

Pleasure for all senses

The Danube in Lower Austria

Light-flooded vineyards, paradisiacal orchards, mysterious floodplain forests, imposing monasteries and castles, culinary highlights and the finest wines - a trip to the Lower Austrian Danube region invigorates the senses.

Spitz, March 2021: The Danube, Europe's second longest river and Austria's most important waterway, has always shaped nature and people on its banks. With 260 km of what is probably the most scenic section of the river valley, the Danube region in Lower Austria was blessed with a true treasure. From the Nibelungengau in the west to the world heritage site of the Wachau and the gates of Bratislava in the east, magnificent buildings, picturesque riverside towns and the highest wine culture attract visitors. Art lovers and connoisseurs can revel in the abundance here just as much as nature lovers and those who enjoy exercise.

World Cultural Heritage Wachau

As one of Austria's oldest cultural landscapes, the Wachau was awarded the European Nature Conservation Diploma in 1994. In December 2000, the Wachau was the only region along the entire Danube to be included in the UNESCO World Heritage List, and at the end of 2008 it was named "Best Historic Destination in the World" by National Geographic Traveler magazine.

Culinary delights at the highest level

Sun-ripened Wachau apricots, freshly caught river fish and crisp asparagus from the Marchfeld - the Lower Austrian Danube region spoils you with a variety of high-quality regional products and is one of Europe's top regions for culinary delights. Those who value the best quality in food and drink and a special atmosphere can choose from numerous addresses here - from rustic Kellergassen Heurigen and Buschenschänken to cosy inns and exquisite gourmet restaurants. About half of all Lower Austrian restaurants awarded toques by the **Gault Millau guide** are located along the Danube. And a great number of establishments of **Lower Austria's inn culture** are currently located in the Lower Austrian Danube region. In some of them, your mouth not only waters at the sight of the delicious dishes, but you also sit directly on the water or enjoy a fantastic view of the Danube. **Heurige** or **Buschenschänken** offer a hearty snack with a good glass of wine. Here, wines from the region's own vineyards are served only on certain dates, and food from the region's own production is offered. "Buschen" (bundles of twigs) above the entrance door are the sign that it is open.

World-class wines

Wachau, Kremstal, Traisental, Wagram, Kamptal and Carnuntum Six of the eight Lower Austrian vineyards and some of the most famous vineyards in Austria are located in the Lower Austrian Danube region. The ideal climate with both Atlantic-humid and Pannonian-dry influences and the varied soils allow the wines to thrive particularly well. The **Wachau Rieslings**, for example, are world-famous, as well as the **Grüner Veltliner**, the **Chardonnay** and the **Gelber Muskateller**, which achieve remarkable qualities. Numerous winegrowers are internationally renowned and innovative. In addition to "wine ex farm" sales, some winegrowers also offer commented wine tastings and guest rooms.

Special wine experiences are offered in the **wine experience world SANDGRUBE 13wein.sinn** in Krems, where you can enjoy the fascination of wine with all your senses in 8 stations, or the guided tour in the 300-year-old wine cellar of the Wachau winegrowers' cooperative **Domäne Wachau** in Dürnstein, followed by a wine tasting in the baroque cellar castle.

Cycling along the river

The famous **Danube Cycle Path** winds along the mighty river. The section in Lower Austria is a special feast for the eyes of the cyclist: the magnificent backdrop of the **Wachau World Heritage Site** with its typical primary rock terraces leading into the **Krems Valley** and the wide landscape of the **Tulln Danube region** allow the cyclist to really enjoy the ride. The journey continues through the wine-growing region of **Wagram** to just before the Slovakian border, where in the **Roman land of Carnuntum - Marchfeld** you pass the Danube Floodplain National Park, one of the last intact floodplain forests in Europe. The varied route runs for the most part on footpaths directly along the river. For long stretches, both the north and south banks are navigable. Cycle ferries and bridges make it easy to cross the river. Detours into the Danube hinterland are possible in many places. Resting places with cosy biker's arbours create an additional incentive to pause and let the charming landscape take its effect on you. It is worth planning more time to visit interesting sights or to reward yourself with the culinary delights and wines of the region to top off an eventful day.

Hiking in a World Heritage Site

Those who prefer to walk will find wonderful hiking trails in Lower Austria's Danube region. Particularly attractive is the long-distance hiking trail **Wachau World Heritage trail**, one of the most beautiful long-distance hiking routes in Austria: over a length of 180 kilometres, it leads through the impressive World Heritage Wachau in 14 stages. The stages are laid out in such a way that each route can be completed in a leisurely day hike. Hikers are rewarded with fantastic views and a multitude of cultural sites along the way. Gentle vineyards meet rugged rock faces, sunny paths lead to shady ruins. You hike along the famous primeval rock terraces and also pass the most famous vineyards of the Wachau. Since the stages are laid out as long-distance and circular hiking trails, each starting and ending in the villages, you will always find a wide range of culinary addresses and accommodation at the end of an extensive hiking day. The tour planner on the following website is a valuable aid in selecting the routes: www.wachau-world-heritage-trail.at

Das Kremstal entdecken

The **Kremstal-Danube long-distance hiking trail** was opened in 2020. On about 100 kilometres, it connects picturesque places around the wine town of Krems north and south of the Danube. In 15 stages, each between 4 and 18 kilometres long, the scenic and cultural features of the Kremstal region can be hiked. The region, which is characterised by viticulture, has striking excursion destinations to offer. From the magnificent Göttweig Abbey to the Senftenberg ruins, from wine experience worlds and forest nature trails to rich cultural treasures in the city of Krems and its surroundings. The trail leads through numerous cellar alleys and sunken paths. Many wine taverns and restaurants invite you to taste the regional delicacies with quality wines typical of the region. If you want to hike all the stages of the new trail, you should plan on about 5-6 days. Further information on the hiking trail and the individual stages can be found at www.kremstal.at

Long-distance hiking along the Danube

The **Nibelungengau long-distance hiking trail** offers a suitable route for every level of ability. Over a total length of 110 km, it connects the Upper Austrian Donausteig trail in the west with the Wachau World Heritage Trail in the east. Unspoilt nature and fantastic views of the Danube valley accompany hikers at every turn. The trail runs both north and south of the Danube and connects all the cultural treasures and natural jewels like a red thread. The eight stages are between 10

and 22 kilometres long. Along the route you will find everything that makes hikers happy: resting and resting places to linger, a romantic gorge, but also historically grown towns and villages. Information on the individual stages, such as length, metres in altitude or difficulty level, can be called up and downloaded at www.fabulous-nibelungengau.at.

VIA.CARNUNTUM. - The 5 top circular hiking trails in Roman Carnuntum.

"All roads lead to Rome", according to a saying. Five hiking trails lead to the region of Roman Carnuntum between Vienna and Bratislava: the VIA.CARNUNTUM. On 70 km, hikers follow the traces of the ancient Romans and experience the rich history of the region. The individual rounds are 5 to max. 12 km long, without any particular ascents, easy for families to hike. Whether a day trip or a hiking holiday lasting several days. With a free app, hikers can hear exciting information about legends and myths and rare plants such as the Hainburg feathered carnation. The most beautiful excursion destinations along the VIA.CARNUNTUM. are presented in a special way. Download the wanted guide in the app "Wanderwege Römerland Carnuntum" free of charge, best with WLAN on your smartphone. www.via-carnuntum.at

Hiking with luggage transport

Enjoyable hiking is guaranteed when you book a hiking package with luggage transport. Our hiking partners will transport your luggage from one accommodation to the next. www.donau.com/hiking-vacation

Cultural enjoyment at its best

Artists and cultural workers have always been inspired by the Danube. Today, the city of **Krems** has established itself as a centre for the visual arts. With its medieval alleys and buildings from the late Gothic, Renaissance and Baroque periods, the old town of Krems was declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2000. The **Krems Art Mile** with the Kunsthalle, the Caricature Museum, the Forum Frohner and the Landesgalerie Niederösterreich offers a mix of cultural institutions at an international level.

A young, boisterous festival for contemporary art forms is the **donaufestival**, which takes to various stages in Krems every year from the end of April to the beginning of May. Traditional and contemporary folk music from all over the world is knitted together into a unique sound experience every summer as part of "**Glatt&Verkehrt**". The Melk Summer Games in the Danube Arena below Melk Abbey - every year from mid-July to mid-August - are also a traditional crowd-puller with their open-air theatre performances. In the **open-air stage "Wolkenturm"** at the site of **Grafenegg Castle**, the music festival under the direction of star pianist Rudolf Buchbinder from mid-August to early September is the artistic highlight of the season.

The **Danube Stage in Tulln** is Austria's largest river stage. In this wonderful setting, audiences can enjoy a broad mix of international stars and local greats during the summer months. The **Traismauer Summer of Culture**, on the other hand, offers a programme of cabaret, classical music, folk music, gospel, soul, pop and jazz. Traismauer Castle provides a dignified ambience for this cultural event series with its beautiful inner courtyard and festival hall.

The traditional **Stockerau Festival** offers those interested a summer month of theatre at its best in the open air. In summer, the castle courtyard of Klosterneuburg Abbey serves as the venue for the **Klosterneuburg Opera**. Every year, the **Korneuburg Music Summer** brings high-quality musical events to Korneuburg on the shipyard grounds. The programme is aimed at both adult and young audiences.

The **world theatre festival Art Carnuntum** takes place at the historic Petronell Amphitheatre and has been attracting theatre fans from all over the world for almost 30 years.

The brothers Joseph and Michael Haydn are among the most prominent sons of our province. The exhibition in the **Haydn Birthplace in Rohrau** deals with their childhood and their career as composers. In connection with the renovation and reopening of the Haydn Birthplace, the "**Haydn Region of Lower Austria**" was created in the musically and culturally important area around Rohrau to pay tribute to the legacy of the Haydn brothers. A multitude of cultural events and festivities await the guests.

Impressions from the river

The landscape along the Danube presents itself from a particularly attractive perspective from a ship. Several shipping companies ply the river valleys of the Nibelungengau and the Wachau, connecting places worth seeing such as Krems, Spitz, Dürnstein or Melk. In addition to the white Danube boats, wooden boats and traditional zills are also operating. From mid-April to the end of October, numerous themed trips are also offered. The trips are particularly popular at the time of the **Solstice bonfires**, which are lit in large numbers on the slopes of the Wachau and the Nibelungengau in June. If you want to experience this unique spectacle from a ship, however, you should book well in advance. In the **Maritime Museum in Spitz**, the history of Danube river cruising is presented in an entertaining and exciting way on more than 400 exhibits.

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You can also find photographic material about the Lower Austrian Danube region in our online picture archive on the following website: www.media.donau.com