



**CICERONI**  
T R A V E L

# THE HABSBURGS ART & MUSIC IN VIENNA

SUNDAY 1 – THURSDAY 5 OCTOBER, 2017 (5 DAYS)

LECTURER: INGRID SAWERTHAL

£1495

- **Short and comprehensive introduction to one of Europe's most important cities**
- **Comfortable 4\* hotel in historic centre within easy walking distance of museums**
- **Guided visits of the fabled Kunsthistorisches Museum**
- **Private visit to the Lichtenstein Collection**
- **Opportunity to attend Opera, Ballet & Concert performances**



**Vienna: a view from the Belvedere Gardens towards the historic centre**

## OVERVIEW

During the course of more than three centuries Vienna was the capital of one of the greatest European empires, that of the Austrian Habsburgs. Austria had always been their home, yet the family acquired land throughout Europe, partly through conquest but more cunningly through dynastic connections and inheritance. One sixteenth century diplomat put it succinctly: “You, Oh France, may acquire lands through war but the Habsburg territories grow through Love!”

When the Emperor Charles V split the family territories into two great entities, governed separately from Madrid and Vienna, the future for this once small Austrian city was assured as it became the heart of the Habsburg Holy Roman Empire. As the focus of both Imperial and Princely patronage the city grew rapidly, reflecting an elegant mixture of architectural styles. These draw on the influence of nearby Italy whilst retaining a faint air of eastern mystery, reflecting both the brooding threat from, and the equal attractions of, the Ottoman Turks.

Our five-day visit will be the ideal introduction to Vienna, concentrating on its evolution as an Imperial capital through an exploration of its architecture, art collections and musical culture. The visit will be led by one of Vienna's most experienced (and charming) English-speaking guides, Ingrid Sawerthal, supported by Stephen Brook as Tour Manager.

We shall stay at the comfortable 4\* Hotel Das Tigra, located within the historic centre reasonably close to St Stephen's Cathedral. Given that almost all the sites we shall visit are close to our hotel, most of our time will be spent on foot and **not** in a coach.

Music will play an integral, though optional, part of this visit. As we shall visit when the opera season will be in full swing, participants will be offered the opportunity to book tickets for performances at the Vienna State Opera.

## ITINERARY OUTLINE

**Day 1:** Sunday 1 October – We take a late morning flight from Heathrow with BA and on arrival in Vienna we will be met by our guide, Ingrid Sawerthal. We drive first to the **Belvedere Palace**. This is a stunning Baroque ensemble built in two stages for Prince Eugene of Savoy by the greatest architect of the day, Lucas von Hildebrandt. We shall concentrate on the Upper Belvedere Palace with its commanding views of the city. Now the home of the **Österreichische Galerie**, it contains a marvellous collection of paintings by Gustav Klimt, Egon Schiele and is in all respects a major collection. We then drive to our hotel and en route there will be a short orientation tour of the city along the **Ringstrasse** ending at the **Freyung**. There will be a group dinner that evening – wine, water and coffee are included with all group lunches and dinners.

**Day 2:** Monday 2 October - We begin at the historic **Cathedral of St Stephen**, a magnificent example of medieval architecture. Close by are a number of smaller churches and we plan to visit one or two to trace subsequent developments in the Baroque and Rococo periods.

We then make our way down to the Opera House on the Ringstrasse, the **Staatsoper**, which we plan to visit for a guided tour of the interiors (this will be confirmed a few weeks before our visit). We then have a pause for lunch (not included) and continue on to the **Hofburg** - an enormous complex of buildings occupying much of the old city centre. The earliest section is the **Alte Burg**, begun in 1275 as a fortress. The main sites here are the **Burgkapelle**, built in the mid fifteenth century and much altered subsequently. There is also the **Sacred and Secular Treasuries** which contain many of the jewelled treasures of the Habsburgs. The next section of the Hofburg is named **In der Burg** and is the busiest part of the complex. Of interest are the **Imperial Apartments** now given over to mementoes from the later Habsburgs. There is also the **Silver and Porcelain Collection** which is very interesting. The evening will be free, and you may wish to take tickets to Verdi's tragic opera *La Traviata* tonight, at the State Opera House. Tickets can be added to your booking via our office.

**Day 3:** Tuesday 3 October – We start our day at the **Lichtenstein Palace Museum**. The Lichtenstein princes have always owned vast properties in Austria. At the outbreak of World War II the family secretly removed their famous paintings collection to Vaduz. This has now been returned to Vienna and while recently closed to the public, we have arranged for a private tour of the palace and its collections. We continue to the famous **Secession Building**, erected in 1898 by Joseph Olbrich. It is a seminal building and contains Klimt's famous frieze celebrating Beethoven. After a pause for lunch (not included) we visit the **Kunsthistorisches Museum** for our first visit. This is undoubtedly one of Europe's finest art galleries. We concentrate on the Italian paintings. These are *exceptionally* good and many of the "plums" were once owned by Charles I and some of his courtiers. Dispersed after the Civil War, many were purchased by the then Governor of the Spanish Netherlands, Archduke Leopold von Habsburg and subsequently incorporated into the Imperial collections. We then return to our hotel and the evening will be free. Tonight's performance is Puccini's *La Bohème*. Please contact the office if you would like to reserve tickets.

**Day 4:** Wednesday 4 October – The part of the Hofburg known as **Josefplatz** contains two of the finest eighteenth century interiors in the city, the **National Library**, designed by Fischer von Erlach the Elder and the **Spanish Riding School** by his son. Should it be possible to attend the School's 'morning exercise' this will be included. We then walk the short distance to visit the little known **Gemaldegalerie** of the Fine Art Academy. This is a small collection but it contains masterpieces by Bosch, Van Dyck and many others.

We pause for lunch (not included) after which we return to the **Kunsthistorisches Museum** where we continue our tour of the collection, concentrating on the non Italian schools. The undoubted highlights will be the famous set of landscapes by Brueghel (including *Hunters in the Snow*) and very fine works by Rubens, Van Dyck and Rembrandt. You will be free from mid afternoon onwards and there will be a group dinner that evening.

**Day 5:** Thursday 5 October – We will depart late morning to spend time just outside the city centre at the marvellous **Schönbrunn Palace**, the summer residence of the Habsburgs, surrounded by formal gardens. We end the visit with a group lunch after which we transfer to Vienna Airport for the return flight home.

**Opera in Vienna:** We have left most evenings free so that participants can enjoy the city's rich musical life. The State Opera House will host *La Traviata* on Monday 2, with tickets at £207, £182 & £139 and *La Bohème* on Tuesday 3 October with tickets at £187, £166 & £124. Tickets can be added to your booking via our office.

## PRACTICALITIES

**Price** £1495    **Deposit** £250    **Single Supplement** £245 (Double/Twin Room for Sole Use)

**Optional Supplements** Upgrade from Standard to Comfort Room £65 or to Superior Room £185 per room

**Tour Manager** Stephen Brook

**Hotel** 4 Nights with Breakfast at the 4\* Hotel Das Tigra

**Flights** British Airways

Outward: **BA702** Depart London Heathrow (Terminal 3) **1135** arrive Vienna **1455**

Return: **BA705** Depart Vienna **1935** arrive London Heathrow (Terminal 3) **2100**

**Price includes** 2 Dinners & 1 Lunch with wine, water & coffee, all local transfers, entry fees & gratuities, services of Ingrid Sawerthal & Stephen Brook

**Not included** Travel to/from Heathrow, 2 Dinners & 4 Lunches, Opera Tickets



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