

From Sevelen in Switzerland the trip went to [Vienna](#) in [Austria](#). We took the bus from the hotel to Sargans, where the train went 9.37. It went direct without train change, and we arrived in Vienna 16.44.



The location of Austria in Europe



Flag



Coat of arms

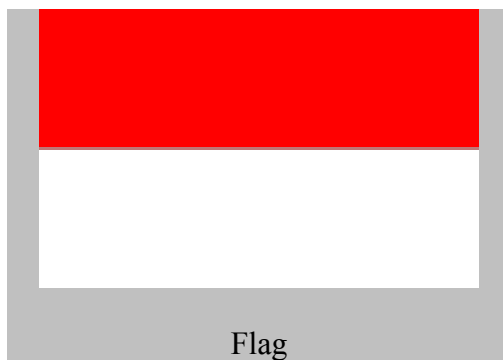
After having been conquered by [Romans](#), [Huns](#), [Lombards](#), [Ostrogoths](#), [Bavarians](#) and [Franks](#), Austria came under the rule of [Habsburg](#) in the 13th century. This family continued to rule Austria until the 20th century|.

[The Republic of Austria](#) was established from the remains of the Austrian-Hungarian twin monarchy after WWI, and it got its constitution in 1920. This was continued after WWII in 1945, when The Second Republic was formed. Austria got full sovereignty with the Austrian State Treaty 15th of May 1955.

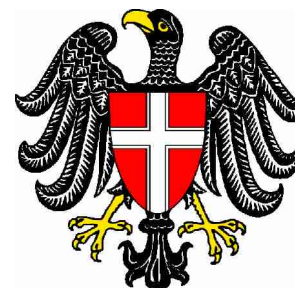
Austria has 8,3 million inhabitants, of whom two thirds belongs to the roman-catholic belief. The official language is German that is spoken in dialectic forms. Beyond that are Slovenian, Croat and Hungarian acknowledged minority languages.



The location of Vienna in Austria



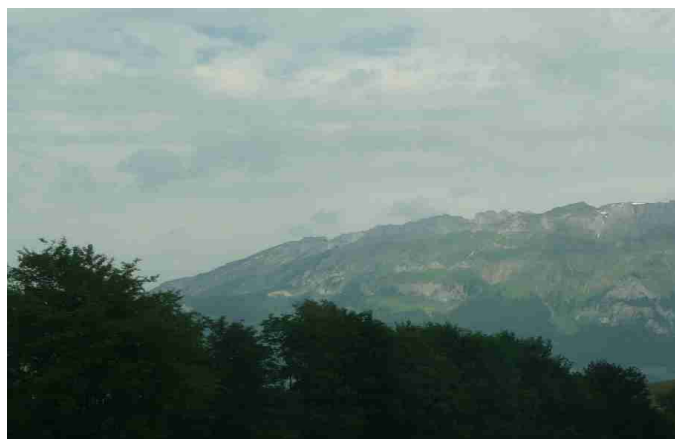
Flag



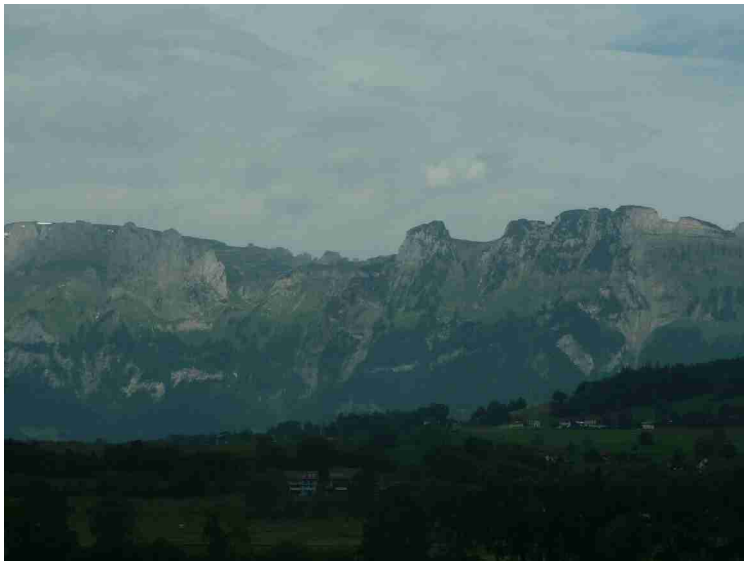
Coat of arms

[Vienna](#) is Austria's capital and the biggest city. It lies by the Danube and has 1,7 million inhabitants. The city is divided in 23 districts. Vienna is also a separate Austrian state (since 1921), which is completely surrounded by the state Lower Austria.

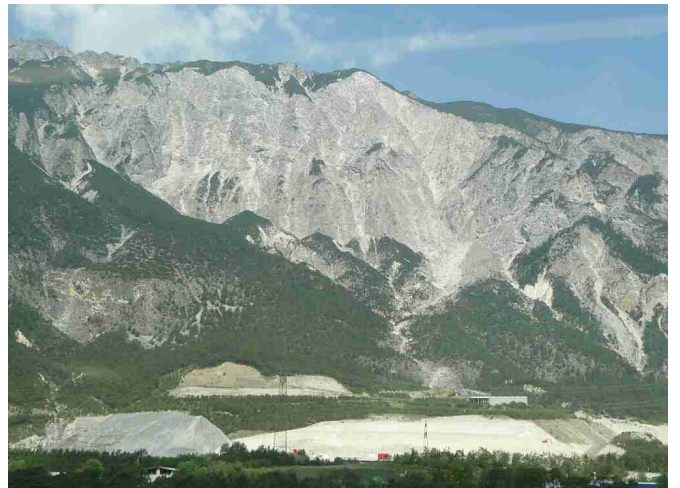
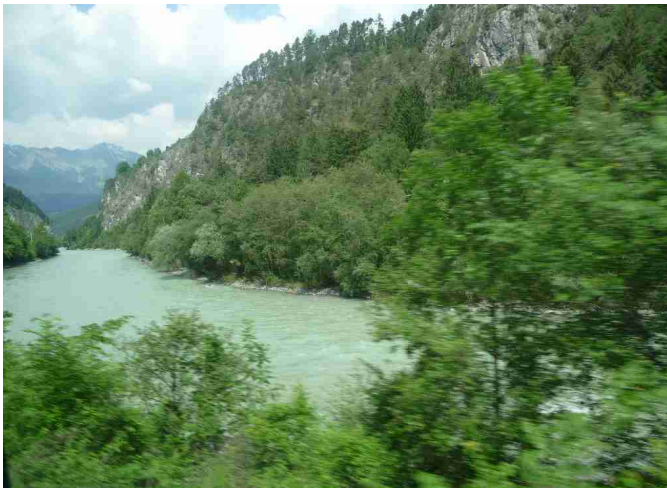
In the Roman era, Vienna was a fortification, [Vindobona](#). In 1278 it became the center of the Hapsburg Dynasty (later Austria-Hungary), which it was until the end of WWI, which resulted in that Vienna today is much bigger and more glorious as capital than the size of the present Austria should promise. The whole inner city is on the UNESCO list of World Heritage Sites. It was exposed to vast destructions during WWII, but is rebuilt after the war.



Various pictures taken through the train window.



Kjell is finished with the «office work» with the Inter-rail tickets and is now working on a cross word and a beer.





Testing the camera on the cell phone.

Arriving at Railway station West in Vienna (Westbahnhof).
From here we took a taxi to our hotel.





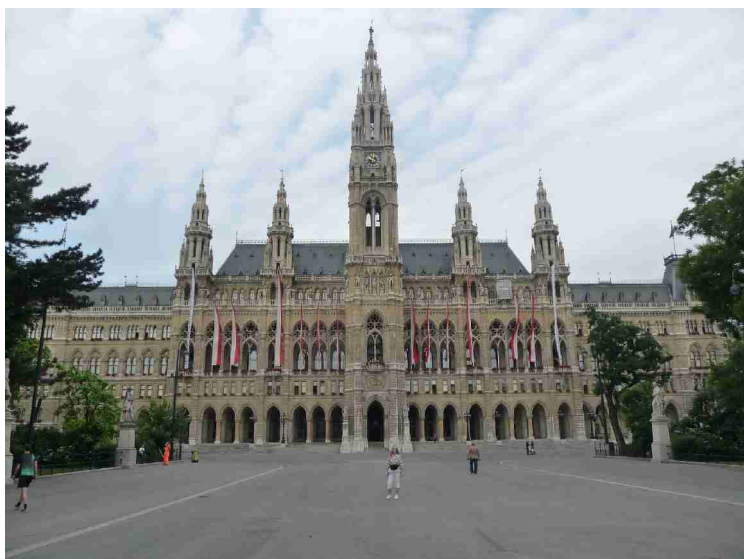
The next day we walked in direction of the old town. Here we are at the Vienna Town Hall that was built during 1872 to 1883. This is in fact the «rear side» of the building.



From the rear side of Vienna Town Hall we can see the [Votive Church](#). The sand stone church was built 1855 to 1879 in gratitude of Emperor Franz Joseph's survival of an assault in 1853.



Here we are in the front of the town hall.



The tower is 103.3 meter tall. On the square in front of the town hall ([Rathaus](#)) there is arranged various festivals throughout the entire year.



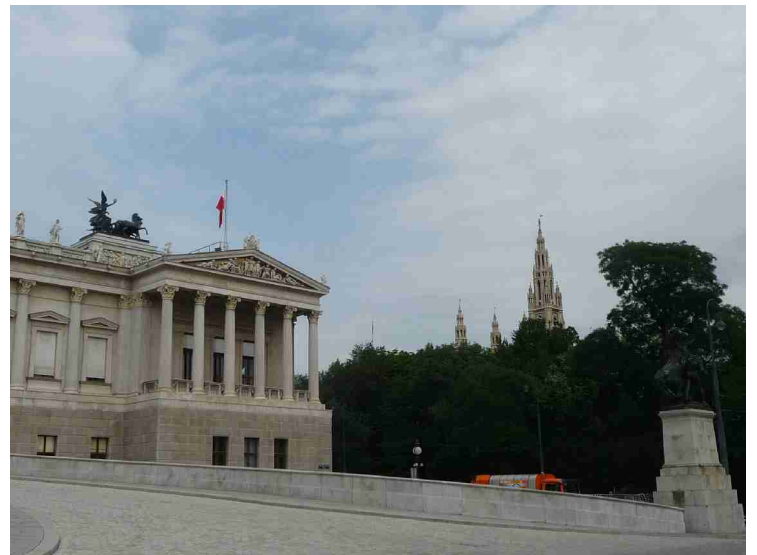
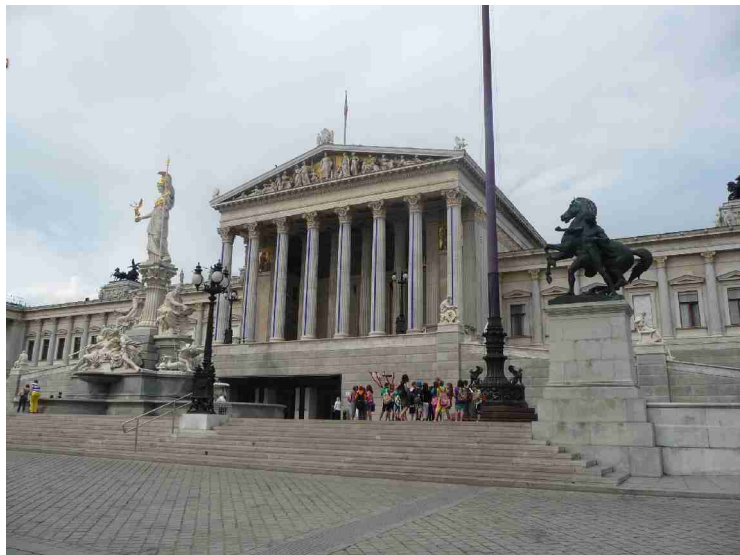
On the other side of the square lies the [Burgtheater](#), which was finished in 1888 and was one of the first theaters in the German speaking part of the world.



A fountain in [Volksgarten](#), a park adjacent to the Rathaus and the theater.



The [Parliament](#) was built during the years 1873-83. There was used Greek style in the building to honour the cradle of democracy.



More pictures of the parliament. It was here the first Austrian republic was announced in October 1918.



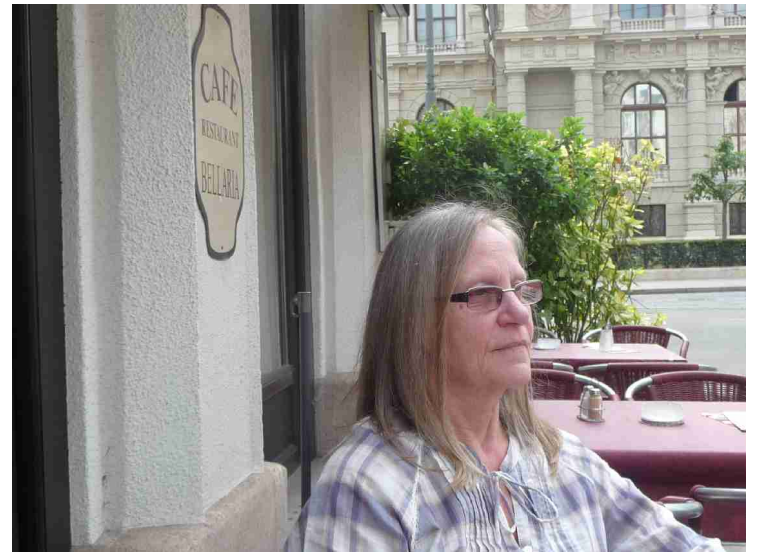
Sightseeing by horse and cariole .



A monument for the formation of the republic in 1918 stands on Schmerling Platz.



Here is [The Museum of Natural History of Vienna](#). In a voting in 2001 it came among 10 of the best museums in the world.



Here we needed a beer.



From where we are sitting, we can see a little of the [MuseumsQuartier](#). It is a baroque building, which once housed the emperor's horses. Today it is one of the world's biggest museum blocks.



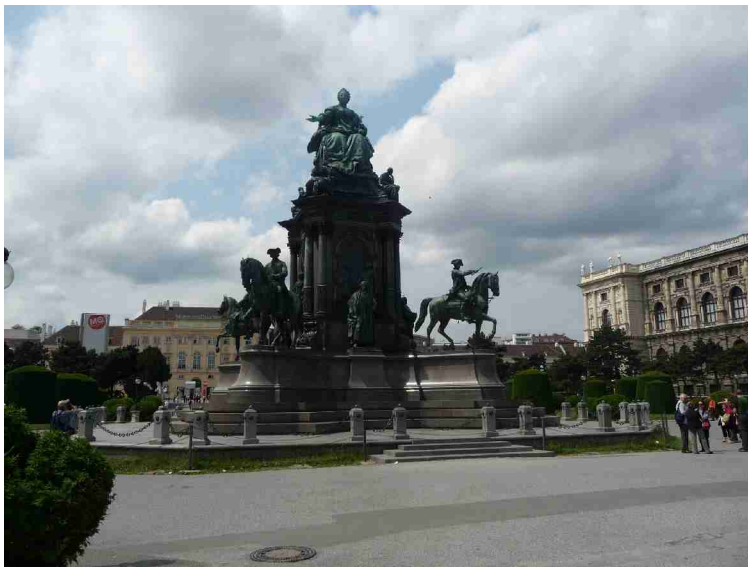
We can also see the [Justizpalast](#), built in 1875 – 1881.



Straight beyond lies [The Museum of Art History](#).

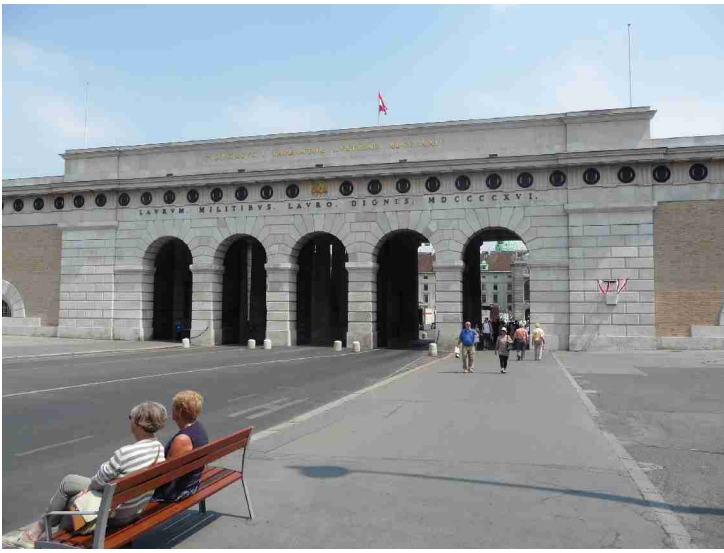


At the same square lies also The Museum of Natural History, which we saw from the other side when having the beer.



On the square between the two museum buildings stands a statue of [Marie Theresia](#), who was head of state from 1740 – 1780.





The entrance to [Hofburg Palace](#). Hofburg Palace is the former emperor palace in Vienna. Today it is used as official residence of the President of Austria, various official and private residences, museums and fairground.



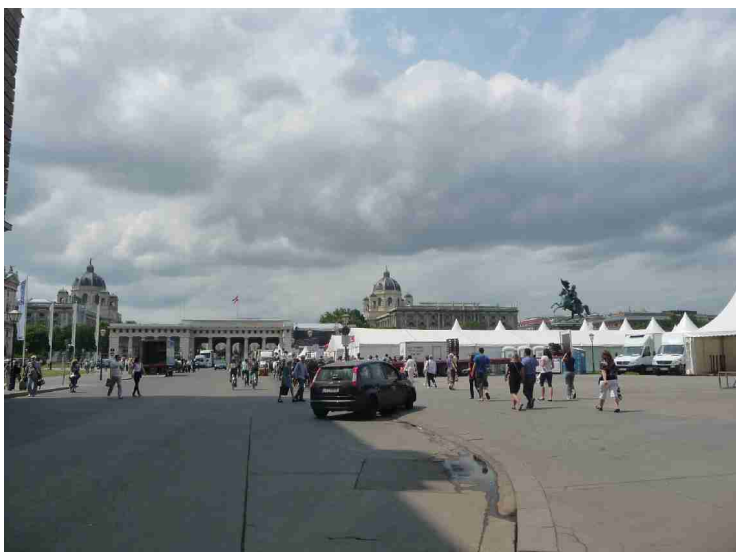
The Palace was gradually expanded until 1918. Neue Burg is the latest addition.



The west wing.



Beer wagon.



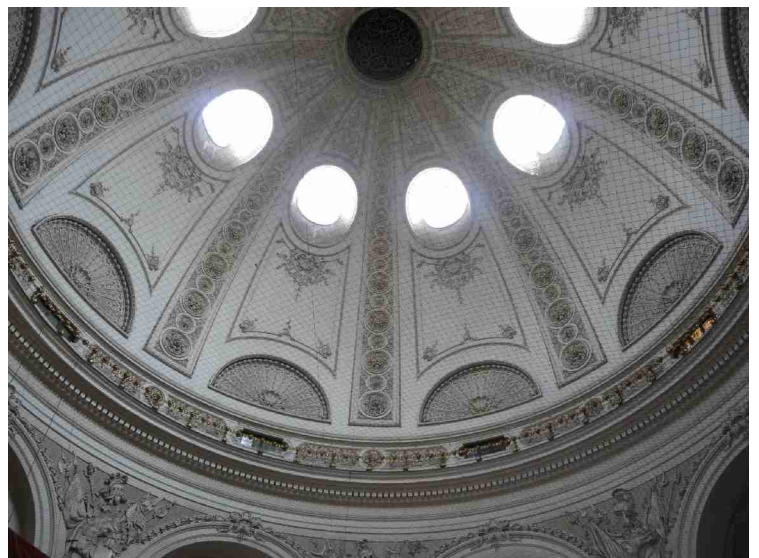
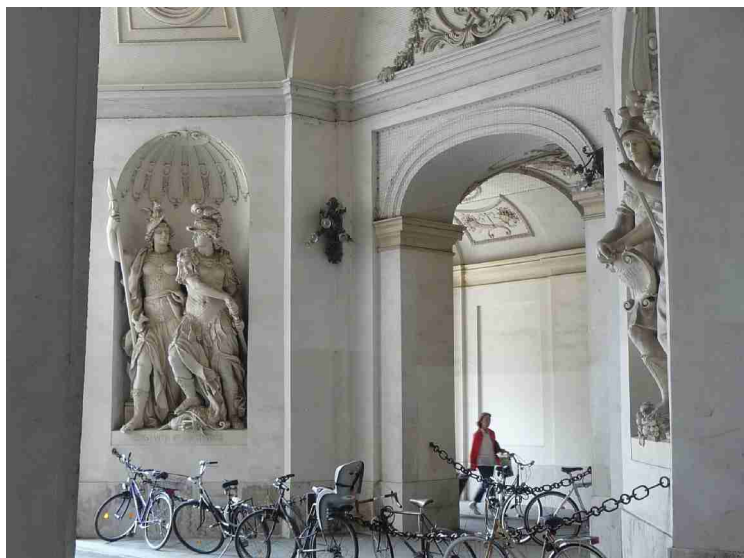
There was going to be an arrangement in the city, so here are party tents put up.



Here tents are made ready on the palace's inner courtyard.



The palace is richly decorated outside and inside.





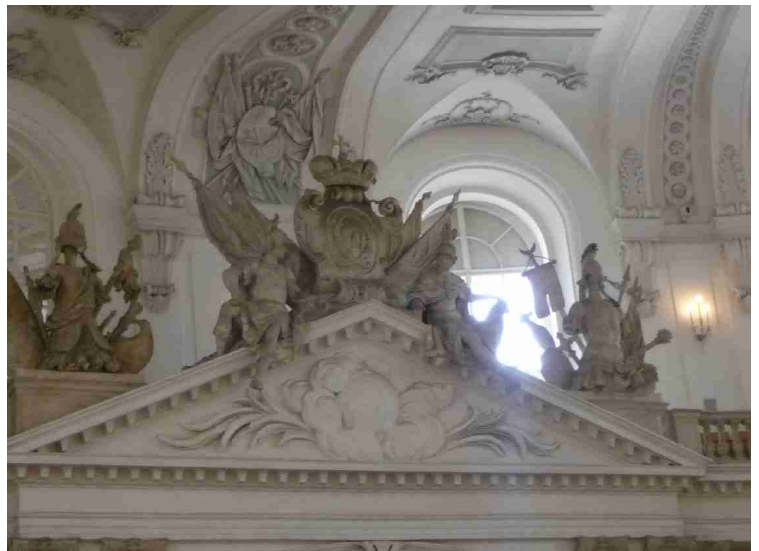
The [Spanish Riding School](#) is also in the palace. Here we are buying tickets to have a look at the afternoon training for horses and riders.



This was outside the entrance to the hall.



They are using [Lipizzaner](#) horses. This is originally Spanish horses that at first was brought to Austria by Emperor Mammalian 2. in 1562. They got their name from a stud farm in Trieste.



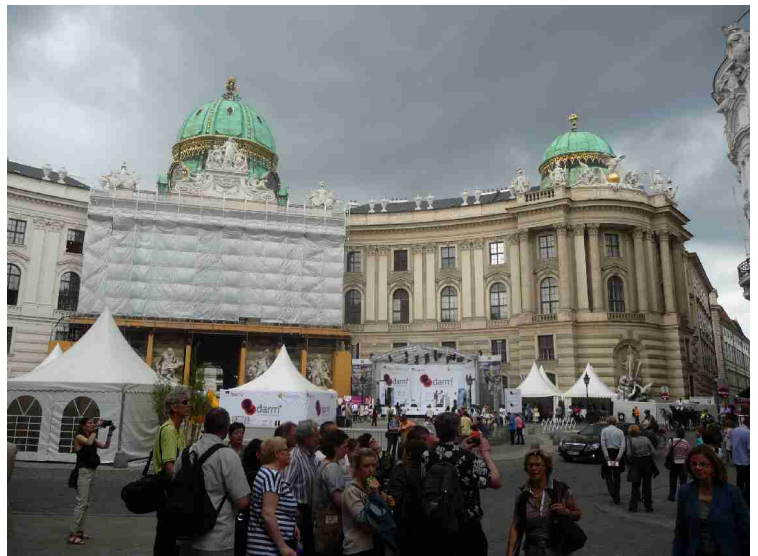
The hall is 56 m long and the gallery is supported by 46 Corinthian columns.



This is the kind of hats, which are used by the riders.



Outside the palace, there were some archeological excavations going on.



Here we are on the street at the other side of the palace.



This is the palace, too. To the left we can see the entrance to the [Michaelerkirche](#).



Here we are in a pedestrian street, which is called [Graben](#). Don't know what these figures are representing.



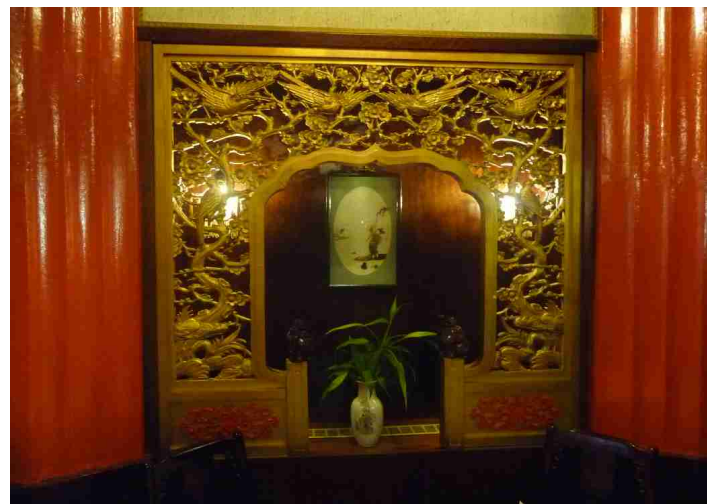
This [pest column](#) stands in Graben. It was erected on initiative from Emperor Leopold I after the plague in Vienna in 1779 – 1780.



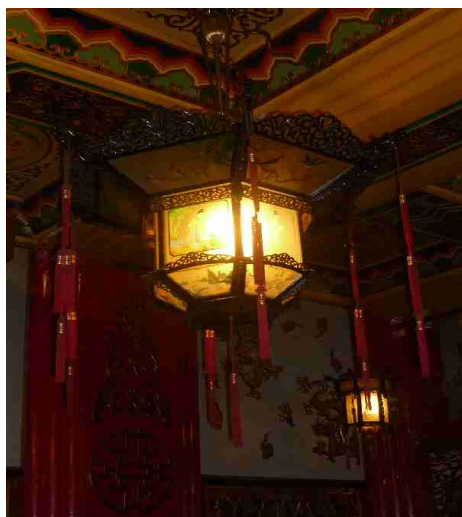
This is [St. Stephen's Cathedral](#). It is evaluated to be Austria's nicest Gothic buildings. The foundation for the original Roman Church is from 1147, But the oldest parts remaining today are from the 1200s.

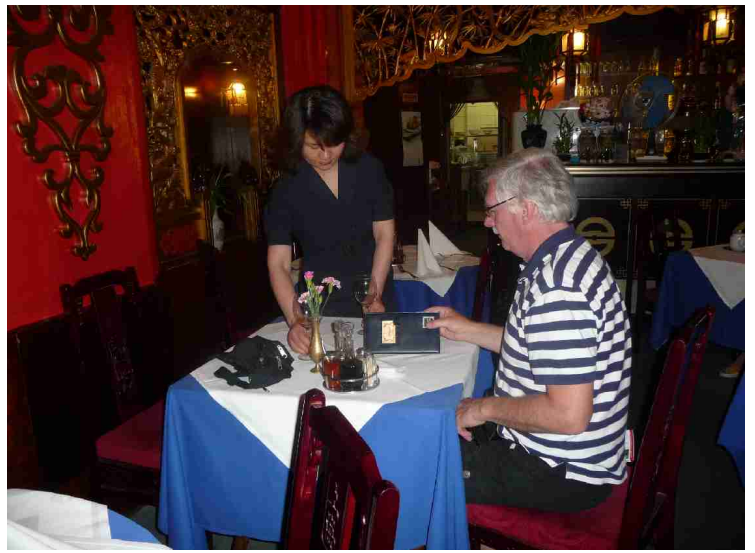


The cathedral was badly damaged during the war, but is now restored.



Here we are in a Chinese restaurant with lot of nice decorations.





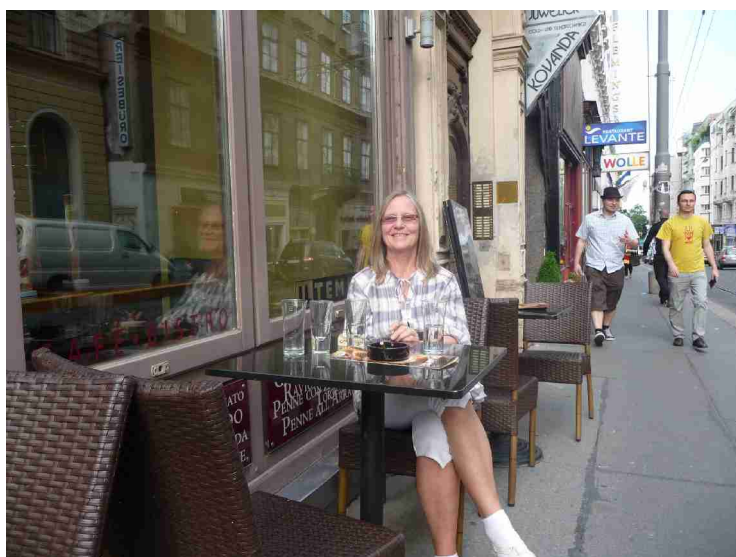
The food was very good and here is the bill going to be paid.



Here we are at the smoking table outside the restaurant.



On the way back to the hotel, we were surprised by a thundershower, so we had to seek shelter in this gateway until it had stopped raining.



After having been at the hotel and had a look at the pictures we had taken during the day, we went outside to Italian cafe and had a Grappa and an Amaretto.



In the evening we went to a Greek restaurant and had Stifado with red wine and finished with an Ouzo. The next day Kjell had a "travel-drink" before starting a new sightseeing round.



First we are passing the [Volkstheater](#). It has 1000 seats and is one of the biggest theaters in the German speaking part of the world.



This is a plan over the [MuseumsQuartier](#), which we saw at a distance the last day. We didn't go in today either.



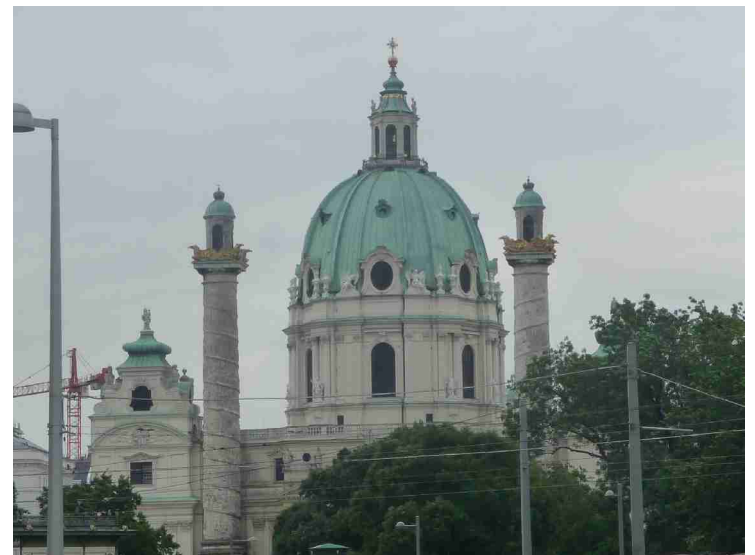
[Academy of Fine Arts Vienna](#) is one of Europe's oldest art academies, founded in 1692.



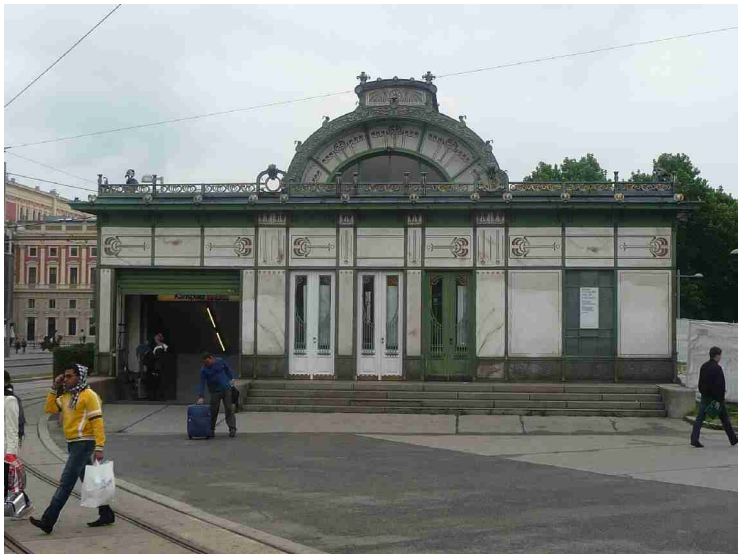
The [Vienna Secession building](#) was finished in 1898 as a manifest for the secession movement, a movement that wanted to break up traditions. It was founded by the artist [Gustav Klimt](#).



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[St. Charles Church](#).



This is used as station building and art exhibitions.

This is used as a cafe.

This is the two buildings on the subway station [Karlsplatz](#). One of the busiest stations in the city. It was opened in 1899 as a station on the city line. In 1981 the line was converted to subway. The buildings were planned to be demolished, but the protests were so big that they are still standing.



The rear side of the cafe.

[St. Charles Church](#).



The St. Charles Church was built in the years from 1715 to 1737 in honor of [Charles Borromeo](#), patron saint of the fight against the plague. The purpose was to thank God having liberated Vienna from the plague in 1713, an epidemic that claimed 8000 lives. The dome is inspired by classic architecture, while the minaret like pillars testify to Oriental influence.



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[The Wiener Musikverein](#). The concert hall was built in 1869. The Vienna Philharmonic orchestra started New Year concerts here in 1941.



This figure stands on Karlsplatz.



[The Soviet War Memorial](#) on Schwarzenbergplatz. The red army's liberation monument is a memory from Austrian after war time when the city was occupied of the four allied forces and divided into four zones. It was erected in 1955.



A window in the wall around Belvedere.



Now we have arrived at Upper Belvedere.
It was built in the period 1720-1723.



A park with a little lake. The Alp garden lies on the other side of the lake.



A gate furthest away.



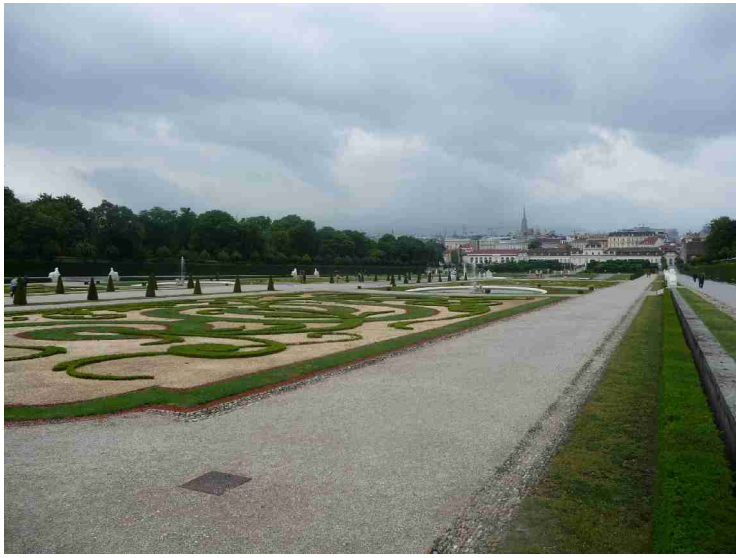
Here we see the entire building at Upper Belvedere.



Some of the park.



Upper and Lower Belvedere was built by Prince Eugen of Savoia with money he got as reward for his victories during the War of the Spanish Succession. He became the best known of the Hapsburg generals because of the victory over the Turks in 1683. The palaces was built by Lukas von Hildebrandt in 1714 – 1723. It was at Upper Belvedere that the Austrian State Treaty was signed 15. May 1955.



One of the sphinxes.

View downwards Lower Belvedere.



Lower Belvedere.

The pictures above are from the gardens between Upper and Lower Belvedere. The gardens are made in French style and have three levels. The lowest represents the four elements (water, air, earth and fire), the middle Parnassos (a mountain in middle Greece) and the upper Olympos (a mountain in eastern Greece).



A look back towards Upper Belvedere.



A statue in Lower Belvedere.



The entrance to Lower Belvedere.



Gardekirche, which was built in the years 1755 – 63. It was given to the Polish congregation in the area in 1897.



This is the Staatsoper. The construction of the opera house started in 1861 and it was opened in May 1869. The building was destroyed completely during WWII, but was rebuilt and opened again in 1955. It then became a symbol of that Austria had regained its independence after the occupation.

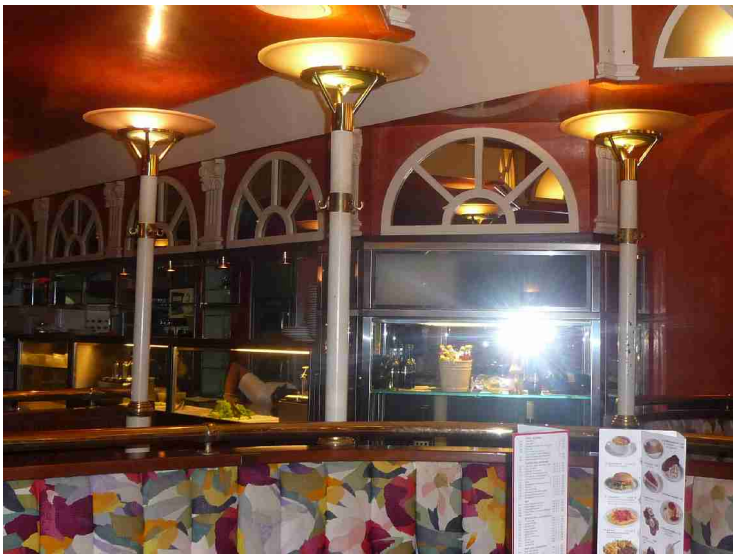




Now it was time for food. Kjell had this.



Anne Berit had this.



We had lunch at this American inspired restaurant.



Thy had lot of customers. All tables were taken, except this.



The entrance.



On the way back to the hotel we went past this South American duo.



Kjell is queuing to get some cash at a cashpoint.



Outside Hofburg there is a band playing.



This is St. Micheal's Church just adjacent to Hofburg. The imperial court went to mass in this church. It has been destroyed by fire and earthquakes various times, so it is a bit changed each time.



The Parliament seen from Schmerling Platz.

Now we are «finished» with Vienna. The next day the trip goes on to Bratislava.