

Vienna Itinerary

January 7

6 p.m. Arrive Vienna

Y Make train reservations for Jan. 9 train

January 8

Walking tour of Vienna (weather permitting)

Start: Staatsoper (State Opera House) Time: 3 hours.

U Begin at the southernmost loop of Ringstrasse, the beltway that encircles most of the historic core of the city.

1. Staatsoper (State Opera House)-- On Opernring, walk 1 block north pedestrian street, Kärntnerstrasse. Turn left behind the arcaded bulk of the State Opera onto Philharmonikerstrasse. On the right side, you'll see:

2. Hotel Sacher--

Take A Break--If you'd rather indulge in heartier fare than the coffeehouses offer, try the Augustinerkeller, Augustinerstrasse 1 (tel. 01/533-1026), in the basement of the Hofburg palace sheltering the Albertina collection. This popular wine tavern, open daily from 11am to midnight, offers wine, beer, and Austrian food.

In the same building as your rest stop is the:

3. Albertina (17% off)--A monumental staircase in the building's side supports the equestrian statue that dominates the square. Its subject is Field Marshal Archduke Albrecht, in honor of a battle he won in 1866.

Adjacent to Albertinaplatz, at Lobkowitzplatz 2, lies one of the many baroque jewels of Vienna. Its position is confusing because of the rows of buildings partially concealing it. To get here, walk about 50 paces to the right of the Albertina. This is the:

4. Lobkowitz Palace--This privately owned building existed in smaller form at the time of the second Turkish siege of Vienna.

At the far end of Lobkowitzplatz, take Gluckgasse past a series of antiques shops filled with Art Deco jewelry and silverware. At the end of the block, at Tegetthoffstrasse, go left. About 50 paces later, you'll be in front of the deceptively simple facade of the:

5. Church of the Capuchin Friars-- Despite its humble appearance, the Kapuzinerkirche contains the burial vaults of every Habsburg ruler since 1633. The portal of this church marks the beginning of Neuer Markt, whose perimeter is lined with rows of houses. The square's centerpiece is:

6. Donner Fountain--Holding a snake, the gracefully undraped Goddess of Providence is attended by four laughing cherubs struggling with fish.

Now take the street stretching west from the side of the fountain, Plankengasse, where a yellow baroque church fills the space at the end of the street. As you approach it, you'll pass an array of shops filled with alluring old-fashioned merchandise. Museum-quality antique clocks fill the store at

Plankengasse 6 and its next-door neighbor at the corner of Dorotheergasse.

Turn left when you reach Dorotheergasse, past the Italianate bulk of no. 17. This is one of the most historic auction houses of Europe, the:
7. Dorotheum--Established in 1707, it was rebuilt in the neo-baroque style in 1901.

About half a block later, turn right onto Augustinerstrasse, which borders the labyrinth of palaces, museums, and public buildings known as the:

8. Hofburg (13% off)--Roaring traffic usually diminishes the grime-encrusted grandeur of this narrow street with darkened stone walls.

In about half a block you'll arrive at:

9. Josefsplatz--A huge equestrian statue of Joseph II seems to be storming the gate of no. 5, the Palffy Palace, originally built around 1575 with a combination of classical and Renaissance motifs. Two pairs of relaxed caryatids guard the entrance. Next door, at no. 6, is another once-glittering private residence, the Palavicini Palace. A few steps later, a pedestrian tunnel leads past the:

10. Spanish Riding School (Spanische Reitschule)--

Michaelerplatz now opens to your view. At Michaelerplatz 3, opposite the six groups of combative statues, is a streamlined building with rows of unadorned windows. This is the:

11. Loos House--Designed in 1910. A covered tunnel that empties both pedestrians and automobiles into the square takes you beneath the Hofburg complex. Notice the passageway's elaborate ceiling. When you eventually emerge from the tunnel, you'll find yourself surrounded by the magnificent curves of:

12. Heldenplatz--Its carefully constructed symmetry seems to dictate that each of the stately buildings bordering it.

Gardens stretch out in well-maintained splendor. To continue the tour, put spaced columns of the Hofburg's curved facade behind you and walk cater-corner to the far end of the palace's right wing. At Ballhausplatz 2, notice the:

13. Chancellery--Here, Count Kaunitz plotted with Maria Theresa to expand the influence of her monarchy.

Walk along the side of the Chancellery's adjacent gardens, along Lowelstrasse. Notice the window trim of some of the buildings along the way, each of which seems to have its own ox, satyr, cherub, or Neptune carved above it. Continue until you reach the:

14. Burgtheater--This is the national theater of Austria. Destroyed in World War II, it reopened in 1955.

At the Burgtheater, make a sharp right turn onto Bankgasse. On your right at no. 9 is the:

15. Palais Liechtenstein (10% off)--An ornate beauty, the building was completed in the early 18th century.

A few buildings farther on, pause at nos. 4-6, the:

16. Hungarian Embassy--You'll see stone garlands and catch glimpses of crystal

chandeliers.

Now retrace your steps for about half a block until you reach Abraham-a-Sancta-Clara-Gasse. At its end, on Minoritenplatz, you'll see the severe Gothic facade of the:

17. Church of the Minorites-- Walk behind the blackened bulk of the church to the curve of the building's rear. At this point some maps might lead you astray. Regardless of the markings on your map, look for Leopold-Figl-Gasse and walk down it. You'll pass between two sprawling buildings, each of which belongs to one of the Austrian bureaucracies linked by a bridge. A block later, turn right onto Herrengasse. Within a few minutes, you'll be on the now-familiar Michaelerplatz. This time you'll have a better view of:

18. St. Michael's Church--Winged angels fly above the entranceway. Turn left (north) along Kohlmarkt, noticing the elegant houses along the way: No. 14 houses Demel's, the most famous coffeehouse in Vienna; no. 9 and no. 11 bear plaques for Chopin and Haydn, respectively.

At the broad pedestrian walkway known as the Graben, turn right. In the center is the:

19. Plague Column-- A few feet before the Plague Column, turn left onto Jungferngasse and enter our favorite church in Vienna:

20. Peterskirche--Believed to be on the site of a crude wooden church built during the Christianization of Austria around A.D. 350.

Return to the Graben, passing the Plague Column. A few steps beyond it, pass the bronze statue of a beneficent saint leading a small child.

Leave the Graben at one of the first intersections on the right, Dorotheergasse, where you'll find a fine choice for a sandwich or lunch:

<p>Buffet Trzesniewski, Dorotheergasse 1 (tel. 01/512-3291), has satisfied the hunger pangs of everyone who was anyone in Vienna in the last century.</p>

Continue southeast down the Graben to its terminus. Here you'll find a vaguely defined section of pavement that signs identify as:

21. Stock-im-Eisen--Two pedestrian thoroughfares, the Graben and Kärntnerstrasse, meet at the southernmost corner of Stephansplatz. To your right, notice the sheet of curved Plexiglas bolted to the corner of an unobtrusive building at the periphery of the square. Behind it are the preserved remains of a tree.

In it, 16th-century blacksmiths would drive a nail for luck each time they left Vienna. Today the gnarled and dusty log is covered with an almost uninterrupted casing of angular, hand-forged nails.

By now, it will be difficult to avoid a full view of :

22. St. Stephan's Cathedral--Newcomers should circumnavigate the building's exterior to check out its 12th- and 13th-century stonework before going inside.

When you exit, turn left after passing through the main portal and head down the pedestrian-only:

23. Kärntnerstrasse-- Shop, hang out, do whatever.

January 9

- **Tour the Schönbrunn Palace, the magnificent royal summer residence.**
- **Schatzkammer, the Imperial Treasury filled with sparkling court jewels, and the glitzy Silberkammer, the museum of court silver and tableware.**
- **Take a guided tour to the roof of the Museum of Natural History – they take place all year, but the view after sunset can only be enjoyed during the winter months.**
- **Prater amusement park in late afternoon for a ride on the Riesenrad, the giant Ferris wheel.**

10 p.m. Leave on night train