

Vienna, Austria

★ Fun Fact: The German name for **Vienna** is **Wien**. that means Austria's most famous dish, wiener schnitzel, translates to **Viennese** schnitzel



The Beginnings: Vienna began as a Roman settlement known as Vindobona which was an important trading site in the 11th century. Eventually, it became the capital of the Babenburg dynasty and consequently, the Austrian Hapsburgs. The Hapsburgs returned to being Holy Roman Emperors in 1438 and were housed in the capital of Austria, Vienna. Briefly in 1528 Vienna was besieged by the Turks, however, not conquered. This siege was the first attempt by the Ottoman empire to capture the city, there would be one more attempt by the Turkish to follow this initial siege. Both battles for Austrian territory ended with the Hapsburgs victory and Turkish withdrawal. This marked the end of Ottoman expansion into Europe. Allegedly, the Turks at the end of the invasion left behind their coffee thus beginning the famous Viennese coffee house tradition.

Schönbrunn Palace:

The Schönbrunn Palace acts as one of the most significant cultural monuments in Austria. The castle was built to rival the great French Versailles in its Rococo

fashion, however, the Hapsburgs lacked the funds to parallel its Parisian counterpart. The palace was named Schöner Brunnen (meaning 'fair spring') as it was originally a hunting lodge. In



earlier times it served as a summer retreat for various Hapsburg emperors.

Emperor Franz Joseph (ruled 1848-1916), who was born there in 1830, spent the last years of his life entirely in Schönbrunn. The palace reached its full glory with the help of Empress Maria Theresa who turned it into her full time summer residence. So from 1742 onwards until the late 1770s the palace and its interiors were expanded and transformed into its complete form. Eventually, in 1918 the palace became the property of the New Republic and was added to UNESCO's world cultural heritage list.

Maria Theresa: Maria Theresa was an Austrian archduchess, and Holy Roman Empress of the Habsburg Dynasty from 1740 to 1780. Maria Theresa was born

May 13, 1717, in Vienna, Austria. In 1740 she succeeded to the Habsburg throne. Maria Theresa's father was the last remaining male heir to the Habsburg throne, so before she was born, fearing that he might not produce a son, Charles VI reformed the Salic Law, which prevented any female heir from succeeding her father. In 1713 he issued the Pragmatic Sanction to ensure his eldest daughter's right to take over the throne when he died, provided he never had a son. Maria's early childhood education consisted of frivolous skills that were benefiting of a young noblewoman of the time. Despite the fact that Maria Theresa still did not have a brother and was the most likely candidate to be the heir to the Austrian throne. Charles VI had been advised to marry off his daughter to a powerful prince, however, he wanted her to marry for love. So In 1736 Maria Theresa and her beloved Duke Francis Stephen of Lorraine, France, were wed. Over the course of her marriage Maria Theresa would give birth to 5 sons and 11 daughters, including the infamous future queen of France, Marie Antoinette. In October of 1740, Charles VI died. It was time for Maria Theresa, then 23 years old, to succeed to the Habsburg throne. Subjects of her crown lands: the Austrian duchies Netherlands, Bohemia and Hungary were quick to accept Maria Theresa as their empress. But Maria Theresa immediately faced resistance to her succession from European powers who had previously agreed to her father's Pragmatic Sanction.

Under the leadership of Frederick II, King of Prussia, those powers formed a coalition against Maria Theresa. However, Frederick II lost in his efforts and Maria Theresa still remained the ruler of Austria. In 1765 Maria Theresa's husband, Francis Stephen, died. Upon his death, Maria Theresa appointed her eldest son, Joseph II, as emperor and co-regent. The two frequently clashed in their beliefs. After considering her own abdication and ultimately rejecting the idea, Maria Theresa allowed Joseph to take control of army reforms and join Wenzel Anton, Prince of Kaunitz-Rietberg, in determining the empire's foreign policy. Although Maria Theresa craved peace and promoted diplomacy, during the mother and son's co-regency the War of the Bavarian Succession broke out, lasting from 1778 to 1779. Maria Theresa died on November 29, 1780, at Hofburg Palace in Vienna, Austria where she had reigned for four decades leaving behind a solid basis for future generations of the family empire. With her death, Joseph II assumed full responsibility as Holy Roman Emperor. Joseph II was known as the Musical King of Austria and eventually appointed Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart as his Chamber



Composer as the Austrian king had been known to Mozart's talent since he was a young boy visiting the likes of the royal family and showing off his genius. Vienna, The Capital of Classical Music: Beethoven, Mozart, Schubert, Strauss, and Haydn, some of the most famous and most brilliant composers to have ever lived all resided in Vienna during the height of their

careers. More musical composers have lived in Vienna than in any other city.

Haydn started out in Vienna as a choir boy at St. Stephen's Cathedral, but spent most



of his career in the service of the music-loving Prince Esterházy outside of the capital. At 65, he settled in Vienna, where he spent the



remaining twelve years of his life. He composed more than a hundred symphonies, a great number of chamber music works, and numerous oratorios and masses. Beethoven came all the way from Germany in order to study and take lessons with “Papa Haydn”.



Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart was also a great admirer of the composer and dedicated six string quartets to him. In 1781 Mozart moved to Vienna, the city whose imperial court he had enjoyed with great success as a child prodigy, he remained in Vienna from then on until his death in 1791. Mozart once wrote to his father about his

“irrational Affection” for Vienna. His greatest works were composed in the great musical city. Beethoven always had a strong admiration for Mozart, when he was 17 years old Beethoven traveled from Bonn to Vienna to meet his idol. Mozart, however, was in no mood to receive as his health was plaguing him and his untimely death at 35 was just about five years away. He said to Beethoven, “Play something!” and Beethoven played the opening of Mozart's Piano Concerto No. 24 in C minor. "Not that," said Mozart. "Anybody can play that. Play something of your own." So Beethoven did. When he had finished Mozart walked in the next

room where his wife Constanze was entertaining friends and said "Stanzi, Stanzi," pointing back into the music room, "Watch out for that boy. One day he will give the world something to talk about." He agreed to take Beethoven on as a pupil, but when Beethoven returned to his lodgings there was an urgent letter from his father telling him to return to Bonn as soon as possible as his mother was seriously ill with consumption and doctors feared for her life. Beethoven had no choice but to leave. Less than two weeks after arriving in Vienna for what promised to be a journey that would change his life, he left for Bonn without ever achieving his ambition of taking lessons with Mozart. By the time he returned to Vienna in November 1792, Mozart was dead. Beethoven's oeuvre was written almost exclusively in Vienna and it includes symphonies, chamber music, concertos and just one opera, "Fidelio," which premiered at the quaint Theater an der Wien. Beethoven and his ardent admirer Franz Schubert unfortunately, never got the chance to meet. Schubert was a chubby diminutive looking man who was nicknamed "Schwammerl" (mushroom) by his friends. However, his music was renowned as he composed almost a thousand musical works before his death at age 31 in 1828 due to syphilis. Schubert and his friends often celebrated musical evenings together, called "Schubertiade," a tradition that has since been revived in Vienna and elsewhere. Johann Strauss II was born in 1825, his father Johann

Strauss the elder was a self taught musician who gained traction in Vienna publishing 250 musical works composed of polkas, waltzes, and galops. Famous Compositions such as *The Blue Danube* helped establish Johann Strauss II as "the Waltz King" and earned him a place in music history. Strauss's main focus was on the Viennese waltz and the Viennese operetta. His most famous and well known operetta "Die Fledermaus" which premiered in 1874. In the 1870s much of Strauss' family died including his wife. Still, he continued on and began his work on the ballet "Cinderella". Due to a respiratory illness which then turned into

Pneumonia, Johann Strauss never finished “Cinderella” and died in Vienna, June 1899 at age 73.

The Hofburg: The Hofburg Imperial Palace was the official residence of the Hapsburg dynasty rulers. It is located in the center of Vienna and was built in the 13th century. Originally a medieval fortified castle, the Hofburg, expanded with each emperor. For over 600 years the Vienna Hofburg was the residence of Austrian sovereigns. Over the course of the centuries it



developed into one of the most important centers of European history. It was from here that the Habsburgs reigned from the 13th century, at first as rulers of the Austrian patrimonial lands, from 1452 as emperors of the Holy Roman Empire, and finally as emperors of Austria from 1806 until the end of the monarchy in 1918. In 1559 work started on the Stallburg as a new residence. Since the 18th century this part of the palace has contained the stables of the famous Lipizzan horses which can be seen daily at their morning training or their performances in the Winter Riding School, situated on the opposite side of the street.

Empress Elizabeth: Empress Elizabeth or Sisi as she is nicknamed was an important character of Vienna as she is showcased with her own museum in the



Hofburg palace. Elisabeth was born December 24, 1837, in Munich, Bavaria (Germany). Sisi grew up playing in the Bavarian forests with her seven brothers and sisters, riding horses and climbing mountains. From her eccentric father, Duke Maximilian Joseph, she inherited a belief in progressive democratic ideals and pacifism, uncommon for royalty at the time. From her hands-on mother, Princess Ludovika, she

developed a love of privacy and a fear of public duties, traits that would not serve her well as empress. On April 25, 1854, the shy and melancholy bride married into a major European royal house. Trembling and overcome with emotion, 16-year-old Elisabeth, was wed to the 23-year-old Emperor Franz Joseph of Austria, the absolute monarch of the largest empire in Europe outside of Russia. Sisi's husband, Franz Joseph, was hardworking and loved her, but had little imagination or humor. The new couple's mothers (who were sisters) had intended for the handsome 23-year-old emperor to marry Sisi's sophisticated older sister, Helene, but Franz Joseph was captivated by the sight of Sisi from the moment he saw her. Shy and unsure, Sisi crumbled under the strict court etiquette, which left her isolated and friendless. She bore Franz Joseph three children during the first four years of their marriage, but only two, the Crown Prince Rudolf and Archduchess Gisela survived past their infancy. Her melancholy and distaste for public life was treated as a childish indulgence by her distracted husband and his mother, the formidable Archduchess Sophie. "You cannot imagine how charming Sisi is when she cries," Archduchess Sophie wrote. Yet despite her somber demeanor Sisi captivated the public, thanks to her stunning beauty and ankle-length chestnut hair. Sisi was just as focused on her beauty as the public was. Hours were spent maintaining her looks: Three hours a day of hairdressing, and an hour to cinch her

19.5 inch waist. Obsessed with her figure, Sisi lived on a strict diet and extreme exercise routine that would likely be interpreted as symptoms of anorexia today. She survived at a time only on thin broth and in her later years only on raw milk, oranges and eggs. She also exercised excessively for hours every day. Some of her exercises consisted of horseback riding, fencing, fast paced hikes, and exercises from the circus. Sisi had an exercise room where she lifted dumbbells and trained on rings. In his diary, a servant recalled walking in on her mid-exercise:

“When I saw her, she was just raising herself on the hand-rings. She wore a black silk dress with a long train, hemmed with magnificent ostrich feathers. I had never before seen her so imposing. Hanging on the



ropes, she made a fantastic impression, like a creature somewhere between



snake and bird.”

After a nervous collapse in 1862, Sisi spent as much time as she could away from the “prison fortress” of Vienna’s Hofburg palace (today her life is chronicled in the Sisi Museum there), frequently traveling to Greece, England, Ireland, Switzerland and Hungary. “I want always to be on the move,” she wrote, according to



Hamann. “Every ship I see sailing away fills me with the greatest desire to be on it.” Eventually she grew extremely fond of the Hungarian people and struggled to make Hungary an equal partner in the Austro-Hungarian empire. Eventually, Franz Joseph was crowned king of Hungary and Sisi became their queen. She was beloved for her part in the Austro-Hungarian compromise of 1867 which gave the Hungarian people new freedoms. She was well liked by the

common people and made many efforts to visit charities and hospital wards. Here she displayed down to earth behaviour, holding the hands of the dying and speaking to patients about their needs. She was incredibly fascinated with new innovations in the treatment of the insane and even toyed with the idea of opening up her own Psychiatric ward. By the 1880s it was clear that Sisi was struggling with a mental illness of her own. Marie Valerie, the one child on whom

Sisi doted, wrote of finding her mother laughing hysterically in a bathtub. The empress frequently spoke of suicide to a terrified Franz Joseph, and turned to mediums and psychics to help cure her mental anguish. In 1889, her beloved son, Crown Prince Rudolf, was found dead with his 17-year-old mistress, Mary Vetsera, at the Mayerling hunting lodge, sending Sisi into a steep decline. Though both Rudolf and Vetsera left behind notes, the circumstances surrounding their deaths remained a mystery; rumors of a double murder persisted. It was initially thought Vetsera poisoned Rudolf before killing herself, though it was later determined that Rudolf shot both of them in a murder-suicide pact, a conclusion that only deepened Sisi's sadness. With her liberal, progressive son dead, she knew that the creaking empire of Austria-Hungary could not last. (As Rudolf had no son, succession passed to Emperor Franz Joseph's brother, Archduke Karl Ludwig, and his eldest son, Archduke Franz Ferdinand, setting off a chain of events that would lead to World War I.) At age 51 Sisi got a tattoo of an anchor on her arm as she traveled aimlessly around the world in order to forget her son's tragic plight. Her end came on September 10, 1898 when she was visiting Geneva under an assumed name. Also in town was Italian anarchist Luigi Lucheni who had come to Switzerland to assassinate Prince Henri of Orléans in an act of protest against the ruling class. Word had leaked about the empress's arrival and Prince Henri had

cancelled his trip to Geneva. Luigi approached Sisi as she walked along a dock to board a ship attacking her with a small triangular file. After the blow to her chest Sisi stood up believing she had been punched but collapsed shortly after boarding the ship. she then died soon after of internal bleeding.

Vienna State Opera House (Wiener Staatsoper): The opera house was the first major building on the Vienna Ringstrasse commissioned by the Viennese “city expansion fund”. Work commenced on the house in 1861 and was completed in 1869. Wiener Staatsoper was christened with a performance of Mozart's *Don Giovanni* with Emperor Franz Joseph and Empress Elizabeth (Sisi) in attendance.



At the opera's first high point, famous composer and musician Gustav Mahler helped to refine many of the performances.



Unfortunately, the years 1938-1945 were a dark time for the state of the opera house. Under the Nazi regime members of the house were driven out, pursued, and killed. Many works were not allowed to be played anymore unless it fit in

with Nazi morals. Then on March 12, 1945 the Opera house was bombed and left in ruins. Only the main facade, grand staircase, and the Schwind foyer were left untouched. For years the opera moved its company between two different locations in order to keep performing whilst the main house was being rebuilt at a great expense. On November 5, 1955, the Vienna State Opera reopened with a new auditorium and modernized technology and showcased a performance of Beethoven's *Fidelio*. Now it is one of the most

important opera houses in the world as it is the house with the largest repertoire.

Hedy Lamarr: Hedy Lamarr was born November, 9, 1914 in Vienna, Austria. Her father was a Jewish banker and her mother was a concert pianist. Lamarr was an incredibly famous actress and bombshell. She first caught traction with her risqué film *Ecstasy*. After her unhappy marriage ended with Fritz Mandl, a wealthy



Austrian munitions manufacturer who sold arms to the Nazis, she fled to the United States and signed a contract with Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer studio in Hollywood. Often referred to as one of the most gorgeous and exotic of Hollywood's leading ladies, Lamarr made a number of well-received films during the 1930s and 1940s. In 1942, during the peak of her career, Lamarr earned recognition in a field quite different from entertainment. Lamarr was secretly a genius and brilliant scientist. She and her friend, the composer George Antheil, received a patent for a radio signaling device, or "Secret Communications System," which was a means of changing radio frequencies to keep enemies from decoding messages. Originally she designed it to help defeat the German Nazis, but because she was a woman the Navy dismissed her invention; however, the system she had created became an important step in the development of

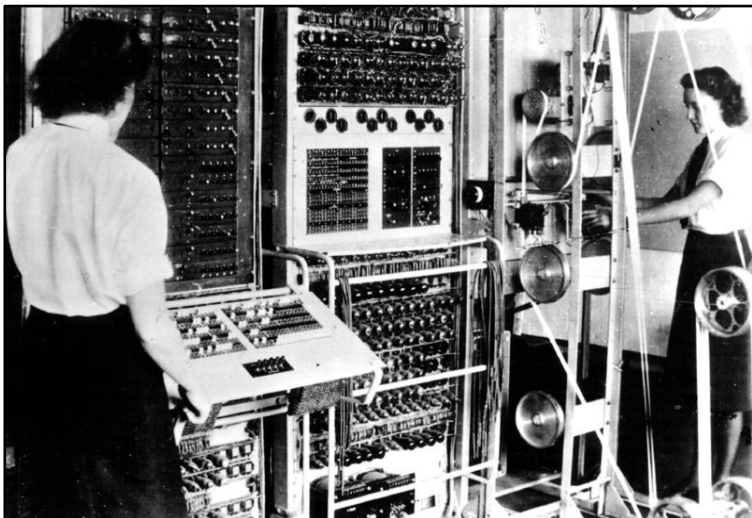


technology to maintain the security of both military communications and cellular phones. She is credited with the invention of WIFI.

History of Jews in Vienna: The establishment of an autonomous Jewish religious community in Vienna was officially sanctioned by Emperor Franz Josef in 1849.

Following this period, the Jewish community faced many hardships until under the influence of the

enlightenment period Emperor Joseph II issued an Edict of Tolerance, that led to the emancipation of the Jews. For the first time, civil rights were extended to the Jewish population and discriminating measures repealed. The civil war of 1848 encouraged many



Jewish intellectuals to engage in the struggle for the emancipation of the Jews within the framework of civil unrest. In the wake of these circumstances, a notable meeting with the young Emperor took place in 1849.

Finally, in 1852, the “provisional statutes” of the Vienna community were recognized as official. The community had achieved its lasting autonomy to manage internal and religious concerns. Jews in Austria were granted full citizenship in 1867 as the Jewish community grew immensely. A century of efforts for Jewish emancipation was destroyed by Nazi sentiments. Already in the 1930s there was a feeling of anti-semitism in Vienna, Austria. Then with the entry of Adolf Hitler's army in 1938 Jews in Vienna were put under extreme duress and experienced unprecedented suffering. Grave acts of violence were committed against the Jewish population during this time. Citizens were openly brutalized and forced into the most humiliating chores. Hitler's racist mania found its first culmination in the Nuremberg Racial Laws, which robbed the Jewish population of practically all property and civil rights. Jews were forced to wear the yellow star and had to assume the first names "Sara" or "Israel". Many shops and assets were expropriated ("Aryanised"); those that were able to escape faced an uncertain future, deprived of their possessions and without a basis for their livelihood. In 1941 there was mass deportation of Viennese Jews to various concentration and death camps. Over 65,000 Jews were murdered in concentration and

extermination camps. They are part of the six million victims of a mass murder organised with mathematical precision.

Vienna during the Cold War: Vienna just like Berlin was divided in the cold war by the Berlin wall in 1945. The allies carved Vienna into different occupation zones in order to sift through the wreckage caused by WW2. Vienna wasn't targeted in the way Berlin was because Stalin had traded Vienna for Berlin. Vienna was a hub for intelligence operations despite Austria's neutral stance after occupation had ended. Austria gained the tradition of being a bridge between the East and West.

While Vienna was characterized by espionage Berlin was where all of the

important transaction took place.

Eventually, the walls that divided both

Berlin and Vienna were torn down. To this

day the city acts as a hotspot for espionage



Figure 7. The Leopoldstaedt synagogue, the second to be established by the Vienna community, built in 1858. Like all but one of the city's synagogues, it was destroyed by the Nazis.

due to there being no

counterintelligence, spies can do



whatever they want in Vienna. Consequently, Vienna has a special place in the



hearts of film lovers as many great undercover movies were filmed in Vienna including *The Third Man* and *Mission Impossible: Third Nation*.

Modern day Vienna: Present day

Vienna is revived in a blend of old and

contemporary architecture and culture. The president of Austria, Alexander Van der Bellen, and his wife Doris Schmidauer now live in the Hofburg, the former residence of the long lasting Hapsburg monarchy. Austria's autocracy ended with the Hapsburgs and shifted into a federal republic state with a parliamentary democracy. However, not all of the old Viennese practice was abandoned, The coffee house tradition is still heavily in practice as coffee houses are treasured throughout Vienna as well as their coveted rustic wine taverns. Tourists flock to

the grand city for its many intrigues such as food, music, architecture, history, art

and the Viennese love of ornate coffee

houses.

