

WELCOME TO AUSTRIA!

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Welcome to Austria, the heart of our old continent. Admire its charm and its mountainous landscape, its crystal-clear lakes, where you can see the top of the snowy mountains, admire the architecture of the cities, the traditional music, the impressive culture and last but not least the unique atmosphere of the ski resorts.



The beautiful cities can make you their “prisoner” but you do not want to escape. Vienna is the capital of the country and the nucleus of European music. Music, art and architecture reach perfection in Salzburg, the place birth of Mozart. Even a one-day shopping experience in these cities can become an unforgettable one.



The History of Austria

The history of Austria is, just like that of the majority of the European states, extremely agitated. But, throughout the centuries, the unique elements of the Austrian character were preserved and cultivated. More than anything else, the passion for refinement, beauty helped the country go on.

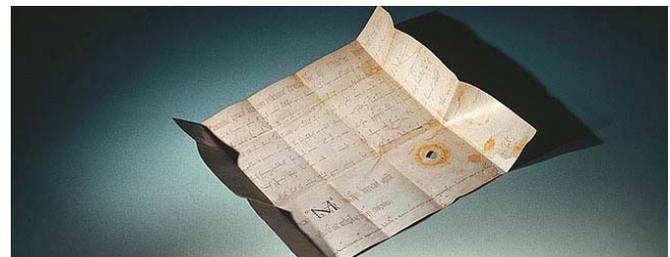


During the Migration Period the Slavic tribe of the Carantanians migrated into the Alps mixed with the Celto-Romanic population, and established the realm of Carantania, which covered much of eastern and central Austrian territory. In the meantime, the Germanic tribe of the Bavarians had developed in the 5th and 6th century in the west of the country and in Bavaria, while what is today Vorarlberg had been settled by the Alemans. Those groups mixed with the Rhaeto-Romanic population and pushed it up into the mountains.

During the following centuries, Bavarian settlers went down the Danube and up the Alps, a process through which Austria was to become the mostly German-speaking country it is today. The first record showing the name Austria dates from 996 where it is written as Ostarrîchi.

Babenberger: the builder of Austria.

Babenberger establishes his residence at Pöchlarn, and later at Melk. The territory is colonized, monasteries are built. In the first half of the 12th century, Austria is Duchy of Heinrich Jasomirgott, and Vienna becomes the capital.



In 1278, the Habsburg family succeeded in securing Austria for their house. Once they were sorted, Habsburgs became Emperors of the Holy Roman Empire of German Nation in 1452.

In the 16th century the Baroque Empress Maria Theresa and her son Emperor Joseph II modernized Austria and introduced many reforms driven by new ideas of enlightenment.

In the late 18th century, the French revolution shocked Europe's nobility. Its ideas of freedom and equality and spreading nationalism were fought with a stubborn policy of censorship and suppression by the Habsburgs. In 1806, the Holy Roman Empire was extinguished when Franz I resigned and later declared himself Emperor of Austria in response to Napoleon's coronation. After the Napoleonic Wars, Europe looked for a new order at the Vienna Congress.

Around 1900, Vienna was one of the biggest cities in the World and its intellectual and cultural life peaked again.



The waltz king Johann Strauß celebrated his triumph all over the world. Sigmund Freud develops psychoanalysis. In 1900 the Viennese Jugendstil brings unique works. Famous painters like Gustav Klimt și Egon Schiele astonish, just like the architects Otto Wagner and Adolf Loos. A walk along Ringstraße in Viena, a visit at the Sisi or Sigmund Freud museums, but also at the Belvedere Gallery allow us to have a detailed opinion on this epoch.



When the Archduke of Austria was shot by a Serbian nationalist, World War I started in 1914. It left millions dead and was a disaster for the Austrian-Hungarian Empire, which split into many tiny countries. The Habsburg reign ended in 1919, when Austria turned into a Republic.

After World War II, much of the infrastructure was destroyed. With international help, much was re-built in the following years. In 1955, Austria declared its neutrality and re-gained full sovereignty. The neutral status allowed the country to establish itself as a bridge between East and West during the Cold War.

Vienna became a centre for international organisations like the UN. The economy recovered and in the 1970s, Social Democrat governments shaped Austria through a pronounced socialist tradition similar to Scandinavia. After the Iron Curtain had fallen, Austria was back at the heart of Europe. It joined the EU in 1995 and introduced the Euro in 2002.



VIENNA'S PARLIAMENT



Austrian Flora

Due to its rich topographical diversity Austria has a large array of plants. Austria is mainly a forested area, and 44% of its land is covered by forests. Oak and beech at low altitudes, and at higher elevations conifers flourish here. Orchids, edelweiss and poppies are quite common here. Typical for the country are the deciduous forests (oak, beech) and the mixed forests (beech, fir) plus woods of fir, larch and pine in the higher altitudes.

Flowers like edelweiss, gentians, alpine carnations, arnicas, alpine roses, heathers, ornaments Austrian land with different colors. Grazing grounds and meadows occupies the northern alps. Scrub forests, deciduous forests and steppe moors are predominant in

Austria.



Austrian Fauna

Central European animals such as deer, stags, rabbits, pheasants, foxes, badgers, martens and partridges can easily be seen in Austria. Alpine animals like Chamois, groundhogs, eagles and mountain jackdaws are dominant in Austrian regions. Heavily wooded southern and central mountainous regions are famous for variety of small bears. Lipizzaner (pure white horse), Ibex (a mountain goat with huge curved horns) and marmots (cute little furry features) and chamois (horned goat like an antelope) are some valuable assets of the Austrian fauna. Red-deer stag, fallow-deer stag, mouflon ram, roe-deer buck and wild-boar are found in Austrian region.

