 1 January

Epiphany 6 January

Easter Monday March/April

May Day 1 May

Ascension Five and a half weeks after Easter

Whit Monday Seven weeks after Easter

Corpus Christi 10 days after Whit Monday

Assumption of the Virgin Mary 15 August

National Day 26 October

All Saints' Day 1 November

Immaculate Conception 8 December

Christmas Day 25 December

Boxing Day 26 December

INTERNET RESOURCES

Austrian Railways (Österreichische Bundesbahnen; ÖBB; www.oebb.at) Train times and many fares.

Mensa (www.mensen.at, in German) Has a list of cheap university canteens (*Mensas*).

LANGUAGE

Although they understand 'High' or received German, Austrians use different words and some even speak a dialect. They join their Bavarian cousins in forming the diminutive with 'erl' instead of the northern German 'chen'; when Austrians say *ein Bissel*, they mean *ein Bisschen* (a little). Some time expressions are unique. *Heuer* means 'this year', and the first calendar month is *Jänner*, not *Januar*.

MONEY

The euro is the currency of Austria. An approximate 10% tip is expected in restaurants. Pay it directly to the server; don't leave it on the table.

POST

Typical hours in smaller towns are 8am to noon and 2pm to 6pm Monday to Friday (money exchange to 5pm), and 8am to 11am Saturday, but a few main post offices in big cities are open daily till late, or even 24 hours.

Stamps are also available in tobacco (*Tabak*) shops.

Postcards and standard letters (up to 20g) cost €0.55 within Austria and to Europe. Standard letters to other destinations cost €1.25. Heavier letters, up to 50g, cost from €1 to Europe and €1.25 to other parts of the world.

TELEPHONE

Don't worry if a telephone number you're given has only four digits, as many as nine or somewhere in between. The Austrian system often adds direct-dial (DW) extensions to the main number – after a hyphen. Thus, say ☎ 12 345 is a main number, ☎ 12 345-67 will be an extension, which could be a phone or fax. Mostly, ☎ 0 gives you the switchboard operator.

The minimum tariff for public phones is €0.20. Some boxes only accept phonecards (*Telefon-Wertkarte*), which can be bought from post offices in two denominations: €3.60 (face value €3.63) and €6.90 (face value €7.27).

Mobile phones in Austria operate on GSM 900/1800, which is compatible with other European countries and Australia, but not with the North American GSM 1900 system or the system used in Japan.

VISAS

Visas are not required for EU, US, Canadian, Australian or New Zealand citizens. Many other visitors may stay up to three months (six months for Japanese) without a visa. Most African and Arab nationals usually require a visa. There are no time limits for EU and Swiss nationals, but they should register with the police before taking up residency.

Seasonal work in ski resorts is the most obvious and readily available work option; even for this, non-EU nationals will need their prospective employer to apply for a work permit for them.

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