

Vienna:

A Symphony for the Senses

By Elyse Glickman

Vienna is truly a city for lovers. From die-hard romantics, to music connoisseurs, to chocolate fanatics and foodies, the city is bound by the perfect marriage of baroque elegance and 21st century chic.

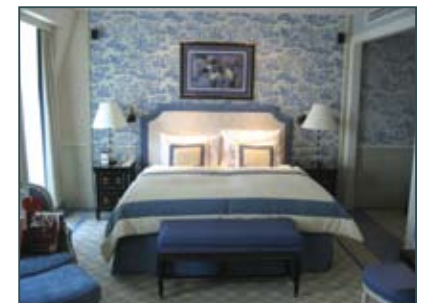
In 2006, Vienna was ablaze in culture, especially with the 250th anniversary of Mozart's birth in full swing. Because its food, architecture and museums are so rich and multifaceted, you can rest assured a visit to Vienna in 2007 will feel like a true celebration.

When you arrive, venture around Kohlmarkt and Karntner Strasse, where you will find a wide range of delights among souvenir kiosks, including Palmer Lingerie (similar to Victoria's Secret but with racier, higher quality undergarments) and Dorotheum Auction House (offering exceptional antique auction jewelry and stylish modern pieces).

In the center of it all is Hotel Sacher—a museum in its own right and the birthplace of the Original Sacher-Torte (the mother of all death-by-chocolate desserts). Additionally, Hotel Sacher is home to larger-than-life romantic suites outfitted with velvety Old World flair, from the fresh candy and fruit in each guestroom, to the regal bathrooms complete with marble appointments and chocolate-based soaps and lotions. Most of the hotel's suites offer million dollar postcard views of Hapsburg palaces, museums and other lavish baroque structures. Apart from the flat screen televisions, spa-style shower heads and motorized interior, the rooms reveal how Marie Antoinette developed such rich tastes long before she set foot in Versailles.

There are many incentives to get out of bed when visiting Vienna, one being that everything is within walking distance or is easily accessible from Vienna's highly efficient public transportation system. The Museum Quarter complex, which includes the Leopold Museum and the Kunsthaus, offers a rich tapestry of all things contemporary and serves as the gateway to the trendy Sixth and Seventh districts.

If your heart is set on being swept back in time, you're in luck. With its grandiose stairway and ceiling frescoes as impressive as the operas themselves, the Vienna Opera House will certainly take you back to an earlier period. The Kunsthistorisches Museum presents a who's who of antiquities, and if you adore the fever-dream glamour of Viennese painter Gustav Klimt from the Belle Epoque era, don't miss the Upper Belvedere in the Austrian Gallery. In addition, an early



Hotel Sacher Suite



Stammersdorf Street



Mozart Fountain



An aerial view of the city

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morning stroll through Schönbrunn Palace and its surrounding grounds is achingly romantic.

Vienna stands as one of the greatest foodie cities on the planet, especially if you have a yen for sweets and comfort food. Süesses Eck looks almost exactly like the candy shop from the opening scenes of the original 1971 film, *Willy Wonka & the Chocolate Factory*. While Süesses Eck selections feature items from around the world, it places a special emphasis on locally produced, hand-crafted candy, including seasonal chestnut creams. For additional candy selections, visit the First District, where master confectioner Wolfgang Leschanz recently took over one of the city's oldest sweetshops, Schokoladekonig. There he devotes his waking hours to creating some of the finest artisan chocolates in Europe.

While many of the cafés and *gasthauses*, or inns, in the center of the city add a few modern touches to the food, it is worth a 40-minute tram ride to Stammersdorf—a village recently incorporated into the city limits—to experience great, simple food. Weingut Wieninger, one of Vienna's most successful vintners, owns a superb restaurant called Weinhof Wieninger, where you can enjoy a lavish spread of comfort food in a lovely garden setting. ❁

For more information, visit AboutVienna.org.



Süesses Eck candy shop