

CYCLING AUSTRIA DANUBE RIVER PASSAU-VIENNA



General Information

Austria History at a glance ...

The origins of Austria today date back to the time of the Habsburg dynasty as a part of the Holy Empire of German Nation; Austria became one of the great powers of Europe. In 1867, the Austrian Empire was reformed into Austria-Hungary. The Habsburg (Austro-Hungarian) Empire collapsed in 1918 with the end of World War I. The First Austrian Republic, a German State was established in 1919. In the 1938 Anschluss, Austria was occupied and annexed by Nazi Germany. This lasted until the end of World War II in 1945, after which Nazi Germany was occupied by the Allies and Austria's former democratic constitution was restored. In 1955, the Austrian State Treaty re-established Austria as a sovereign state, ending the occupation. In the same year, the Austrian Parliament created the Declaration of Neutrality which declared that the Second Austrian Republic would become permanently neutral. Today, Austria is one of the richest countries in the world, with a nominal per capita GDP of \$43,723 (2010 est.). The country has developed a high standard of living and in 2010 was ranked 25th in the world for its Human Development Index.

Weather

The greater part of Austria lies in the cool/temperate climate zone in which humid westerly winds predominate. With over half of the country dominated by the Alps, the alpine climate is the predominant one. In the east—in the Pannonian Plain and along the Danube valley—the climate shows continental features with less rain than the alpine areas. Although Austria is cold in the winter (−10 – 0 °C), summer temperatures can be relatively warm, with average temperatures in the mid-20s and record temperatures in the mid to high 30s°C

Loved by many this cycle trail is the most famous in Europe. Experience smooth cycling on dedicated cycle paths on this flat route. On this bicycle tour, navigate your way with ease through towns with bike friendly services. From Passau, the "City of 3 rivers" because it lies at the confluence of the Danube, Inn and Ilz rivers, you cycle alongside the Danube, in a deep river valley with castles and churches perched overlooking the river. See the romantic river meander near the town of Schlögen and the vineyards, meadows and orchards of the Wachau wine region. Cycle through small towns with rich cultural heritage, Melk with its beautiful monastery, Grein, Krems and finally to Vienna.

Austrian Cuisine

Breakfast is of the "continental" type, usually consisting of bread rolls with either jam or cold meats and cheese, accompanied by coffee, tea or juice. The midday meal was traditionally the main meal of the day, but in modern times as Austrians work longer hours further from home this is no longer the case. The main meal is now often taken in the evening.

A mid-morning or mid-afternoon snack of a slice of bread topped with cheese or ham is referred to as a *Jause*, and a more substantial version akin to a British "Ploughman's Lunch" is called a *Brettljause* after the wooden board on which it is traditionally served.

The most popular meats in Austria are pork, beef and chicken. The famous Wiener Schnitzel is traditionally made of veal. Pork in particular is used extensively, with many dishes using offal and parts such as the snout and trotters. Austrian butchers use a number of special cuts of meat, including "Tafelspitz" (beef), and

"Fledermaus" (pork), named for its shape which resembles a bat. Austrian cuisine has many different sausages, like "Frankfurter", "Debreziner" (named after Debrecen in Hungary), or "Burnwurst", "Blunzn" made out of pig-blood and "Grüne Würstl" - green sausages. Green means raw in this context – the sausages are air dried and are consumed boiled. Bacon in Austria is called

"Speck", bacon can be smoked, raw, salted, spiced etc. Bacon is used in many traditional recipes as a salty spice. *Vanillerostrbraten* is a beef dish prepared with lots of garlic.



Some other popular dishes include the following:

Rindsuppe—(beef soup) a clear soup with golden color.

Tafelspitz—beef boiled in broth, often served with apple and horseradish sauce)

Gulasch—a hotpot similar to Hungarian *pörkölt* - Austrian goulash is eaten often with rolls, bread or dumplings ("Semmelknödel")

Beuschel—(a ragout containing calf lungs and heart)

Liptauer—spicy cheese spread, eaten on a slice of bread

Selchfleisch—(smoked, then cooked meat) with Sauerkraut and dumplings.

Powidl—a thick sweet and spicy jam made from plums.

Apfelstrudel—apple strudel

Topfenstrudel—cream cheese strudel

Palatschinken—pancakes similar to French Crêpes, filled with marmalade, jam, sprinkled with sugar etc. They are also served in savory versions i.e. with spinach and cheese.

Kaiserschmarrn—soft, fluffy pancake ripped into bites and slightly roasted in a pan, served with applesauce or stewed plums.

Germknödel—a fluffy yeast dough dumpling filled with spicy plum jam (Powidl), garnished with melted butter and a mix of poppy seeds and powdered sugar, sometimes served with vanilla cream.



Passau

Known as the Dreiflüssestadt or "City of Three Rivers", much of the city's culture and tourism is centered around the 3 convening rivers. Passau was an ancient Roman colony of ancient Noricum called Batavis. In 739, an English Celtic monk called Boniface founded the diocese of Passau and this was the largest diocese of the Holy Roman Empire for many years. During the Renaissance and early modern period, Passau was one of the most prolific centers of sword and bladed weapon manufacture in Germany. Passau smiths stamped their blades with the Passau wolf, usually a rather simplified rendering of the wolf on the city's coat-of-arms. Superstitious warriors believed that the Passau wolf conferred invulnerability on the blade's bearer, and thus Passau swords acquired a great premium. As a result, the whole practice of placing magical charms on swords to protect the wearers came to be known for a time as "Passau art."



Passau sights

Some recommended sights while in Passau include:

- St. Stephen's Cathedral

With 17,774 pipes and 233 registers World's second largest cathedral organ. Concerts held daily, May-September. The Cathedral is also renowned for its Baroque architecture.

- "Veste Oberhaus"

Founded in 1219, the Passau landmark served as a fortress to the Bishop. The fortress was attacked 5 times, but was never conquered. Today, the fortress is home to a museum, restaurant, and youth hostel.

For more information about Passau, including recommended restaurants, bars, and shopping districts go to:
<http://www.english.passau.de>



The Danube River

The Danube originates in the Black Forest of Germany where the small Brigach and Breg rivers join. Traversing some 2850 km, the river is the second largest in Europe. Passing through or acting as a border to Germany, Austria, Slovakia, Hungary, Croatia, Serbia, Bulgaria, Moldova, Ukraine, and Romania, the river then empties into the Black Sea, the river way

is considered an international waterway. The Danube is navigable by ocean ships from the Black Sea to Brăila in Romania and by river ships to Kelheim, Bavaria, Germany; smaller craft can navigate further upstream to Ulm, Württemberg, Germany.



At Schlogen, the river's drastic bend makes for quite a beautiful scene. Bending nearly 180 degrees, the river changes course from southeast to northwest before continuing east.

The Sauwald

The plateau like area south of the Danube is known as the Sauwald and runs for about 40 km parallel to the river. The majority of the Sauwald is spruce forest, speckled with



wooded boulders and granite outcroppings. Paired with the plateau's sharp descent into the southern bank of the Danube, this makes for a picturesque scene.

Did you know?

Austrian cakes and pastries are a well-known feature of its cuisine. Perhaps the most famous is the Sachertorte, a chocolate cake with apricot jam filling, traditionally eaten with whipped cream. Among the cakes with the longest tradition is the



Wilhering Monastery

The monastery was founded by Ulrich and Kolo of Wilhering, who gave the family's old castle to the cause, in accordance with the wish of their deceased father, after the family had moved to their new castle. The monastery's long history is not without struggles along the way. It was settled initially by [Augustinian Canons](#), but in the first years the new foundation was beset with problems, and in 1146 Ulrich replaced the canons with [Cistercian](#) monks. However, after less than forty years only two monks remained. the monastery was re-settled by monks from Ebrach. The abbey almost came to end during the [Reformation](#), when the then abbot, Erasmus Mayer, absconded with its funds to [Nuremberg](#), where he married, and by 1585 there were no monks left at all. The abbey was only saved by the efforts of Abbot Alexander a Lacu. The abbey buildings were almost entirely destroyed by fire in 1733 and was entirely rebuilt in the Rococo style. For this it has been said by some that the Wilhering Monastery is the most brilliant example of the Rococo style in the German speaking world.



The Ars Electronica Center



A museum and science center featuring hands on exhibition interactive displays. Take a break from the immense amount of Austria of the past and visit "The Museum of the Future".

Open: Tuesday-Friday 9-5

Saturday-Sunday 10-6

Admission: 7 euro

With a short walk from the Center, visit the Lentos Modern Art Museum, a building with similar glowing façade after dark.

Linz

The city is home to a vibrant music and arts scene that is well-funded by the city and the state of Upper Austria. Between the Lentos Art Museum and the "Brucknerhaus", is the "Donaulände", which is also referred to as "Kulturmeile" ("culture mile"). This is a park alongside the river, which is used mainly by young people to relax and meet in summer. It is also used for the Ars Electronica Festival and the "Linz Fest". Linz has other culture institutions, such as the Posthof, which is near the harbor, and the Stadtwerkstatt, which is by the Danube river. The Pflasterspektakel, an international street art festival, takes place each year in July in and around the Landstraße and the main square. Linz was the European Capital of Culture in 2009, along with Vilnius, the capital of Lithuania.

Linz and Adolf Hitler

Adolf Hitler was born in the border town of Braunau am Inn but moved to Linz in his childhood. Hitler spent most of his youth in the Linz area, from 1898 until 1907, when he left for Vienna. The family lived first in the village of Leonding on the outskirts of town, and then in an apartment on the Humboldtstrasse in Linz itself. Hitler's parents are buried in Leonding. After elementary education in Leonding, Hitler was enrolled in the *Realschule* (school) in Linz.

The association of the city with Hitler's childhood warranted an allusion in a poem by W.H. Auden, September 1, 1939: *"Accurate scholarship can/Unearth the whole offense/ From Luther until now/ That has driven a culture mad, Find what occurred at Linz...."* To the end of his life, Hitler considered Linz to be his "home town", and envisioned extensive architectural schemes for it, wanting it to become the main cultural center of the Third Reich. In order to make the city economically vibrant, Hitler initiated a major industrialization of Linz shortly before, and during, World War II. Many factories were dismantled in the newly-acquired Czechoslovakia and then reassembled in Linz. The Mauthausen-Gusen concentration camp, located near Linz, was the last Nazi concentration camp to be liberated by the Allies. While in operation, they were the source of quarrying for stone for Hitler's prestige projects across the Reich. The main camp in Mauthausen is just 25 kilometres (16 mi) away from Linz.



Austria as a Destination

When it comes to world travel, Austria may not be the first destination that comes to mind. But with the picturesque castles, deep rooted culture, scenic parks and medieval villages there is actually a lot more to offer than one may initially think. Located at the heart of Europe, Austria is home to a number of UNESCO World Heritage Sites and produce some of the world's most popular beers. The landscape's rolling hills and peaceful valleys makes it the perfect location to cycle and a particularly enchanting place for cycling enthusiasts. Enjoy the adventure of the ride while experiencing all the beauty and charm of Austria. For these reasons and countless others, a bike trip through Austria should be on any cyclist's wish list.



More Linz: Art

The recently built Lentos (2003) is a modern art gallery, presenting art from the 20th and 21st centuries. It is situated on the south banks of the river Danube. The building can be illuminated at night from the inside with blue, pink, red, and violet, due to its glass casing.

The Ars Electronica Center (AEC) is a museum and research facility on the north bank of the Danube (in the Urfahr district), across the river from the Hauptplatz (main square). The AEC is a significant world center for new media arts, attracting a large gathering of technologically-oriented artists every year for the Ars Electronica festival. The AEC museum is home to one of the few public 3D CAVES in Europe.



Mauthausen Concentration Camp (known from the summer of 1940 as Mauthausen-Gusen Concentration Camp) grew to become a large group of Nazi concentration camps that was built around the villages of Mauthausen and Gusen in Upper Austria, roughly 20 kilometres (12 mi) east of the city of Linz.

Initially a single camp at Mauthausen, it expanded over time and by the summer of 1940, the Mauthausen-Gusen had become one of the largest labor camp complexes in German-controlled Europe. Apart from the four main sub-camps at Mauthausen and nearby Gusen, more than 50 sub-camps, located throughout Austria and southern Germany, used the inmates as slave labor. Several subordinate camps of the KZ Mauthausen complex included quarries, munitions factories, mines, arms factories and Me 262 fighter-plane assembly plants. In January 1945, the camps, directed from the central office in Mauthausen, contained roughly 85,000 inmates.



Melk Monastery

One of the world's most famous monastic sites. Today's impressive Baroque abbey was built between 1702 and 1736 to designs by Jakob Prandtauer. Particularly

noteworthy is the abbey church with frescos by Johann Michael Rottmayr and the impressive library with countless medieval manuscripts. Due to its fame and academic stature, Melk managed to escape dissolution under Emperor Joseph II when many other Austrian abbeys were seized and dissolved between 1780 and 1790. The abbey managed to survive other threats to its existence during the Napoleonic Wars, and also in the period following the Nazi Anschluss that took control of Austria in 1938, when the school and a large part of the abbey were confiscated by the state. The school was returned to the abbey after the Second World War and now caters for nearly 900 pupils of both sexes.

Maria Taferl

Located in the Nibelungengau on a bank over the Danube. The town's church became a famous pilgrimage. Built in 1660, According to an inscription in the building's interior, the building of the church gave the local inhabitants new courage after the Plague, the Turkish Wars, and the Thirty Years' War had all taken their toll and exhibit the power to cure ailments of those who visited.

Tulln

Tulln is one of the oldest cities in Austria. At one point it was seen as a very important city, vying for status as the country's capitol, but eventually fading under Vienna. Because of its abundance of parks and other green spaces, Tulln is often referred to as Blumenstadt, meaning "city of flowers". According to the Nibelungenlied, an epic poem, it was in Tulln that Attila the Hun saw Gudrun and proposed to her. A fountain, the *Nibelungen-Brunnen* was dedicated to this event in 2005.



Austrian wines are mostly dry white wines (often made from the Grüner Veltliner grape) with some luscious dessert wines made around the Neusiedler See. About

30% of the wines are red, made from Blaufränkisch (also known as Lemberger, or as Kékfrankos in neighbouring Hungary), Pinot Noir and locally bred varieties such as Zweigelt. Four thousand years of winemaking history counted for little after the "antifreeze scandal" of 1985, when it was revealed that some wine brokers had been adulterating their wines with diethylene glycol. The scandal destroyed the market for Austrian wine, but in the long term has been a force for good, compelling Austria to tackle low standards of bulk wine production, and reposition itself as a producer of quality wines that stand comparison with the best in the world. The country is also home to Riedel, makers of some of the most expensive wine glasses in the world.



The Wienerwald Forest

Literally meaning the Vienna forest, Wienerwald forest lies just outside of the capitol city. The pre alpine forest is a tranquil place, with many different types of trees, including pines, firs, oaks and beeches. There is plenty of wildlife, unlike many places in Europe where civilization has encroached on nature. In 2005 it was named a Biosphere Reserve. If

you have extra time in Vienna and still have not gotten your fill of cycling, visit the Wienerwald forest for over 250 km of mountain biking trails for all levels of riders.

Museumsquartier—Vienna

The Hofburg is the location of the Schatzkammer (treasury), holding the imperial jewels of the Habsburg dynasty. The Sisi Museum (a museum devoted to Empress Elisabeth Amalie Eugenie of Austria) allows visitors to view the imperial apartments as well as the silver cabinet. Directly opposite the Hofburg are the Kunsthistorisches Museum, which houses many paintings by old masters, ancient and classical artifacts, and the Naturhistorisches Museum.



A number of museums are located in the Museumsquartier (museum quarter), the former Imperial Stalls which were converted into a museum complex in the 1990s. It houses the Museum of Modern Art, commonly known as the MUMOK (Ludwig Foundation), the Leopold Museum (featuring the largest collection of paintings in the world by Egon Schiele, as well as works by the Vienna Secession, Viennese Modernism and Austrian Expressionism), the AzW (museum of architecture), additional halls with feature exhibitions, and the Tanzquartier. The Liechtenstein Palace contains one of the world's largest private art collections of the baroque. Castle Belvedere, built under Prinz Eugen, has a gallery containing paintings by Gustav Klimt (The Kiss), Egon Schiele, and other painters of the early 20th century, also sculptures by Franz Xaver Messerschmidt, and changing exhibitions too.

Vienna

The Capitol of the republic of Austria and the largest city of the country, home to nearly a quarter of Austria's population. Recently the city has been awarded accolades for its high quality of life, some organizations naming it the best in the world!

Schönbrunn Palace

The former 1,400 room, "summer residence", palace of the Habsburg monarchs. Now open to the public, the palace displays the culture and tastes of the royalty of Austria's past. Features the world's oldest zoo.

Art and Culture

Art and culture have a long tradition in Vienna, including theatre, opera, classical music and fine arts. The Burgtheater is considered one of the best theatres in the German-speaking world alongside its branch. Vienna is also home to a number of opera houses, including the Theater an der Wien, the Staatsoper and the Volksoper, the latter being devoted to the typical Viennese operetta. Classical concerts are performed at well known venues such as the Wiener Musikverein, home of the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, and the Wiener Konzerthaus. Vienna also features a large number of museums, having several museum "districts" including the Museumsquartier, housing the Museum of Modern Art, AzW (museum of architecture), and the Leopold Museum



Historic Center of Vienna UNESCO World Heritage Site

Vienna developed from early Celtic and Roman settlements into a Medieval and Baroque city, the capital of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. It played an essential role as a leading European music centre, from the great age of Viennese Classicism through the early part of the 20th century. The historic centre of Vienna is rich in architectural ensembles, including Baroque castles and gardens, as well as the late-19th-century Ringstrasse lined with grand buildings, monuments and parks. In addition, since the 16th century Vienna has been universally acknowledged to be the musical capital of Europe.