

VIENNA

A MONOCLE GUIDE

Join our grand tour of an age-old favourite that combines regal grandeur with a new-found finesse in everything from culture to food, art and design. Welcome to the Austrian capital.

CITY

Top tips to help you get your bearings and keep up with the fast-moving city

BUSINESS

The start-ups and ideas spurring Vienna's entrepreneurial scene

CULTURE

A peek behind the curtain at art, culture, music and media in the city

DESIGN

The designers and architects buoying Vienna's creative renaissance

DINING

A culinary collection of edibles from tasty schnitzel to a crisp spritz

RETAIL

A line-up of the city's makers and most desirable independent venues



Monocle
Special
Edition



1 MAP

A bird's-eye view of Vienna, from its winding waterways to its baroque palaces and on through its overlooked 'hoods.

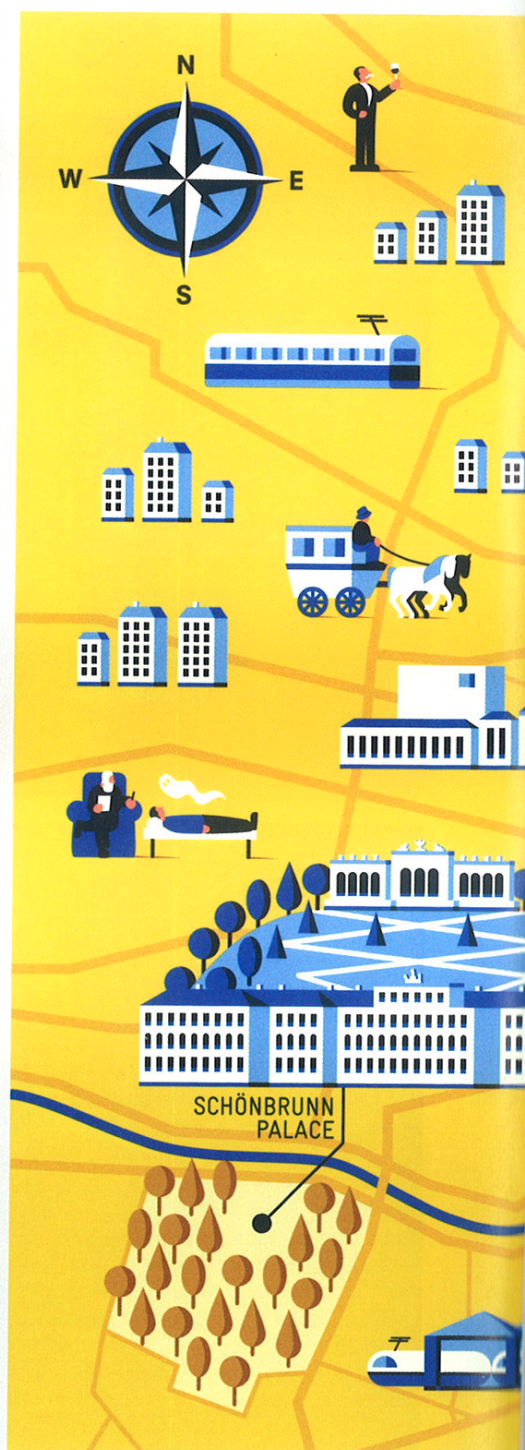


THE OVERVIEW Welcome to Vienna

Vienna may be central Europe's fastest-growing city but its heart is still its historic centre, the 1st district. Elegant pedestrian thoroughfares emanate from St Stephen's Square and winding side streets lined with shops and coffeehouses lead to the Hofburg Palace, an imperial-era complex that is now the offices of Austria's president. The grand Ringstrasse (a one-way street that encircles Vienna's 1st district) turned 150 in 2015. But there are 22 other districts that surround the centre. Across the Danube canal, the pre-war 2nd district was once the working-class waltz to the centre's aristocratic opera. More recently it's become a trendy Brooklyn to the centre's Manhattan. Inner districts three to nine are small and residential: the 6th and 7th are more bohemian and independent in spirit, the 8th and 9th posher. Only outside the second ring – or Gürtel – do districts differ more visibly: southern areas are more working-class while the north is more associated with villas and vineyards. And in the east, Donau City's skyscrapers preside over popular Danube swimming spots close to the UN headquarters. Avoiding urban sprawl, Vienna manages to mix chocolate-box prettiness with egalitarianism. Let's explore.

TOP STOPS The star turns

- 1 **St Stephen's Square**
Smack in the city centre, St Stephen's Cathedral is a landmark, its surrounding square is a perennial meeting point.
- 2 **Hofburg/Volksgarten**
The Hofburg Palace has been a nexus of power since 1279; the surrounding Volksgarten is now an urban respite.
- 3 **Burgtheater**
This is one of the finest theatres in the German-speaking world. Its original premises opened in 1741.
- 4 **Augarten**
A baroque park that's home to Vienna's Boys Choir, the Austrian film archive, a porcelain maker – and a few atmospherically looming wartime bunkers.
- 5 **Prater**
The greater Prater is best known for its Wurstelprater amusement park. You can't miss the giant Ferris wheel.
- 6 **Belvedere**
A former summer palace whose baroque halls are filled with works by Gustav Klimt, Egon Schiele and more.
- 7 **Hauptbahnhof (main train station)**
A modern transport hub opened in December 2014; around it a new urban neighbourhood, the Sonnwendviertel, is well under way.
- 8 **Museumsquartier**
The former royal stables are now an ensemble of cultural institutions and a popular public space.



6 FOOD & DRINK

The hearty and homely are in rich supply in Vienna but the great and grand are never that far away either.

THE OVERVIEW

Comfort class

Vienna's food scene is all the better for not having succumbed to the arrival of (too many) chains or fancy, foam-obsessed haute-cuisine hangouts. Instead there are the many street-corner sausage-stands and Vienna's renowned café culture. Not forgetting a smattering of unpretentious *beisl* (bistros), serving schnitzel and *tafelspitz* (boiled beef); you can expect to be well fed. Luckily, the city's established eating scene hasn't stifled the culinary creativity. Here we meet foodies finding a niche with Vienna's discerning diners and recommend the city's best-in-class hotels.



1 CAFÉ PRÜCKEL

All-day cheer

Recognised by Unesco for its intangible cultural heritage, Vienna's cafés are defined both by their ubiquity and inherent *Gemütlichkeit* (good cheer). A cup of coffee can last all day in these snug hideaways and the food is hearty and inexpensive. Try the *Wiener Frühstück* or Styrian fried-egg dish *Eierspeise* at Café Prückel (pictured), a 1950s-style stop-in on the western edge of the Ringstrasse. prueckel.at



PLACES TO EAT

Three of the best

- 1 Tian**
Elegant settings and some of the best vegetarian fare, courtesy of chef de cuisine Paul Ivic. A firm favourite among deep-pocketed foodies since 2011. taste-tian.com
- 2 Labstelle**
Run by Thomas Hahn, this beguiling bar-and-restaurant has a large beer garden that accommodates for 60. Expect fresh dishes in a pared-down environment. labstelle.at
- 3 Motto Am Fluss**
Easily mistaken for a boat, this restaurant on the Danube Canal is actually a mooring point for the Twin City Liner to Bratislava. Expect traditional Viennese food done well and flawless 1950s decor. motto.at



2 ZUM SCHWARZEN KAMEEL

Equal but unrivalled

Owner Peter Friese (pictured) may have held the reins here since 1977 but Kameel (as locals affectionately refer to it) has been here for almost four centuries. The art-nouveau-style tile-and-wood restaurant (complete with a cosy dining room or optional bar-style seating) stocks some 800 wines. Despite the 2014 renovation of the Golden Quarter in which the restaurant is located, little has changed about this Viennese institution. Kameel remains "one of the most egalitarian places in Vienna", says Friese. "Here a president can sit next to a labourer." kameel.at



2

The number of Michelin stars awarded to the Steirerck restaurant in the leafy Stadtpark. Heinz Reitbauer's destination is Vienna's fanciest

2015

The year chef Christian Petz set up Petz im Gusshaus. A riff on Vienna's *beisl* (unpretentious dining rooms), the food is innovative but homely



3 WÜRSTLSTAND

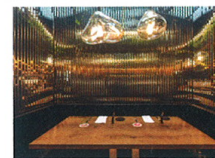
Snack of choice

Despite the many sumptuous sit-down meals you'll enjoy here, Vienna's best snack is enjoyed standing and from one of the many *Würstlstände* – sausage kiosks that open early and close late. Stand elbow-to-elbow to devour inexpensive but tasty *Käsekrainer* (sausages with cheese) or *Debreziner* (spiced with paprika). Sample widely but start at the Bitzinger Würstlstand (pictured) by the entrance of the Albertina museum.

4 KUSSMAUL

Scenic route

As you enter Kussmaul turn right and head up a small set of stairs to access the informal, large-windowed bistro that opens onto the cobbled Spittelberggasse. This is the best place to linger for lunch and enjoy chef Mario Bernatovic's inventive staples such as burgers, pasta dishes and medleys of fish or meat. Opened in summer 2014 the space is set around a buzzy open kitchen. kussmaul.at



5 THIRD-WAVE COFFEE

Take stock

Old-school cafés serving questionable coffees have been challenged in recent years by more serious third-wave coffee offerings. Located on Ferstel Passage (pictured, top left), a baroque arcade within a one-time bank and stock exchange, is Caffè Couture. Founded by barista Georg Branny the simple space makes a great flat white using equipment from Hario, Chemex and Aeropress. But Caffè Couture isn't the exception. "Traditional coffeehouses draw their existence from classical ambience and flair," says Otto Bayer who opened Balthasar (pictured) in April 2014 just north of the Danube. "We endear through our personality and passion." caffecouture.com; balthasar.at

WHERE TO STAY

Places for all seasons

Whatever level of hotel you need, the city has it.

- 1 Best of a grand bunch:**
Hotel Sacher
Three hundred staff tend the 149 rooms of the wood-panelled parquet-floored gem. It is Vienna's grandest hotel and has been since it opened opposite the Opera House in 1876. Pavarotti, Grace Kelly and Queen Elizabeth II have all navigated the hotel's labyrinthine corridors and stately rooms. sacher.com

- 2 Best new opening:**
Grand Ferdinand
Founded in 2015, this newcomer (from the team behind Hotel Daniel) is an impressive counterpoint to Vienna's older options. On the ground floor, Thonet chairs and red banquette seating line the wide-windowed restaurant, while the top-floor terrace is a delight for breakfast. grandferdinand.com

- 3 Best for business travellers:** 25hours
Opened in April 2013 as part of the Hamburg-based 25hours chain, the hotel is set over seven floors and is topped with a lively bar overlooking the Weghuberpark – and towards the parliament building. The 217 rooms (of which 34 are suites) are an affordable option for business travellers. 25hours-hotels.com

- 4 Best independent:**
Hotel Altstadt
Located in a patrician townhouse in Spittelberg (a short, pleasant walk from the city centre), the Altstadt's 45 rooms are designed by individual artists such as Lena Hoschek and Matteo Thun. Miraculously the resulting look manages to avoid being twee. The breakfast is a hearty highlight. altstadt.at