

# Austria

It sounds clichéd to say, but this country really is alive with the sound of music. Mozart's symphonies waft through the cobbled streets of Salzburg like Julie Andrews floating around the picturesque Austrian countryside. The story of Austria 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. Juxtaposed against them is incredible natural beauty blanketed in an edifying patchwork of depth and character like no other. Gorgeous enough to make you gasp in awe, its snow-capped peaks stare back at you with jagged smiles. Its verdant valleys, strewn with summer wildflowers, make the perfect outdoor playground. Graceful old cities exude genteel airs of times long past and even the smallest rural villages are cultural reservoirs rich in history. In Austria the past is as pertinent as the present and the country surprises with its ability to change without sacrificing its time-honoured heritage and traditions.

## FAST FACTS

- **Area** 83,855 sq km
- **Capital** Vienna
- **Currency** euro (€); A\$1 = €0.60; ¥100 = €0.67; NZ\$1 = €0.50; UK£1 = €1.48; US\$1 = €0.78
- **Famous for** apple strudel, Wiener schnitzel, Adolf Hitler, Arnold Schwarzenegger, Freudian psychoanalysis
- **Official Language** German (Slovene, Croat and Hungarian are also official languages in some southern states)
- **Phrases** *Grüss Gott* (hello); *Servus!* (hello and goodbye); *Ba Ba* (bye bye)
- **Population** 8.2 million
- **Telephone Codes** country code ☎ 43; international access code ☎ 00



## HIGHLIGHTS

- Take in art from a completely different standing (literally) at the popular **Kunst HausWien** (p65) by Friedensreich Hunder twasser in Vienna.
- Relive scenes from *The Sound of Music* while singing along on a fabulously kitsch tour in the picture-postcard city of **Salzburg** (p82).
- Experience Tyrolean culture with plenty of recreation opportunities and nightlife on the side in **Innsbruck** (p93) or **Mayrhofen** (p97).
- Road-trip through the Hohe Tauern National Park along one of the world's most scenic highways, the **Grossglockner Hochalpenstrasse** (p99).
- Gaze at what locals have dubbed 'the friendly alien', the spaceship-shaped **Kunsthau Graz** (arts centre; p79) in Graz.

## ITINERARIES

- Two days** Spend this entire time in Vienna, making sure to visit the Habsburg palaces and the Riesenrad before cosying up in a *Kaffeehaus* (coffee house). At night check out the pumping bar scene or catch a Vienna Boys' Choir concert.
- One week** Spend three days in Vienna, plus one day on a wine tour in the Wachau, a day each in Salzburg and Innsbruck, and one day visiting the Salzkammergut lakes district to hike or ski (depending on the season).

## CLIMATE & WHEN TO GO

Austria has a typical central European climate, with Vienna enjoying an average maximum of 2°C (35°F) in January and 25°C (77°F) in July. Some people find the *Föhn* – a hot, dry wind that sweeps down from the mountains in early spring and autumn – rather uncomfortable. For more information, see p1100.

Austria hangs out its *Zimmer frei* (rooms vacant) signs year-round, but its high seasons are from July to August and Christmas to New Year. Christmas to late February is the peak skiing time. Alpine resorts can be pretty dead between seasons, ie May, June and November.

## HISTORY

Austria is a little nation with a big past. It may be hard to believe that this diminutive,

**HOW MUCH?**

- 1L milk €0.95
- Loaf of bread from €1.20
- Bottle of house white wine market/restaurant from €3/10
- Newspaper €0.80 to €1.45
- Short taxi ride €5

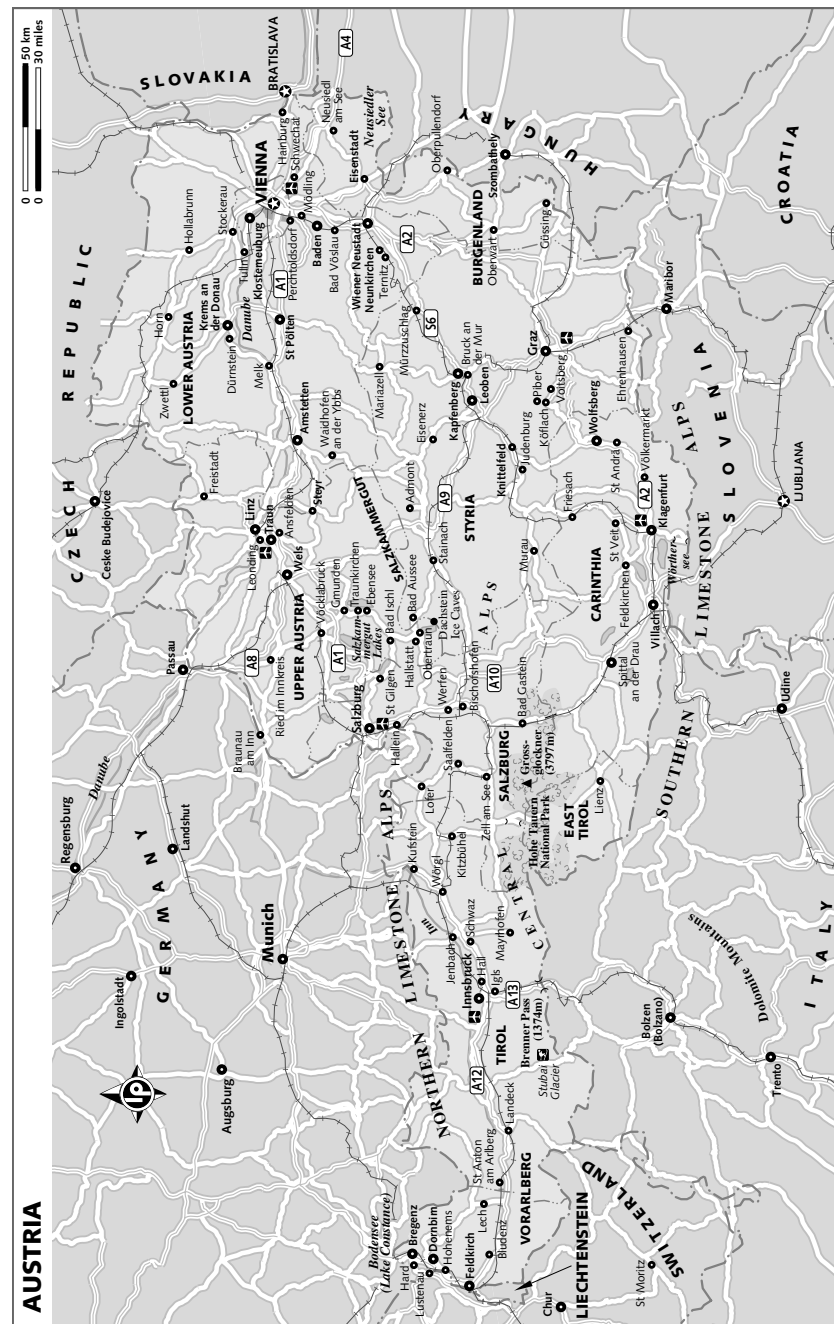
**LONELY PLANET INDEX**

- 1L petrol €1
- 1L bottled water €0.40 to €2.50
- Bottle of beer from €2.50
- Souvenir T-shirt €15
- Street snack (wurst) €3

landlocked Alpine country, bordering eight other states (Germany, Switzerland, Liechtenstein, Italy, Slovenia, Hungary, Slovakia and the Czech Republic) was once the epicentre of the mighty Habsburg empire and, in the 20th century, a pivotal player in the outbreak of WWI. For centuries the Habsburgs used strategic marriages to maintain their hold over a territory now encompassing parts of today's Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Poland, Romania, the majority of the aforementioned proximate nations and, for a period, even Germany. But defeat in WWI brought that to an end, when the small republic of Austria was formed in 1918.

There had been military and political struggles before. Twice the neighbouring Ottoman Empire reached Vienna, in 1529 and 1683. In 1805 Napoleon defeated Austria at Austerlitz. Austrian Chancellor Metternich cleverly reconsolidated Austria's power in 1815 after Waterloo, but in the 1866 Austro-Prussian War the country (hampered by an internal workers' revolution in 1848) lost control of the German Confederation. At this point the empire's Hungarian politicians asserted themselves and forced the formation of Austria-Hungary.

However, these setbacks pale beside Archduke Franz Ferdinand's assassination by Slavic separatists in Sarajevo on 28 June 1914. When his uncle, the Austro-Hungarian emperor Franz Josef, declared war on Serbia



in response, the ensuing 'Great War' (WWI) would prove the Habsburgs' downfall.

During the 1930s Nazis from neighbouring Germany assassinated Austrian Chancellor Dolfuss, installing a puppet regime. With Hitler, a native Austrian, also as German chancellor, the German troops met little resistance when they invaded recession-hit Austria in 1938. A national referendum supported the *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 that 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 currently holds the Presidency of the Council of the European Union and the headquarters or regional centre of many international organisations, including the UN.

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

## PEOPLE

By and large, Austrians are shrugging off their controversial right-wing past, a stereotype that has lost its grip since the collapse of the Iron Curtain along the country's eastern border more than 15 years ago. At first glance, Austrians can seem reserved and even slightly suspicious of strangers. Not generally regarded for outward displays of friendliness, this changes when you get to know them better. Then 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.

Within the country, Vienna has always been a paradox, mixing Austrian conservatism with a large dollop of decadence. The scene you might get at Viennese balls of grand old society dames flirting with drag

queens aptly reflects this. The capital's pervading humour, *Wiener Schmah*, is quite ironic and cutting, but is also meant to be charming. In essence, it's very camp.

Nearly one-fifth of the population lives in Vienna, but other cities are small, so more than two-thirds live in small towns or in rural areas.

## RELIGION

Although Vienna once had a sizable Jewish population, Austria today is a largely Christian nation. Some 80% of the population is Catholic. The rest is Protestant, concentrated in Burgenland and Carinthia.

## ARTS

Austria's musical heritage tends to elbow most of its other artistic achievements off the page. European composers were drawn to the country by the Habsburgs' generous patronage during the 18th and 19th centuries: Beethoven, Brahms, Haydn, Mozart and Schubert all made Vienna their home during this period. The waltz originated in the city, perfected by Johann Strauss junior (1825–99).

However, Vienna at the end of the 19th century was also a city of design and painting. The Austrian Secessionist movement, the local equivalent of Art Nouveau (*Jugendstil*), turned out such talents as the painter Gustav Klimt and architect Otto Wagner. Expressionist painters Egon Schiele and Oskar Kokoschka and modernist architect Adolf Loos followed.

While Austrian literature is not well known in the outside world, Arthur Schnitzler's *Dream Story* (*Traumnovelle*) inspired the Stanley Kubrick film *Eyes Wide Shut*. Football fans should be familiar with one famous work by Carinthian novelist Peter Handke, *The Goalie's Fear of the Penalty Kick* (*Der Angst des Tormanns beim Elfmeter*).

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.

Meanwhile, expert film director Michael Haneke has also been creating a splash with his controversial *Funny Games* (1997) and

the twisted romance of the much-lauded *The Piano Teacher* (2001). The country's most famous TV export is the detective series *Inspector Rex* (*Kommissar Rex*). As well as being big in Germany and Australia, Rex, a German shepherd dog who regularly proves invaluable to his police owners, apparently has a cult following in some 93 countries. In recent times perhaps the most noteworthy Austrian imprint to be stamped on the world (and particularly the USA) is former professional bodybuilder/actor turned politician, and current governor of the state of California, Arnold Schwarzenegger, who was born near Graz.

## ENVIRONMENT

More than half of Austria's 83,855 sq km is mountainous. Three chains run west to east: the Northern Limestone Alps, the Central (or High) Alps, which have the tallest peaks in Austria, including the 3797m Grossglockner, and the Southern Limestone Alps. They are banded around the middle and the south of the country, occupying most of its western half, and leaving flats around the Danube Valley and Vienna in the northeast and Graz to the southeast.

Meadows and forests cover much of the country. Although Austria is home to Europe's largest national park, Hohe Tauern, only 3% of its landmass is national park. These protected wilderness areas are good places to spot wildlife, such as marmots. Hohe Tauern itself has many species of alpine wildflower, and the bearded vulture and lyre-horned ibex were reintroduced in recent years.

Austria is highly environmentally conscious and no one wants to spoil the pristine landscape by littering. Recycling and biocompost bins are ubiquitous throughout the country.

## FOOD & DRINK Staples & Specialities

There's more to Austrian cuisine than *Wiener schnitzel* (a veal or pork cutlet coated in breadcrumbs). Traces of the country's wider historical reach endure in the Hungarian paprika used to flavour several dishes, including *Gulasch* (beef stew), and in the Styrian polenta and pumpkinseed oil popular in Italian and Slovenian cuisine respectively. Some staples like wurst (sausage)

and regional dishes, such as *Tiroler Bauernschmaus* – a selection of meats served with sauerkraut, potatoes and dumplings – can be very fatty and stodgy. However, hearty soups often include *Knödel* (dumplings) or pasta.

Besides *Strudel* (fillo pastry filled with a variety of fruits, poppy seeds or cheese), *Salzburger Nockerl* (a fluffy soufflé) is a popular Austrian dessert.

Known for its lager beer – from brands like Gösser, Schwechater, Stiegl and Zipfer to *Weizenbier* (wheat beer) – Austria also produces some white wines in its east. *Heuriger* wine is the latest vintage, and is avidly consumed, even in autumn while still semi-fermented (called *Sturm*).

## Where to Eat & Drink

A traditional Austrian inn is called a *Beissl* or *Stüberl*. A *Beissl* (from the Hebrew word for 'house') tends to be more about meeting friends and having a drink, with food a necessary but ancillary pastime, whereas the emphasis is usually more on the food itself in a *Stüberl* (from the word *Stube*, meaning 'cosy living room'). Not all *Beissl* or *Stüberl* will be 100% traditional; however, only a few of them in the middle of Vienna are touristy enough to be wary of.

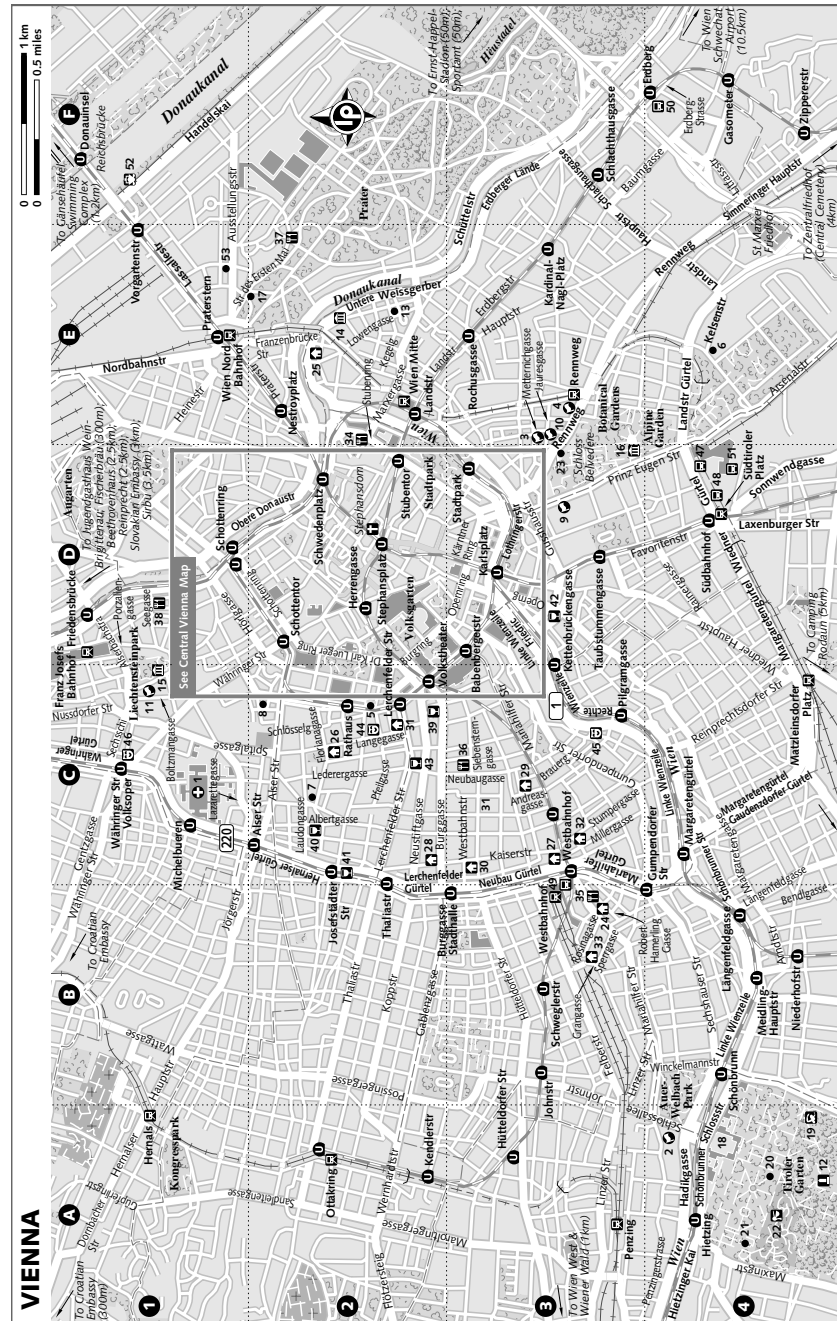
Of course, lots of Asian restaurants and pizzerias dot the countryside. These, in addition to the dumplings in local cuisine, mean that vegetarians shouldn't have any trouble finding satisfying meals.

For cheap food, try *Mensens* (university canteens). The main meal is at noon, when many restaurants provide a good-value *Tagesteller* or *Tagesmenu* (set meal).

## 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 full with galleries, museums and exhibitions, and a sensation of resuscitated times past. The demarcation between antiquity and contemporary is hazily represented here. Take the time to absorb the copious vestiges of grandiose marzipan-like buildings filling the streets, and the many ornate

**INFORMATION**

Allgemeines Krankenhaus.....	1	C1
Czech Embassy.....	2	A4
German Embassy.....	3	E3
Italian Embassy.....	4	E3
KlangBoden.....	5	C2
Max Mobil.....	6	E4
Seniorenbüro der Stadt	7	C2
STA Travel.....	8	C2
Swiss Embassy.....	9	D3
UK Embassy.....	10	E3
US Embassy.....	11	C1

**SIGHTS & ACTIVITIES**

Gloriette Monument.....	12	A4
Hundertwassershaus.....	13	E2
KunstHausWien.....	14	E2
Liechtenstein Museum.....	15	C1
Oberes Belvedere & Österreichische Galerie.....	16	D3
Reisenrad.....	17	E2
Schloss Schönbrunn.....	18	A4
Schönbrunn Baths.....	19	A4

Schönbrunn Maze.....	20	A4
Schönbrunn Palmenhaus.....	21	A4
Schönbrunn Zoo.....	22	A4
Unteres Belvedere.....	23	D3

**SLEEPING**

Hostel Ruthensteiner.....	24	B3
Hotel Urania.....	25	E2
Hotel-Pension Zipser.....	26	C2
Intercity Hotel.....	27	C3
Lauria.....	28	C2
Pension Kaffemühle.....	29	C3
Pension Wild.....	30	C3
Westend City Hostel.....	32	C3
Wombat's.....	33	B3

**EATING**

Indochine 21.....	34	E2
Sato Turkish Café-Restaurant.....	35	B3
Schnitzelwirt Schmidt.....	36	C3
Schweizerhaus.....	37	E2
Stomach.....	38	D1
Vegetasia.....		(see 30)

**DRINKING**

Das Möbel.....	39	C2
Die Wäscherel.....	40	C2
Rhiz.....	41	C2
Schikanader.....	42	C3
Shebeen.....	43	D2

**ENTERTAINMENT**

English Theatre.....	44	C2
Rosa Lila Villa.....	45	C3
Volksoper.....	46	C1

**TRANSPORT**

Bus to Airport.....	47	D4
Bus to Airport.....	48	D4
Bus to Airport.....	49	C3
Eurolines Office.....	50	F4
Eurolines Office.....	51	D4
G Glaser.....		(see 52)
Hydrofoil & Boat Wien Landing		
Stage.....	52	F1
Pedal Power.....	53	E1

baroque edifices decorating the city's inner circular road, the Ringstrasse. But these are only the proverbial icing on this beguiling marvel. The flavour of this city is as elaborate as its heritage and is many centuries in the making. The colourful narrative of the Habsburg dynasty can be traced through the rooms of the Hofburg palace or Schloss Schönbrunn, while the legacy of Art Nouveau artists Gustav Klimt and Egon Schiele is on show at the Secession Building, Schloss Belvedere and at the Leopold Museum.

This busy intersection of ethnicities, beliefs and cultural facets has always percolated with creative energy. It was here that Johann Strauss invented the waltz and where Sigmund Freud developed his psychoanalytic theories. And it was not too long ago that Vienna's artisans, musicians and academia flocked to coffee houses (chiefly as a respite from their drafty, more often than not, unheated flats) to embrace and disseminate ideas. So, if this city's rich diet of music, art and philosophy starts to feel a bit stodgy, ease up and relax in one of the many cafés, or take to the top of the *Riesenrad* (the Ferris wheel featured in the film *The Third Man*) for a panorama 65m aloft.

**ORIENTATION**

Many of the historic sights are in the old city, the Innere Stadt. The Danube Canal (Donaukanal) is located to the northeast

and a series of broad boulevards called the Ring or Ringstrasse encircle it.

Most of the attractions in the city centre are within walking distance of each other. Stephansdom (St Stephen's Cathedral), in the heart of the city, is the principal landmark.

In addresses, the number of a building within a street follows the street name. Any number *before* the street name denotes the district, of which there are 23. District 1 (the Innere Stadt) is the central region, mostly within the Ring. Generally, the higher the district number, the further it is from the city centre. The middle two digits of postcodes refer to the district, hence places with a postcode 1010 are in district 1, and 1230 means district 23.

The main train stations are Franz Josefs Bahnhof to the north, Westbahnhof to the west and Südbahnhof to the south; transferring between them is easy. Most hotels and *pensions* (B&Bs) are in the city centre and to the west.

**INFORMATION****Bookshops**

**British Bookshop** (Map p64; ☎ 512 19 45; 01, Weiburggasse 24-6) Stocks English-language titles.

**Freitag & Berndt** (Map p64; ☎ 533 86 85; 01,

Kohlmarkt 9) Sells maps and guidebooks.

**Reisebuchladen** (Map p64; ☎ 317 33 84; 09, Kolin-gasse 6) Specialises in guidebooks.

**Shakespeare & Co Booksellers** (Map p64; ☎ 535 50 53; 01, Stern-gasse 2) Sells new and second-hand books.

### WHAT'S ON A COFFEE DRINKER'S MIND?

From the way customers linger over their cappuccino, *Grosser Brauner* or *Melange* in a Viennese *Kaffeehaus* (coffee house), it's easy to believe Austrians have always been born with a coffee spoon in their mouths. But those great tea drinkers, the English, opened their first coffee house before the Austrians ever did, so how did the tradition take such a hold here?

Local schoolchildren are taught that the beverage entered their country after the Ottoman Empire's siege of Vienna in 1683. Polish merchant Georg Kolschitzky smuggled a message out of his adopted city to the Polish king, who eventually came to Vienna's rescue; and Kolschitzky asked to be rewarded with the sacks of coffee beans abandoned by Kara Mustafa's retreating army. As historian Simon Schama put it, Austria managed to 'resist the Turkish siege but (was) defenceless against the coffee bean'.

Only much later, from the 18th century, did the tradition of spending long hours in coffee houses really become entrenched. To escape Vienna's mostly unheated apartments, impoverished artists and intellectuals would set up shop at their coffee-house tables, writing and holding meetings and debates. Sigmund Freud and Leon Trotsky spent hours at Café Central (p71), plotting, playing chess and running up a tab for hot drinks. When the Russian revolution started, Trotsky left Vienna (much to the chagrin of the head waiter) without paying his bill.

Today coffee drinking remains a central part of Viennese, and to a lesser extent Austrian, life. It goes beyond a simple Starbucks culture (but surprisingly that chain now exists here, too). The true coffee house is still a place for music, exhibitions and cultural events; see what's on at the **Viennese Coffee House** (www.wiener-kaffeehaus.at). Above all, in the birthplace of psychoanalysis, it's somewhere to offset the stresses of the everyday. As the owner of a Viennese coffee shop once theorised to the *Guardian* newspaper, 'The coffee is the medicine, the waiters, the therapists'.

### Internet Access

**Bignet** (Map p64; ☎ 503 98 44; Kämtner Strasse 61; per 30 min €3.90)

**Speednet Café** (Map p60; ☎ 892 56 66; 15 Europlatz 1, Westbahnhof; per 30 min €3.30) Conveniently located inside the train station.

**Surfland Internetcafé** (Map p64; ☎ 512 77 01; Krugerstrasse 10; initial charge €1.50, per extra min €0.08)

### Medical Services

**Allgemeines Krankenhaus** (general hospital; Map p60; ☎ 40 400; 09, Währinger Gürtel 18-20; ☎ 24hr)

**Dental Treatment** (☎ 512 20 78; ☎ 24hr) German-speaking only.

### Post

**Main Post Office** (Map p64; 01, Fleischmarkt 19; ☎ 24hr) Other post offices open long hours are at Südbahnhof, Franz Josefs Bahnhof and Westbahnhof.

### Tourist Information

Tourist offices and hotels sell the Vienna Card (€16.90), which provides admission discounts and a free 72-hour travel pass.

**Information & Hotel Reservation Counters** Westbahnhof (☎ 8.30am-9pm); Airport arrivals hall (☎ 7am-10pm) Opposite the baggage-claim areas.

**Jugend-Info Wien** (Vienna Youth Information; Map p64; ☎ 17 99; 01, Babenbergerstrasse 1; ☎ noon-7pm

Mon-Sat) Offers various reduced-price tickets for 14- to 26-year-olds.

**Tourist-Info Zentrum** (Map p64; ☎ 24 555; www.wien.info; 01, cnr Am Albertinaplatz & Maysedergasse; ☎ 9am-7pm) Near the state opera house, with loads of regional information.

### Travel Agencies

**Amex** (Map p64; ☎ 5124 0040; Kämtner Strasse 21-23; ☎ 9am-5.30pm Mon-Fri, 9am-noon Sat)

**STA Travel** Vienna (Map p60; ☎ 40 148-0; 09, Garnison-gasse 7; ☎ 9am-5.30pm); Central Vienna (Map p64; ☎ 40 148-7000; 09, Türkenstrasse 6B; ☎ 9am-6pm); Central Vienna (Map p64; ☎ 50 243-0; 04, Karlsgasse 3; ☎ 9am-6pm)

### SIGHTS

Vienna's ostentatious buildings and beautifully tended parks make it a lovely city just to stroll through. If you catch tram 1 or 2 around the Ringstrasse (the road circling the city centre) you'll acquire a taste of the city, passing the neo-Gothic **Rathaus** (city hall; Map p64), the Greek Revival-style **Parliament** (Map p64) and the 19th-century **Burgtheater** (Map p64), among others. You can even glimpse the baroque **Karlskirche** (St Charles' Church; Map p64) from the tram.

Strolling along the pedestrian-only tree-lined **Kämtner Strasse** (Map p64) will take you

past plush shops, cafés and street entertainers. The main point of interest in Graben is the knobblly **Petsäule** (Plague Column; Map p64), designed by Fischer von Erlach and built to commemorate the end of the Plague. There's also a concrete **Holocaust memorial** (Map p64) by Rachel Whiteread in Judenplatz, Austria's first monument of its kind. Look closely and you'll notice that 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 victims of the holocaust.

Interesting buildings in the city centre include **Loos House** (Map p64), now a Raiffeisen bank, across from the Hofburg; The Art Nouveau **Postsparkasse** (Savings Bank; Map p64; Georg Coch Platz) and **Stadtbahn Pavilions** (train station pavilions; Map p64; Karlsplatz) are both by architect Otto Wagner.

### Stephansdom

The prominent latticework spire of **St Stephen's Cathedral** (Map p64) makes this 13th-century Gothic masterpiece one of the city's key points of orientation, and the geometric pattern of its roof tiles is also striking. Bearing in mind the significance of the church in daily medieval commerce, run your fingers across over-200-year-old rudimentary circular grooves on the cathedral's face (right side of front), once used for standardising and regulating exact measurements of bread loaves, and over two horizontally fastened iron bars at one time utilised for gauging proper lengths of cloth.

Inside, you can take the lift up the north tower (€4) or the stairs up the higher south tower (€3) – but travellers are sometimes disappointed by the fairly mediocre views. Some of the internal organs of the Habsburgs reside in urns in the church's **Katakomben** (catacombs; admission €3).

### Hofburg

The **Hofburg** (Imperial Palace; Map p64) was the Habsburgs' city-centre base. Added to many times since the 13th century, resulting in a mix of architectural styles, the palace continues to be a seat of power, housing the office of the president of Austria and a major congress centre. Wander around a bit and admire the exterior before venturing inside. While not as ornate as Schönbrunn's rooms, the **Kaiserappartements & 'Sissi' Museum** (Map p64; ☎ 535 75 75; Hofburg; admission €7.50; ☎ 9am-5pm; 🚫 U-Bahn Herrngasse) are worth seeing because they relate the unusual life story of Empress Elisabeth (Sissi). You don't particularly have to be a fan to enjoy the experience: the empress' 19th-century gym and her obsession with her looks are attention-grabbing enough. Plus, the museum helps explain why Sissi's face still adorns shop windows in Vienna today. A ticket to the Kaiserappartements includes entry to the **Silberkammer** (silver chamber).

Among several other points of interest within the Hofburg you'll find the **Burgtor** (Royal Chapel), where the Vienna Boys' Choir performs (see p73), and the Spanish Riding School (p73).

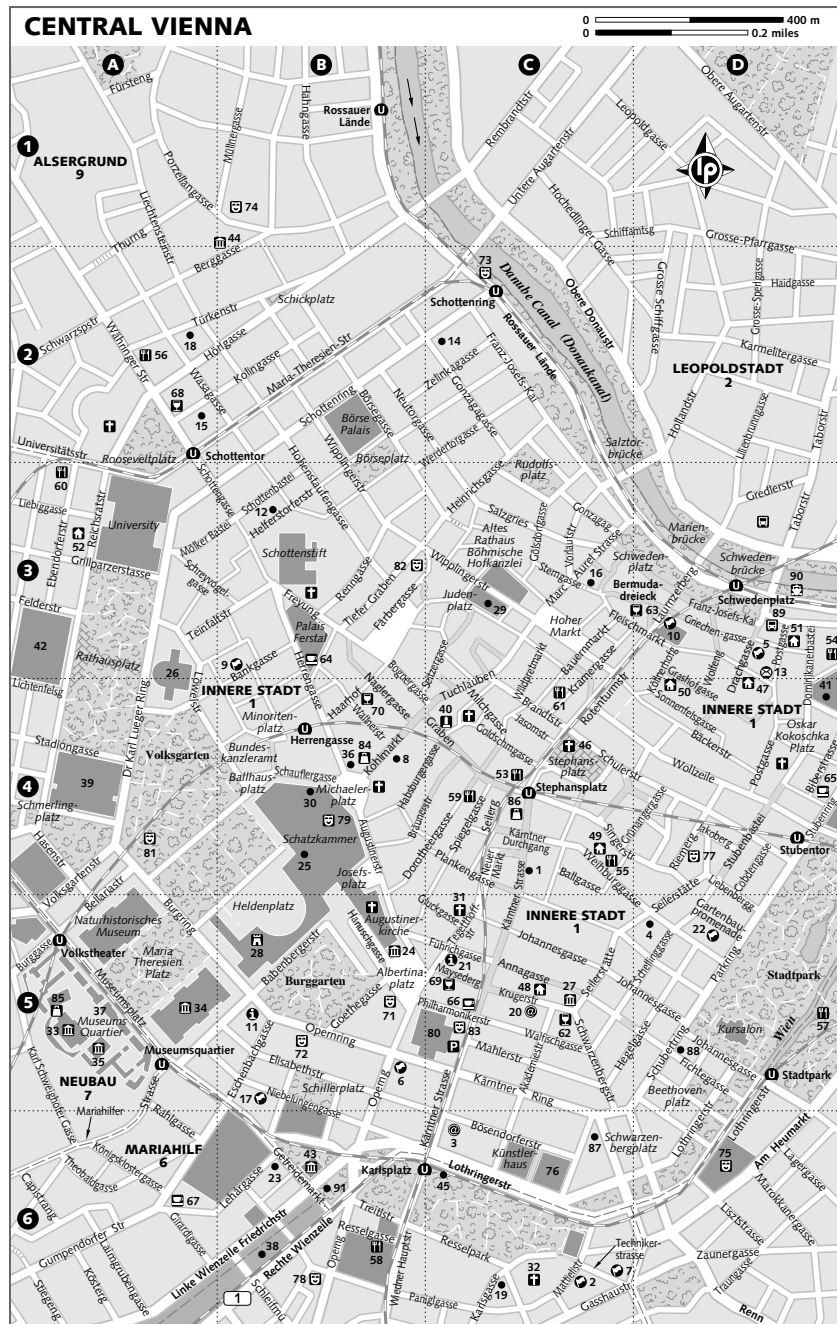
### Kaisergruft

Also known as the Kapuzinergruft, the **Imperial Vault** (Map p64; 01, Tegetthofstrasse/Neuer Markt; admission €4; ☎ 9am-5pm; 🚫 U-Bahn Stephansplatz) offers another weirdly compelling take on the cult of 'Sissi'. Stabbed by an Italian anarchist on the waterfront in Geneva in 1898, Empress Elisabeth was brought back here as her final resting place. Her coffin, still strewn with flowers by fans, lies alongside that of her husband, the penultimate emperor Franz Josef, and other Habsburgs. It's as bizarre as anything on TV's *Six Feet Under*.

### VIENNA IN TWO DAYS

Starting at the **Stephansdom** (above), head via Graben and the Kohlmarkt to the **Hofburg** (above). Drop by the **Kaisergruft** (above), before finding a coffee house and settling into a long break. After lunch, hop on tram 1 around the Ringstrasse. Do one circuit and a half, just taking in the sights, before alighting near the **Museums Quartier** (p65). Try to get tickets to the **opera** (p72) for the evening or head to a club like **Flex** (p72).

Choose a few galleries or a museum and explore them in-depth on your second morning. If it's a warm afternoon, laze in the gardens at **Schloss Schönbrunn** (p66). At night venture into the suburbs for delicious wine in Vienna's *Heurigen* (wine taverns; p71).



AUSTRIA

AUSTRIA

INFORMATION		Leopold Museum.....		35 A5		Café Central.....		64 B3	
Amex.....	1 C4	Loos House.....	36 B4	Café Prückel.....	65 D4	Café Sacher.....	66 C5	Café Sperl.....	67 A6
Australian Embassy.....	2 C6	Museums Quartier.....	37 A5	Café Stein.....	68 A2	Crossfield's Aussie Pub.....	69 C5	Esterházykeller.....	70 B4
Bignet.....	3 C6	Naschmarkt.....	38 B6	Parliament.....	39 A4	Seclusion Building.....	42 A3	Sigmund Freud Museum.....	44 B1
British Bookshop.....	4 D5	Parliament.....	39 A4	Pestsäule.....	40 C4	Silberkammer.....	(see 30)	'Sissi' Museum.....	(see 30)
Canadian Embassy.....	5 D3	Postsparkasse.....	41 D4	Rathaus.....	42 A3	Stadtbahn Pavilions.....	45 C6	Stephansdom.....	46 C4
Dutch Embassy.....	6 B5	Rathaus.....	42 A3	Österreichischer Jugendherbergsverband.....	14 C2	Reisebuchladen.....	15 A2	Hotel Post.....	47 D4
French Embassy.....	7 C6	Seclusion Building.....	42 A3	Reisebuchladen.....	15 A2	Shakespeare & Co Booksellers.....	16 C3	Hotel zur Wiener Staatsoper.....	48 C5
Freytag & Berndt.....	8 B4	Sigmund Freud Museum.....	44 B1	Slovenian Embassy.....	17 B5	Slovenian Embassy.....	17 B5	Kaiserin Elisabeth.....	49 C4
Hungarian Embassy.....	9 B3	Silberkammer.....	(see 30)	STA Travel.....	18 A2	STA Travel.....	18 A2	Kärntnerhof.....	50 D4
Irish Embassy.....	10 D3	'Sissi' Museum.....	(see 30)	STA Travel.....	19 C6	Surfland Internetcafé.....	20 C5	Pension Dr Geissler.....	51 D3
Jugend-Info Wien.....	11 B5	Stadtbahn Pavilions.....	45 C6	Surfland Internetcafé.....	20 C5	Tourist-Info Zentrum.....	21 C5	Pension Residenz.....	52 A3
Junge Hotels Austria.....	12 B3	Stephansdom.....	46 C4	US Consulate.....	22 D5	Wiener Festwochen.....	23 B6	DO & CO.....	53 C4
Main Post Office.....	13 D3	Österreichischer Jugendherbergsverband.....	14 C2	Immervoll.....	55 C4	OH Pot, OH Pot.....	56 A2	Café Demel.....	84 B4
Leopold Museum.....	35 A5	Reisebuchladen.....	15 A2	Immervoll.....	55 C4	OH Pot, OH Pot.....	56 A2	Lomo Shop.....	85 A5
Loos House.....	36 B4	Shakespeare & Co Booksellers.....	16 C3	OH Pot, OH Pot.....	56 A2	Ra'an.....	(see 68)	Österreichische Werkstätten.....	86 C4
Museums Quartier.....	37 A5	Slovenian Embassy.....	17 B5	Ra'an.....	(see 68)	Steierleck.....	57 D5	Technical University Mensa.....	58 B6
Naschmarkt.....	38 B6	STA Travel.....	18 A2	Steierleck.....	57 D5	Trzesniewski.....	59 C4	University Mensa & Café.....	60 A3
Parliament.....	39 A4	STA Travel.....	19 C6	Trzesniewski.....	59 C4	Wrenkh.....	61 C4	Holocaust Memorial.....	29 C3
Pestsäule.....	40 C4	Surfland Internetcafé.....	20 C5	Wrenkh.....	61 C4	Kaiserappartements.....	30 B4	Kaisergruft.....	31 C5
Pub.....	69 C5	Tourist-Info Zentrum.....	21 C5	Kaisergruft.....	31 C5	Kaiserkirche.....	32 C6	Karlskirche.....	32 C6
Esterházykeller.....	70 B4	US Consulate.....	22 D5	Karlskirche.....	32 C6	Kunsthalle.....	33 A5	Kunsthistorisches Museum.....	34 A5
ENTERTAINMENT		Wiener Festwochen.....	23 B6	Kunsthalle.....	33 A5	1516 Brewing Company.....	62 C5	Bermudadreieck (Bermuda Triangle).....	63 D3
Bundestheaterkassen.....	71 B5	Österreichischer Jugendherbergsverband.....	14 C2	1516 Brewing Company.....	62 C5	Bermudadreieck (Bermuda Triangle).....	63 D3	DDSG Blue Danube.....	91 B6
Burgkino.....	72 B5	Reisebuchladen.....	15 A2	Bermudadreieck (Bermuda Triangle).....	63 D3	DDSG Blue Danube.....	91 B6		
Club U.....	(see 45)	Shakespeare & Co Booksellers.....	16 C3	DDSG Blue Danube.....	91 B6				
Flex.....	73 C2	Slovenian Embassy.....	17 B5						
International Theatre.....	74 B1	STA Travel.....	18 A2						
Konzerthaus.....	75 D6	Surfland Internetcafé.....	20 C5						
Musikverein.....	76 C6	Tourist-Info Zentrum.....	21 C5						
Porgy n Bess.....	77 D4	US Consulate.....	22 D5						
Roxy.....	78 B6	Wiener Festwochen.....	23 B6						
Spanish Riding School.....	79 B4	Österreichischer Jugendherbergsverband.....	14 C2						
Staatsoper (State Opera).....	80 C5	Reisebuchladen.....	15 A2						
Volksgarten.....	81 A4	Shakespeare & Co Booksellers.....	16 C3						
Why Not?.....	82 B3	Slovenian Embassy.....	17 B5						
Wien Ticket.....	83 C5	STA Travel.....	18 A2						
SHOPPING		Surfland Internetcafé.....	20 C5						
Café Demel.....	84 B4	Tourist-Info Zentrum.....	21 C5						
Lomo Shop.....	85 A5	US Consulate.....	22 D5						
Österreichische Werkstätten.....	86 C4	Wiener Festwochen.....	23 B6						
TRANSPORT		Österreichischer Jugendherbergsverband.....	14 C2						
Austrian Airlines.....	87 C6	Reisebuchladen.....	15 A2						
Austrian Automobile Club.....	88 D5	Shakespeare & Co Booksellers.....	16 C3						
Buses to Airport.....	89 D3	Slovenian Embassy.....	17 B5						
Danube Canal Tour Landing Stage.....	90 D3	STA Travel.....	18 A2						
DDSG Blue Danube.....	91 B6	Surfland Internetcafé.....	20 C5						

### Museums Quartier

Small guidebooks have been written on the popular **Museums Quartier** (Map p64; ☎ 523 04 31; 07, Museumsplatz 1; 🚉 U-Bahn Museumsquartier), so only a taster can be given here. The high-point is undoubtedly the **Leopold Museum** (Map p64; ☎ 525 700; adult/senior/student €9/7/5.50; 🕒 10am-7pm Wed-Mon, 10am-9pm Fri; 🚉 U-Bahn Museumsquartier), which houses the world's largest collection of Egon Schiele paintings, with some minor Klimts and Kokoschkas thrown in.

### Schloss Belvedere

This **palace** (Map p60; ☎ 79 557-134; www.belvedere.at; combined admission €7.50; 🕒 10am-6pm Tue-Sun Apr-Oct, 10am-5pm Nov-Mar; 🚉 tram D to Schloss Belvedere) consists of two main buildings. One is the **Oberes Belvedere & Österreichische Galerie** (Upper Belvedere & Austrian Gallery; Map p60; 03, Prinz Eugen Strasse 37; adult/student €6/3; 🕒 10am-6pm Tue-Sun Apr-Oct, 10am-5pm Nov-Mar), where you'll find instantly recognisable works, such as Gustav

Klimt's *The Kiss*, accompanied by other late-19th to early-20th-century Austrian works. The other is the **Unteres Belvedere** (Lower Belvedere; Map p60; 03, Rennweg 6A; admission €6; 🕒 10am-6pm Tue-Sun Apr-Oct, 10am-5pm Nov-Mar), which contains a baroque museum. The buildings sit at opposite ends of a manicured garden.

### Secession Building

This popular Art Nouveau 'temple of art' **building** (Map p64; ☎ 587 53 07; 01, Friedrichstrasse 12; adult/student €5.50/3; 🕒 10am-6pm Tue-Sun, 10am-8pm Thu; 🚉 U-Bahn Karlsplatz) was built in 1898 and bears an intricately woven gilt dome that the Viennese say looks like a 'golden cabbage' – and it definitely does. The highlight inside is the 34m-long *Beethoven Frieze* by Klimt.

### KunstHausWien

This formerly inconspicuous factory building, now fairy-tale **art gallery** (Map p60; ☎ 712

04/91; 03, Untere Weissgerberstrasse 13; admission €9, half-price Mon; ☎ 10am-7pm; ☎ tram N or O to Radetzkyplatz) designed and transformed by Friedensreich Hundertwasser into a repository for his art, is redolent of Antonio Gaudi's buildings in Barcelona. Irregular elements, like uneven floors, misshapen windows, amalgamations of glass, metal, brick and ceramic tile, almost literally sweep you off your feet. Down the road there's a block of residential flats by Hundertwasser, the **Hundertwasser-schau** (Map p60; cnr Löwengasse & Kegelgasse). To the west, heading towards the town of Dürnstein, another spectacle arises that would make Willy Wonka proud. Visible by its towering, golden-tiled smoke stack, this is Vienna's architecturally unique rubbish incinerator that also heats water for homes in the surrounding area.

### Albertina

Simply reading the highlights among its enormous rotating collection – several Michelangelos, some Raphaels and Albrecht Dürer's *Hare* – might give a misleading impression of this reopened **gallery** (Map p64; ☎ 53 483-540; www.albertina.at; 01, Albertinaplatz 1A; adult/senior/student €9/7.50/6.50; ☎ 10am-6pm Thu-Tue, 10am-9pm Wed; ☎ U-Bahn Karlsplatz or Stephansplatz). When we visited, the exhibitions ranged from pop art to Rembrandt and included two fascinating photography displays, making it feel quite modern. The curators do a superb job, so keep an eye out for what's on here.

In addition to the mostly temporary exhibitions, a series of Habsburg staterooms are always open.

### Schloss Schönbrunn

The single attraction most readily associated with Vienna is the Habsburgs' **summer palace** (Map p60; ☎ 81 113-0; 13, Schönbrunner Schloßstrasse 47; self-guided 22-/40-room tour €8/10.50; ☎ 8.30am-5pm Apr-Oct, 8.30am-4.30pm Nov-Mar; ☎ U-Bahn Schönbrunn). However, the sumptuous 1440-room palace is so vast, crowded and out of the way that you'll need to put aside at least half a day to see it, and it won't be to everyone's taste. Students get a slight discount.

Inside this mini-Versailles you'll traipse through progressively more luxurious apartments. The most impressive, the **Audience Rooms**, are only included in the 40-room grand tour.

The grounds are more enjoyable and are home to the world's oldest zoo, the **Tiergarten** (adult/senior/student/child €12/10/5/4), founded in 1752. Highlights include the formal gardens and fountains, the **maze** (admission €2.10), the **Palmenhaus** (greenhouse; admission €3.30) and the **Gloriette Monument** (admission €2.10), whose roof offers a wonderful view over the palace grounds and beyond.

### Liechtenstein Museum

The collection of Duke Hans-Adam II of Liechtenstein is now on show at Vienna's new **museum** (Map p60; ☎ 319 57 67-0; 09, Fürstengasse 1; adult/senior/student €10/8/5; ☎ 9am-8pm Wed-Mon; ☎ U-Bahn Friedensbrücke or Franz Josefs Bahnhof), located in a refurbished, frescoed, baroque palace. There are classical paintings, including some by Rubens.

### Kunsthistorisches Museum

A huge range of art amassed by the Habsburgs is showcased at the **Museum of Fine Arts** (Map p64; ☎ 52 524-0; www.khm.at; 01, Maria Theresien Platz; admission €10; ☎ 10am-6pm Tue-Sun, 10am-10pm Thu; ☎ U-Bahn Volkstheater or Museumsquartier). Included are works by Rubens, van Dyck, Holbein and Caravaggio. Paintings by Peter Brueghel the Elder, including *Hunters in the Snow*, also feature. There is an entire wing of ornaments, clocks and glassware, and Greek, Roman and Egyptian antiquities.

### Other Museums

Vienna has so many museums you might overlook the superlative **Haus der Musik** (House of Music; Map p64; ☎ 51 648-51; www.haus-der-musik-wien.at; Seilerstätte 30; admission €10; ☎ 10am-10pm; ☎ U-Bahn Karlsplatz or Stephansplatz). Try not to. Interactive electronic displays allow you to create different forms of music through movement and touch, and to connect with something a lot deeper than just your inner child.

Some former homes of the great composers, including one of Mozart's, are open to the public; ask at the tourist office. There is also the fairly low-key **Sigmund Freud Museum** (Map p64; ☎ 319 15 96; 09, Bergasse 19; admission €5; ☎ 9am-6pm Jul-Sep, 9am-5pm Oct-Jun; ☎ U-Bahn Rossauer or Schottentor).

### Cemeteries

Beethoven, Schubert, Brahms and Schönberg have memorial tombs in the **Zentralfriedhof** (Central Cemetery; 11, Simmeringer Hauptstrasse

232-244), about 4km southeast of the city centre. Mozart also has a monument here, but he is actually buried in the **St Marxer Friedhof** (Cemetery of St Mark; 03, Leberstrasse 6-8).

### Naschmarkt

Saturday is the best day to visit this **market** (Map p64; 06, Linke Wienzeile; ☎ 6am-6pm Mon-Sat; ☎ U-Bahn Karlsplatz or Kettenbrückengasse) when the usual food stalls and occasional tatty clothes stall are joined by a proper flea market. Curios and trinkets sit beside produce from Austrian farms, plus there are cafés for an al fresco breakfast, lunch or refuelling stop.

### ACTIVITIES

#### Riesenrad

In theory, riding the **Riesenrad** (giant wheel; Map p60; admission €7.50; ☎ U-Bahn Praterstern) in the Prater amusement park allows you to relive a classic film moment: when Orson Welles ad-libbed his immortal speech about peace, Switzerland and cuckoo clocks in *The Third Man*. In practice, you'll be too distracted by other passengers and by the views as the Ferris wheel languidly takes you 65m aloft. It's fun, but not quite the London Eye.

### Water Sports

You can swim, sailboard, boat and windsurf in the stretches of water known as the Old Danube, northeast of the Donaustadt island and the New Donau, which runs parallel to and just north of the Donaukanal (Danube Canal). There are stretches of river bank with unrestricted access. Alternatively, visit the **Schönbrunn baths** (Map p60; Schönbrunner Schloßstrasse 47; full day/afternoon ind locker €9.50/6.50; ☎ 8.30am-5pm May-Sep; ☎ U-Bahn Schönbrunn), within the Schloss Schönbrunn grounds.

### GRAPE GRAZING

Cycle, sit, swirl, sip, cycle, slurp, savour, then cycle again, your way from winery to winery and let your taste buds reap the rewards of one of Austria's best wine regions. Expert guides and a lovely path along the Danube river make **Mitch's Tours Grape Grazing Tour** (☎ 699-1882 0155; www.mitchstours.com; Grangasse 4, 1150 Vienna; adult/student €55/45) a great choice for the authentic Vienna countryside excursion.

You'll spend a day touring the breathtakingly beautiful scenery and old medieval villages of the Wachau by bike. Wander through the fortress ruins in Durnstein, where England's King Richard the Lion-Heart was imprisoned, perhaps the most historically infamous stop on the route. Learn how Austrian schnapps is made. You can also go swimming, play beach volleyball or relax while enjoying a barbecue. Tours depart 9.30am daily (except Monday and Wednesday) and hotel pick-up is available.

### TOURS

The tourist office publishes a monthly list of guided walks, called *Wiener Spaziergänge*. **Vienna Walks** (☎ 774 89 01; www.viennawalks.tix.at) organises **Third Man tours** (tour €16; ☎ 4pm Mon & Fri), including through the city's sewers, and a tour of **Jewish Vienna** (tour €11; ☎ 1.30pm Mon).

### FESTIVALS & EVENTS

The **Vienna Festival**, from mid-May to mid-June, has a wide-ranging arts programme. Contact the **Wiener Festwochen** (Map p64; ☎ 58 922-22; www.festwochen.or.at; Lehárgasse 11; ☎ Jan-mid-Jun; ☎ U-Bahn Karlsplatz) for details.

The extremely popular **Vienna Spring Marathon** is held in April/May and Vienna's **Summer of Music** runs from mid-July to mid-September; contact **KlangBoden** (Map p60; ☎ 40 00-8410; 01, Stadiogasse 9; ☎ U-Bahn Rathaus).

Look out for free rock, jazz and folk concerts during the **Donauinselfest**, held at the end of June. The free open-air **Opera Film Festival** on Rathausplatz runs throughout July and August.

Each year Vienna's traditional **Christmas market** (*Christkindlmarkt*) takes place in front of the Rathaus between mid-November and 24 December.

### SLEEPING

#### Budget

Vienna has lots of budget choices, although rooms fill quickly in summer, so try to book ahead when possible.

**Wien West** (☎ 914 23 14; www.wiencamping.at; Hüttelbergstrasse 80; camp site per adult/tent Sep-Jun €5/3.50, Jul-Aug €6/3.50, 2-/4-person cabin Apr-Oct €27/37; ☎ closed Feb) On the edges of the Wiener Wald (Vienna Woods), but just 20 minutes from the city centre, this well-equipped



camping ground has modern facilities, and even a wi-fi hotspot. Take U4 or the S-Bahn to Hütteldorf, then bus 148 or 152.

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

**Wombat's** (Map p60; ☎ 897 23 36; www.wombats.at; 15, Grangasse 6; dm/d €18/24; 📺) 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. Rates include breakfast.

**Westend City Hostel** (Map p60; ☎ 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 knowledge 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 Kaffeemühle** (Map p60; ☎ 523 86 88; www.kaffeemuehle.at; 07, Kaiserstrasse 45; s/d from €48/60; 📺) Family-run *pension* offering comfortable clean rooms and a central location not far from the Westbahnhof. It's a good place to rest up before another day in the city.

**Pension Hargita** (Map p60; ☎ 526 19 28; www.hargita.at; 07, Andreasgasse 1; s/d €55/66, with shared bathroom from €38/53) One of the cleanest and most charming budget *pensions* in Vienna. Rooms have aqua blue or sunny yellow features, the friendly Hungarian owner keeps things spotless and breakfast is included in the rates.

## Midrange

There are lots of charming guesthouses and small hotels in this price bracket.

**Hotel Urania** (Map p60; ☎ 713 17 11; www.hotel-urania.at; 03, Obere Weissgerberstrasse 7; s/d/tr/q from €55/70/95/115) This hotel is tacky, but fun. Episodes of various Austrian TV series (eg *Inspector Rex*) have been filmed here, and as a guest you'll feel you're in one, too. Not all of the eclectic rooms will be to everyone's taste (a knight's boudoir with animal skins on the floor, anyone?). Others, as in the Hundertwasser and Japanese rooms, are

actually quite chic. The hotel is quiet, but central.

**Pension Residenz** (Map p64; ☎ 406 47 86-0; www.pension-residenz.co.at; 01, Ebendorferstrasse 10; s/d €60/90; 📺) This *pension* is a model of restraint. Traditionally decorated, with white, light-coloured fittings, it has a pleasant, if not overly personal, feel. Its location near the university is also handy.

**Lauria** (Map p60; ☎ 522 25 55; www.lauria-vienna.at; 3rd fl, 07, Kaiserstrasse 77-8; d/tr/q from €62/78/96, with shared bathroom €48/66/84) A good place for young couples or small groups of travellers staying a couple of nights – you get your own homy quarters, your own keys and access to a fully equipped kitchen. There is a €7 surcharge for single-night stays.

**Pension Dr Geissler** (Map p64; ☎ 533 28 03; www.hotelpension.at; 01, Postgasse 14; s/d from €65/88, with shared bathroom from €39/50; 📺) Don't let the slow lift deter you: when you do make it to your floor, you'll find rooms are an eclectic mix of faux baroque and 1950s retro. The airport bus to Schwedenplatz almost brings you to the door, making it handy for jet-lag rehab.

**Pension Wild** (Map p60; ☎ 406 51 74; www.penions-wild.com; 08, Langegasse 10; s/d €65/90, with shared bathroom from €37/45) Most of the rooms at this gay-friendly *pension* have been recently renovated, but some cheaper accommodation remains, with showers and toilets outside the rooms. All guests can prepare snacks in the small kitchenette on each floor.

**Hotel-Pension Zipser** (Map p60; ☎ 40 454-0; www.zipser.at; 08, Langegasse 49; s/d from €69/109; 📺) This

## AUTHOR'S CHOICE

**Hostel Ruthensteiner** (Map p60; ☎ 893 42 02; www.hostelruthensteiner.com; 15, Robert Hammerling Gasse 24; dm/d from €12.50/25; 📺) If stars were given out for hostels, this place would be a 5. The first truly independent backpackers in central Europe, the über-friendly owners, Erin and Walter, have been catering to travellers for 34 years strong. Start with a quirky low-key vibe then add 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 a lovely garden area also enhance the surroundings.

kärtl has elegant contemporary furnishings and some rooms have balconies facing a garden.

**Hotel Post** (Map p64; ☎ 51 583-0; www.hotel-post-wien.at; 01, Fleischmarkt 24; s/d €75/115, with shared bathroom €44/70; 📺) The strongest feature of this hotel is its location, right in the heart of things. With its parquet flooring in the rooms, long, carpeted hallways and decorative cast-iron lift, it feels like a grand, if somewhat faded, 19th-century boarding house.

**Kärtnerhof** (Map p64; ☎ 519 19 23; www.kartnerhof.com; 01, Grashofgasse 4; s/d from €80/105; 📺) Tucked away in a cul-de-sac in the city centre, Kärtnerhof is a terrific find with quietly elegant rooms, many of them with bathtubs. It has a policy of not accepting tour groups.

**Hotel zur Wiener Staatsoper** (Map p64; ☎ 513 12 74; www.zurwienerstaatsoper.at; 01, Krugerstrasse 11; s/d from €85/126; 📺) Famous for its appealing façade, this hotel's rooms are small, but its prices are great value for the central location.

## Top End

Vienna has a glut of four- and five-star hotels. Every major chain is represented and even the city's most recognisable names now belong to one of these groups.

**InterCity Hotel** (Map p60; ☎ 52 585-0; www.intercityhotel.de; 07, Mariahilfer Strasse 122; s/d €121/205; 📺) Located on a major shopping thoroughfare, with soundproof modern rooms and tasteful décor, this place is a fine choice for convenience and comfort. Use of local transport included in the rate means you won't fret about getting around the city.

**Kaiserin Elisabeth** (Map p64; ☎ 51 526-0; www.kaiserinelisabeth.at; 01, Weihburggasse 13; s/d from €175/200; 📺) The central Kaiserin, with its mix of chandeliers, red velvet, wooden floors and rugs, is a plush option.

## EATING

The city's signature dish, *Wiener schnitzel*, is widely available and Vienna is renowned for its excellent pastries. You can buy groceries outside normal shopping hours at Franz Josefs Bahnhof and Westbahnhof.

## Restaurants

**Schnitzelwirt Schmidt** (Map p60; 07, Neubaugasse 52; schnitzel from €5.50; 📺 Mon-Sat) With fabulously grumpy waiters – who'll shout at you if you get in their way – and huge *Wiener schnitzels*,

## AUTHOR'S CHOICE

**Expedit** (Map p64; ☎ 512 33 13-0; 01, cnr Wiesingerstrasse & Biberstrasse; mains €11; 📺) lunch & dinner Mon-Fri, dinner Sat) In this old warehouse on the edge of district 1, patrons enjoy a cross between an upmarket Italian bistro and a minimalist pub. In its room filled with imported pasta, pesto and panini around an open-plan, bare-floored dining space, the food is 'Ligurian' (ie Italian – mainly pasta and salads). There are a few long communal tables to squeeze around and it can be quite crowded at times, but an extensive list of imported wines and a *boccia* (Italian bowling) alley in the basement enhance the experience.

this buzzing place lets you experience the authentic Vienna of today.

**OH Pot, OH Pot** (Map p64; ☎ 319 42 59; 09, Währinger Strasse 22; hotpots lunch/dinner €6.50/8.50) Painted in warm Mediterranean colours, this sweet boho restaurant has decent ethnic stews (or 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 €5.

**Ra'an** (Map p64; ☎ 319 35 63; 09, Währinger Strasse 6-8; lunch €6, dinner €6.50-13) Ra'an is 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.

**Vegetasia** (Map p60; ☎ 523 10 91; 07, Kaiserstrasse 45; mains €6.50-22) Flavourful and eclectic combinations of fresh vegetables, Asian spices and pure vegetable-based home-made dishes will bring gastric delight to anyone wanting to avoid *Fleisch* (meat) in their diet. Every item on the menu is vegetarian.

**Immervoll** (Map p64; ☎ 5135 2288; 01, Weihburggasse 17; mains €9-14.50) Run by a famous Austrian actor, Immervoll (literally, 'always full') attracts an arty crowd to its uncluttered small room. The menu changes daily, but the delicious food often has Hungarian and Italian influences.

**Stomach** (Map p60; ☎ 310 20 99; 09, Seegasse 26; mains €9-15; 📺 dinner Wed-Sat, lunch & dinner Sun) Many vegetarian dishes have dropped off



**AUTHOR'S CHOICE**

**1516 Brewing Company** (Map p64; ☎ 961 15 16; 01, Schwarzenbergstrasse 2) Flaunting exposed copper and stainless-steel piping, wine-barrel tables and a long bar extending along the front room, this hip brewpub is an awesome place to go for a drink while you're in the city centre. Unfiltered ales and lagers, an unpretentious ambience and friendly staff are all on tap here. Specifically named after the year of one of the oldest 'consumer protection' laws (the *Reinheitsgebot*), beer enthusiasts will imbibe with glee knowing that their pint is made exactly the same as it was in the year 1516, using only water, malt, hops and yeast.

the menu at Styrian-style Stomach, but some remain, and the quaint, ramshackle rooms and the courtyard create a rustic outpost in the big city.

**Schweizerhaus** (Map p60; ☎ 319 35 63; 02, Strasse des Ersten Mai 116; mains €10-20; ☎ Mon-Sat Mar-Oct) In the Prater park, this place serves *Hintere Schweinsstelze* (roasted pork hocks) and the like to a rowdy crowd of international travellers who wash it all down with huge mugs of beer.

**Wrenkh** (Map p64; ☎ 533 15 26; 01, Bauernmarkt 10; mains €11) Quiche, mung beans and nut roast are *not* on the menu at this vegetarian restaurant. Instead, this is an upmarket affair, with sleek customers and lip-smacking Mediterranean, Austrian and Asian fare – from risotto to tofu.

**Indochine 21** (Map p60; ☎ 513 76 60; 01, Stubenring 18; mains €12.50-38; ☎ lunch & dinner) This is one of Vienna's hotter, newer eateries, having been named the best Asian restaurant in the city a few years back. The food is trendy French/Vietnamese, while red-lacquered umbrellas hang on the walls and exotic potted plants evoke a vaguely colonial ambience.

**DO & CO** (Map p64; ☎ 535 39 69; 01, Haas Haus, Stephansplatz 12; mains €15-24) The food and the views from seven floors above Stephansplatz keep this elegant restaurant in business. Contemporary Viennese dishes are highlighted, but it also serves Austrian classics, Uruguayan beef and Asian specialities. The service is flawless. Booking ahead is advised.

**Steirereck** (Map p64; ☎ 713 31 68; 03, Heumarkt 2a-Stadtpark; mains €22.50-30; ☎ lunch & dinner) This

long-standing gourmet temple's name means 'corner of Styria' and is famous for traditional Viennese fare and new Austrian selections. Try the Styrian roast beef with red-pepper risotto. Patrons can examine the vast wine cellar, which holds some 35,000 bottles, or choose from 150 different types of cheese. Reservations are required.

**Cafés**

**Trzesniewski** (Map p64; ☎ 512 32 91; 01, Dorotheergasse 1; sandwiches €1) 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.

**Sato Turkish Café-Restaurant** (Map p60; ☎ 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 *Tagesmenüs* sure to satisfy every taste and budget. Live traditional music on the weekends is also worth checking out.

**Quick Eats & Self-Catering**

Cheap student cafeterias include **Technical University Mensa** (Map p64; 04, Resselgasse 7-9; mains €3.50-5; ☎ 11am-2pm Mon-Fri) and **University Mensa** (Map p64; 7th fl, 01, Universitätsstrasse 7; mains €4.50-5; ☎ 11am-2pm Mon-Fri). Though the latter is closed in July and August, its adjoining **café** (☎ 8am-3pm Mon-Fri) remains open year-round.

**DRINKING Bars**

The area around Ruprechtsplatz, Seitenstetengasse and Rabensteig near Schwedenplatz is dubbed the Bermudadreieck (Bermuda Triangle; Map p64) for the way drinkers disappear into its numerous pubs and clubs, but you'd have to seriously overindulge to become lost here. Venues are lively and inexpensive, and draw a mix of crowds.

**Crossfield's Aussie Pub** (Map p64; ☎ 241 000; 01, Maysedergasse 5) There's a saying on some of the touristy T-shirts – 'there's no kangaroos in Austria'. Well, this pub proves the contrary, 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 like crocodile, ostrich fillet, grilled grasshoppers

and plenty of roo any way you like it, makes this place one of our favourites.

**Shebeen** (Map p60; ☎ 524 79 00; 07, Lerchenfelder Strasse 45-47) This African-inspired pub remains a popular evening spot for English-speaking travellers, expats and internationals alike. Major football matches, decent music and activities, like nightly quizzes of the Trivial Pursuit variety, all create a lively atmosphere.

**Das Möbel** (Map p60; ☎ 524 94 97; 07, Burggasse 10) The interior is never dull at this bar near the Museums Quartier. It's remarkable for its funky décor and furniture – cube stools, assorted moulded lamps, plus a round ping-pong table.

**Café Stein** (Map p64; ☎ 3197 2419; 09, Währinger Strasse 6-8; ☎) This trendy, student café/bar-cum-diner offers a smoke-free environment in which to curl up with a good book or surf the Net. It also hosts poetry slams and modern art exhibitions.

Also recommended:

**Die Wäscherei** (Map p60; ☎ 409 23 75-11; 08, Albertgasse 49) Lots of draught beers.

**Rhiz** (Map p60; ☎ 409 25 05; Lechenfelder Gürtel 37-38) A mecca for Vienna's electronic music scene; it's near the U-Bahn arches.

**Schikanader** (Map p60; ☎ 585 58 88; 04, Margaretenstrasse 22-4) In the foyer of a cinema.

**Coffee Houses**

Vienna's famous *Kaffeehäuser* (coffee houses) are like economic forecasts; ask two people for a recommendation and you'll get four answers. Following are a few local favourites – a full-sized coffee will cost roughly €3 to €3.50, but you can take as long as you like to drink it without being moved on.

**Café Sacher** (Map p64; ☎ 151 45 69; 01, Philharmonikerstrasse 4; ☎ 8am-noon) Arguably home to the world's most famous chocolate cake – the Sacher Torte, fastidiously baked in-house. Savour a slice of this exquisite speciality that 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 Staatsoper (State Opera) and in summer is transformed into a huge terrace.

**Café Central** (Map p64; ☎ 533 37 63; 01, Herrengasse 14; ☎ Mon-Sat) A lot more commercialised than when Herts Trotsky, Freud and Beethoven drank here, we dare say, but still appealing with vaulted ceilings, palms and baroque architecture.

**AUTHOR'S CHOICE**

**Café Sperl** (Map p64; ☎ 586 41 58; 06, Gumpendorfer Strasse 11; ☎ 7am-11pm Mon-Sat year-round, 11am-8pm Sun Sep-Jun) With its scuffed but original 19th-century fittings and cast of slacker patrons playing chess and reading newspapers, this is exactly how you expect an Austrian coffee house to be. Under the high ceiling and old-fashioned lights, wooden panelling reaches up to meet mustard-coloured wallpaper, while battered wooden legs hold up red-patterned chairs and a few billiard tables add a modern twist.

**Café Prückel** (Map p64; ☎ 512 61 15; 01, Stubenring 24) This 1950s-style café is the epitome of shabby chic. A traditional Viennese coffee house, it's been around some 100 years.

**Heurigen (Wine Taverns)**

Vienna's *Heurigen* are a good way to see another side of the city. Selling 'new' wine produced on the premises, they have a lively atmosphere, especially as the evening progresses. Outside tables and picnic benches are common. There's usually buffet food, and often strolling piano-accordion musicians entertaining with folk songs.

Because *Heurigen* tend to be clustered together, it's best just to head for the wine-growing suburbs to the north, south and west of the city and look for the green wreath or branch hanging over the door that identifies a *Heuriger*. Opening times are approximately 4pm to 11pm, and wine costs less than €2.50 a *Viertel* (250mL).

The *Heurigen* areas of Nussdorf and Heiligenstadt are near each other at the terminus of tram D, north of the city centre. In 1817 Beethoven lived in at 19, Pfarrplatz 3, Heiligenstadt in what is now known as Beethovenhaus. Down the road (bus 38A from Heiligenstadt or tram 38 from the Ring) is Grinzing, an area favoured by tour groups.

**Reinprecht** (☎ 320 14 71; 19, Cobenzlgasse 22) This is the best option in the row of *Heurigen* where Cobenzlgasse and Sandgasse meet. It's in a former monastery and boasts a large paved courtyard and a lively, if somewhat touristy, atmosphere.

**Sirbu** (☎ 320 59 28; 19, Kahlenberger Strasse 210; ☎ Mon-Sat Apr-Oct) This spot has great views

of the Danube. Catch bus 38A east to the final stop at Kahlenberg, from where it is a 15-minute walk.

**Esterházykeller** (Map p64; ☎ 533 34 82; Haarhof 1; ☎ 11am-11pm Mon-Fri, 4-11pm Sat & Sun) If you don't have time to venture out into the suburbs, you can get a genuine taste of the *Heurigen* experience here. After descending sharply down a steep stairwell, aromas of dank air, hints of pipe and cigar smoke combined 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.

## ENTERTAINMENT

Check listings magazine *Falter* (€2.05) for weekly updates. The tourist office has copies of *Vienna Scene* and produces monthly events listings.

## Cinemas & Theatre

**Burgkino** (Map p64; ☎ 587 84 06; 01, Opernring 19; admission €6-8) Screens *The Third Man* every Friday evening and Sunday afternoon, if you want to revisit this classic movie while in Vienna. Otherwise, check local papers for listings. Seats are cheapest on Monday.

There are performances in English at the **English Theatre** (Map p60; ☎ 402 82 84; www.englishtheatre.at; 08, Josefgasse 12) and the **International Theatre** (Map p64; ☎ 319 62 72; 09, Porzellanlgasse 8).

## Classical Music

The state ticket office, **Bundestheaterkassen** (Map p64; ☎ 51 444-7880; www.bundestheater.at; 01, Goethegasse 1), sells tickets without commission for both the Staatsoper and Volksoper. In the hut by the Staatsoper, **Wien Ticket** (Map p64; ☎ 58 885; Linke Wienzeile 6, 1060 Wien) also charges little or no commission for cash sales.

The cheapest deals are the standing-room tickets that go on sale at each venue an hour before performances. However, you may need to queue three hours before that for major productions. An hour before the curtain goes up, unsold tickets also go on sale at cheap prices to students under 27 years (from €3.70; home university ID plus international student card necessary).

**Staatsoper** (State Opera; Map p64; ☎ 51 444-2960; 01, Opernring 2; standing room €4, seats €5.50-220) Performances are lavish, formal affairs, where people dress up.

**Volksoper** (People's Opera; Map p60; ☎ 51 444-3670; 09, Währingerstrasse 78; standing room €1.50-24, seats €17-75) Productions are more modern here and the atmosphere is a little more relaxed.

**Musikverein** (Map p64; ☎ 505 18 90; www.musikverein.at; 01, Bösendorferstrasse 12; standing room €5-7, seats €16-110) The opulent and acoustically perfect (unofficial) home of the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra. You can buy standing tickets three weeks in advance at the box office to hear this world-class orchestra.

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

## Nightclubs

**Flex** (Map p64; ☎ 533 75 25; Donaukanal/Augartenbrücke) The stairwell leading from the U-Bahn stop to its doors constantly reeks of urine and the circling dealers are an annoyance, but Flex is still the finest club in the city. Time after time this uninhibited shrine to music (it has one of the best sound systems in Europe) puts on great live shows and features the top DJs from Vienna and abroad. Each night is a different theme, with dub club on Monday and London Calling on Wednesday among the most popular.

**Porgy n Bess** (Map p64; ☎ 512 88 11; 01, Riemergasse 11; ☎ 8am-4am Mon-Sat, 7pm-4am Sun) Vienna's best spot to catch modern, local and international jazz acts. It has a relaxed and sophisticated atmosphere that attracts a professional crowd. DJs are a ruling feature on weekends and Wednesday night sees impromptu jam sessions.

**Volksgarten** (Map p64; ☎ 533 05 18; 01, Burgring 1) In the middle of the park of the same name, this place is very popular. There's modern dance and an atmospheric 1950s-style salon that was once a former *Walzer Dancing* venue. Friday and Saturday are the big nights, although it's open other evenings, too.

**Roxy** (Map p64; ☎ 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 seams. The sounds range from jazz to world music.

**Club U** (Map p64; ☎ 505 99 04; 04, Karlsplatz; ☎ Tue-Sun) In the ornate Otto Wagner Stadtbahn

Pavilions café, Club U is a bit like a squat party and plays indie/alternative music.

**Why Not?** (Map p64; ☎ 535 11 58; 01, Tiefer Graben 22; ☎ Wed-Sun) A popular gay and lesbian bar/disco; on Wednesday night it's men only.

**Rosa Lila Villa** (Map p60; ☎ 586 81 50; 06, Linke Wienzeile 102) This pink-and-purple building is another favourite spot with alternative lifestyles types. Along with the on-site bar, it also has an information centre. It's a good place to link up with like-minded locals.

## Spanish Riding School

The famous Lipizzaner stallions strut their stuff at the **Spanish Riding School** (Map p64; tickets@srs.at; Michaelerplatz 11010; standing room €24-25, seats €45-145) behind the Hofburg. Performances are sold out months in advance, so write to the Spanische Reitschule, Michaelerplatz 1, A-1010 Wien, or ask in the office about cancellations (unclaimed tickets are sold 45 minutes before performances); there's no phone. Travel agents usually charge commission on top of the listed prices.

You need to be pretty keen on horses to pay the high admission price, although a few tricks, such as a stallion bounding along on its hind legs like a demented kangaroo, do tend to stick in the mind. Same-day tickets (€11.50, or with entry to the Lipizzaner Museum €15; ☎ 10am-noon Tue-Sat Feb-Jun & Sep-Dec) can be bought to watch the horses train. The best riders go first and queues disappear by 11am. Watching the weekly final **rehearsal** (tickets €20; 7pm Fri & Sat) is also an option.

## Vienna Boys' Choir

Never mind bands like Take That and Nsync; the Vienna Boys' Choir (*Wiener Sängerknaben*) is the original boy band. The first troupe was put together back in 1498 and the latest bunch of cherubic angels in sailor suits still holds a fond place in Austrian hearts.

The choir performs weekly at the **Burgkapelle** (Music Chapel; Map p64; ☎ 533 99 27; hofmusikkapelle@asn-wien.ac.at; Hofburg, Rennweg 1; standing free, seats €5.50-30, tickets Fri & 8.15am Sun) at 9.15am on Sunday, except from July to mid-September. Concerts are routinely sold out and there's often a crush of fans to meet the choir afterwards. The group also performs regularly in the **Konzerthaus** (Map p64; ☎ 242 002; 03, Lothringgasse 20) at 3.30pm on Friday in May, June, September and October.

## SHOPPING

**Stephansplatz** (Map p64; ☎ 514 130; Kärntner Strabe 19; ☎ 9.30am-7pm Mon-Fri, 9.30am-5pm Sat) Set along the famous plaza by the same name, the Stephansplatz is filled with all the stores a good mall needs.

**Österreichische Werkstätten** (Map p64; Kärntner Strasse 6) Good for Art Deco-type jewellery and household objects in the Viennese tradition; other local specialities include lamps, handmade dolls, and wrought-iron and leather goods.

**Café Demel** (Map p64; ☎ 535 17 17-0; 01, Kohlmarkt 14) Lavish Café Demel has the old-world atmosphere that makes for the perfect landmark coffee house, but it's usually too crowded. Instead, pop in to buy some fantastic cakes, pastries or sandwiches here.

## GETTING THERE & AWAY

**Air**  
Regular scheduled flights link Vienna to Linz, Salzburg, Innsbruck, Klagenfurt and Graz. Check with **Austrian Airlines** (code 05; Map p64; ☎ 051 789; www.aua.com; 01, Kärntner Strasse 11, Vienna). There are also daily nonstop flights to all major European destinations. For further details, see p106.

## Boat

Between April and November, fast hydrofoils travel eastwards to Bratislava (one-way/return €23/35, bike extra €7, 1½ hours, Wednesday to Sunday June to September) and Budapest (one-way/return €76/100, bike extra €19, 5½ hours, daily). Bookings can be made through **DDSG Blue Danube** (Map p64; ☎ 58 880-0; www.ddsg-blue-danube.at; 01, Friedrichstrasse 7) or **G Glaser** (Map p60; ☎ 726 08 20; www.members.aon.at/danube; 02, Handelskai 265).

Heading west, a series of boats plies the Danube between Krems and Passau (in Germany), with a handful of services originating in Vienna. Two respectable operators include **DDSG Blue Danube** and **Brandner** (☎ 07433-25 90; www.brandner.at; Ufer 50, Wallsee). Both run trips from April through October that start at around €17 one-way.

## Bus

Bus company Eurolines operates from two locations. At least daily, buses leave from its terminal at **Südbahnhof** (Map p60; ☎ 7968552; 03, Arsenalstrasse; ☎ 7am-7pm) heading to Belgrade (one-way/return €40/60, nine hours), to Budapest

(one-way/return €26/40, 3½ hours), to Ljubljana (one-way/return €36/60, 15 hours 20 minutes), to Warsaw (one-way/return €34/62, 13½ hours) and to Zagreb (one-way/return €26/42, 4¾ hours).

Services to Bratislava (one-way/return €4/8, 1½ hours) leave from outside Euroline's **city office** (Map p60; ☎ 798 29 00; 03, Erdbergstrasse 202; ☎ 7am-7pm).

Euroline's services to Prague depart from 01, Rathausplatz 5 (Map p64; one-way/return €22/36, five hours). Call ☎ 93 000-34305 for details.

### Car & Motorcycle

The Gürtel is an outer ring road that joins up with the A22 on the north bank of the Danube 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

International trains leave from Westbahnhof (Map p60) or Südbahnhof (Map p60). Westbahnhof has trains to northern and Western Europe, and western Austria. Services to Salzburg leave roughly hourly; some go on to Munich and terminate in Paris (14½ hours total). To Zürich there are two trains during the day (€80, nine hours) and one night train (€80, plus charge for fold-down seat/couchette). Eight trains daily go to Budapest (€39, 3½ hours).

Südbahnhof has trains to Italy (including to Rome, via Venice and Florence), Slovakia, the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland, and southern Austria. Five trains daily go to Bratislava (€17, 1½ hours) and four to Prague (€41, five hours), with two of those continuing to Berlin (10 hours in total).

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

For train information, call ☎ 05-17 17.

### GETTING AROUND To/From the Airport

It is 19km from the city centre to **Wien Schwechat airport** (VIE; ☎ 7007-0; www.viennaairport.com). The **City Airport Train** (☎ 25 250; www.cityairporttrain.com) takes 15 minutes between Schwechat and Wien Mitte (one-way €9). The S-Bahn (S7) does the same journey (single €2.90, 25 minutes).

Buses run every 20 or 30 minutes, 24 hourly, from the airport (single €6). Services include to Südtiroler Platz, Südbahnhof and Westbahnhof, and another direct to Schwedenplatz in the city centre.

Taxis cost about €32. **C&K Airport Service** (☎ 44 444) charges €22 one-way for shared vans.

### Bicycle

There's a system of **Vienna city bikes** (☎ 0810-500 500; www.citybikewien.at; deposit €2, 1st hr free, 2nd hr €2, 3rd hr €3, per hr thereafter €2). You'll need a Maestro debit card, Austrian visa or city bike card to be able to use the payment machines. Check its website for locations.

The rather steeply priced **Pedal Power** (Map p60; ☎ 729 72 34; 02, Ausstellungsstrasse 3; hire per half/full day €18/28) is the city's dominant operator, but the tourist office should be able to point to others near your hostel or hotel. *Tips für Radfahrer*, available from the tourist office, shows circular bike tours.

### Car & Motorcycle

Parking is difficult in the city centre and the Viennese are impatient drivers. Blue parking zones allow a maximum stop of 1½ or two

hours from 9am to 8pm (to 7pm in the In-nere Stadt) on weekdays.

Parking vouchers (€0.40 per 30 minutes) for these times can be purchased in *Tabak* (tobacconist) shops and banks. The cheapest parking garage in the city centre is at Museumsplatz.

### Fiakers

Before hiring a *Fiaker* (horse-drawn carriage) by the Stephansdom for a ride around the city, it's worth asking yourself whether these are pony traps or tourist traps. Sure, they're kind of cute, but at around €65/95 for a 30-/60-minute ride...well, you do the maths.

### Public Transport

Vienna has a unified public transport network that encompasses trains, trams, buses, and underground (U-Bahn) and suburban (S-Bahn) trains. Routes are outlined on the free tourist office map.

Before use, all advance-purchase tickets must be validated at the entrance to U-Bahn stations or on trams and buses. Tickets are cheaper to buy from ticket machines in U-Bahn stations or from *Tabak* shops, where single tickets cost €1.50. On board, they cost €2. Singles are valid for an hour, and you may change lines on the same trip.

Daily passes (*Stunden-Netzkarte*) cost €17 (valid 24 hours from first use); a three-day pass costs €12 (valid 72 hours); and an eight-day multiple-user pass (*8-Tage-Karte*) costs €24 (validate the ticket once per day per person). Weekly tickets (valid Monday to Sunday) cost €12.50.

Children under six years travel free; those under 16 travel free on Sunday, public holidays and during Vienna school holidays (photo ID necessary). Senior citizens should ask about discounts.

Ticket inspections are not very frequent, but fare dodgers pay an on-the-spot fine of €62. Austrian and European rail passes (see p1121) are valid on the S-Bahn only. Public transport finishes around midnight, but there's also a comprehensive night bus service, for which all train tickets are valid.

### Taxi

Taxis are metered for city journeys and cost €2 or €2.10 flag fall, plus from €1.09 per kilometre. There is at least another €2 surcharge for phoning a radio taxi.

## THE DANUBE VALLEY

Cruise along the country's most picturesque stretch of the Danube River between Krems an der Donau and Melk. The beautiful valley is filled with terraced vineyards, ruined castles and medieval towns.

### KREMS AN DER DONAU

☎ 02732 / pop 23,000

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 site 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. Otherwise try the atmospheric **Gästehaus Einzinger** (☎ 82 316; fax 82 316-6; Steiner Landstrasse 82, Krems-Stein; s/d €36/52), which has individually designed rooms around a leafy sunken courtyard (watch out for the rather precarious stairs).

The **tourist office** (☎ 82 676; www.tiscover.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 *Schiffstation* (boat station) 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 and five minutes). Trains to Vienna (€10.50, one hour, multiple daily) arrive at Franz Josefs Bahnhof.

### DÜRNSTEIN

☎ 02711 / pop 1000

This pretty town, on a curve in the Danube, is not only noted for its beautiful buildings but also for the castle above the town, which at one time imprisoned English king Richard I (the Lion-Heart) in 1192. His unscheduled stopover on the way home from the Crusades came courtesy of Austrian archduke Leopold V, whom he had insulted.

There's not much left of **Künringerburg castle** today. It's basically just a pile of rubble. Still, it's worth snapping a picture and the views from the top are rather breathtaking.

For more about Dürnstein, contact the **Rathaus** (town hall; ☎ 219; www.duernstein.at; Hauptstrasse 25; ☎ 9am-5pm Mon-Fri).

### HAPPY SNAPS

Want to give your holiday photos extra pizzazz? Want to be able to put on a slide show back home that won't send friends and family to sleep? Well, as Vienna is the home of Lomo – inventor of the ActionSampler – it's the perfect place to rediscover your love of photography.

Of course, Lomo cameras – plastic compacts that, for example, put nine identical images in one frame or that capture a sequence of four actions in one picture – are a worldwide cult. Although originally a Russian brand, they are now designed in Vienna, which also hosts the Lomographic World Archive at **Lomography Society International** (www.lomography.com). The **Lomo Shop** (Map p64; ☎ 521 890; Museums Quartier; ☎ 10am-7pm; ☎ U-Bahn Volkstheater), next to the Kunsthalle, is eminently browsable, as you can just admire the artistic photos on its walls.

**MELK**

☎ 02752 / pop 6500

The sheer size and majesty of Melk's imposing abbey-fortress, rising above the Danube and the small town, is stunning. Featured in the epic medieval German poem *Nibelungenlied* and Umberto Eco's best-selling novel *The Name of the Rose*, the impressive Benedictine monastery endures as a major Wachau landmark. It's an essential stop along the Danube Valley route, however, so be prepared to fight through loads of tourists to explore the place.

**Orientation & Information**

The train station is 300m from the town centre. Walk straight ahead from the train station along Bahnhofstrasse, turning right into Abt Karl Strasse if you're going to the hostel or continuing ahead for the town. The quickest way to the central Rathausplatz is through the small Bahngasse path (to the right of the cow's-head mural at the bottom of the hill), rather than veering left into Hauptplatz.

Turn right from Bahngasse into Rathausplatz and right again at the end, following the signs to the **tourist office** (☎ 52 307-410; www.tiscover.com/melk; Babenbergerstrasse 1; ☎ 9am-noon & 2-6pm Mon-Fri, 10am-2pm Sat Apr-Jun & Sep-Oct, 9am-7pm Mon-Sat, 10am-2pm Sun Jul & Aug, closed Nov-Mar).

**Sights & Activities**

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 extra €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. Consequently, it's an elaborate example of baroque architecture, most often lauded for its imposing marble hall and beautiful library, but just as unforgettable for the curved terrace connecting these two rooms. The **Abbey Museum** on the grounds outlines the history of the building and the church with its exhibition topic entitled 'The Path from Yesterday to Today – Melk in its Past and Present'. Various rooms using computer animation, sound and multimedia accurately narrate the 910-year-plus Benedictine monastic history of Melk.

Useful explanatory booklets (€4) for the whole building are available in various lan-

guages, or phone ahead if you want a tour in English, which works out cheaper.

**Sleeping & Eating**

**Camping Melk** (☎ 53 291; Kolomania 3; camp site per person/tent/car €4/3/2; ☎ Mar-Oct) Located on the west bank of the canal that joins the Danube, this camping ground is a tranquil spot. If you get hungry, there is an attached restaurant, where you'll also find reception.

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

**Gasthof Goldener Stern** (☎ 52 214; Sternstrasse 17; s/d from €22/44; ☎) When the friendly owners renovated recently, they decided to keep some cheaper 'student' rooms for budget travellers – they share bathrooms but are clean and excellent value. At the other end are the so-called 'romantic' rooms, all individually decorated. The place has a welcoming feel and a secluded location above the main square. It also has a fine restaurant.

**Pasta e Pizza** (☎ 53 686; Jakob Prandtauerstrasse 4; pizza €6-8) Tucked away from the main tourist trail, this eatery offers heaps of pizza and pasta dishes in cheerful environs.

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

**Getting There & Away**

Boats leave from the canal by Pionierstrasse, 400m behind the monastery. Multiple daily trains to Vienna's Westbahnhof (€12, 75 to 90 minutes) are direct or via St Pölten.

**LINZ**

☎ 070 / pop 218,000

Austria's second-largest city is essentially 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 – the Linzer torte – named after it. So the city carved a niche for itself by becoming technologically industrial as well. Its world-leading cybercentre, stunning first-rate contemporary art gallery and appealing attractions for kids prove that Linz certainly has the ability to please and interest.

**Orientation**

Most of the city is on the south bank of the Danube. The main square, Hauptplatz, is reached from the train station on tram 3. To walk here, turn right (northeast) out of the station forecourt, Bahnhofplatz, and continue straight ahead until you come to a park on the left. Turn left here into Landstrasse and continue for 10 minutes to get to Hauptplatz.

**Information**

**Ars Electronica Center** (☎ 72 720; www.aec.at; Hauptstrasse 2; ☎ 9am-5pm Wed & Thu, 9am-9pm Fri, 10am-6pm Sat & Sun) Offers free Internet access.

**Main Post Office** (Bahnhofplatz 11-13; ☎ 7am-9pm Mon-Fri, 7am-6pm Sat, 7am-1pm Sun)

**Tourist Office** (☎ 707 017-77; www.linz.at; Hauptplatz 1; ☎ 8am-7pm Mon-Fri, 10am-7pm Sat & Sun May-Oct, 10am-6pm Nov-Apr) Has the Linz City Ticket (€20), which offers free public transport, sightseeing discounts and a free €10 meal.

**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, 10am-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 artists such as Klimt, Schiele, Picasso, Kokoschka, Matisse, Haring and Warhol. Lit up at night, the building looks spectacular.

Across the Danube lies an older art and technology centre that will help you indulge your childhood superhero fantasies, without having to jump off the garage roof and graze your knee. At the **Ars Electronica Center** (☎ 72 720; www.aec.at; Hauptstrasse 2; adult/student €6/3; ☎ 9am-5pm Wed & Thu, 9am-9pm Fri, 10am-6pm Sat & Sun) you'll be given a virtual-reality headset, then strapped to the ceiling and sent 'flying' over Linz and into the future. If you like this, you'll also love the world's only public 'cave', a virtual environment where you can travel through space and time.

A ride on the **Pöstlingbergbahn** (funicular railway; ☎ 7801 7002; one-way/return €2/3.20, children half-price; ☎ 5.20am-8pm Mon-Sat, 11.40am-8pm Sun) offers great views and is bound to keep kids of all ages happy. It looks like a quaint street trolley from a movie and climbs slowly to the ornate twin-spired church and **children's**

**grotto railway** (☎ 3400 7506; www.linzag.at; adult/child €4/2; ☎ 10am-5pm Oct-Apr, 10am-6pm May-Sep) atop the Pöstlingberg hill. To reach the Pöstlingbergbahn take tram 3 to Bergbahnhof Urfahr.

**Festivals & Events**

The **Ars Electronica Festival** (☎ 72 72-0; www.aec.at) in early September showcases cyber-art, computer music, and other marriages of technology and art. This leads into the **Brucknerfest** (Bruckner Festival; ☎ 775 230; www.brucknerhaus.at; Brucknerhaus Kasse, Untere Donaulände, A-4010 Linz), which pays homage to native son Anton Bruckner with a month of classical music between mid-September and mid-October. For this, you should book early.

In July there's the **Pflasterspektakel street performers' festival**.

**Sleeping**

The tourist office offers a free accommodation booking service for visitors, but only face-to-face and not over the phone.

**Jugendgästehaus** (☎ 664 434; www.oehv.or.at; Stanglhofweg 3; dm/s/d €18.50/28.50/41) Modern and comfortable, even if it's a little way from the centre of town; take bus 17, 19 or 27. Half- and full-board options are available.

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

**Goldener Anker** (☎ 771 088; Hofgasse 5; s/d from €42/70) A tastefully decorated family-run *Gasthof* (guesthouse) inside Linz's oldest pub, rooms are comfortable and conveniently located.

**Novotel Linz** (☎ 347 28 10; www.accorhotels.com/novotel\_linz.htm; Wankmüllerhofstrasse 37; s/d €69/84; ☎ ☎ ☎ ☎) Packed with all sorts of amenities, including a sauna and tennis courts, this place is popular with business travellers as well families on weekends or holidays. Rooms are modern and efficient, and there's a playground for the kids.

**Hotel Wolfinger** (☎ 773 291-0; www.austria-classic-hotels.at/wolfiner; Hauptplatz 19; s/d €83/115, with shared bathroom from €44/65; ☎) A central option, this hotel is in a wonderful former cloister renovated in baroque style and with unique flair. It has a very limited number of cheaper rooms.

## Eating & Drinking

**Café Traximayr** (☎ 773 353; Promenadestrasse 16; snacks from €5; ☎ Mon-Sat) An elegant coffee house, with only a few snooker tables breaking up the formal environment of white walls, marble, mirrors and chandeliers. Try the Linzer torte – this heavy, nutty-tasting sponge filled with strawberry jam isn't on the menu but it is on the cake trolley, so just ask.

**p'aa** (☎ 776 461; Altstadt 28; mains €8-12; ☎ 11am-midnight Mon-Sat) Serving mainly vegan cuisine in an elegant interior, the menu is 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.

**Sky Loft Media Bar** (Ars Electronica Center, Hauptstrasse 2; ☎ 9am-5pm Wed & Thu, 9am-2am Fri & Sat) This glassed-in bar is a great place for a beer or cocktail overlooking the Danube and the Lentos museum.

## Getting There & Around

Low-cost Ryanair flies in daily from London Stansted to **Linz airport** (LNZ; ☎ 600-0; www.flughafen-linz.at), which provides a shuttle bus (€2.20, 20 minutes) to the main train station.

Linz is halfway between Salzburg and Vienna on the main road and rail routes. Trains to Salzburg (€17.70) and Vienna (€23.50) take between 1¼ and two hours. Trains leave approximately hourly.

City transport tickets are bought before you board: €0.70 per journey or €3 for a day card. Some of the bus services stop early in the evening. The suburban **Lilo train station** (☎ 654 376; Coulinstrasse 30) offers bike hire for €7 per day.

## THE SOUTH

Austria's two main southern states, Styria (Steiermark) and Carinthia (Kärnten), often feel worlds apart from the rest of the country, both in climate and attitude. Elements of Italian, Slovenian and Hungarian culture are present here, 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).

A jet-setting, fashion-conscious crowd heads to sun-drenched Carinthia for summer holidays. The region (right on the border with Italy) exudes an atmosphere that's as close to Mediterranean as this staunch country gets.

## GRAZ

☎ 0316 / pop 250,000

European Capital of Culture in 2003 and recently included in the list of world cultural heritage sites, this provincial capital of Styria offers a little something for everyone. Funky and laid-back at the same time, the futuristic, bluish-bloblike **Kunsthau Graz** will make you think that aliens have landed nearby. There's so much to see and do in Graz that it's fair 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

Austria's second-largest city is dominated by its **Schlossberg** (castle hill) looming above the city centre. The River Mur runs in a north-south path in front (west) of the hill, separating the city centre from the main train station (Hauptbahnhof). Trams 3, 6 and 14 all run from the train station to the central Hauptplatz. Several streets radiate from this square, including café-lined Sporgasse and the primary pedestrian thoroughfare, Herrergasse. This thoroughfare leads to Jakominiplatz, which is a major transport hub.

## Information

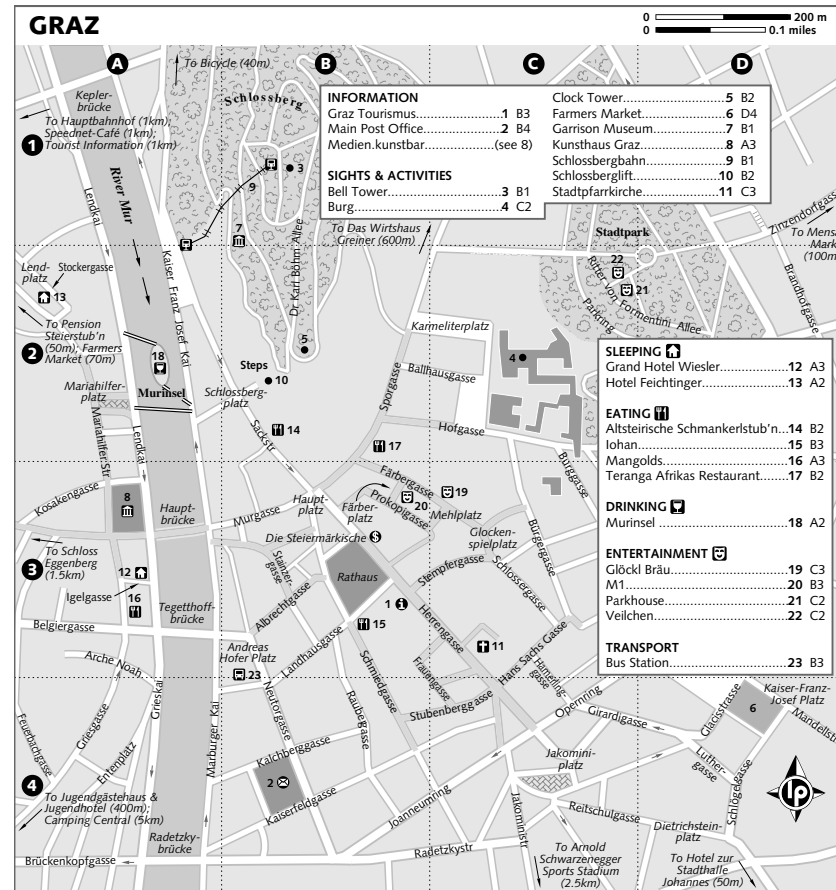
**Graz Tourismus** (☎ 80 75-0; www.graztourismus.at; Herrergasse 16; ☎ 9am-6pm Mon-Sat, 10am-6pm Sun)

**Main Post Office** (Neutorgasse 46; ☎ 7.30am-8pm Mon-Fri, 8am-noon Sat)

**Medien.kunstbar** (Kunsthau Graz, Lendkai 1; ☎ 10am-6pm Tue-Sun, 10am-8pm Thu) Offers free Internet access.

**Speednet-café** (Hauptbahnhof Europaplatz 4; per hr around €6; ☎ 8am-10pm Mon-Sat, 9am-9pm Sun) Offers Internet access.

**Tourist Information Center** (☎ 80 75-21; Hauptbahnhof; ☎ 8.30am-1pm & 2.5-3.30pm Mon-Wed & Fri, to 6.30pm Thu)



## Sights & Activities

Here you'll find a plethora of museums, galleries, grandiose architecture, churches and unusual surprises. Most visitors head first for the **Schlossberg** to get an overview of the city and explore what remains of its fortress. This includes the medieval **clock tower**, plus a **bell tower**, **bastion** and **garrison museum** (☎ 827 348; adult/concession €1.50/0.85; ☎ 10am-5pm Tue-Sun Apr-Oct). There are three main ways to ascend: the glass **Schlossberglift**, hewn through the hill; the **Schlossbergbahn** funicular railway (both requiring a Zone 1 transport ticket, €1.70); and the 260 steps near the lift (free).

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, 10am-8pm Thu). Notice anything extraterrestrial? This creation by UK architects Colin Fournier and Peter Cook is referred to as the 'friendly alien'. It has 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 star.

Likewise, the **Murinsel** (☎ 24hr), an artificial island in the River Mur that's connected to both banks, north of the Kunsthau and Hauptbrücke (main bridge). Designed in the form of an open seashell, the glass, concrete and steel construction, by New York

artist Vito Acconic, is an oft-photographed fixture. The outer swirl of the 'shell' is an amphitheatre; the inner part, a trendy café/bar in aqua blue.

Graz's two morning **farmers markets** (Kaiser-Franz-Josef Platz & Lendplatz; ☒ Mon-Sat) offer an enticing array of produce, such as apples, fresh fruit juices and schnapps – depending on the season.

After visiting one of these markets, check out the Old Town centre, which has several highlights. One is the **Burg** (Hofgasse) complex of the Styrian parliament; to the left of the door marked 'Stiege III' there's a double-winding staircase as good as any perspective-defying drawing by MC Escher. The **Stadtpfarrkirche** (Herrengasse 23) is famous for the stained-glass window behind the altar that depicts Hitler and Mussolini looking on as Jesus is tortured.

The tourist office organises **guided walks** of Graz (from €7.50), daily in summer and on Saturday in winter.

## Sleeping

**Jugendgästehaus & Jugendhotel** (☎ 708 350; www.jfgh.at; Idlhofgasse 74; dm/d in hostel €18.50/55, r in hotel from €47, 1st-night surcharge €3; ☒ reception 7am-10pm Mon-Fri, 7-10am & 5-10pm Sat & Sun; ☒) Ultramodern and comfortable, with en suite rooms, spacious reception/restaurant areas and full

wheelchair access. Individual travellers are accommodated in the hostel wing, groups and families in the hotel section. It's about 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, the young, friendly owners put fresh flowers and fruit in the simple, modern rooms, and place local pumpkinseeds, rather than chocolates, on your pillow. The Styrian restaurant below serves tasty food, and there's free bike hire.

**Hotel zur Stadthalle Johannes** (☎ 837 766; www.stadthalle.co.at; Münzgrabenstrasse 48 & 87; s/d from €47/70) Rooms at this older, well-kept hotel have wooden floors and beds. The breakfast room goes for a more Italianate style.

**Hotel Feichtinger** (☎ 724 100; www.hotel-feichtinger.at; Lendplatz 1A; s/d from €50/94; ☒) It isn't especially full of character, but rooms at one of Graz's newer hotels offer a high level of comfort for the price. It's on the outer boundary of Graz's tiny and largely inoffensive red-light strip, but when it's this close to town few will mind.

**Grand Hotel Wiesler** (☎ 70 66-0; www.hotelwiesler.com; Grieskai 4; s/d from €170/230; ☒ ☒) The best of the top-end hotels in town, the Grand Wiesler is a beautiful Art Nouveau affair with equally beautiful rooms and impeccable five-star service.

## THE ARNIE EFFECT

Given that another of the world's top tourist destinations has a similar name, it's unsurprising that Austria has suffered from an identity crisis, with jokey T-shirts proclaiming, 'No Kangaroos in Austria'. Now the Alpine nation believes help has arrived in the bulky shape of a Styrian bodybuilder-turned-movie-star-turned-politician.

Arnold Schwarzenegger, locals hope optimistically, will help even the most geographically ignorant American schoolchild locate their tiny country on a map.

When the Terminator became the Californian 'Gubernator' in late 2003, even left-wing Austrians put aside their reservations for the evening. Bar-goers in Graz, just a few miles from Schwarzenegger's boyhood home of Thal, erupted in cheers.

'Mozart is no longer the world's most famous Austrian', Dieter Hardt-Stremayr of the Graz tourist office told AFP.

While Californians have since been welcomed in Austria like long-lost members of the family, there's little Arnie memorabilia for them, or anyone else, to see. Two Russian artists have been trying to erect a huge Terminator statue in Graz's Stadtpark. However, they've met with resistance because, ultimately, Arnie is a controversial figure in Austria.

In fact, in 2005 it appeared the Governor was actually trying to sever ties with his hometown. A museum exhibiting training equipment used by the former bodybuilder closed in 2005 due to money woes. Museum officials say they reached out to Schwarzenegger for financial help to save it but were ignored. Now all that marks his presence in Graz is the Arnold Schwarzenegger Sports Stadium. The stadium is to the southwest of the city centre; take tram 4.

## AUTHOR'S CHOICE

**Teranga Afrikas Restaurant** (☎ 818 306 56; Sporgasse 16; mains around €1) Find that Styrian cuisine isn't far enough from the sometimes bland Austrian fare and don't mind adventurous arrangements? Then head into a sometimes-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 it has the spicy mango soup with yams – it's excellent. Credit cards are not accepted.

## Eating

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

**Mangolds** (Griesgasse 11; salad per 100g from €1.05; ☒ 11am-8pm Mon-Fri, 11am-4pm Sat) An ultra-healthy and reasonably cheap vegetarian buffet, with loads of salads to choose from.

**Mensa Markt** (Schubertstrasse 2-4; menus €4-4.50) This spot by the university has a range of inexpensive takeaway.

**Altsteirische Schmankerlstub'n** (☎ 823 211; Sackstrasse 10; mains €7.50-16.50) Hidden in a passageway off Sackstrasse, this rustic restaurant serves Styrian staples, such as *Bauernschmaus* (roast pork with blood sausage, sauerkraut and dumplings), *Ochsenfetzen* (beef strips with sour cream and roast potatoes) and *Vogerlsalat* (green salad) with roast potatoes, egg, tomatoes and pumpkinseed oil.

**lohan** (☎ 821 312; Landhausgasse 1; mains from €18; ☒ dinner Tue-Sat) Locals come here for a treat. In the former cold-storage room of the city hall, it has formal white tablecloths, draped white canvas chairs and a cool, somewhat more relaxed, bar. The select menu might include saddle of lamb with black lentils or veal with polenta and mushrooms.

## Drinking & Entertainment

Graz, like Vienna, has a 'bar zone' known as the Bermudadreieck. It's located between

Sporgasse, Färbergasse and Stempfergasse, where you will find venues ranging from the humble **Glöckl Bräu** (☎ 814 781; Glockenspielplatz 2-3) to the 3rd-floor **M1** (☎ 811 233; Färbergasse 1), favoured by the beautiful people. There are other clusters of hip bars at the top of Sporgasse and behind the Kunsthaus Graz.

**Murinsel** (☎ 818 669; ☒ café/bar 9am-11pm Sun-Wed, 9am-2am Thu-Sat) 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 on 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.

**Veilchen** (☎ 8277 3416; Stadtpark 1) Near the Parkhouse, this can be an interesting venue. It's an art gallery and community centre that usually has DJs on Saturday.

## Getting There & Away

Ryanair has flights daily from London Stansted to **Graz airport** (GRZ; ☎ 29 02-0; www.flughafen-graz.at, in German). Direct Intercity (IC) trains to Vienna's Südbahnhof depart every two hours (€30, 2¾ hours). Trains depart every two hours to Salzburg (€40, 4¾ hours), either direct or changing at Bischofshofen. Two daily, direct trains depart for Ljubljana (€38, four hours), and every hour or two to Budapest (€63, 6½ hours) via Szentgotthard and Szombathely. Trains to Klagenfurt (€30, three hours) go via Bruck an der Mur. The A2 autobahn from Vienna to Klagenfurt passes a few kilometres from the city.

## Getting Around

Public transport tickets cover trams, buses, the Schlossbergbahn and the Schlossberglift. Tickets cost €1.60 each. The 24-hour/weekly passes cost €3.20/7.50. Buses 600, 630 and 631 connect the airport with the train station, Hauptplatz or Jakominiplatz (€1.60); the same journey by taxi costs about €15.

You can hire a bike from **Bicycle** (☎ 821 357-0; Körösisstrasse 5) from €7.50/42 per day/week.

## KLAGENFURT

☎ 0463 / pop 87,000

In a salacious location on the water, this sunny provincial capital makes a handy base for exploring the Wörthersee's lakeside villages and elegant medieval towns to the

north. The town is not hugely interesting, but gets buzzing in summer when Austrians on weekend holiday flock here.

### Orientation

The heart of the city is Neuer Platz, which is 1km north of the main train station. Walk straight down Bahnhofstrasse and turn left into Paradiesergasse to get there, or take bus 40, 41 or 42 to Heiligengeistplatz, just around the corner from Neuer Platz.

### Information

**Gates Cafebar** (Waaqplatz 7; per 10 min €1; ☎ 9am-1am Mon-Fri, 7pm-1am Sat & Sun) Offers Internet access.

**Main Post Office** (Dr Hermann Gasse 4; ☎ 7.30am-6pm Mon-Fri, 8-11am Sat)

**Tourist Office** (☎ 537 22 23; [www.info.klagenfurt.at](http://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)

### Sights & Activities

The **Wörthersee**, 4km west of the city 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 (69°F). Events from go-kart rallies to avant-garde festivals of tattoo and body painting ensure 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* (Hire a Bike) scheme in summer; hire a standard bicycle at one of several outlets around the lake and return it at any other outlet (five hours/24 hours/one week €5/9/35). Mountain and road bikes are available, and you can also arrange to return the bike to the same location, although it costs a few euros more.

Also near the lake, Europa Park has various attractions, including the theme park **Minimundus** (☎ 21 194-0; Villacher Strasse 241; adult/student €10/4.50; ☎ Apr-Oct), which displays more than 150 models of famous international buildings on a 1:25 scale.

### Sleeping & Eating

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 public transport.

**Jugendherberge** (☎ 230 020; [jgh.klagenfurt@oejvh.or.at](mailto:jgh.klagenfurt@oejvh.or.at); Neckheimgasse 6; dm €17.50, dm as d €42; ☎ recep-

tion 7-11am & 5-10pm; ☎ ) Modern and clean, this HI hostel is near the university and Europa Park. Take bus 12 to get there. Book ahead, as it's often full with school groups.

**Hotel Liebetegger** (☎ 56 935; [www.liebetegger.com](http://www.liebetegger.com), in German; Völknermarkterstrasse 8; s/d from €28/60) The décor is modern, with interesting touches like cast-iron door handles and Gustav Klimt prints on the walls, making this three-star hotel quite a good deal. There's an inviting café/bar (mains €7 to €10) attached, and breakfast is available for an extra €7.50.

**Hotel Geyer** (☎ 57 886; [www.hotelgeyer.com](http://www.hotelgeyer.com); Priesterhausgasse; s/d €55/95; ☎ ) Everyone's favourite Klagenfurt hotel, the public areas are quite funky with loads of modern art on the walls. Rooms were recently renovated, and although they're compact, they're still comfortable. A generous breakfast buffet is included.

**Zum Augustin** (☎ 513 992; Pfarrhofgasse 2; mains €7-16) A smoky brewery that makes its own beer – it has eight different ales on tap. It is popular with the after-work crowd, serves a decent range of regional food and has a pleasant cobblestone patio.

### Getting There & Around

Flights are available with Ryanair from London daily, with a bus running to the city centre. Trains to Graz (€28, five hours) go via Bruck an der Mur and depart every two hours. Trains to western Austria, Italy and Germany go via Villach, 40 minutes away.

Bus drivers sell single tickets (€1.50), while a strip of 10 costs €12 from ticket machines. Daily/weekly passes cost €3.30/13. For the Europa Park vicinity, take bus 10, 11, 12, 20, 21 or 22 from Heiligengeistplatz in the city centre. To the airport, take bus 42 or a taxi (about €16). Bikes can be hired from **Zweirad Impulse** (☎ 516 310; 24hr hire adult/child €10/7).

## 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 as much 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, fountains and churches below is fully revealed. And visitors still tour film locations used for *The Sound of Music* in and around Salzburg, Austria's charming capital of kitsch.

### ORIENTATION

The pedestrianised Old Town is on the south bank of the River Salzach, wedged between the river and Mönchsberg behind it. Many attractions and the shopping street of Getreidegasse are here. On the north bank is Mozart's Wohnhaus and Schloss Mirabell, as well as the new city centre, with most of the cheaper hotels. Buses 1, 6, 51 and 55 will take you from the main train station (Hauptbahnhof) to the city centre. To walk, turn left out of the train station into Rainerstrasse and follow it (taking the second, not the first tunnel under the railway) to Mirabellplatz.

### INFORMATION

Tourist offices and hotels sell the Salzburg Card (€21/28/34 for 24/48/72 hours), which provides free museum entry and public transport, and offers various reductions. Students get a 10% discount. The tourist office's commission for hotel reservations is €2.20 or €4 for three or more people.

**Amex** (☎ 80 80; Mozartplatz 5; ☎ 9am-5.30pm Mon-Fri, 9am-noon Sat) For travel agency information.

**Cybar** (☎ 844 822; Mozartplatz 5; per 10 min €1.50-1.80; ☎ 9am-10pm) Offers Internet access.

**Main Post Office** (Residenzplatz 9; ☎ 7am-7pm Mon-Fri, 8-10am Sat)

**Main Tourist Office** (☎ information 88-987 330, hotel reservations 88-987 314; [www.salzburg.info](http://www.salzburg.info); Mozartplatz 5; ☎ 9am-6pm May-Jun & Sep-Oct, 9am-7pm Dec, Jul & Aug, 9am-6pm Mon-Sat Nov & Jan-Apr)

**Piterfun** (Ferdinand-Porsche-Strasse 7; per 10 min €1.50-1.80; ☎ 10am-10pm) Offers Internet access.

**St Johannis-Spital** (☎ 44 82-0; Müllner Hauptstrasse 48) For medical treatment.

**STA Travel** (☎ 458 733; Fanny-von-Lehnert Strasse 1; ☎ Mon-Fri)

**Tourist Information Counter** (Platform 2A, Hauptbahnhof; ☎ 9.15am-8pm) Opening hours vary.

**Train Station Post Office** (Hauptbahnhof; ☎ 7am-8.30pm Mon-Fri, 8am-2pm Sat, 1-6pm Sun)

### SIGHTS & ACTIVITIES

A Unesco World Heritage site, Salzburg's Old Town centre is equally entrancing

whether viewed from ground level or from the hills above.

**Residenzplatz** is a good starting point for a wander. The **Dom** (cathedral), just to the south, is worth checking out for the three bronze doors symbolising faith, hope and charity. From here, head west along Franziskanergasse and turn left into a courtyard for **St Peterskirche**, an abbey dating from AD 847. Among lovingly tended graves in the abbey's grounds you'll find the entrance to the **Katakomben** (catacombs; adult/student €1/0.70; ☎ 10.30am-5pm summer, 10.30am-3.30pm winter). The western end of Franziskanergasse opens out into Max Reinhardt Platz, where you'll see the back of Fisher von Erlach's **Universitätskirche** (Universitätsplatz), an outstanding example of baroque architecture. The **Stift Nonnberg** (Nonnberg Abbey), where *The Sound of Music* first encounters Maria, is back in the other direction, to the east of the Festung Hohensalzburg.

### Festung Hohensalzburg

This **castle fortress** (☎ 842 430-11; [www.salzburgurgen.at](http://www.salzburgurgen.at); Mönchsberg 34; admission €4, for interior & audioguide €7.50; ☎ 9am-6pm 15 Mar-14 Jun, 9am-7pm 15 Jun-14 Sep, 9am-5pm 15 Sep-14 Mar), built in 1077, was home to many archbishop-princes (who ruled Salzburg from 798). Inside are the impressively ornate staterooms, torture chambers and two museums.

It takes 15 minutes to walk up the hill to the fortress, or you can 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).

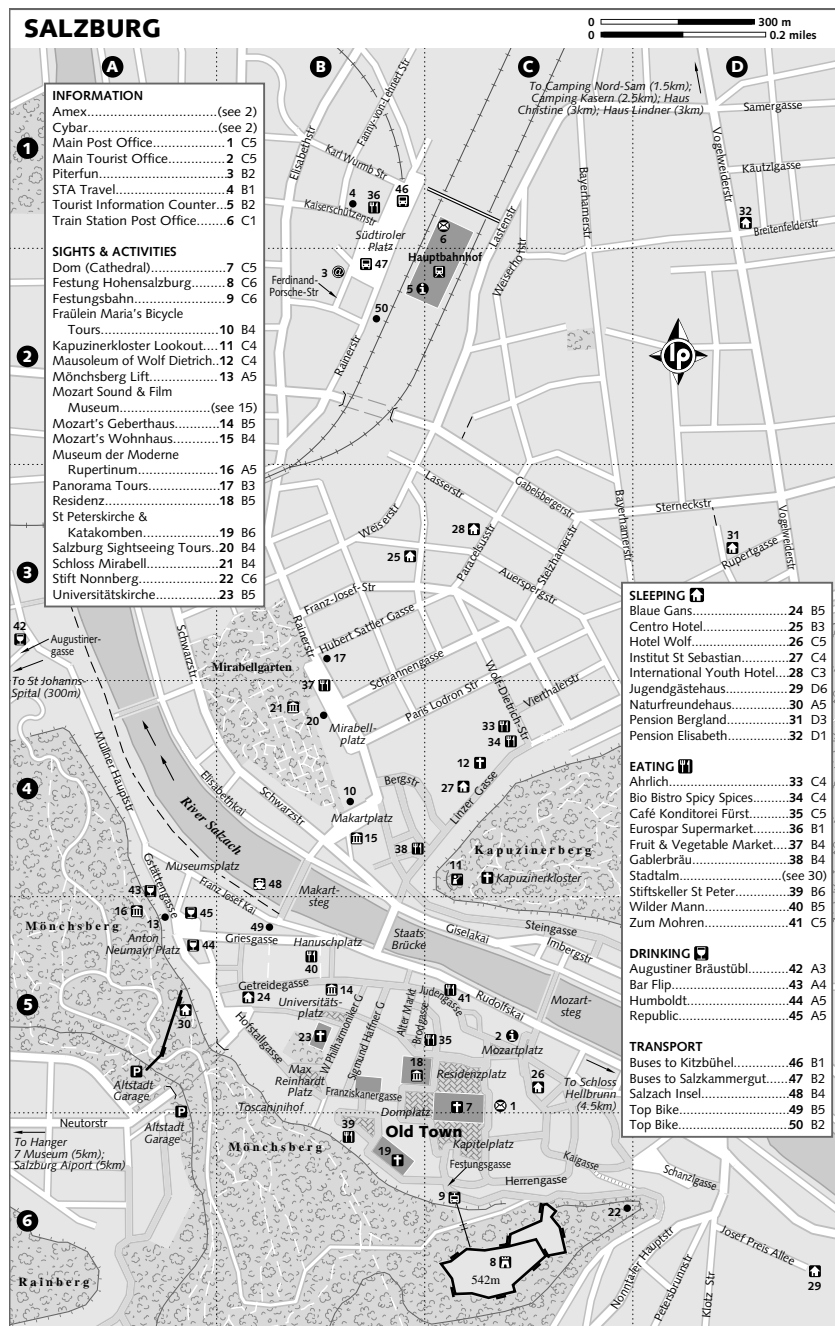
### Schloss Mirabell

The formal gardens of **Schloss Mirabell** (☎ dawn-dusk), with their tulips, crocuses and Greek statues, are the main attraction at this palace built by the archbishop-prince Wolf Dietrich for his mistress in 1606. The view from the western end (looking east towards the fortress) is one of Salzburg's most attractive. The gardens were featured in *The Sound of Music*, and are now popular with wedding parties. Concerts are often held in the palace, and there are sometimes open-air performances in the garden. Parts of the garden are off limits in winter.

### Museums

Although Mozart is now a major tourist drawcard, the man himself found Salzburg





stifling and couldn't wait to leave. Consequently, Mozart's **Geberthaus** (birthplace; ☎ 844 313; Getreidegasse 9; adult €5.50; ⌚ 9am-6pm Sep-Jun, 9am-7pm Jul & Aug, last entry 30 min before closing) and his **Wohnhaus** (residence; ☎ 874 227-40; Makartplatz 8; adult €5.50; ⌚ 9am-6pm Sep-Jun, 9am-7pm Jul & Aug, last entry 30 min before closing) cover only his early years as a prodigy and young adult, until he left town in 1780 at 24 years of age. A combined ticket to both houses is €9 (students and seniors €7). The Wohnhaus is more extensive, and houses the **Mozart Sound and Film Museum** (admission free).

In the **Residenz** (☎ 80 42-2690; www.salzburg-burgen.at; Residenzplatz 1; adult/student €7.30/5.50; ⌚ 10am-5pm, gallery closed Wed Oct-Mar) you can visit the archbishops' baroque staterooms and a gallery housing fine 16th- and 17th-century Dutch and Flemish paintings.

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

### Mausoleum of Wolf Dietrich

In the **graveyard** (Linzer Gasse; ⌚ 9am-7pm Apr-Oct, 9am-4pm Nov-Mar) of the 16th-century St Sebastian's Church sits Wolf Dietrich's not-so-humble **memorial** to himself. Both Mozart's father and his widow are also buried in the graveyard.

## TOURS

### Sound of Music Tours

Although these are the tours that interest the greatest number of visitors, how much fun you have depends on whether your fellow passengers enter into the necessary kitsch, tongue-in-cheek attitude. If you can, try to get together your own little posse. Otherwise, hope to find yourself among manic Julie Andrews impersonators flouncing in the fields, screeching 'the hills are alive' or some such thing.

Tours take three to four hours and usually spend most time in neighbouring Salzburgmergut, rather than Salzburg itself. Following are some recommended operators:

**Fraülein Maria's Bicycle Tours** (☎ 0646-342 62 97; Makartplatz; adult €16; ⌚ 9.30am mid-May-Sep) At the entrance to Mirabellgarten, behind Hotel Bristol.

**Panorama Tours** (☎ 874 029; Mirabellplatz; adult €33; ⌚ 9.30am & 2pm)

**Salzburg Sightseeing Tours** (☎ 881 616; Mirabellplatz; adult €33; ⌚ 9.30am & 2pm)

## River Tours

Boats operated by **Salzburg Schifffahrt** (☎ 825 769-12) cruise along the Salzach (adult/child €11/7, 40 to 50 minutes) leaving half-hourly to hourly from 10am to 6pm May to September. Others go to Schloss Hellbrunn (adult/child €14/10), departing at 12.45pm from September to June, and 9.30am and 12.45pm from July to August. The company also has atmospheric tours by night in late July and August.

Boats leave from the Salzach Insel, on the city side of the Makart bridge.

## FESTIVALS & EVENTS

Austria's most renowned classical music festival, the **Salzburg Festival** (www.salzburgfestival.at), attracts international stars from late July to the end of August. Book on its website before January, or ask the **Festspielhäuser ticket office** (☎ 80 45; Herbert von Karajan Platz 11; ⌚ 9.30am-6.30pm during the festival, 9.30am-3pm during the few weeks before) about cancellations during the festival.

## SLEEPING

Ask for the tourist office's hotel brochure, which gives prices for hotels, *pensions*, hostels and camping grounds. Accommodation is at a premium during festivals.

## Budget

**Naturfreundehaus** (☎ 841 729; Mönchsberg 19; dm €13.50; ⌚ mid-Apr-mid-Oct) The rooms are little more than glorified shoeboxes, but the hostel is atop the Mönchsberg hill and you soon forget the cramped conditions when you wake up to such amazing views. There is a 1am curfew. To get here, take the Mönchsberg lift (€2.60 return) from Anton Neumayr Platz or the stairs from Toscaninihof, behind the Festival Halls.

**International Youth Hotel (YoHo)** (☎ 879 649; www.yoho.at; Paracelsusstrasse 9; dm with shared bathroom from €16, s/d/tr €28/21/19; Ⓟ) If you're hankering after a lively bar scene with cheap beer, friendly staff and regular events, including daily screenings of *The Sound of Music*, this hotel is for you. Book ahead on its website - phone reservations are accepted only one day in advance for its spartan, but spotless, rooms. Reception doesn't 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 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) Just a few minutes walk from the bridge, 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 door, you might find this student abode is almost too close to the action. Don't expect much of a social atmosphere, as there is no bar or comfortable lounge; however, there is a roof terrace and kitchen.

**Haus Lindner** (☎ 456 681; info@haus-lindner.at; Panoramaweg 5; d/tr €30/45) The largest and one of the most popular private-room options in the city, with comfortable rooms and a homy atmosphere. Breakfast is provided, but there are kitchen facilities, too.

Try the following camping recommendations:

**Camping Kasern** (☎ /fax 450 576; campingkasern@aon.at; Carl Zuckmayer Strasse 4; camp site 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 site per adult/car & tent €5.50/8; ☹ Easter & May-Sep) Slightly closer to the city.

## Midrange & Top End

Salzburg has a fair number of options in these price brackets.

**Pension Elisabeth** (☎ 871 664; Vogelweiderstrasse 52; s/d from €44/66, with shared bathroom from €35/42; ♿) A small, friendly budget hotel; bright rooms come with white duvets, coloured upholstered chairs and wooden floors. It's near the Breitenfelderstrasse stop of bus 15, which heads into the city every 15 minutes. Beware there can be price increases during the high season for single-night stays.

**Pension Bergland** (☎ 872 318; www.berglandhotel.at; Rupertgasse 15; s/d/tr/f €56/86/102/120; ♿ ☹) Austrian rustic collides with '70s retro in the folksy rooms at this friendly, family-run pension. It's about a 15-minute walk from the Old Town.

**Centro Hotel** (☎ 882 221; www.centro-hotel.com; Auerspergstrasse 24; s/d €68/104; ♿ ☹) Slightly minimalist décor, the well-proportioned rooms have wooden furniture offset with touches of green. Ask for one with a private balcony.

**Hotel Wolf** (☎ 843 453-0; www.hotelwolf.com; Kaugasse 7; s/d from €70/100) With its neat living room set off from the main entrance hall, this family-owned hotel immediately feels like a real home. Austrian country-style bedrooms have been reconstructed in this 500-year-old abode, which has none of the mustiness of most buildings its age.

**Blaue Gans** (☎ 842 491-0; www.blauegans.at; Getreidegasse 41-43; s/d from €120/170) One of Salzburg's oldest inns converted into a trendy 'art hotel', it combines modern luxury with its historic setting.

## EATING Restaurants

If you wish to eat cheaply in Salzburg, it's worth following the Austrian tradition of making lunch your main meal, because some cheaper restaurants open only during daylight hours on weekdays.

**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.

**Wilder Mann** (☎ 841 787; Getreidegasse 20; mains €5.50-12; ☹ Mon-Fri) Traditional Austrian food in a friendly, bustling environment, located 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.

**Zum Mohren** (☎ 484 23 87; Judengasse 9; mains €9-16) This cellar restaurant offers traditional food in a cosy environment. Dishes include roast pork, Hungarian goulash and Tirolean calf's liver with bacon.

**Ährlich** (☎ 871 275-60; Wolf-Dietrich-Strasse 7; mains €11-17; ☹ dinner Tue-Sat, lunch Jul & Aug, closed Feb & Mar) If you've had enough of wurst and *Tafelspitz* (boiled beef with apple and horseradish sauce), this organic restaurant provides relief, with a brief, seasonal menu of international veggie and meat mains. It does sometimes have a bit of a weird health-farm vibe, but the food is tasty.

**Gablerbräu** (☎ 88 965; Linzer Gasse 9; mains €12) Low-key and pleasant, choose from home-made pasta and lip-smacking Styrian specialities served in four atmospheric rooms with a stained-glass arch, tiled oven and other rustic features.

**Stiftskeller St Peter** (☎ 841 268-34; St Peter Bezirk 1/4; mains €12.50-20) Be prepared to play the tourist when you visit the much advertised Austrian specialist. Environs are in a huge dining complex. The baroque main salon is worth a peek even if you don't stay for the food.

## Cafés

**Café Konditorei Fürst** (☎ 843 759; Brodgasse 13 in Alter Markt; confections from €3) Café Konditorei Fürst boasts that its *Mozartkugeln* chocolates – wrapped in blue and silver paper instead of the usual red and gold – are the original 'Mozart's Balls'. They're still made here from the same recipe.

**Stadtm** (☎ 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.

## Quick Eats & Self-Catering

Salzburg has no shortage of markets, with a **fruit and vegetable market** (Mirabellplatz) on Thursday morning, and market stalls and

fast-food stands on Universitätsplatz and Kapitelplatz. There's a **Eurospar supermarket** (☹ Mon-Sat) opposite the train station.

## DRINKING

Salzburg's most famous stretch of bars, clubs and discos remains Rudolfskai, but it's largely patronised by teenagers. Those who've already hit their 20s (or beyond) will probably prefer the scene around Anton Neumayr Platz, where things keep going until 4am on weekends.

**Augustiner Bräustübl** (☎ 431 246; Augustiner-gasse 4-6; ☹ 3-11pm Mon-Fri, 2.30-11pm Sat & Sun) It's Oktoberfest year-round here. Well, perhaps it's not quite so boisterous, but this hillside complex of beer halls and gardens is not to be missed. The local monks' brew keeps the huge crowd of up to 2800 humming.

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

**Humboldt** (☎ 843 171; Gstättengasse 4-6) Slightly more upmarket, with jellybean dispensers, a video projection of the Mirabellgarten on one wall and a pair of traditional antelope's horns...painted purple.

**Republic** (☎ 841 613; Anton Neumayr Platz 2) A hip, American bar/brasserie, it is liable to have MTV DJs in for its regular club nights.

## GETTING THERE & AWAY Air

The **airport** (SZG; ☎ 85 80-100; www.salzburg-airport.at) handles regular scheduled flights to Amsterdam, Brussels, Frankfurt, London, Paris and Zürich, and charter flights to the Mediterranean. Contact **Austrian Airlines** (☎ 854 511-0) or no-frills Ryanair, which has two flights daily (three on Saturday) from London.

## Bus

Services to the Salzkammergut region leave from just to the left of the main train-station exit. Destinations include Bad Ischl (€7.60, 1½ hours), Mondsee (€5, 50 minutes) and St Wolfgang (€7, 1½ hours).

Buses to Kitzbühel (€13, 2½ hours, at least three daily) go via Lofer; they 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. Alternatively, call ☎ 46 60-333 for information.

## HANG(AR)TIME AT THE 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; admission free). 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 Red Bull Team Formula One racing cars, motorcycles and other cool historical aircraft. There's also a café where you can recharge your engine with a snack and, of course, a can of the silver and blue elixir that 'Gives you Wiiiings'. 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. He is now one of the most successful businessmen in Austria.

## Car & Motorcycle

Three autobahns converge on Salzburg and form a loop around the city: the A1 from Linz, Vienna and the east – the A8/E52 from Munich and the west; and the A10/E55 from Villach and the south. Heading south to Carinthia on the A10, there are two tunnels through the mountains; the combined toll is €10 (€7 for motorcycles).

## Train

Fast trains leave for Vienna (€37, 3¼ hours) via Linz hourly. The express service to Klagenfurt (€28, three hours) goes via Villach. The quickest way to Innsbruck (€30, two hours) is by the ‘corridor’ train through Germany via Kufstein; trains depart at least every two hours. There are trains every hour or so to Munich (€26, two hours), and hourly trains to Salzburg (€7.40) via St Gilgen.

## GETTING AROUND

Salzburg airport is 4km west of the city centre. Bus 2 goes there from the main train station (€1.70). A taxi costs about €12.50.

Bus drivers sell single bus tickets for €1.70. Other tickets must be bought from the automatic machines at major stops, *Tabak* shops or tourist offices. Day passes cost €3.20 and weeklies €10. Children aged six to 15 years travel half-price; those under six travel free.

Most of the Old Town is pedestrianised. The nearest central parking area is the Altstadt Garage under the Mönchsberg. Attended car parks cost €1.40 to €2.40 per hour. On streets with automatic ticket machines (blue zones), a three-hour maximum applies (€0.50 for 30 minutes) during specified times – usually shopping hours.

Bicycle hire is available from **Top Bike** (☎ 0676-476 72 59; www.topbike.at; 2hr/4hr/day €6/10/15), which has two locations: just outside the train station and on the bridge.

For a taxi, call ☎ 81 11, or go to the ranks at Hanuschplatz, Residenzplatz or the train station.

## AROUND SALZBURG

Four kilometres south of Salzburg’s Old Town centre is the popular **Schloss Hellbrunn** (☎ 820 372-0; www.hellbrunn.at; Fürstenweg 37; adult/student €7.50/5.50; ☎ 9am-10pm Jul & Aug, 9am-5.30pm May, Jun & Sep, 9am-4.30pm Apr & Oct). Built by bishop Markus Sittikus, this 17th-century castle is known for its ingenious trick fountains and

water-powered figures. When the tour guides set them off, expect to get wet! Admission includes a tour of the **baroque palace**. Other parts of the garden (without fountains) are open year-round and free to visit.

City bus 55 runs to the palace every 30 minutes from Salzburg’s main train station, via Rudolfskai in the Old Town. Salzburg tickets are valid.

## Werfen

☎ 06468 / pop 3000

The world’s largest accessible ice caves are in the mountains near Salzburg. These **Eisriesenwelt Höhle** (Giant Ice Caves; ☎ 56 46; www.eisriesenwelt.at; adult/student with cable car up €17/15, without cable car €8/7; ☎ 1 May-26 Oct) house elaborate and beautiful ice formations; take warm clothes because it gets cold inside and the tour lasts 1¼ hours – you also need to be reasonably fit.

The **Hohenwerfen Fortress** (adult/student €9/7.50; ☎ Apr-Nov) stands on the hill above the village. It was originally built in 1077, although the present building dates from the 16th century. Admission includes an exhibition, a guided tour of the interior and a dramatic falconry show, in which birds of prey swoop low over the heads of the crowd. The walk up from the village takes 20 minutes.

Both attractions can be visited in one day if you start early (tour the caves first and be at the castle by 3pm for the falconry show). The **tourist office** (☎ 53 88; www.werfen.at; Markt 24; ☎ 9am-7pm Mon-Fri, 5-7pm Sat mid-Jul–mid-Aug, 9am-5pm Mon-Fri mid-Aug–mid-Jul) is in the village’s main street.

Werfen can be reached from Salzburg along the A10. By train it takes 50 minutes and costs €8. The village is a five-minute walk from Werfen train station. Getting to the caves is a bit more complicated, though scenic. A minibus service (€6.50 return) from the train station operates along the steep, 6km road to the car park, which is as far as cars can go. A 15-minute walk then brings you to the cable car (admission €9 return), from where it is a further 15-minute walk to the caves. Allow four hours return from the train station, or three hours from the car park (keep in mind that peak-season queues may add an hour). The whole route can be hiked, but it is a very hard four-hour ascent, rising 1100m above the village.

# SALZKAMMERGUT

A picture-perfect wonderland of glassy blue lakes and tall craggy peaks, Austria’s Lake District is a longtime favourite holiday destination attracting visitors in droves from Salzburg and beyond – including Habsburg emperors and their hangers-on. The waters in this salt-mining region (mining has taken place in the area since Celtic times) are rich in minerals, and believed to have medicinal value. In fact, Emperor Franz Josef once declared the region to be ‘an earthly paradise’ and spent a large part of every summer at Bad Ischl, whose healing waters were credited with his conception.

Whether you’re looking for a way to entertain the kids or hoping to just commune with nature, the area is big on variety. The peaceful lakes offer limitless opportunities for boating, fishing, swimming, or just sitting on the shore and chucking stones into the water. Favourite waterside beauty spots include the picturesque villages of Hallstatt and St Wolfgang, and the Riviera-style port of Gmunden. You can also tour the salt mines that made the region wealthy or plunge into the depths of the fantastic Dachstein caves, where glittering towers of ice are masterfully illuminated in the depths of a mountain.

## Getting There & Around

The major rail routes bypass the heart of Salzkammergut, but regional trains cross the area north to south. You get on this route from Attnang-Puchheim on the Salzburg–Linz line. The track from here connects to Bad Ischl, Hallstatt and Obertraun in one direction, as well as to Gmunden in another. When you’re travelling from a small, unstaffed station (*unbesetzter Bahnhof*), you buy your ticket on the train; no surcharge applies.

After Obertraun, the railway continues eastwards via Bad Aussee before connecting with the main Bischofshofen–Graz line at Stainach-Irdning.

Attersee can also be reached via Vöcklamarkt, the next stop on the Salzburg–Linz line before Attnang-Puchheim.

Regular buses connect the region’s towns and villages, though less frequently on weekends. Timetables are displayed at stops, and tickets can be bought from the driver.

Passenger boats ply the waters of the Attersee, Traunsee, Mondsee, Hallstätter See and Wolfgangsee.

To reach Salzkammergut from Salzburg by car or motorcycle, take the A1 or Hwy 158.

## BAD ISCHL

☎ 06132 / pop 13,000

A longtime favourite of the imperial family, Bad Ischl also has the dubious distinction of being the birthplace of WWI, or at least the concept of it (Emperor Franz Josef was enjoying his annual holiday here in 1914 when troubles with Serbia arose). It’s hard to picture the Bad Ischl of today as the conception point for such brutality, given it’s a spa resort devoted to rather more holistic pursuits.

Many of Bad Ischl’s dignified buildings still wear an imperial aura. It’s a handsome-looking place and makes a good base for visiting the region’s five main lakes.

## Orientation

The town centre rests within a bend of the Traun River. To head into town, turn left into the main road as you come out of the train station; you’ll pass the tourist office and post office.

## Information

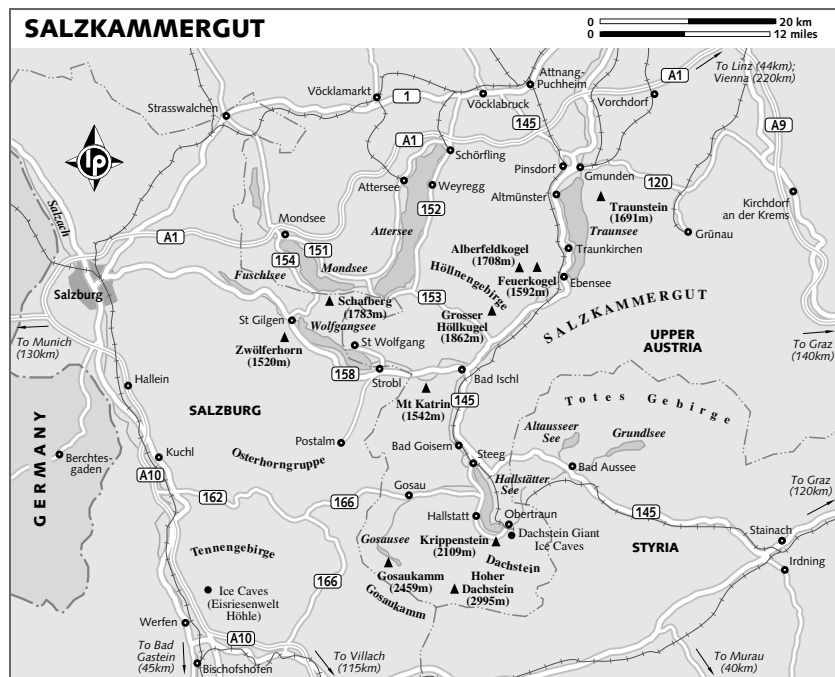
**Post Office** (Aüböckplatz 4; ☎ 8am-6pm Mon-Fri, 9am-noon Sat)

**Salzkammergut Touristik** (☎ 24 000-0; www.salzkammergut.co.at; Götzstrasse 12; ☎ 9am-8pm) Has Internet access.

**Tourist Office** (Kurdirektion; ☎ 27 757-0; www.badischl.at, in German; Bahnhofstrasse 6; ☎ 8am-6pm Mon-Fri, 9am-3pm Sat, 10am-1pm Sun Jul-Sep, 8am-5pm Mon-Fri, 8am-noon Sat Oct-Jun)

## Sights & Activities

The **Kaiservilla** (☎ 23 241; www.kaiservilla.at; Kaiserpark; ☎ May–mid-Oct) was Franz Josef’s summer residence and shows he loved huntin’, shootin’ and fishin’ – it’s decorated with an obscene number of animal trophies. It can be visited only by guided tour (€12; in German but with written English translations), during which you’ll pick up little gems, like the fact that Franz Josef was conceived in Bad Ischl after his mother, Princess Sophie, took a treatment to cure her infertility in 1828. There are several 40-minute tours daily (main season) and only three on Wednesday (noon, 2pm and 3pm) from January to April.



The teahouse of Franz Josef's wife, Elisabeth, is now a **photo museum** (admission €3). Admission to the grounds alone costs €4.20/3.50 per adult/child.

Free *Kurkonzerte* (spa concerts) are held regularly during summer; the tourist office has venues and times. An **operetta festival** takes place in July and August; for details and advance reservations call ☎ 23 839.

Bad Ischl has downhill skiing from **Mt Katrin** (winter day pass €21); however, there are only three trails. It also has various cross-country skiing routes. In summer the Mt Katrin cable car costs €12.50 return.

The tourist office has information on **health treatments** in Bad Ischl.

### Sleeping & Eating

**Jugendgästehaus** (☎ 26 577; [www.oehjv.or.at](http://www.oehjv.or.at); Am Rechensteg 5; dm €13, s/d €27/38; ☎ reception 8am-1pm & 5-7pm) Rooms are standard hostel fare, but comfortable enough for a night or two. The exterior is rather nondescript. Look for it in the town centre behind Kreuzplatz.

**Haus Rothauer** (☎ 23 628; Kaltenbachstrasse 12; s/d €25/55) You'll feel as if you're staying with

longtime family friends when spending a few days at this immaculately clean, super-friendly guesthouse. Do phone ahead, however, to make sure there's space and someone is around to let you in.

**Hotel Garni Sonnhof** (☎ 23 078; [www.sonnhof.at](http://www.sonnhof.at); Bahnhofstrasse 4; s/d €45/90; (P)) Nestled into a leafy glade of maple trees next to the train station, this is an excellent option – it has cosy, traditional décor, a lovely garden (complete with a pond), a sunny conservatory, and large bedrooms with interesting old furniture and wooden floors. There's a billiard room, sauna and a steam bath on-site.

**Café Zauner** (☎ 23 013; Pfarrgasse 7; snacks from €5) This café has changed little since imperial times, retaining its glittering chandeliers, marble floors and fantastical displays of confectionery. Founded in 1832, it was Franz Josef's bakery of choice – his mistress ordered their morning pastries here when he was in residence. Its summer pavilion on the Esplanade by the river is equally atmospheric.

**Blue Enzian** (☎ 28 992; Wirerstrasse 2; mains €7-14; ☎ Mon-Sat) The laid-back Enzian does a variety of pastas, salads, and regional and

seasonal dishes with solid results. It's an informal place set back from the main street. When you've finished eating, check out the popular Hofbeisl (open 9am to 4pm), almost next door. It's an atmospheric spot with baroque décor.

**Weinhaus Attwenger** (☎ 23 327; Lehkarkai 12; mains €7-20) High-quality Austrian food is served at this quaint chalet with a relaxing garden next to the river. The menu changes seasonally, with wines to match. Ask about set-course meals.

### Getting There & Around

Trains from Salzburg (€17, two hours) arrive via Attnang-Puchheim. Trains on to Hallstatt depart roughly hourly between 6am and 6pm (€4, 50 minutes); however, be aware that you need to catch a ferry from this train station to the actual village (see p92).

Buses arrive and depart from in front of the train station. They run hourly to Salzburg (€7.40, 1½ hours) via St Gilgen between 5am and 8pm. To St Wolfgang (€3.10), you generally need to change at Strobl (although you can buy one ticket straight through). Buses depart for Hallstatt every couple of hours (€3.60, 50 minutes), arriving in the village itself.

**Salzkammergut Touristik** (☎ 24 000-0; [www.salzkammergut.co.at](http://www.salzkammergut.co.at); Götzstrasse 12; ☎ 9am-8pm) has bikes for hire. Call ahead for reservations and rates as they change periodically.

### HALLSTATT

☎ 06134 / pop 1150

With pastel-hued homes, swans and towering mountains on either side of a glassy green lake, breathtakingly beautiful Hallstatt looks like some kind of greeting card for tranquility. Boats chug lazily across the water from the train station to the village itself, which clings precariously to a tiny bit of land between mountain and shore. So small is the patch of land occupied by the village that its annual Corpus Christi procession takes place largely in small boats on the lake.

There's evidence of human settlement at Hallstatt as long as 4500 years ago, and the village has been classified as a Unesco World Heritage site. Mining salt in the peak above the village was the main activity for thousands of years. Today tourism is the major money-spinner. Fortunately, the crowds of summer day-trippers only stay a few hours, then calm returns.

### TIP!

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

### Orientation & Information

Seestrasse is the main street. Turn left from the ferry to reach the **tourist office** (☎ 82 08; [hallstatt@inneres-salzkammergut.at](mailto: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** (Seestrasse 160) is around a bend in the road.

### Sights & Activities

Hallstatt is rich with archaeological interest. Near the mine, 2000 graves were discovered, dating from 1000 to 500 BC. 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 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.

Around the lake at Obertraun are the intriguing **Dachstein Rieseneishöhle** (Giant Ice Caves; ☎ 8400 1830; [www.dachstein.at](http://www.dachstein.at); tours adult/child €9/5; ☎ early May-late Oct, tours 9.20am-4pm).

The caves are millions of years old and extend into the mountain for nearly 80km in places. The ice itself is no more than 500 years old, but is increasing in thickness each year – the 'ice mountain' is 8m high, twice as high now as it was when the caves were first explored in 1910. Ask at the ticket office about tours in English – if none are available you can take a sheet of printed information around the caves with you.

Above the village are the **Salzbergwerk** (Saltworks; ☎ 84 00; admission €20; ☎ 9am-4pm late Apr-26 Oct, 9am-3.30pm from mid-Oct). Riding the funicular up adds €5 to the salt mine ticket, or costs €7.50 return if you just want to get up the mountain. Ask the tourist office about the two scenic hiking trails you could take to get there.

## Sleeping

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; per adult €8; 📅 15 Apr-15 Oct) This camping ground is conveniently located south of the town centre.

**Gasthaus zur Muhle** (☎ 83 18; [www.toeroe.at/magnet.at](http://www.toeroe.at/magnet.at); Kirchenweg 36; dm €13) On the Hallstatt hillside and overlooking the lake, this place is popular with independent travellers. Dorms are rather basic, however.

**Jugendherberge** (☎ 82 12; Salzbergstrasse 50; dm €15; 📅 May-Oct, check-in 5-6pm) Some dorms in this hostel have lots of beds and can be cramped. Phone ahead as reception hours are irregular. It is usually full with groups in July and August.

**Gasthof Hallberg** (☎ 82 86; [www.pension-hallberg.at](http://www.pension-hallberg.at); Seestrasse 113; s/d from €45/60; 📍) An excellent-value guesthouse, the best rooms are light and airy, furnished with pale wood and boasting superb lake views on both sides. Even the more ordinary rooms are still great quality, with many featuring quaintly sloping ceilings and mountain views.

## Eating

Hallstatt's steep footpaths certainly help you work up an appetite. The following eateries are open for lunch and dinner.

**Pferdestall** (☎ 20 00; Seestrasse 156; mains €7.50-20) A one-time stable, tables are 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.

**Bräu Gasthof** (☎ 20 012; Seestrasse 120; mains €8-20; 📅 May-Nov) Served in vaulted rooms or on tables by the lake, the menu promises hearty local fare and turns out dishes like sirloin steak with onions (€13) or game goulash (€12), as well as a few salads.

## Getting There & Away

There are six buses daily to/from Bad Ischl. You alight at 'Lahn', just south of the road tunnel. Beware, as services finish very early and the last guaranteed departure from Bad Ischl is 4.10pm. There are at least nine train services daily from Bad Ischl (€4, 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 (€2). Though trains run later, the last ferry departs from the train station at 6.30pm (leaving Hallstatt just after 6pm). Parking in the village is free if you're staying the night and therefore have a guest card.

## WOLFGANGSEE

You can swim or go boating on this lake, climb the mountain above it, or just sit on the shore, gazing at the scenery. The only downside is that its proximity to Salzburg means it can become crowded in summer.

The Schafberg peak on the northern shore dominates the lake. Next to it is the resort of St Wolfgang. St Gilgen, on the western shore, provides easy access to Salzburg, 29km away. The **St Wolfgang tourist office** (☎ 06138-22 39-0; [info@stwolfgang.at](mailto:info@stwolfgang.at); 📅 8am-8pm Mon-Sat, noon-6pm Sun Jul & Aug, 9am-noon Mon-Sat & 2-5pm Mon, Tue, Thu & Fri Sep-Jun) has regional tourist information.

Some people like to climb mountains because they're there; others prefer the less-strenuous train ride to the top. The former will love the four-hour hike to the peak of the **Schafberg** (1783m). The rest need to get there between early May and the end of October, when the Schafberg cog-wheel railway operates. It runs approximately hourly during the day and costs €13 to the top or €22 return. There is also a stop halfway up.

The village of St Wolfgang's 14th-century **Pilgrimage Church** (📅 9am-6pm) still attracts pilgrims interested in viewing this highly ornate church.

On the lakefront, **Camping Appesbach** (☎ 06138-22 06; Au 99; adult/tent & car €5/6; 📅 Easter-Oct), 1km from St Wolfgang heading south towards Strobl, is a favourite with Austrians on holiday.

The **Jugendgästehaus Schafbergblick** (☎ 236 575; [www.oehjv.or.at](http://www.oehjv.or.at); Mondseestrasse 7; dm/d from €13/16; 📅 reception 8am-1pm & 5-7pm Mon-Fri, 8-9am & 5-7pm Sat & Sun) is in nearby St Gilgen. It's an up-market hostel with a great position near the town's swimming beach. Some of the rooms have lake views. There's no lock-out.

Both St Wolfgang and St Gilgen have numerous *pensions*, starting from about €20. Ask at the local tourist office for details and bookings.

A ferry operates from Strobl to St Gilgen, stopping at various points en route, including St Wolfgang. Services are from late April

to 26 October, but are more frequent from early July to early September. The ferry journey from St Wolfgang to St Gilgen takes 45 to 50 minutes (€4.50), with boats sailing during the high season approximately twice hourly between 8am and 8pm.

Buses from St Wolfgang to St Gilgen and Salzburg go via Strobl on the east side of the lake. From St Gilgen the bus to Salzburg (€4.80, 50 minutes) departs hourly until at least 8.30pm.

## NORTHERN SALZKAMMERGUT

West of Attersee is **Mondsee**, a lake whose warm water makes it a favourite swimming spot. Mondsee village has an attractive church that was used in the wedding scenes of *The Sound of Music*.

East of Attersee is another lake, **Traunsee**, and its three main resorts: Gmunden, Traunkirchen and Ebensee. **Gmunden** is famous for its twin castles, linked by a causeway on the lake, and its ceramic manufacturing.

## TIROL

With converging mountain ranges behind lofty pastures and tranquil meadows, Tirol (also Tyrol) captures a quintessential Alpine panoramic view. 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 the country's highest peak, the Grossglockner (3797m). Back further west, in the middle of the main state, Innsbruck is the region's jewel.

## INNSBRUCK

☎ 0512 / pop 140,000

Sandwiched between majestic snow-capped mountains dominating your periphery, it's hard to resist the urge to get up high when in Innsbruck. Whether you're visiting the reopened winter Olympics stadium and the Bergisel ski-jump tower or partaking in an all-day hiking adventure, the region around this gorgeous Alpine town embodies just about everything a good skiing mecca should. In fact, on the Stubai Glacier (Austria's largest), 40km to the south, you can ski or snowboard at any time of the year.

## Orientation

Innsbruck, in the valley of the River Inn, is scenically squeezed between the northern chain of the Alps and the Tuxer mountains to the south. The city centre is compact, with the main train station (Hauptbahnhof) only a 10-minute walk from the pedestrian-only Old Town centre (Altstadt). The main street in the Old Town is Herzog Friedrich Strasse.

## Information

**Bubble Point Waschsalon** (☎ 565 007; [www.bubblepoint.com](http://www.bubblepoint.com); Brixner Strasse 1; per 30 min €1.50) Internet café and laundrette combined.

**Internetcafé Moderne** (☎ 584 848; Maria Theresienstrasse 16; per min €2) Offers Internet access.

**Landeskrankenhaus** (University Clinic; ☎ 504-0; Anichstrasse 35) For medical treatment.

**Main Post Office** (Maximilianstrasse 2; 📅 7am-9pm Mon-Fri, 7am-3pm Sat, 8am-7.30pm Sun) There is another branch in the main train station.

**Main Tourist Office** (☎ general information 59 850, tickets & packages 53 56, hotel reservations 562 000-0; [www.innsbruck.info](http://www.innsbruck.info); Burggraben 3; 📅 9am-6pm) There is a €3 booking fee for hotel reservations. Check out the tourist office's free newspaper *Innsbruck Hallo!* for a map and lots of useful information.

**Tourist Counter** (main train station, lower concourse; 📅 7am-7pm)

## Sights OLD TOWN

Innsbruck's atmospheric, medieval Old Town is ideal for a lazy stroll. The famous **Goldenes Dachl** (Golden Roof; Friedrich Herzog Strasse), built by Emperor Maximilian I in the 16th century as a display of wealth, is a good starting point. Comprised from 2657 gilded copper tiles, Maximilian used it to observe street performers from the balcony beneath.

The **Hofkirche** (Imperial Church; ☎ 584 302; Universitätsstrasse 2; adult/student under 27yr €2.20/1.45, admission free Sun & holidays; 📅 9am-5pm Mon-Sat, before 8am, noon-3pm & after 5pm Sun) is another favourite (and worthwhile) attraction. It contains a memorial to Maximilian, and although his 'sarcophagus' has been restored, it's actually empty. Perhaps more memorable are the 28 giant statues of Habsburgs lining either side of the cask. You're now forbidden to touch the statues, but numerous inquisitive hands have already polished parts of the dull bronze, including Kaiser Rudolf's codpiece!

## BERGISEL TOWER

If you've ever wondered what it feels like to stand on top of an Olympic-sized ski jump, you'll leave the **Bergisel tower** (☎ 589 259; adult/child €7.90/3.90; ☎ 9am-6pm Jun-Nov, 9am-5pm Dec-May) with a better idea. And if you've never been curious about such death-defying feats, you'll still be rewarded with truly fantastic views; the tower sits 3km south of the city centre on the crest of the refurbished Winter Olympics ski-jump stadium, overlooking Innsbruck. (Some wag has built a cemetery over the lip of the hill, directly in line with the end of the ski jump.)

The tower evinces the curving design typical of its designer – Iraqi-born, British-based celebrity architect Zaha Hadid. For the full experience, stop for coffee in the Café im Turm (meals €8.50 to €16.60), whose panorama windows give a whole new meaning to the term 'caffeine high'.

To get here, take tram/bus 1 (direction Bergisel) or tram 6 (direction Igls) from Museumstrasse. At the stop, follow the signs to Bergisel, up a fairly steep path for 15 minutes. The stadium is still used for ski-jumping in June and January, so ring ahead to check that it's OK to visit.

## SWAROVSKI KRISTALLWELTEN

To get to the heart of Swarovski you must visit the mind-blowing **Crystal Worlds** (☎ 05224-51 080; 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 Wattens and best reached by bus (€8.50 return, 30 minutes).

## ALPENZOO

The **Alpine Zoo** (☎ 292 323; www.alpenzoo.at, in German; Weiherburggasse 37; adult/student/child €7/5/3.50; ☎ 9am-6pm) houses a comprehensive collection of alpine animals, including ibexes, bears, an eagle and a bearded vulture. Walk up the hill to get there or take the Hungerburgbahn, which is free if you buy your zoo ticket at the Hungerburgbahn station.

## OTHER SIGHTS

The **Landesmuseum Ferdinandeum** (☎ 59 489; Museumstrasse 15) has a massive collection of Gothic statues and altarpieces. The **Alpenverein Museum** (Alpine Club Museum; ☎ 59 547-19; Wilhelm Greil Strasse 15; adult/child €2.20/1.10; ☎ 10am-5pm Mon, Tue, Thu & Fri, noon-7pm Wed, 10am-1pm Sat May-Oct) has a collection of Alpine art and relief maps.

A new 'hop on, hop off' **Sightseer bus** (adult/concession day ticket €8/5.60; ☎ services every half-hour btwn 9am-5.30pm May-Oct, 10am-5pm Nov-Apr) does make getting to some of the more remote sights a little easier. Pick up a brochure at the tourist office.

## Activities

### HIKING

Those staying in Innsbruck are entitled to the Club Innsbruck card, available at your hostel or hotel, which includes free guided mountain hikes. This is a fantastic deal, offering remarkable views for nothing more than the cost of your own food and water. The hiking programme runs from June to September, with most of the 40-odd diverse hikes leaving at 9am from the **Congress Centre** (Rennweg 3). The popular sunrise hikes leave at 4.45am Friday and you'll need to book by 4.30pm the previous day. Night-time lantern walks depart at 7.45pm Tuesday.

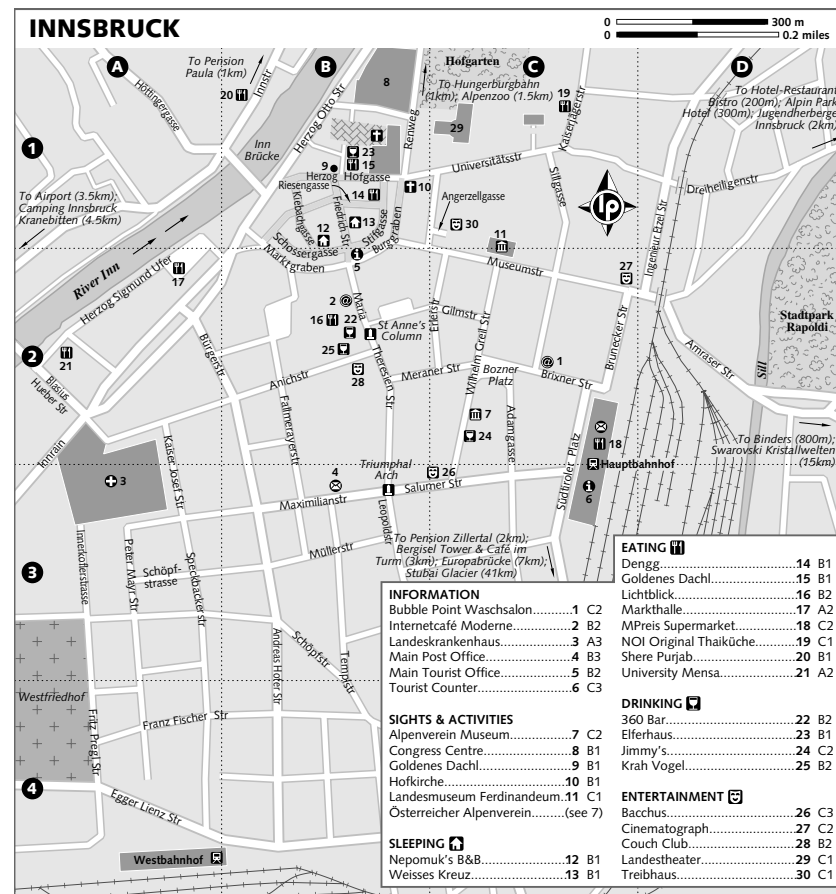
### SKIING

The ski region around Innsbruck is constantly improving with new runs added each year. A one-day ski pass is around €26. Downhill equipment hire starts at €15.

You can ski or snowboard year-round at **Stubai Glacier**. A one-day pass costs €36 (€25 in summer). Catch the white IVB Stubbaltbahn bus, departing hourly from near the main train station. The journey takes 80 minutes and the last bus back is at 5.30pm. Several places offer complete packages to the glacier, which compare favourably with going it alone. The **tourist office** (☎ 53 56) has a package for €49, including transport, passes and equipment hire. This works out to be a good deal in summer. In winter, however, there's a free ski bus leaving from various hotels, so compare going it alone with taking a tourist office package first.

### 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 complementary Club Innsbruck card. It provides various discounts and benefits.

**Camping Innsbruck Kranebitten** (☎ 284 180; www.campinginnsbruck.com; Kranebitter Allee 214; adult/tent/car €5/3/5) In an idyllic location 5km from the Old Town centre, under the mountains, this camping ground is open year-round. It has a restaurant and bike hire, and offers a shuttle service into the city.

**Jugendherberge Innsbruck** (☎ 346 179; www.jugendherberge-innsbruck.at; Reichenauerstrasse 147; dm from €15.60, d with shared bathroom €46; ☎ closed 10am-3pm summer, 10am-5pm rest of year, curfew 11pm; ☎) Seen from afar, this hostel resembles a building from the former USSR – a huge, concrete monstrosity. Up close the picture

is a bit prettier – its dorms are actually 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; Kiebagasse 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 (only 10), and the breakfast in the wonderful attached patisserie downstairs will get your day going.

**Pension Paula** (☎ 292 262; www.pensionpaula.at; Weiherburggasse 15; s/d €36/58, with shared bathroom €29/49; ☎) This hilltop 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, although bathrooms are better than average.

**Binders** (☎ 33 436-0; [www.binders.at](http://www.binders.at); Dr Glatz Strasse 20; s/d €45/70, with shared bathroom €40/54; (P)) 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 the city, this is excellent value for money.

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

**Pension Zillertal** (☎ 582 129; [www.pensionzillertal.com](http://www.pensionzillertal.com); Fritz Konzert Strasse 7; s/d/tr from €54/85/128; (P) (X)) A family-run B&B in a converted apartment building, south of the city and close to the Bergisel tower. The recently renovated rooms are spotless, and have TVs and phones.

**Weisses Kreuz** (☎ 59 479; [www.weisseskreuz.at](http://www.weisseskreuz.at); Herzog Friedrich Strasse 31; s/d from €62/96, with shared bathroom from €35/66; (P) (X)) It's had the honour of hosting Mozart, and this creaky, atmospheric hotel remains comfortable to this day. Parking costs €10.

**Alpin Park Hotel** (☎ 346 172; [alpinpark@innsbruck-hotels.at](mailto:alpinpark@innsbruck-hotels.at); Pradler Strasse 28; s/d €82/120; (P)) New and modern, this place has all the slick amenities you'd expect from a classy hotel – minus the super-high prices. Rooms are small but clean, with fluffy white duvets. Ski packages can be arranged. Parking costs €8.

## Eating

**University Mensa** (Herzog Siegmund Ufer 15; mains €4-5; ☎ 11am-2pm Mon-Thu, 11am-1.30pm Fri) Enjoy great views of the Alps while lunching here. The food is cheap, but just OK.

**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.

**Shere Purjab** (☎ 282 755; Innstrasse 19; mains €6-10) Innstrasse is lined with cheap eats, including this cut-price Indian restaurant, which has a daily menu and, naturally, lots of veggie food.

**Lichtblick** (☎ 566 550; 7th fl, Maria Theresien Strasse 18; daytime snacks €6.50-9, evening menu €30-40; ☎ Mon-Sat) This is the city's hot ticket, and little wonder, given both the views and the delicious modern international food. The Alps rise up along one side of this small, glassed-in restaurant, while in the other direction you can see the Bergisel tower. It's a romantic setting at night. After dinner grab a drink across the foyer in the 360 Bar (below).

**Goldenes Dachl** (☎ 589 370; Hofgasse 1; mains €10-15) The menu features Tyrolean specialities, such as *Bauerngröstl*, a pork, bacon, potato and egg concoction served with salad (€9.90), along with *Wiener schnitzel* and various types of *Braten* (roasts).

**Dengg** (☎ 582 347; Riesengasse 11-13; mains €13-18) An upmarket eatery, it serves everything from Thai coconut curry soup to international fish and meat dishes.

There is an **MPReis Supermarket** (☎ 6am-9pm) in the main train station and a large indoor food market by the river in **Markthalle** (Herzog Siegmund Ufer; ☎ 8am-4pm Mon-Fri, Sat morning).

## Drinking

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

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

**Krah Vogel** (☎ 5801 4971; Anichstrasse 12) Red-walled, festive, Krah Vogel is a favourite student haunt. Stop in for a beer after 10pm when it gets busy.

**360 Bar** (☎ 566 550; 7th fl, Maria Theresien Strasse 18; ☎ Mon-Sat) Like the name says, it's all about the views. This hip wine bar across from Lichtblick has perhaps the best views of the city. Relax in the plush surroundings and lounge in style swathed in ultramodern comfort with excellent service.

## Entertainment

The tourist office sells tickets for 'Tyrolean evenings' (€32 for alpine music, folk dancing, yodelling and one drink), classical concerts and performances in the **Landestheater** (Rennweg 2). For more entertainment options, pick up a copy of *Innsider*, found in cafés across town.

**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).

**Cinematograph** (☎ 578 500; Museumstrasse 31) Screens independent films in their original language.

**Couch Club** (Anichstrasse 7; ☎ Thu-Sat) Come to the hip Couch Club for clubbing.

**Treibhaus** (☎ 586 874; Angerzellgasse 8) The arty, community-minded Treibhaus 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 'five o'clock tea'.

## Getting There & Away

Austrian Airlines has three flights a week from London Gatwick to **Innsbruck airport** (INN; ☎ 22 525). Tyrolean Airways flies daily to Amsterdam, Frankfurt, Paris, Vienna and Zürich.

The A12 and the parallel Hwy 171 are the main roads to the east and west respectively. Hwy 177 heads north to Germany and Munich. The A13 motorway is a toll road (€8) southwards through the Brenner Pass to Italy; it includes the impressive Europabrücke (Europe Bridge), several kilometres south of the city. Toll-free Hwy 182 follows the same route, passing under the bridge.

Fast trains depart seven times daily for Bregenz (€25.10, 2¾ hours) and every two hours to Salzburg (€29.50, two hours). Connections are hourly to Kitzbühel (€12.20, 1¼ hours). On many trains to Lienz, people travelling on Austrian rail passes must pay a surcharge for travelling through Italy. Ask before boarding or call ☎ 05-17 17, available 24 hours.

## Getting Around

The airport is 4km west of the city centre. To get there, take bus F, which departs from opposite the main train station half-hourly (hourly on Saturday afternoon and Sunday) and passes through Maria Theresien Strasse. A taxi from the main train station to the airport costs around €10.

Single bus tickets, including to the airport, cost €1.80. A 24-hour pass is €3.50.

Street parking is very limited in the city centre. Parking garages (eg under the Old Town) cost €10 and upwards per day.

## MAYRHOFEN

☎ 05285 / pop 4000

Run barefoot in meadows and inhale the purified, brisk mountain air surrounded by the beautiful Zillertal (Ziller) Valley, where unspoilt landscapes and the power of the piste dominate your periphery. Old farmhouses alongside elegant hotels make for a quaint contrast in this mountain chalet village. Have a glass of schnapps when you arrive – it has been a symbol of hospitality welcoming visitors to the Ziller for centuries. There's also a little test in this: how you drink it may foretell your experience in Mayrhofen. Gulp it and your holiday may be action packed and exhilarating, or sip it and enjoy a more relaxed and serene alpine paradise.

The **Europa House tourist office** (☎ 67 60; [www.mayrhofen.at](http://www.mayrhofen.at); Europahaus; ☎ 8am-6pm Mon-Fri, 9am-noon & 2-6pm Sat, 10am-noon Sun) has loads of comprehensive information, basically from A-Z for both summer and winter. It's free and written in English. There are good walks originating from the village; ask at the tourist office for maps or about guided trips. Mayrhofen is home to the steepest piste in Austria, known as the HariKari. There is year-round **skiing** on the Hintertux Glacier. A pass costs €33/29 per day in winter/summer; inquire at the tourist office.

To work your taste buds instead of your legs, visit **Erlebnis Sennerei** (☎ 62 713; [www.cennerei-zillertal.at](http://www.cennerei-zillertal.at); Hollenzen 116; adult/child €11/free; ☎ 10am-3pm), a grass-roots dairy. See how local cheeses are made on the production facility tour and then enjoy the chance to taste them.

For sleeping, try the **Hotel Neue Post** (☎ 62 131; [www.neue-post.at](http://www.neue-post.at); Hauptstrasse 400; s/d from €51/86; (P) (X) (S)). It's a lavish affair that's surprisingly well priced – although rates vary with the season and are higher in winter. It has a fabulous indoor swimming pool, and a great spa, sauna and solarium.

Our favourite local eating and drinking spot is **Mo's** (☎ 63 435; Hauptstrasse 417; mains €6-20), on the town's main street. The food is quite good, although the mix of cuisines is a bit strange – it encompasses the Mediterranean, Caribbean and American South. It also showcases live music.

To reach Mayrhofen catch a train to Jenbach from Innsbruck (€10, 1½ hours, hourly). From Jenbach (€5, 45 minutes) there are multiple trains daily to Mayrhofen, which is the last stop on the rail line.



## 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 and the excellence of its slopes.

### Orientation & Information

From the main train station to the town centre is 1km. You emerge from the train station onto Bahnhofstrasse and walk straight ahead and then turn left into Josef Pirchl Strasse; take the right fork (no entry for cars), which is still Josef Pirchl Strasse, and continue past the post office. Following this road will eventually take you to the **tourist office** (☎ 62 155-0; www.kitzbuehel.com; Hinterstadt 18; ☎ 8.30am-6pm Mon-Fri, 9am-6pm Sat).

### Activities

#### SKIING

In winter there is good intermediate skiing on Kitzbüheler Horn to the north and Hahnenkamm to the south of town. A one-day ski pass costs around €35, though some *pensions*/hotels offer 'Ski Hit' reductions before mid-December or after mid-March.

#### HIKING

Dozens of summer hiking trails surround the town; the tourist office gives free maps and free guided hikes. Get a head start to the heights with a one- or three-day cable-car pass for €15/35.

There is an alpine flower garden (free) on the slopes of the Kitzbüheler Horn (a toll road for drivers). The scenic Schwarzsee is a fine location for summer swimming.

### Sleeping

Prices quoted for *pensions* and hotels are for the winter high season.

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

**Pension Schmidinger** (☎ 63 134; Ehrenbachgasse 3; s/d from €35/70) The spotless rooms here are decorated in a pleasant country style and have new bathrooms.

**Pension Mühlbergerhof** (☎ 62 835; fax 64 488; Schwarzseestrasse 6; s/d from €35/70) The colour scheme in the public areas of this *pension* is somewhat darker than Schmidinger, but the rooms are light and airy. The owners serve breakfast featuring fresh produce from their farm.

### Eating

**Asia Markt** (Josef Pirchl Strasse 16; meals €4.50-6.50; ☎ Mon-Sat) This grocery store serves light weekday lunches and early evening meals.

**La Fonda** (☎ 73 673; Hinterstadt 13; mains €5-12; ☎ dinner) The kitschy Tex-Mex décor makes this place a popular choice, plus the kitchen is open until midnight for those wanting to dine late.

**Huberbräu Stüberl** (☎ 65 677; Vorderstadt 18; mains €6.50-12.50) This is a Kitzbühel 'must', although so many diners come for the Austrian food and beer that the service is sometimes rather off-hand.

**Zinnkrug** (☎ 62 613; Bichlstrasse 9; mains €6-17.50) A typically Austrian inn, Zinnkrug is known for its pork spare ribs and fondue (€15.60).

For self-caterers, there's a **Spar supermarket** (☎ Mon-Sat) on Bichlstrasse (corner of Ehrenbachgasse).

### Getting There & Away

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 town 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.

Heading south to Lienz, you pass through some marvellous scenery. Hwy 108 (the Felber Tauern Tunnel) and Hwy 107 (the Grossglockner mountain road; closed in winter) both have toll sections.

### LIENZ

☎ 04852 / pop 13,000

The piste-filled outline of the Dolomite mountain range engulfing the southern skyline beckons visitors to the capital of East

Tirol. Lienz serves mostly as a stopover for skiers and hikers passing through or on the way to the Hohe Tauern National Park, which is Europe's largest national park.

### Orientation & Information

The town centre is within the junction of the Isel and Drau Rivers. To reach Hauptplatz from the train station cross the road (or take the 'Zur Stadt' exit) and follow the street past the post office. The **tourist office** (☎ 65 265; www.lienz-tourismus.at; Europaplatz 1; ☎ 8am-6pm Mon-Fri, 9am-noon Sat, 9am-noon Sun summer & winter high season) will find rooms free of charge, or you can use the hotel board (free telephone) outside.

### Sights & Activities

There is downhill skiing on the nearby **Zettersfeld** and **Hochstein** peaks. A one-day ski pass covering both is €30. However, the area around Lienz is more renowned for its cross-country skiing; the town fills up for the annual **Dolomitenlauf** cross-country skiing race in mid-January.

In summer there's good hiking in the mountains. The cable cars are closed during the low season (April, May, October and November).

### Sleeping & Eating

There are ADEG supermarkets on Hauptplatz and Tiroler Platz.

**Comfort-Camping Falken** (☎ 64 022; Eichholz 7; camp site without/with electricity €8/10.50, adult €6; ☎ mid-Dec-Oct) Just south of town, this camping ground has good washing facilities, a restaurant and mountain views.

**Altstadthotel Eck** (☎ 64 785; altstadthotel.eck@utanet.at; Hauptplatz 20; s/d from €55/110) Atmospheric and spacious, it provides all the comfort you'd expect from one of the town's leading hotels.

**Pick Nick Ossi** (☎ 71 091; Europaplatz 2; snacks €3-7) Salads, pizza and other fast food are on offer here.

**Adlerstüberl** (☎ 62 550; Andrä Kranz Gasse 5; mains from €8) Daily specials are featured at this eatery, which does the usual assortment of Austrian dishes with varying results.

### Getting There & Away

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

You wouldn't guess from its small stature, but little Austria actually contains the largest national park in the Alps. Straddling Tirol, Salzburg and Carinthia, the Hohe Tauern National Park stretches over 1786 sq km. At the heart of this protected oasis of flora and fauna (including marmots and some rare ibexes) lies the **Grossglockner** (3797m), Austria's highest mountain. The Grossglockner towers over the 10km-long Pasterze Glacier, which is best seen from the outlook at **Franz Josef's Höhe**.

Although camping is not allowed in the park, there are mountain huts and hiking trails. Ask the tourist office in Lienz (left) for details. If you're on foot, the most direct public transport into the park from Lienz is by bus to Franz Josef's Höhe. This goes via Heiligenblut, where you'll find the **Hotel Senger** (☎ 22 15; www.romantic.at; Hof 23; s/d from €40/80; ☎ ☎ ☎). Located in a charming old farmhouse, it lends a real feel for being up in the mountains (think stone floors, open fireplaces, and plenty of nooks and crannies in which to relax). The whole place has the friendly, sociable atmosphere of a ski chalet.

Buses run from mid-June to late September, but infrequently and on a very complicated and confusing schedule, so ask the Lienz tourist office *and* your bus driver before boarding in front of the train station. The return fare from Lienz is €10.20, plus a park toll of €2.70.

The portion of the **Grossglockner Hochalpenstrasse** (Hwy 107; www.grossglockner.at, in German) running through the park is considered one of the most scenic in the world. It winds upwards 2000m past waterfalls, glaciers and Alpine meadows. The highway runs between Lienz and Zell am See, and if you catch a bus from Lienz to Franz Josef's Höhe, you'll be traversing the southern part of this route. If you want to travel further north, ask your driver, or the **Kärnten tourist office** (☎ 04824-200 121) just up the road from the bus stop in Heiligenblut about current bus schedules.

If you have your own vehicle, you'll have more flexibility. However, beware that the road is open only between May and mid-

September, and you must pay tolls (at least €26/17 for a car/motorcycle, but more if you take a circular route).

At the northern end of the park, turn west along Hwy 168 (which becomes Hwy 165) to reach the spectacular, triple-level **Krimml Falls**.

## VORARLBERG

Vorarlberg is Austria's 'wild west', occupying the country's furthest western reaches and separated from it by the Arlberg massif. Over the centuries its isolation has helped cultivate an individual identity (right down to the language) and it still often associates itself more with neighbouring Switzerland than Vienna.

Alluringly beautiful, this region is an aesthetic mix of mountains, hills and valleys. Trickling down from the Alps to the shores of Lake Constance (Bodensee), Vorarlberg is a destination in its own right, attracting everyone from classical-music buffs to skiers. It's also a gateway, by rail or water, to Germany, Liechtenstein or Switzerland.

### BREGENZ

☎ 05574 / pop 27,500

Ritzzy Bregenz sits pretty on the shores of Lake Constance and emits a decidedly posh vibe – go window shopping for Dior and Louis Vuitton at one of the designer shops gracing its quaint Old Town streets. Visit in summer, during the annual Bregenzer Festspiele (Bregenz Festival), to catch this provincial capital at its most boisterous.

### Orientation

Bregenz is on Lake Constance's eastern shore. Turn left at the main train station exit and take Bahnhofstrasse to the city centre (five minutes). Buses for the city leave from outside the train station.

### Information

**Cockpit Café** (Seegalerie, Bahnhofstrasse 10; per 15 min €1.20; ☎ 5pm-midnight) Offers Internet access.

**Post Office** (Seestrasse 5; ☎ 7am-7pm Mon-Fri, 8am-noon Sat)

**Tourist Office** (☎ 49 59-0; www.bregenz.at, in German; Bahnhofstrasse 14; ☎ 9am-noon & 1-5pm Mon-Fri, to noon only Sat, to 7pm Mon-Sat during the Bregenz Festival) Also offers free Internet access.

### Sights & Activities

Most tourists who arrive in Bregenz are drawn almost instinctively to the **Bodensee**, a major summer holiday destination for Austrians, Swiss and Germans, all of whom take advantage of the many water sports and attractions lining its banks.

Other highlights around the Bodensee include the **Zeppelin Museum** (Friedrichshafen), Meersburg's picturesque half-timbered houses built in classical German style and its two castles, the **Cathedral of St Nicholas** (Überlinge), the **flower island** of Mainau and the Gothic cathedral of Konstanz.

Bregenz offers spectacular views from its **Pfänder** mountain; a **cable car** (☎ 421 600; www.pfaenderbahn.at, in German; admission €10; ☎ 9am-7pm, closed 2 weeks in Nov) carries you up and back. There are hiking trails at the top.

Bregenz is also of interest to architecture fans. The most notable modern building is the shimmering art-gallery block, the **Kunsthhaus**, by award-winning Swiss architect Peter Zumthor.

### Festivals & Events

A feature that makes the **Bregenzer Festspiele** (Bregenz Festival) in July and August so remarkable is its setting. During the four-week programme, operas and classical works are performed from a floating stage on the lake's edge. For tickets, contact the **Kartenbüro** (☎ 407-6; www.bregenzerfestspiele.com; Postfach 311, A-6901) about nine months beforehand, or ask about cancellations on the day.

### Sleeping & Eating

The tourist office has a list of private homes that let rooms for €20 to €30 per person if none of the following options sound appealing. Expect prices during the festival to be higher than those quoted here.

**Jugendgästehaus Bregenz** (☎ 42867; www.jgh.at/bregenz; Mehrerauerstrasse 5; dm from €20; ☎ ☎) In a former needle factory, this HI hostel is a lively place, with larger than average dorms boasting only six beds plus en suite. There's also a decent restaurant on the premises. The hostel is near the skateboard park; take the 'Zum See' exit from the train station and pass the casino.

**Pension Sonne** (☎ 42 572; Kaiserstrasse 8; s/d from €35/66) This family-run *pension* is rather basic (the wooden floors can feel a little cold), but it is the most central accommodation option

around. Ask to see a few rooms; some have nicer décor than others. The cheapest rooms share bathrooms.

**Gästehaus am Tannenbauch** (☎ 44 174; Im Gehren 1; s/d €40/80; ☎ May-Oct; ☎) Travellers with a taste for something different might prefer this quirky guesthouse. From the outside it looks like a normal house; inside it explodes into an ornate display of baroque kitsch. The highlight is the regal breakfast room.

**Deuring-Schlössle** (☎ 47 800; www.deuring-schloessle.com; Ehregutplatz 4; s/d €135/210; ☎) Bregenz's best rooms are found in this fabulously renovated old castle. Each one is decorated differently, but all have loads of medieval charm and grace. Its restaurant (mains from €20) is also the best in Bregenz, with a sophisticated look and a gourmet menu.

**Gösserbräu** (☎ 42 467; Anton Schneider Strasse 1; mains €8-12; ☎ 9am-1pm Tue-Sun) Solid Austrian fare, simple and hearty, but not too stodgy, is served in a number of uniquely decorated dining rooms. The vegetarian mushroom goulash with dumplings is divine.

### Getting There & Away

Trains to Munich (€36, 2½ hours) go via Lindau. There are also regular departures to St Gallen and Zürich. Trains to Innsbruck (€27, 2¾ hours) depart every two hours.

Boat services operate from late May to late October, with a reduced schedule from early March. For information, call ☎ 42 868. Bregenz to Lake Constance by boat via Friedrichshafen takes about 3½ hours and there are about seven departures daily. Special boat passes offer discounts.

### ARLBERG REGION

The Arlberg region, shared by Vorarlberg and neighbouring Tirol, has some of the best skiing in Austria. Summer is less busy and many bars are closed.

**St Anton am Arlberg** is the largest resort, where you're as likely to hear a cheery antipodean 'G'day' or Scandinavian *God dag*, as you are to hear an Austrian *Grüss' Di*. There are good intermediate to advanced runs here, as well as nursery slopes on Gampen and Kapall. The **tourist office** (☎ 05446-22 690; www.stantonamarlberg.com; ☎ 9am-5pm Mon-Fri), on the main street, has details. Head diagonally left from the train station to find it.

A ski pass valid for 83 ski lifts in St Anton and neighbouring St Christoph Lech, Zürs

and Stuben costs €45 for one day and €180 for six days (reductions for children and seniors).

There are nearly 600 accommodation options in and around St Anton, 80% of which are open during summer. Even with all this choice, it can be hard to find somewhere to stay over winter without booking ahead (note that short stays of a couple of days will usually incur a surcharge).

**Haus Wannali** (☎ 05446-23 50; Arlberg Strasse 509; s/d €40/80) is a central spot, with a friendly atmosphere and entertaining regulars. Some of the best views in town are enjoyed from the relatively spick-and-span **Pension Strolz Christian** (☎ 05446-30 119; Ing Gomperz Strasse 606; s/d €40/80).

When hunger hits, there is a Spar supermarket on the main road, and decent pizza and pasta dishes at **Pomodoro** (☎ 33 33; Fussgängerzone 70; mains from €8; ☎ dinner Dec-Apr). The food isn't great but the atmosphere is lively.

Loud, bawdy and very English, **Piccadilly** (☎ 221 32 76; Fussgängerzone 55) often has live music. For an après-ski cocktail or two head to **Krazy Kanguruh** (☎ 26 33), a longtime favourite bar on the lower slopes.

### Getting There & Away

St Anton is on the main railway route between Bregenz (€14.50) and Innsbruck (€13.60), less than 1½ hours from both cities. St Anton is close to the eastern entrance of the Arlberg Tunnel, the toll road connecting Vorarlberg and Tirol. The tunnel toll is €9.45/7.25 for cars/motorcycles. You can avoid the toll by taking the B197, but no vehicles with trailers are allowed on this winding road.

## AUSTRIA DIRECTORY

### ACCOMMODATION

Reservations are recommended at Christmas, Easter and during summer. They are binding on both parties, so if you don't take a reserved room, the price could still be deducted from your credit card. Hostels tend to be more flexible; however, small groups booking into hostels might find their reservation for a four-bed room translated into four separate beds on arrival.

Tourist offices can supply lists of all types of accommodation and will generally make reservations – sometimes for a small fee.

Many resort towns hand out a *Gästekarte* (guest card) to people staying overnight. This card is funded by a resort tax of around €1 to €2 per night, added to the accommodation tariff, and it offers useful discounts on transport, sporting facilities and museums. Check with the tourist office if you're not offered one at your resort accommodation. In smaller towns, the first night's accommodation can cost slightly more than subsequent nights.

There are more than 500 camping grounds in Austria, but most close in winter. 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. The **Austrian Camping Club** (Österreichischer Camping Club; Map p64; ☎ 01-71 199-1272; Schuberting 1-3, A-1010 Vienna) has information.

In the mountains, hikers can take a break from camping by spending the night in an alpine hut. See below for further details.

Two HI-affiliated hostelling associations operating within the country are **Österreichischer Jugendherbergersverband** (Map p64; ☎ 01-533 53 53; www.oehjv.or.at; 01, Schottenring 28, A-1010 Vienna) and **Junge Hostels Austria** (Map p64; ☎ 01-533 18 33; www.jungehoteles.at; 01, Helfferstorferstrasse 4, Vienna). Prices are generally €13 to €20 per night.

It's quite common for house owners to rent out rooms in their home (€15 to €30 per person, per night). Look out for the ubiquitous *Zimmer frei* (room vacant) signs.

The cheapest budget hotels start at around €25/40 for singles/doubles with a shared bathroom, and €35/60 for those with private facilities. Most midrange hotels start at around €50/80 for rooms with private facilities.

For this chapter we've defined places costing less than €40 as budget, while midrange options cost €40 to €80 and top-end hotels start at €80 per person.

Accommodation prices quoted in this chapter are for the high summer season (or winter in ski resorts) and include all taxes. Unless otherwise stated, all rooms have private facilities and breakfast is included.

## ACTIVITIES

### Hiking & Mountaineering

Walking and climbing are popular with visitors and Austrians alike, and most tourist

offices sell maps of hiking routes. Mountain paths have direction indicators and often markers indicating their level of difficulty. Those 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. There are 10 long-distance national hiking routes, while three European routes pass through Austria. Options include the northern Alpine route from Lake Constance to Vienna, via Dachstein, or the central route from Feldkirch to Hainburger Pforte, via Hohe Tauern National Park.

Don't try mountaineering without the proper equipment or experience. The **Österreichischer Alpenverein** (ÖAV; Austrian Alpine Club; Map p95; ☎ 0512-587 828; office@alpenverein-ibk.at; Wilhelm Greil Strasse 15, A-6010 Innsbruck) has touring programmes and also maintains a list of alpine huts in hill-walking regions. These provide inexpensive accommodation and often have meals or cooking facilities. Members of the club take priority but anyone can stay. It's a good idea to book huts. Listing your next intended destination in the hut book on departure provides you with an extra measure of safety, as search-and-rescue teams will be alerted should a problem arise.

### Skiing & Snowboarding

Austria has some of the world's best skiing and snowboarding. The most popular regions are Vorarlberg and Tirol, but Salzburg province and Carinthia offer cheaper possibilities. Unusually, skiing is possible year-round at the famous Stubai Glacier near Innsbruck.

The skiing season starts in December and lasts well into April at higher-altitude resorts. Count on spending €20 to €38 for a daily ski pass (to ride the ski lifts). Rental generally starts at €16 for downhill equipment or €14 for cross-country skis; rates drop for multiple days.

### Spa Resorts

There are spa resorts throughout the country, identifiable by the prefix *Bad* (bath), eg Bad Ischl. While perfect for the self-indulgent pampering that stressed-out city-dwellers today so often crave, they also promise more traditional healing cures for respiratory, circulatory and other ailments. The **Austrian National Tourist Office** (www.austria-tourism.at) can provide details, as can the **Österreichischer**

**Heilbäder & Kurortverband** (Austrian Thermal Baths & Spa Association; ☎ 01-512 19 04; oehkv@newsclub.at).

## BOOKS

Lonely Planet has guides to both *Austria* and *Vienna*, as well as the *German Phrasebook*.

Graham Greene's evocative spy story *The Third Man* is set in Vienna, as is John Irving's *Setting Free the Bears*. Numerous travel writers, from the masterful Patrick Leigh Fermor (*A Time of Gifts*) to the amusing Bill Bryson (*Neither Here Nor There*), have passed through the city.

## BUSINESS HOURS

Shops usually open 9am to 6pm Monday to Friday, and 9am to 1pm or 5pm on Saturday. However, grocery stores might open as early as 6am, and other shops don't close their doors until 7.30pm. In smaller cities, there's sometimes a two-hour closure over lunch.

Banks keep short hours, usually 9am to 12.30pm and 1.30pm to 3pm Monday to Friday, with 'late' (5.30pm) closing on Thursday. Information offices are generally open from 9am to 5pm Monday to Saturday. Restaurants generally open around 11am and stop serving food around 10pm. Most bars open sometime around noon, while clubs don't start rocking until after 10pm.

## EMBASSIES & CONSULATES

### Austrian Embassies & Consulates

Following is a list of Austrian diplomatic missions abroad.

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

**Canada** (☎ 613-789 1444; www.austro.org; 445 Wilbrod St, Ottawa, ON 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) Visas only at the consulate.

**Germany** (☎ 30-202 87-0; www.oesterreichische-botschaft.de; Stauffenbergstrasse 1, D-10785 Berlin)

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

**Netherlands** (☎ 070-324 54 70; den-haag-ob@bmaa.gv.at; van Alkemadeaan 342, 2597 AS Den Haag)

**New Zealand** (☎ 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)

## Embassies & Consulates in Austria

Only *Botschaften* (embassies) and *Konsulate* (consulates) in Vienna issue visas. In case of an emergency, you might be re-directed to a limited-hours consulate in a nearer city. The following diplomatic missions are located in Vienna unless otherwise stated:

**Australia** (Map p64; ☎ 01-50 674-0; www.australian-embassy.at; 04, Mattiellstrasse 2-4)

**Canada** (Map p64; ☎ 01-53 138-3000; www.kanada.at; 01, Laurenzerberg 2)

**Croatia** (☎ 01-484 87 83-0; 17, Heubergg 10)

**Czech Republic** (Map p60; ☎ 01-894 37 41; 14, Penzingerstrasse 11-13)

**France** (Map p64; ☎ 01-50 275-0; www.ambafrance-at.org; 04, Technikerstrasse 2)

**Germany** (Map p60; ☎ 01-71 154-0; 03, Metternichgasse 3)

**Hungary** (Map p64; ☎ 01-53 780-300; 01, Bankgasse 4-6)

**Ireland** (Map p64; ☎ 01-715 42 46-0; 01, Rotenturmstrasse 16-18)

**Italy** (Map p60; ☎ 01-712 51 21-0; 03, Rennweg 27)

**Netherlands** (Map p64; ☎ 01-58 939; 01, Operring 5)

**New Zealand** (☎ 01-318 85 05; Salesianergasse 15/3)

**Slovakia** (☎ 01-318 90 55-200; 19, Armbrustergasse 24)

**Slovenia** (Map p64; ☎ 01-586 13 09; 01, Niebelungengasse 13)

**Switzerland** (Map p60; ☎ 01-79 505-0; 03, Prinz Eugen Strasse 7)

**UK** (Map p60; ☎ 01-71 613-0; www.britishembassy.at; 03, Jaurèsgasse 12)

**USA** Embassy (Map p60; ☎ 01-31 339-0; www.usembassy.at; 09, Boltzmanngasse 16); Consulate (Map p64; ☎ 512 58 35; 01, Gartenbaupromenade 2) Visas at the consulate only.

## FESTIVALS & EVENTS

**The Austrian National Tourist Office Vienna** (ANTO; www.austria-tourism.at) has a list of annual and one-off events on its website; just click on 'Events'. Following is a list of major festivals.

### February

**Fasching** This Shrovetide carnival before Lent involves parties, waltzes and a parade; celebrated countrywide.

### May/June

**Festwochen** (Vienna) The Vienna Festival focuses on classical music, theatre and other performing arts.

**Lifeball** (Vienna; www.lifeball.org) One of the final balls of the season, this is a huge gay/straight AIDS fundraising gala attracting celebrity guests.

## July

**Bregenz Festspiele** (Bregenz) Opera with a difference – performed on a floating stage on Lake Constance.

**Salzburger Festspiele** (Salzburg) Austria's leading classical music festival attracts major stars, like Simon Rattle and Plácido Domingo.

**Love Parade** (Vienna) Austria hosts its own version of the popular techno street parade.

## September

**Ars Electronica Festival** (Linz) This is a celebration of weird and wonderful technological art and computer music.

**Bruckner Fest** (Linz) This highbrow classical music festival pays homage to native Linz son Bruckner.

## November

**Christmas Markets** (particularly Vienna and Salzburg)

Quaint stalls selling traditional decorations, foodstuffs, mulled wine and all manner of presents heralding the arrival of the festive season.

## December

**Krampus** (Innsbruck and elsewhere) 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.

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

## GAY & LESBIAN TRAVELLERS

Public attitudes to homosexuality are less tolerant than in most other Western European countries, except perhaps in Vienna. A good information centre/meeting point in Vienna is **Rosa Lila Villa** (Map p60; ☎ 01-586 81 50; 06, Linke Wienzeile 102). The age of consent for gay men is 18; for everyone else it's 14. Vienna has a Pride march, the Rainbow Parade, on the last Saturday in June.

## 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

The **Austrian National Tourist Office** (ANTO; www.austria-tourism.at) is a comprehensive starting point, with general information and details on different attractions and types of holidays.

Train times and fares are available from **Österreichische Bundesbahnen** (ÖBB; Austrian Railways; www.oebb.at).

**Herold** (www.herold.at) maintains an online telephone book. Budget travellers might also find quite useful the *Mensa* (university canteen; www.mensen.at, in German) listing.

## LANGUAGE

Although Austrians understand Hochdeutsch ('high' or received German), they use different words and some even speak a dialect. Apart from using the expressions *Grüss Gott* (hello), *Servus!* (hello and goodbye) and *Ba Ba* (bye bye), they join their Bavarian cousins in forming the diminutive with 'erl' instead of the northern German 'chen'. Therefore when Austrians say *ein Bissel*, they mean *ein Bisschen* (a little), and they use the word *Mädlerl* (girl) instead of *Mädchen*.

Some expressions of time are also unique. *Heuer* means 'this year' and Austrians talk not of the German *Januar* but of *Jänner* (January).

## MONEY

The currency is the euro, although you will still hear some references to its Austrian predecessor, the Schilling. Straight conversion of prices from Schilling to euro is the reason for occasionally strange prices – eg €3.63 for a phone card or €2.91 for a cup of coffee.

Major train stations have currency offices, and there are plenty of banks, *bureaux de change* and *Bankomats* (ATMs) across the country.

## Costs

Expenses in Austria are average for Western Europe, with prices highest in big cities and ski resorts. Budget travellers can possibly scrape by on €40 a day, after rail-card costs; double this amount if you intend to avoid self-catering or staying in hostels. The minimum you can expect to pay per person is €13/25 for a hostel/hotel and €5/10 for a lunch/dinner.

## Taxes & Refunds

Value-added tax (*Mehrwertsteuer* or MwSt) is charged at either 10% (eg travel, food and museum entry) or 20% (drinks and luxury goods). Prices always include taxes. For purchases over €75, non-EU residents can reclaim the MwSt either upon leaving the EU or afterwards. (Note that one-third of your refund will be absorbed in charges.) Ensure the shop has the forms to be filled out at the time of purchase, and present the documentation to customs on departure for checking and stamping.

The airports at Vienna, Salzburg, Innsbruck, Linz and Graz have counters for instant refunds, as do some land crossings. You can also reclaim by post.

## Tipping & Bargaining

Austrian waiters aren't renowned for friendly or speedy service, but it's still rude not to round off the bill so that it includes a 10% tip. Pay it directly to the server; don't leave it on the table. Taxi drivers will also expect tips of 10%. Bargaining is unheard of.

## POST

Post office hours vary: 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 until late, or even 24 hours. Stamps are also available in *Tabak* (tobacco) shops. Postcards and standard letters (up to 20g) cost €0.55 both within Austria and to Europe.

## TELEPHONE

Don't worry if a telephone number you are given has only four digits, as many as nine digits, or some odd number 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. Generally, a -0 will give you the switchboard operator.

From a public phone, it costs €0.12 per minute to call anywhere in Austria, be it next door or across the country.

## Mobile Phones

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.

If you're staying for a while, it's possible to get a prepaid phone in Austria, or strike a deal where you pay for calls and line rental but get your handset free. Try **Max.Mobil** (Map p60; ☎ 0676-20 00; 03, Kelsenstrasse 5-7) or **Mobilkom** (☎ 0800-664 300).

## Phonecards

The minimum tariff in phone boxes is €0.20. Some boxes will only accept phonecards (Telefon-Wertkarte), which can be bought from post offices in two denominations – €3.60 and €6.90.

## TIME

Austria operates on Central European Time (GMT/UTC plus one hour). Clocks go forward one hour on the last Saturday night in March and back again on the last Saturday night in October.

## TOURIST INFORMATION

Tourist offices (usually called *Kurverein*, *Verkehrsamt* or *Tourismusverband*) tend to adjust their hours from one year to the next, so the hours listed in this chapter are a guide only and may have changed slightly by the time you arrive.

The **Austrian National Tourist Office** (ANTO; www.austria-tourism.at) has a number of overseas offices, including those in the following list. Some of these offices are not open to personal callers, so phone first. There is a comprehensive listing on the ANTO website.

**Australia** (☎ 02-9299 3621; info@antosyd.org.au; 1st fl, 36 Carrington St, Sydney, NSW 2000)

**UK** (☎ 020-7629 0461; info@anto.co.uk; 14 Cork St, London W1S 3NS)

**USA** (☎ 212-944 6880; info@oewnyc.com; PO Box 1142, New York, NY 10108-1142)

## VISAS

Visas are not required for EU, US, Canadian, Australian or New Zealand citizens. Visitors may stay a maximum of three months (six months for Japanese citizens). There are no time limits for European Union and Swiss nationals, but they should register with the police before taking up residency. Most African and Arab nationals require a visa.

# TRANSPORT IN AUSTRIA

## GETTING THERE & AWAY

### Air

The national carrier, Austrian Airlines, has an excellent safety record and specialises in linking numerous Eastern European cities to the West via Vienna.

Low-cost airlines also serve Austria. Ryanair flies from London to Graz, Klagenfurt, Linz and Salzburg; Air Berlin flies to Vienna from Germany; and German Wings has limited services from Düsseldorf and Stuttgart. Central European low-cost carrier Sky Europe flies to many destinations, including Croatia, France, Hungary, Italy and Poland. Be warned, however, that its 'Vienna' airport is far from the city – in Slovakia, actually.

Following are the key international airports in Austria:

**Graz** (GRZ; ☎ 0316-29 02-0; www.flughafen-graz.at, in German)

**Innsbruck** (INN; ☎ 0512-22 525-0; www.innsbruck-airport.com, in German)

**Klagenfurt** (KLU; ☎ 0463-41 500; www.klagenfurt-airport.com)

**Linz** (LNZ; ☎ 07221-600-0; www.flughafen-linz.at)

**Salzburg** (SZG; ☎ 0662-85 80-100; www.salzburg-airport.com, in German)

**Vienna** (VIE; ☎ 01-7007 22333; www.viennaairport.com)

Major international airlines, reputable regional carriers and low-cost airlines flying to and from Austria include:

**Air Berlin** (code AB; ☎ 0820-400 011; www.airberlin.com)

**Air France** (code AF; ☎ 01-50 222-2400; www.airfrance.com)

**Alitalia** (code AZ; ☎ 01-505 17 07; www.alitalia.com)

**Austrian Airways** (code OS; ☎ 05-17 66; www.aua.com)

**British Airways** (code BA; ☎ 01-79 567-567; www.ba.com)

**Croatia Airlines** (code OU; ☎ 01-70 07-36163; www.croatiaairlines.com)

**CSA** (code OK; ☎ 01-512 38 05-0; www.czechairlines.com)

**German Wings** (code 4U; ☎ 01-50 291-0070; www.germanwings.com)

**Iberia** (code IB; ☎ 01-795 67 61-2; www.iberia.com)

**KLM** (code KL; ☎ 0900-359 556; www.klm.com)

**LOT Polish Airlines** (code LO; ☎ 01-961 08 85; www.lot.com)

**Lufthansa** (code LH; ☎ 0810-1025 8080; www.lufthansa.com)

**Ryanair** (code FR; ☎ 0900-210 240; www.ryanair.com)

**SAS Scandinavian Airlines** (code SK; ☎ 01-68 055-4466; www.scandinavian.net)

**SkyEurope Airlines** (code NE; ☎ 01-9985 5555; www.skyeurope.com)

**Swiss International Air Lines** (code LX; ☎ 0810-810 840; www.swiss.com)

### Land

#### BORDER CROSSINGS

There are many entry points from the Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovakia, Slovenia and Switzerland; main border crossings are open 24 hours. There are usually no border controls to/from Germany and Italy.

### BUS

Buses leave Austria for as far afield as England, the Baltic countries, the Netherlands, Germany and Switzerland. But most significantly, they provide access to Eastern European cities small and large – from the likes of Belgrade, Sofia and Warsaw, to Banja Luka, Mostar and Sarajevo.

Services operated by **Eurolines** (www.eurolines.at) leave from Vienna (see p73) and from several regional cities.

### CAR & MOTORCYCLE

Austria levies fees for its entire motorway network. Therefore tourists need to choose between a 10-day pass (motorcycle/car €4.30/7.60), a two-month pass (€10.90/21.80) or a yearly pass (€29/72.60) and then clearly display the chosen toll label (*Vignette*) on their vehicle. Passes are available at borders, on freeways or from service stations. Without one, you will face an on-the-spot fine of up to €220 or, if you don't pay up immediately, a €2180 fine. See **Asfinag** (www.oesag.at, in German) for details.

### TRAIN

The main rail services in and out of the country include the route from Vienna's Westbahnhof to Munich, via Salzburg and Bregenz. Trains to the Czech Republic leave from Südbahnhof in Vienna. Express services to Italy go via Innsbruck or Villach; trains to Slovenia are routed through Graz.

For Austrian rail passes that extend into other countries, see p1121.

### River & Lake

Hydrofoils run to Bratislava and Budapest from Vienna (see p73). Germany and Swit-

zerland can be reached from Bregenz (see p101).

## GETTING AROUND

### Air

Austrian Airlines and its subsidiary, Tyrolean Airlines, operate regular internal flights, but train, bus and car travel usually suffices in such a small country.

### Bicycle

Private operators and hostels hire bikes; expect to pay anything from €7 to €10 per day. Vienna has cut-price city bikes (p74).

You can pay separately to take your bike on slow trains (€2.90/7.50/22.50 for a daily/weekly/monthly ticket); on fast trains it costs €6.80 per day, if space allows. Booking is advisable, because if there's no space in the passenger carriages, you will have to send your bike as registered luggage (€21.40). If a group of you are travelling with bikes, ask about the '1-Plus Freizeitticket' (passenger plus bike).

### Boat

Services along the Danube are mainly scenic pleasure cruises, but provide a leisurely way of getting from A to B. For more information on boat services along the river, see p73.

### Bus

Both *Postbuses* and *Bahnbus*es are now operated by the railways, ÖBB. Bus services are generally limited to less-accessible regions, such as the Salzkammergut or Hohe Tauern National Park. Between major cities in environmentally friendly Austria, only train services exist.

Buses are single class, clean, efficient and run on time. Generally you can only buy tickets from the drivers. Call ☎ 01-71 101 for inquiries.

### Car & Motorcycle

#### AUTOMOBILE ASSOCIATIONS

The **Austrian Automobile Club** (Map p64; Österreichischer Automobil, Motorrad und Touring Club; ÖAMTC; ☎ 01-71 199-0; Schuberting 1-3, A-1010 Vienna) provides emergency breakdown assistance via its **24-hour phone line** (☎ 120). It charges non-members an initial call-out fee of €95/135 per day/night, on top of other service charges.

### EMERGENCY NUMBERS

- Alpine Rescue ☎ 140
- Ambulance ☎ 144
- Fire ☎ 122
- Police ☎ 133

### BRING YOUR OWN VEHICLE

Cars can be transported on trains; Vienna is linked by a daily motorail service to Innsbruck, Salzburg and Villach.

### DRIVING LICENCE

Visitors from the EU and the USA can drive using their home driving licence; those from elsewhere require an International Driving Permit.

### FUEL & SPARE PARTS

Motorway service stations are found at regular intervals. Basic spare parts are widely available. Ordering more specialised parts, especially for non-European models, takes time and can be costly.

### HIRE

Multinational car-hire firms **Avis** (www.avis.at), **Budget** (www.budget.at), **Europcar** (www.europcar.co.at) and **Hertz** (www.hertz.at) all have offices in major cities; ask at tourist offices for details. The minimum age for hiring small cars is 19 years, or 25 years for larger, 'prestige' cars. Customers must have held a driving licence for at least a year. Many contracts forbid customers to take cars outside Austria, particularly into Eastern Europe.

### ROAD CONDITIONS

Roads are generally good, but care is needed on difficult mountain routes. Snow chains are highly recommended in winter. There are tolls (usually €2.50 to €10) for some mountain tunnels.

### ROAD RULES

Vehicles drive on the right-hand side, and you must give way to traffic on the right. On mountain roads, buses always have priority; otherwise, priority lies with uphill traffic. The usual speed limits are 50km/h in towns, 130km/h on motorways and 100km/h on other roads. There's a steep on-the-spot fine for drink-driving (over 0.05% blood-alcohol

content) and your driving licence may be confiscated. If you plan to drive on motorways, you must pay a tax and affix a *Vignette* to your windscreen (see p106).

Many city streets have restricted parking (called 'blue zones') during shopping hours. Parking is unrestricted on unmarked streets.

Motorcyclists must have their headlights on during the day, and crash helmets are compulsory for riders and passengers.

### Hitching

It's illegal to hitchhike on Austrian motorways (and for minors under 16 years of age to hitch anywhere in Burgenland, Upper Austria, Styria and Vorarlberg).

### Train

The efficient state network, ÖBB, is supplemented by a few private lines. Eurail and Inter-Rail passes (see p1121) are always valid on the state network, but only valid sometimes on private lines. There is no supplement on Eurail and Inter-Rail passes for national travel on faster EC (Eurocity) and

IC (Intercity) trains. Tickets purchased on the train cost about €3 extra. Fares quoted in this chapter are for 2nd-class tickets.

Before arriving in Austria, EU residents can buy a Eurodomino Pass (see p1122) for Austria for €104 for three days and €10 for each extra day for up to eight days in total.

Available to non-EU residents are the Austrian rail pass (US\$119 for three days; US\$18 for each extra day up to eight days in total) and the European Eastpass (US\$158 for five days; US\$23 for each extra day up to 10 days in total) for travel within Austria, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia. Both are valid for a month. The Austria & Switzerland Pass (US\$270/228 over/under 26 years for four days, and \$32/27 for each extra day up to 10 days in total) is valid for two months.

Within Austria, anyone can buy a *Vorteils-card* (adult/under 26 years/senior €99.90/19.90/26.90), which reduces fares by 45% and is valid for a year.

Nationwide train information can be obtained by dialling ☎ 05-17 17 (local rate) or by going online at **ÖBB** ([www.oebb.at](http://www.oebb.at)).