

From antiquity to the avant-garde – cultural tours on the Danube

Travelers driving or cycling along the Danube intent on exploring art and culture will often find themselves transported to times long past. The Ancient Romans have let their mark along the river, as have medieval knights and nobility, not to mention the Hapsburgs and an array of fine baroque architects. Yet the present day also has sensational and creative cultural offerings as well.

For the Ancient Romans, the Danube was an important border river for 450 years. We encounter traces of their civilization, their legionary fortresses, settlements and cities along the river down to the present day: For instance at the Fort Boiotro Roman Museum in Passau, where a fascinating 3-D animation makes three Roman forts come alive. Or in the Roman museums in Enns (Museum Lauriacum), Tulln and Vienna. In the Roman city of Carnuntum, an Ancient Roman townhouse, a city mansion and public baths were reconstructed and are fully functional.

The medieval world is also very much present on the Danube today in many guises. Old fortresses, mysterious ruins and lovely churches tell the exciting tales of crusades, power struggles and legendary events. The Schauberg fortress ruins in the Eferding Basin are impressive with their old fortifications. Greinburg Castle in the Strudengau, in turn, is considered Austria's oldest residential castle. And in Linz, the Castle Museum takes you on a trip back in time. In a visit to the Aggstein fortress ruins in the Wachau, you learn about one of the most famous knight's castles in Austria. At the Dürnstein ruins, also in the Wachau, you find out about the extraordinary story of Richard the Lionhearted being kept prisoner here. In Vienna, you won't want to miss St. Stephen's Cathedral, a masterpiece of medieval architecture. And in the medieval town of Hainburg, impressive fortress ruins await you along with a grand panoramic view.

Hapsburg splendor & contemporary art

The Hapsburg emperors shaped the history of Europe and of the Danube region in lasting ways. The grand style and prosperity of the Danube Monarchy are all-present. The fascinating highlights of cultural tours along the Danube include, among others, imposing historical city centers in Passau and Linz, the magnificent baroque monastery of St. Florian, Engelszell and Melk abbeys, Klosterneuburg Monastery, dreamy castles like Artstetten, the grand Hofburg in Vienna and Schönbrunn Palace as the imperial summer residence plus magnificent works of art such as the imperial crowns in the Treasure Chamber and the collection in the Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna.

Contemporary cultural life is also very much in evidence along the Danube. In Linz, the famous Ars Electronica Center astounds visitors with its interactive exhibitions. The new Musiktheater Linz, the Brucknerhaus, the Forum Metall sculpture park along with a variety of museums and galleries make the city an attractive destination for travelers. The MuseumsQuartier (MQ) in Vienna is one of the largest cultural complexes in the world, drawing visitors with the Leopold Museum (Schiele!) and mumok - Museum moderner Kunst Stiftung Ludwig. The Albertina is considered to have one of the most significant collections of graphic art anywhere (Dürer's "Hase"). Klimt enthusiasts head to the Belvedere ("The Kiss") and avant-garde fans pay a visit to Belvedere21. Smaller cities also hold surprises: Pöchlarn, for instance, with the birthplace of Oskar Kokoschka, Tulln with the Egon Schiele Museum and Krems with its art mile consisting of Kunsthalle Krems, the Caricature Museum Krems - the only one in Austria, Forum Frohner and Landesgalerie Niederösterreich, which will be opened in Mai 2019.

Four cultural tours on the Danube have been worked out in detail and can be found at www.donauoesterreich.at/kultur. There you can download any of the four suggested tours free of charge on the topics "Ancient Romans", "Middle Ages", "Hapsburg & Baroque" and "Modern & Contemporary". The tours are designed to be covered in five to seven days by car or eight to ten days by bicycle.

The length and approximate travel time for the easily manageable stages are included, along with the opening hours, admission prices and web addresses for museums and other sights.

Cultural tours along the Danube at a glance

- The cultural tours suggested at <http://www.donau-oesterreich.at/en/culturaltravels/> focus on the section from Passau to Hainburg - about 375 km by car and about 400 km by bicycle.
- **“Ancient Romans”** cultural tour - by car (starts on Wednesday): 5 days; by bicycle (starts on Sunday): 8 days; highlights: Fort Boiotro Roman Museum, Museum Lauriacum Enns, Roman Museum in Tulln, Roman Museum in Vienna, Carnuntum Archaeological Park
- **“Middle Ages”** cultural tour - by car (starts on Saturday): 5 days; by bicycle (starts on Saturday): 9 days; highlights: Passau, Linz, Enns, Grein, Schauberg fortress ruins, Aggstein fortress ruins, Dürnstein ruins, Krems-Stein, Tulln, St. Stephen’s Cathedral, Hainburg
- **“Hapsburg & Baroque”** cultural tour - by car: 7 days; by bicycle: 10 days; highlights: Passau, Engelszell Abbey Church, Linz, St. Florian Monastery, Artstetten Castle, Melk Abbey, Krems-Stein, Göttweig Abbey, Klosterneuburg Monastery, Schönbrunn Palace and Park, Belvedere Palace, Hofburg, Imperial Treasure Chamber
- **“Modern & Contemporary”** cultural tour - by car (starts on Tuesday): 7 days; by bicycle (starts on Tuesday): 10 days; highlights: Ars Electronica Center Linz, LENTOS Museum of Modern Art Linz, Forum Metall, Musiktheater Linz, Kunsthalle Krems, Egon Schiele Museum, MuseumsQuartier Vienna with Leopold Museum and mumok - Museum moderner Kunst Stiftung Ludwig, Albertina, Belvedere21

More Information:

ARGE Donau Österreich
c/o WGD Donau Oberösterreich Tourismus GmbH
Lindengasse 9, 4040 Linz
Tel: +43 732/7277 800
E-Mail: info@donau-oesterreich.at
Web: www.donau-oesterreich.at