New Viennese elegance on the Ringstraße.

A hotel that celebrates tradition by moving forward, not by looking back

Florian Weitzer draws on the Ringstraße's heyday to revive Viennese elegance at his Grand Ferdinand. With its 186 rooms and three restaurants, the hotel, opened end of 2015, on the Schubertring combines the beauty and relish of times past with the finest amenities anno now. The harmonious overall composition is graced with extravagant details – from the courtyard oasis and rooftop pool to the Lobmey chandalier with real candles. The re-designed Grand Ferdinand returns the building on the Ringstraße back to its former, well-deserved glory. And it enriches Vienna's culinary scene with three restaurants, set in unique ambiance: Meissl & Schadn, serving traditional Viennese cuisine, the Gulasch & Söhne, featuring snacks and small plates, and the Limón, opened at the end of 2023, which, as a Restaurant & Bar, transforms the rooftop into a haven of Mediterranean cuisine and joy of life high above the rooftops of Vienna.

Grand Ferdinand, grand composition

It was no wonder, that Florian Weitzer was drawn to the Ringstraße. He had long desired to add a glamorous hotel to Vienna's scene. First, his four other hotels had already proven that he could playfully combine a historical foundation with good ideas to create a contemporary composition, and second, the magnificent boulevard has been home to illustrious names in the hotel business since the 1873 World Exposition. Till today, the Grand Ferdinand by Weitzer Hotels happens to be the only Austrian-run hotel directly on the Ringstraße.

As in all of his hotels, Florian Weitzer does away with the staid. Instead, he draws on traditional beauty and enjoyment to create a timeless elegance – recalling the Ringstraße era, when Vienna was transformed into a sophisticated European city. It was a time in which one strove for perfection in all things. The intention of the Grand Ferdinand, too, is to create an overall composition whose true grandeur arises from the purposeful arrangement of its individual components. A noble harmony extends to every aspect, from the interior design all the way to the cuisine – connecting the gorgeous chandeliers on the expansive ground floor, hand-made according to old designs by traditional Vienna glass-maker Lobmeyr, and Thonet chairs, to bars in the rooms stocked with French champagne.

GRAND FERDINAND

Timeless beauty – lodging at the Grand Ferdinand

Florian Weitzer is confident that „anything you do can be done beautifully, and everything that is built can be built beautifully.“ But he notes, „Beauty is in no way a matter of money, or design, or a creativity competition. It’s simply a matter of attitude.“ This approach is clear in the design of the 186 rooms in seven categories. Every single room is a custom composition of timeless elegance, contemporary comfort and soulful extras. Light switches are made from ceramic, as was once common, and glass-block shower enclosures recall the building’s 1950s origins. The colour scheme in all of the rooms is an elegant interplay between nostalgic curved headboards and mirror frames in white, dark wood floors and charcoal grey walls. The round, leather-rimmed mirrors above the bathroom sinks are a design classic by Gubi in the style of Jacques Adnet. Details like collapsible interior shutters made of white wood complete the finishes harmoniously staged by Florian Weitzer. A “Petit Chic” room also features a comfortable king-size double bed, a minibar in a leather suitcase, a coffee machine, a chaise longue, and a rain shower. The “Charmant Chic” category offers a touch more space and includes a champagne bar, adding a dash of extravagance – further elevated by the “Grand Chic” rooms (which include a desk) and the “Petites Suites,” which come with a private terrace and views of the peaceful inner courtyard.

The four "Grandes Suites" on the top floor, the seventh, come close to a symphony, or seventh heaven if you will. From here, guests have a box-seat view of the Ringstraße and Vienna’s rooftops – which can be taken in from a free-standing cast-iron art nouveau tub or private terrace. The view from the 100 m² "Ferdinand Suite", extends all the way to the giant Ferris wheel in Vienna’s Prater park. The suite is complete with a walk-in closet, an extra dressing table, Terrazzo floors combined with wooden floor boards, and two toilets. The crowning glory of this magnificence celebrated in every respect is the private access to the rooftop, with its restaurant & bar Limón and an exclusive pool. The "Ferdinand Suite" costs from 1400 EUR upwards per night, but Florian Weitzer wanted to make the Grand Ferdinand experience accessible to those with a smaller budget, too. Bunk beds are available in "the dormitory," an elegant eight-bed room, for a reasonable EUR 50 a night – and they can also be booked through Airbnb.

Food and drink times three at the Grand Ferdinand

MEISSL & SCHADN

During its imperial past, Austria’s renowned cuisine incorporated a number of culinary influences from Northern Italy to Bohemia and Hungary in addition to its own regional traditions. The famous Viennes restaurant Meissl & Schadn was synonymous with incomparably rich meals until it was destroyed in the last days of the war in 1945. The „new“ Meissl & Schadn was opened in September 2017. Naming the new restaurant at the Grand Ferdinand after the original Meissl & Schadn has been a long-held dream of Florian Weitzer. In addition to offering various beef dishes served table-side, the new Meissl & Schadn also serves as a monument to an icon of Austrian cuisine: Wiener Schnitzel, that is prepared in an open Schnitzel show kitchen at the restaurant. And for those who want to

learn the art of schnitzel preparation themselves under expert guidance, you can attend a cooking class at Meissl & Schadn, held once a week.

Showcasing honest cuisine and accompanied by an exquisite wine list the dishes at Meissl & Schadn are served with grandezza in a generous atmosphere. The restaurant's high culinary standards are reflected in the architecture – and of course in the harmonious details, which in their ensemble strive to create something grand: magnificent chandeliers, up-scale wooden furnishings, leather benches and exquisite porcelain and silverware. Whether staying as a hotel guest or not Austrian specialities can be relished at the Meissl & Schadn from noon until late at night in one of its nearly 160 seats – or in one of the additional 40 outdoor seats in front of the restaurant during warm weather. A stylish extra room in the back area is available for private and business celebrations.

GULASCH & SÖHNE

Florian Weitzer's idea of creating a meeting place for locals with every new restaurant concept comes once again to fruition in another eating establishment, accessible from the street. The Grand Ferdinand is home to Gulasch & Söhne, a place where the general public and guests alike can begin and wind down an evening spent at the ball or one spent taking in Vienna's cultural life. Or where people stop by for breakfast or a snack. From early morning on, the bistro serves breakfast classics, goulash and sausages along with the finest champagne or an inexpensive glass of Velkopopovický beer – in a cultivated yet cosy atmosphere with a large bar and Terrazzo floors.

LIMÓN

With the culinary delights of Italy, France, and Spain on the plate and a spectacular view over the city rooftops, Grand Ferdinand unveils the latest gem of its gastronomy in December 2023. The new Rooftop Restaurant & Bar, named Limón (often lovingly called Cucina Limón), opens with a redesign and a new concept on the eighth floor of Grand Ferdinand. It promotes a lifestyle full of enjoyment and savoir-vivre – an ode to the South, reflected in the Mediterranean ambiance, on the terrace, and, notably, on the menu. From Bouillabaisse Marseillaise to Cotoletta alla Milanese to Pollo a la Mallorquina – at Limón, one can embark on an evening journey from the Côte d'Azur to the Amalfi Coast, then onward to Mallorca and back. The bar offerings also align with Aperitivo culture, with a special focus on the Italian cult drink, Campari. The introduction of a Mediterranean way of life to the otherwise Austrian-influenced Grand Ferdinand on the Ringstraße is credited to the travel passion of Florian Weitzer, who brings together the best from the culinary worlds of France, Italy, and Spain. During the day, the rooftop remains exclusively open to hotel guests for breakfast, a drink at the bar, or a refreshing dip in the pool. However, every Tuesday to Saturday evening, Limón opens its doors to everyone – both hotel guests and external ones.

GRAND FERDINAND

It wouldn't be a Florian Weitzer hotel without surprising details – enjoying extravagance at the Grand Ferdinand

Florian Weitzer has once again re-imagined the hotel experience at his fifth hotel. The elegance of the Grand Ferdinand's old structure is graced with one unexpected touch after another. Not only is the view from the top floors one of a kind; from the restaurant, guests look directly into a courtyard, the „oasis", filled with unusual plants and an old stone fountain. Special, beautiful pieces from Austria's old hotel tradition are also on display in the back of the restaurant: Augarten porcelain, Lobmeyr glass and items from Wiener Silber Manufactur. The exhibit is an homage to a time in Vienna in which nothing was more meaningful than embodying what was good. Some products by traditional Austrian manufactures, such as Mühlbauer Hutmanufaktur or Wäscheflott, can even be purchased at the Grand Ferdinand Shop next to the reception desk. Also of note are the cement floor tiles, hand-crafted using a centuries-old method and featuring an elegant pattern, which make up most of the ground floor. And not to be forgotten are the Lobmeyr chandeliers in the restaurant and in the lobby, just next to the landmarked main entrance. This is exactly where the majestical horse, taxidermied by Maison Deyrolle in Paris, is placed.

Architecture – a journey from office building to the Grand Ferdinand

After Hotel Daniel Vienna, this transformation from an office building to a hotel is another collaboration between Weitzer Hotels and Atelier Heiss Architekten. The massive reinforced concrete building, whose sandstone and black granite façade and red marble vestibule are landmarked, dates from the 1950s. Although the building is more recent than most of its neighbours, its history is just as rich.

The mansion built at Schubertring 12 during the Ringstraße era suffered damage during the Second World War and was completely rebuilt in the 1950s according to plans by Percy Farber and Walter Sobotka. After serving as the headquarters of Veitscher Magnesitwerken, it was Austria's Office for the Protection of the Constitution, and finally came under the ownership of Karl Wlaschek and Amisola Immobilien AG. When work began in Spring 2014 in accordance with hotelier Florian Weitzer's wish to give the existing building a touch of grandeur and elegance while respecting its rich history, the building was nearly completely hollowed out, two courtyard wings were demolished and rebuilt, and the ground floor was opened up to the second level. As a result of this work, some of the rooms on the first floor are accessible from a gallery and are at eye level with the restaurant's gorgeous chandeliers. The ground floor is the best example of the triumphant return of timeless beauty and elegance to Schubertring 10-12. It houses the main entrance at the centre with the restaurant and courtyard to one side and the reception and Gulasch & Söhne to the other side, arranged in the shape of a letter E.

The opulent spaciousness culminates in a view through floor-to-ceiling windows directly from the street to the restaurant and courtyard beyond. The opening of the hotel in 2015 returned the building to its former well-deserved standing on the Ringstraße.

Facts – Grand Ferdinand

ADDRESS:

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www.grandferdinand.com

CATEGORY:

Boutique Design Hotel

SITE:

Ringstraße, midway through the centre, very close to the Vienna State Opera, diagonally opposite Hotel Imperial & Schwarzenbergplatz

GETTING TO/FROM THE HOTEL:

Airport: 30 minutes by taxi, train or bus;
Vienna Central Station: 10 minutes by taxi or tram

PARKING:

Valet Parking in Corso Garage

FINE FARE :

Meissl & Schadn
(opening hours: see website)
Gulasch & Söhne
(opening hours: see website)
Limón
(opening hours: see website)

SPECIALS:

3 restaurants, rooftop pool for hotel guests, fitness studio with state-of-the-art-equipment, free WIFI throughout the hotel, Grand Ferdinand Shop with pyjamas by Wäsche-flott, hats by Mühlbauer, Grand Ferdinand soap, bodylotion and glasses by Zwiesel

ROOMS:

186 rooms

Petit Chic (approx. 20 m², king-size bed, chaise longue, minibar, wooden flooring, rain shower, coffee machine)

Charmant Chic (approx. 20 m², same amenities as Petit Chic plus a champagne bar and a view of the quiet inner courtyard)

Grand Chic (approx. 25 m², same amenities as above plus a desk; some rooms are wheelchair accessible)

Petite Suite (6th floor, 30 m², junior suite, view of the inner courtyard, private terrace)

4x Grande Suite (ca. 45m², on the 7th floor, 17 m² balcony, free-standing bathtub, champagne bar)

1x Ferdinand Suite (100m², two-room suite, on the 7th floor, 17 m2 balcony, free-standing bathtub, champagne bar, private access to the rooftop)

1 dormitory
(eight-person room)

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The pleasure is all mine, Grand Ferdinand.