

Some suggestions about Vienna (things to do)

Coffee Houses

Viennese coffee houses (*das Wiener Kaffeehaus*) are a typical institution of Vienna that has played an important part in shaping Viennese culture.

The social practices, the rituals, the elegance create the very specific atmosphere within the Viennese café. Coffee Houses entice with a wide variety of coffee drinks, international newspapers, and pastries.

The most famous Coffee Houses are: Sacher Cafè, Cafè Central, as well as Cafè Prueckel.



Kunsthistorisches Museum Vienna

The **Kunsthistorisches Museum** (lit. "Museum Art History", also often referred to as the "Museum of Fine Arts") is housed in a palatial building on Ringstraße. It is crowned with an octagonal dome. The term *Kunsthistorisches Museum* applies to both the institution and the main building. It is the largest art museum in the country and one of the most important museums in the world.

Emperor Franz Joseph I of Austria-Hungary opened the facility around 1891, at the same time as the Natural History Museum in Vienna which has a similar design and is directly across from Maria-Theresien-Platz.



Spanische Hofreitschule

The world-famous performances by the Lipizzans– the Ballet of the White Stallions – take place in the unique, baroque Winter Riding School at Hofburg (Imperial Palace), built under Charles VI.

These performances are the result of years of training for the rider and their Lipizzans.



The Prater and the Giant Ferris Wheel

Visiting the Prater, a large natural park between the Danube and the Danube Canal, is a little like stepping into another world. Covering an area of 3,200 acres, this vast park–once a royal hunting ground–has long been one of Vienna's most popular recreation areas.

One of the highlights for sightseers is taking a ride on the famous **Giant Wheel**, a Viennese landmark that has provided fine views over the city since 1896 (if you can afford it, go for the super luxurious cabin, suitable for parties of up to 12).



Vienna City Hall (Rathaus)

Vienna's City Hall (Weiner Rathaus) is an impressive Neo-Gothic building that serves as the city's administrative centre. Remarkable for its size, it occupies nearly 14,000 square metres of the former Parade Ground, this attractive building was completed in 1883 and is notable for the famous Rathausmann on top of its 98-metre-high tower, a iron figure carrying a banner, that was presented to the city as a gift from its master locksmith.



What to eat in Wien

I love the food in Vienna! There are so many choices when deciding what to eat so I tracked down some of the best traditional Viennese food that you simply must try while you are there.

Wiener Schnitzel Usually served with a slice of lemon and potatoes, this is my favorite Viennese dish. Although traditionally made with veal, pork schnitzel is very common, and often cheaper than the veal version.



Sachertorte The classic Austrian dessert, Sachertorte is a chocolate cake, topped with a thin layer of apricot jam and smooth chocolate ganache. The cake was first created

by Franz Sacher, who was instructed to create a new dessert for Prince von Metternich in 1832.



Tafelspitz is a dish of boiled beef, served with horseradish and/or apple sauce and usually potatoes.



Goulash Similar to the goulash in Hungary and Czech Republic, goulash is a thick meat stew usually made with beef and flavored with paprika, tomato, and other spices.



Apple Strudel Austrians definitely have a sweet tooth. Apple strudel is one of the most famous desserts in Austria, and all around this area of Europe. Made with pastry stuffed with apples, raisins, and flavoured with cinnamon and a sprinkling of sugar, apple strudel, or apfelstrudel as it is called here, makes for a great dessert, or as a sweet snack with your coffee.

Würstel (Viennese Sausage) Oh yes, Austrians love a good sausage, and Vienna is no different. On pretty much every street in Vienna, you will find fast food places selling

various types of wüerstels. Unlike typical hotdogs in the US or UK, wüstel sausages in Vienna are served sliced, with a generous dollop of mustard and/or ketchup, with a couple of slices of bread or a roll on the side.



What to drink in Wien

In **Viennese coffee houses**, you may drink a *Franziskaner* which is an Austrian coffee that consists of a combination of espresso and milk. Extra finely ground roasted coffee beans are combined with cold water (and sometimes sugar) in a traditional coffee pot called a *cezve* or *ibrik*, and then brewed over a low heat until frothy and on the verge of coming to the boil, yielding a uniquely strong and rich Turkish coffee. It is then topped with hefty amounts of whipped cream, which is occasionally garnished with chocolate sprinkles or a dusting of cocoa powder.



In the **Cantines** you can taste Austrian White Wines like the Gruener Veltliner. This famed dry white wine is produced mostly in Austria but also in Slovakia and the Czech Republic. It is believed to date back to Roman times while its name is derived from *Veltlin*—German for *Valtellina valley* in the north of Italy or the *Rotgipfler*, that is a native Austrian grape variety that is now mostly cultivated in Thermen region. The grape was traditionally used in blends—most commonly with Zierfandler—but many producers now see its potential as an excellent grape that can produce aromatic dry and off-dry wines.



In all the local bars, you may try *Viennese Beers*. Vienna and Austria in general have a very strong beer culture, with your average Austrian consuming just over 100 litres (176 pints) of the stuff each year! And like Czech beer, Austrian beer is very high quality. All the major breweries (as far as I'm aware) brew to the standards enshrined in the Bavarian Rheinheitsgebot of 1516, which declared that beer be made from nothing more than water, malt and hops (they didn't know about yeast back then).

