

# Vienna for Database Researchers

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## ABSTRACT

The paper is a guide to Vienna for the attendees of VLDB 2007. While motivated by similar guides of earlier years (e.g., VLDB 2004 in Toronto), this one sacrifices scientific exactness (and the experiments section) for space to present some anecdotes and factoids for which in many cases no sources can be provided but which should give you a first taste of Vienna. To adjust your expectations, I start with some history. After that I discuss the topics usual to such a guide.

## 1. A BRIEF HISTORY OF VIENNA

The Bronze Age was effectively the golden age of the region, whose celtic culture led archeologists to name an entire era after – well, Hallstatt, another place in Austria.<sup>1</sup> Since then Vienna slowly declined, with the exception of 1993, when ICDE took place here.

In 180 AD, Roman emperor Marcus Aurelius died in Vienna (then called Vindobona) after a protracted war against German tribes, not killed by Commodus but by illness, it is said. Ever since then the region has seen major wars every few decades. With very few exceptions, these wars were lost by the faction that Vienna belonged to. Nevertheless a large Empire was created by dynastically smart marriage with the official motto *Bella gerant alii, tu felix Austria nube!* (lat. “Let others wage war, you - happy Austria - marry!”), as Austrian children are taught rather early on). *Felix Austria* now is a locally popular brand of tomato ketchup.

In 1529 and 1683, Vienna was unsuccessfully besieged by the Ottoman (Turkish) Empire, who really were not so much interested in Vienna but wanted to conquer Europe. Vienna could not be avoided because of geographical and other considerations. Vienna was a fortified town then and some remains of the fortifications can be found just across Ringstrasse from the conference venue. That piece of the wall is called M $\ddot{u}$ lkerbastei.

<sup>1</sup>This was probably somewhat before the first settlement at the location of Vienna.

The Turkish army brought coffee to Vienna. Let me briefly retell the story. The Viennese sent a Polish (on other accounts, Ukrainian) adventurer named Kolschitzky, who spoke Turkish, to sneak through the Turkish lines at night, disguised as a Turkish soldier. Kolschitzky succeeded and delivered an important message to the Emperor, then camped in Passau, and returned to Vienna with the news that the relief army was close to ready. For this he was rewarded, after the end of the siege, with the permission to take as much coffee as he cared for from what the Turkish army had left in their camps (supposedly a substantial amount). Kolschitzky thus started the first *Kaffeehaus* (coffee house/café) in Vienna, the third in Europe. He supposedly also invented a local coffee specialty, the *Melange*. The part about Kolschitzky’s founding of the first café (not his achievements as a secret agent) is now considered an urban legend, albeit an old one (from the 18th century). Even so, the first factual coffee house was established in Vienna soon after the end of the siege, in 1685.

Speaking of rewards, the Polish King Jan III Sobiesky, whose cavalry charge had played an important role in the relief of Vienna, was presented by a Jewish pastry baker of Vienna with bread shaped like a *Steigbügel* (stirrup) or *Beigel* (Viennese, from Yiddish *beygl*). This story is contested as well but may be true. At least, this is the likely reason why many bagel places abroad have adopted German-sounding names. Bagels do go well with coffee too.

You will remember that the SIGMOD 2004 conference banquet (buffet) took place in the Salle Wagram in Paris. Now, in the Battle of Wagram, Napoleon defeated the Austrians just outside Vienna. To put things into perspective, in the same week Napoleon was defeated, for the first time in a battle of comparable forces, by the Austrians at Aspern-Essling (now within the city limits of Vienna).<sup>2</sup> The VLDB 2007 banquet will not take place in the Salle Aspern-Essling (as no such place exists, to my knowledge), but in the City Hall, the venue of the famous and very colorful Life Ball, a yearly AIDS charity event that attracts international stars, and the equally famous Vienna Christmas Market.

Vienna was the center of the Holy Roman and later the Austrian and Austro-Hungarian empires under the Habsburg family, who were active builders (see the Hofburg and Schönbrunn palaces) and, some of them, collectors (see museums). During their tenure, Vienna also attracted many major composers, such as Mozart, Vivaldi, Beethoven, Schubert, the Strauss family, Mahler, and quite a few others, and

<sup>2</sup>The truth of this is not contested, maybe because Aspern-Essling took place three days *before* Wagram.

became big in music.

The decades around 1900 saw a short renewal of the bronze age in Vienna. The city became a major center of the arts and sciences for a few decades, and much greatness now to be admired in the museums (typically by tourists) was produced. If you would like to read up on some of the people of that time on the Web, I suggest to start with Alma Mahler on Wikipedia, who is to Viennese notables what Paul Erdős is to mathematicians and Kevin Bacon is to actors<sup>3</sup>.

The rest of the 20th century consisted of a long chain of fiascoes for Vienna and shall be skipped. Only this little:

- Viennese are somewhat obsessed with death. You can find a museum there in which you can see the car in which Franz Ferdinand, heir presumptive to the throne of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, was assassinated in 1914, the triggering event for World War I. The inconvertible blood and gore is still in the car. There is also the concept of the *Schöne Leich* (beautiful corpse), which I don't want to go into here. Suffice to add that some of the fanciest guides cover the town's cemeteries.
- The Viennese university that notoriously refused to admit Hitler as an art student in 1907 and 1908, and left him looking for a different calling, likely the strongest case for liberal university admission criteria history has to offer, is not the one at which VLDB takes place.

The 20th century has left the Viennese a very nostalgic and pessimistic people, and even one hundred years ago Sigmund Freud could choose his objects of study from an amazing pool of tortured souls.<sup>4</sup> The local breed of humor is also often quite black.

Advice: Expect some crabbiness on the side of locals. Viennese do believe their grumpiness to be a lovable one (in the sense of Matthau/Lemmon, probably). Note in particular that a certain grumpiness is part of some job descriptions here. For example, the top coffee houses are supposed to have only waiters that are above 40, male, wear worn tuxedos, and always look a bit angry. Regarding the essential difference between grumpy waiters in Vienna and Paris (where allegedly a similar situation is to be observed), it has been said that while the attitude of the waiters in Paris is "Don't look at me as if I am the waiter!", the attitude of those in Vienna is "Don't dare look at me like this, I am the WAITER!"

**Vienna today.** Vienna is now one of the major magnets for city tourists in Europe, and you will have to suffer from this since VLDB falls still within the main tourist season (which is all year long). Vienna has splendid cafés and great museums. Vienna still very much looks like the capital of the large empire of previous centuries, and there are many instances of magnificent architecture to be found in the city. Moreover, there is a rich cultural life, and Vienna considers itself a world capital of classical music. The Vienna State Opera is one of the most prestigious opera houses and the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra is one of the finest in the world. (But anyway, they are touring abroad during

<sup>3</sup>For a nice picture and an obituary by Tom Lehrer see <http://members.aol.com/quentncree/lehrer/alma.htm> (I hope this link lasts, I found it with Google.)

<sup>4</sup>Austrian politicians seem to disagree, and recently decided to create – by fiat – what they call an elite university and chose a major mental home in the region as its site.

VLDB and they currently have a thirteen years waiting list for weekend subscriptions<sup>5</sup>. You probably could get a subscription now for the year in which SIGMOD takes place in Vienna.) There are many music shops in which you can buy CDs of what you miss.

## 2. CAFÉS

Most of the cultural life of Vienna in the decades around 1900 took place in the coffee houses, and much of the literature of the time was written there (including Hugo von Hoffmannsthal, Arthur Schnitzler, Stefan Zweig, Karl Kraus, or Peter Altenberg). Communities of intellectuals developed, who tended to be loyal to certain cafés. At the time, many people, including most of the creative ones, lived in small, dark, barely heated appartments, and spent their daytime in the coffee houses to warm up and be/work in more pleasant surroundings (if not without a due amount of quibbling and fighting). A custom that has been preserved from that time is that it is completely fine and usual to order coffee and then stay for a very long time (all day, if you like) in the coffee house, reading the current newspapers that are available there for free. If you have the time, try it (and yes, some places offer free WiFi, too).

If you want to go on a historical Kaffeehaus tour, though, unfortunately, some that the most famous Bohemians and artists have frequented, such as Café Herrenhof, now do not exist anymore. Café Central (1010, Herrengasse 14)<sup>6</sup> is one of these places that still (or again) exists, known not so much for writers and journalists but for great chess players and revolutionaries. From Wikipedia: *A well-known story states that an Austrian politician, asked about the possibility of a revolution in Russia, remarked sarcastically: "Who is going to make a revolution? Perhaps that Trotsky from the Café Central?"*. The interior of Café Central is worth seeing, and it is close to the conference venue.

Some more cafés that are worth visiting: Café Landtmann (1010, Dr. Karl Lueger-Ring 4), Café Schwarzenberg (1010, Kärntner Ring 17), Café Museum (1010, Operngasse 7), and Café Sperl (1060, Gumpendorferstrasse 11). These are quite magnificent inside, and like the Café Central attract many tourists. The incredibly expensive Café Sacher may enforce a dress code. Some that are less touristy are Café Bräunerhof (1010, Stallburggasse 2) and Café Hawelka (1010, Dorotheergasse 6), the latter one was a main meeting point of artists after WW2 (who could pay with their work rather than cash).

Some more cafés that are particularly near the conference venue: Café Maximilian (1090, Universitätsstrasse 9), Café Rathaus (1080, Landesgerichtsstr.5), and Café Votivpark (1010, Kolingasse 5). You should also consider stopping over at an Aida (a chain, e.g., 1090, Währinger Strasse 2–4) at least once (not just because of the very fair price-performance tradeoff). Café Stein (1090, Währinger Strasse 6–8), next to the mentioned Aida, in addition is an internet café which has decent lunch. Konditorei Sluka (1010, Rathausplatz 8; city hall arcades) is a further good pastry shop near to the conference venue.

<sup>5</sup>According to Wikipedia.

<sup>6</sup>I use the local notation ZIP\_CODE, STREET\_NAME HOUSE\_NUMBER for addresses. The middle digits (2 and 3) of the Zip code specify the district. The conference venue is close to the point where the 1st, 8th and 9th districts meet.

Finally, the Demel (1010, Kohlmarkt 14) is a very famous pastry shop and café. For example, the letter that Ralph Fiennes' character carries in his notebook in the English Patient is recognizably written on paper with a Demel letterhead. (A receipt?) It is a main tourist attraction, nevertheless it may be worth having a quick look into the shop.

### 3. MUSEUMS

There are many world-class museums here. I shall rank some of them by personal preference; this ranking may not fit for you. All are within walking distance from the conference venue.

1. The Art History Museum (*Kunsthistorisches Museum*). <http://www.khm.at/>  
Main Building: 1010, Maria Theresien-Platz  
Opening times: Tuesday - Sunday 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Thursday 10 a.m. to 9 p.m.

Considered one of the best museums of its kind, particularly strong on old Dutch (Brueghel et al.) and Italian (Arcimboldo et al.) masters. You will already know many of the paintings even if you are not particularly interested in the fine arts. There is basically no modern art – you will find that elsewhere. The museum got into the international news in recent years when the Saliera, the only still extant gold sculpture by legendary Renaissance artist, goldsmith, and criminal Benvenuto Cellini was stolen and later recovered. If you can only go to one museum and you do not have a clear preference, I suggest this one.

2. The Natural History Museum (*Naturhistorisches Museum*). <http://www.nhm-wien.ac.at/>  
1010, Burgring 7 (entrance on Maria Theresien-Platz)  
Opening hours: Thu-Mon: 9:00 – 18:30; Wed: 9:00 – 21:00; Tue closed.

Opposite the Art History Museum. Voted one of the ten best museums in the world by the Sunday Times, across all categories, and home to the *Venus of Willendorf* and some very large dinosaur skeletons. I particularly like the collection of minerals, which may usually be boring but is very impressive there. Some of the collections are over 250 years old and the atmosphere of an imperial curiosity cabinet has been preserved. The ceiling paintings of the magnificent building are connected to the collections. The museum has not followed the fashion of turning science and natural history museums into playgrounds for children and some of the objects are labeled only with small, nearly illegible paper tags. </hydrodamalis gigas>

3. Leopold Museum <http://www.leopoldmuseum.org/>  
1070, Museumsplatz 1  
Opening hours: daily 10.00–18.00; Thu 10.00–21.00.

This one houses a wonderful collection of paintings by major Austrians from the second bronze age such as Gustav Klimt and Oskar Kokoschka, and the best collection of works by Egon Schiele. The building complex, called Museumsquartier, also houses other museums, including the Museum of Modern Art (MUMOK).

4. Albertina <http://www.albertina.at/>  
1010, Albertinaplatz 1

Opening hours: Mon, Tue, Thu–Sun. 10 – 18h; Wed. 10 – 21h.

Just behind the State Opera building off the Ringstrasse, this museum houses one of the world's largest and most important collections of drawings and prints, including some by Leonardo da Vinci and Albrecht Dürer's famous rabbit.

5. Akademie der Bildenden Künste  
<http://www.akbild.ac.at/Portal/einrichtungen/gemaldegalerie>  
1010, Schillerplatz  
Opening hours: Tue-Sun and holidays 10-18h.

The gallery of paintings of the Vienna Academy of Arts sports the Last Judgement Triptych by Hieronymus Bosch, as well as further masterpieces by the likes of Cranach, Rembrandt, Rubens, and Tizian.

There are many others that are worth visiting given time.

### 4. PALACES AND CHURCHES

- St. Stephen's Cathedral<sup>7</sup> (1010, Stephansplatz).

Many legends surround the cathedral of Vienna, including some about the architect's pact with the devil and bleeding statues. You should absolutely find the time to look inside. You can climb both of the larger towers. The higher one is an ordeal (no elevator, and a very narrow staircase). The cathedral follows a mix of styles as is was constructed over a long time period (1137–now). It houses Europe's second largest bell and the facade sports some huge (male and female) genitals close to the main entrance that you will only find if you muster sufficient determination and look hard enough. Also fixed to the wall of the cathedral are former official yardsticks, including one that defined the required size of a loaf of bread. Bakers who sold smaller loafs where effectively keelhauled in the Danube: They were put into a cage and lowered into the river. This was called *Bäckerschupfen* ("tossing of bakers").

- Hofburg Palace. A very nice walk past the city hall and the Houses of Parliament from the conference venue. Quite beautiful, and home to the Spanish Riding School, the National Library, and various museums. Also houses the offices of the President of Austria. But, most interestingly, it houses the treasury (*Schatzkammer*), in which you can see the imperial regalia of the Holy Roman Empire and of Austria, the treasure of the Order of the Golden Fleece, ecclesiastical treasure, the Holy Lance, and more.

Schatzkammer opening hours: Wed. to Mon. 10am – 6pm.

- Schönbrunn Palace (not within walking distance: take subway U4 to Schönbrunn stop)  
<http://www.schoenbrunn.at>

One of the most popular tourist attractions of Vienna. If you have not been to Versailles, see it, otherwise, don't.

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<sup>7</sup>This is one of the City's landmarks; another one is the giant Ferris wheel ("Riesenrad") in the Prater amusement park in the second district. The conference logo of VLDB 2007 is derived from the Riesenrad.

- Belvedere Palace.  
<http://www.belvedere.at>  
The palace that Prince Eugene of Savoy, Austria's greatest general (and not Austrian but French), built for himself. Also known as the location of the signing of the Austrian *Staatsvertrag*, the document that returned Austria to independence ten years after WW2. It is said that the fact that Austria was not split like Germany is mostly due to Chancellor (later foreign minister) Leopold Figl's ability to beat Russian diplomats in vodka drinking bouts. This is apparently really true. The Belvedere houses the Austrian Gallery, which has some of the most famous Klimt paintings and a special Klimt exhibition during VLDB.
- Palais Liechtenstein (1090, Fürstengasse 1)  
<http://www.liechtensteinmuseum.at/>  
Opening hours: Fri-Mon 10-17h  
Palace of the princely family of Liechtenstein, who traditionally lived in Vienna and still own the palace. Contains a major collection of art.

## 5. UNDERWORLD

- Catacombs below St. Stephen's Cathedral. You can take a creepy tour through the catacombs below the cathedral, where the bones of 11000 people, mostly victims of the plague, are stored. An unnamed conference officer of VLDB 2007 (not me) discovered uncharted tunnels there and has published a book about the catacombs. He was 14 years old then.
- Zentralfriedhof. A very large cemetery, always worth a visit. There is the popular saying that "Although Zurich is twice as big as the Zentralfriedhof, it is only half as much fun." (It is popular in Vienna, not Zurich.) The Jewish cemetery there leaves a powerful impression. Not within walking distance.
- Kapuzinergruft (1010, Tegetthoffstrasse 2)  
Opening Hours: 9:30am-4pm daily  
The imperial crypt of the Habsburgs. The change of styles of coffins over time has been described as "interesting" in a TV documentary. The old protocol dictates that the deceased are refused access twice by a monk at the gate and only admitted on the third asking by those outside.
- "3rd Man Tour" through Vienna sewage system.  
e.g. <http://www.viennawalks.com/>  
(Self-explanatory)
- Roman excavations. At several places in Vienna.

## 6. OTHER PLACES WORTH VISITING

- Vienna Zoo. The world's oldest, substantially overhauled very recently, and very pretty. Some of the historic buildings are now considered too small to allow for proper housing of the animals but could not be torn down because of their historic significance. Thus, the humans at some places end up in the caged buildings while the animals roam outside. They have Pandas and various cute baby animals.

- Danube island. A very nice recreational area between two arms of the Danube river. Take subway U1 to go there and walk around. Find out about Copa Kagrana, if you can fancy a mix of Cuban rhythms and Turkish cooking.
- Heurigen. In Vienna, wine is grown within the city limits, and the Heurigen are the places in the hills at the outskirts of Vienna where the vineyards offer their produce, and food as well (which is usually quite heavy, however). Later in the year, the Viennese aggregate there to taste the young wine of the year; unfortunately, this will not be until after VLDB. Nevertheless, you can go there and try the wine of last year (or earlier). The atmosphere in these places is quite nice. (Not within walking distance, but accessible using public transportation.)
- Naschmarkt (U4 Karlsplatz or U4 Kettenbrückengasse). A famous market with very nice and fresh produce. There are also numerous little places for lunch there. At its rear end, at linke Wienzeile / Kettenbrückengasse, there are some beautiful art deco townhouses.
- The conference venue. The University of Vienna started in 1365 and is the second-oldest in the German-speaking countries (after Prag, which is not German-speaking anymore). You will certainly visit this one.

## 7. CLASSICAL MUSIC EVENTS

- Vienna State Opera  
<http://www.wiener-staatsoper.at>  
At Ringstrasse, U4 station Karlsplatz.
  - Sept. 19: I Puritani (Bellini)
  - Sept. 20: Werther (Massenet) – sold out<sup>8</sup>
  - Sept. 21: Ballet: Romeo and Juliet – sold out
  - Sept. 22: Il Barbiere di Siviglia (Rossini)
  - Sept. 23: I Puritani (Bellini) – sold out
  - Sept. 25: Tosca (Puccini) – sold out
  - Sept. 26: Il Barbiere di Siviglia (Rossini) – sold out
  - Sept. 28: Ballet: The Nutcracker – sold out
  - Sept. 29: Tosca (Puccini)
  - Sept. 30: Ballet: The Nutcracker

Note: even for the nominally sold out events you may be able to obtain tickets if you queue up at the Opera early enough the evening of the performance. Some (even very cheap) tickets are sold there which cannot be obtained by reservation.

- Wiener Musikverein  
<http://www.musikverein-wien.at/>  
1010, Bösendorferstrasse  
This is the home of the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra and the venue of the famous Vienna New Year's Concert. It is supposedly one of the three best concert halls in the world in terms of acoustics.

<sup>8</sup>Booking status for Vienna state opera events as of Jul. 8, 2007.

- Thu. Sept. 20 19:30 Grosser Saal: Wiener Symphoniker – Dante Anzolini – Caballero \* Bizet \* Prokofjew
  - Fri. Sept. 21 16:00 Brahms-Saal: Wiener Sängerknaben (Vienna Boys Choir)
  - Fri. Sept. 21 20:15 Grosser Saal: Wiener Mozart Orchester – Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
  - Sat. Sept. 22 20:15 Grosser Saal: Wiener Mozart Orchester – Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
  - Sun. Sept. 23 19:30 Grosser Saal: Philharmonia Wien<sup>9</sup> – Ola Rudner – Wagner \* Mendelssohn \* Beethoven
  - Mon. Sept. 24 20:15 Grosser Saal: Wiener Mozart Orchester – Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
  - Tue. Sept. 25 19:30 Grosser Saal: Wiener Akademie – Martin Haselböck – Mozart \* Haydn \* Beethoven
  - Wed. Sept. 26 19:30 Grosser Saal: Camerata Bern – Angelika Kirchschrager – Haydn \* Respighi \* Schubert
  - Wed. Sept. 26 20:15 Brahms-Saal: Wiener Mozart Orchester – Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
  - Thu. Sept. 28 16:00 Brahms-Saal: Wiener Sängerknaben – mozart & more
  - Thu. Sept. 28 19:30 Grosser Saal: Philharmonia Orchestra London – Christoph von Dohnányi – Schumann \* Strauss
  - Sat. Sept. 29 19:30 Grosser Saal: Philharmonia Orchestra London – Christoph von Dohnányi – Birtwistle \* Mendelssohn \* Brahms
  - Sat. Sept. 29 20:15 Brahms-Saal: Wiener Mozart Orchester – Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
  - Sun. Sept. 30 19:30 Grosser Saal: Philharmonia Orchestra London – Christoph von Dohnányi – Ludwig van Beethoven
- Volksoper.  
<http://www.volksoper.at>  
1090, Währinger Strasse 78
    - Sept. 21&26 19:00 – Gräfin Mariza – Emmerich Kálmán
    - Sept. 22&28 19:00 – La Traviata – Giuseppe Verdi
    - Sept. 23 18:00 – Orpheus in der Unterwelt - Jacques Offenbach
    - Sept. 25 19:00 – Orpheus in der Unterwelt - Jacques Offenbach
    - Sept. 27 19:00 – Die Zauberflöte – Mozart
    - Sept. 29 19:00 – Die Fledermaus – Johann Strauss
  - Wiener Konzerthaus  
<http://konzerthaus.at/>  
1030, Lothringerstrasse 20  
Another good concert hall. The schedule for September 2007 is not online at the time of writing this.

- Theater an der Wien  
<http://www.theater-wien.at/>  
1060, Linke Wienzeile 6  
A theater with a long tradition which now mostly performs operas.
  - Sept. 26&29 19:30: Dead Man Walking (opera) – Jake Heggie
  - Sun Sept. 30 11:00: Beethoven-Zyklus III – András Schiff, Piano
- At the main tourist sites, people dressed up in 18th century-style clothes (supposedly to look like Mozart) will be lurking and trying to sell you concert tickets. These are concerts done by good orchestras at nice locations such as the Hofburg but the audience will consist exclusively of tourists.

## 8. SOME FURTHER EVENTS

There are more concert halls and opera houses. For more events, including contemporary music and exhibitions, see the very nice site <http://www.wien.info/>

- Sept. 19–23&25–29 19:30 – Rebecca (musical) – Raimund Theater
- Sept. 19 19:30 – Sting/The Police (concert) – Wiener Stadthalle, Halle D
- Sept. 19–23 20:00 – Carmen Cubana (latin pop opera) – Wiener Stadthalle, Halle F
- Sept. 27 20:00 – Juan Diego Florez (concert) – Konzerthaus Grosser Saal
- Sept. 28 15:00 – High School Musical 07 (Disney musical) – Wiener Stadthalle, Halle F
- Sept. 29 19:30 – Absolute Zawinul (jazz) – Konzerthaus Grosser Saal

For location and ticketing information best talk to your hotel or see <http://www.viennaticketoffice.com/>

## 9. RESTAURANT SUGGESTIONS

Apart from some great places for local cuisine, what Vienna is strong at is ethnic restaurants of regions that formerly belonged to the Austrian Empire. In particular, there are some fantastic upscale Italian restaurants. Those do not offer pizza, usually.

Vienna is also famous for its pastry; you may have heard of Sachertorte (by Hotel Sacher, which is next to the opera), but there are many other nice pastries. You can order pastry in the café and I suggest to get some Apfelstrudel.

The tap water in most of Vienna is not just safe to drink, it comes from high mountain sources and is considered better than most water you can get elsewhere, bottled or not. In a good coffee house, coffee always comes with a glass of tap water.

While Vienna is now considered one of the more expensive places in Europe (though still far cheaper than Great Britain, and the Scandinavian countries, on the whole), the

<sup>9</sup>This is not the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra.

really good restaurants are comparably cheap by international standards.

The following restaurant recommendations were contributed by Georg Gottlob, Christian Huemer, Gerti Kappel, Beate List, Paolo Petta, and Bernhard Schandl. All these places except for Weingut am Reisenberg are within walking distance from the conference venue. I have not tried to standardize the judgments about prices and quality, so please do keep in mind that the suggestions were made by several people.

- Altes AKH (university campus, 1090 Alser Strasse 4) – several restaurants of different kinds, good quality, nice surroundings.
- Cantinetta Antinori (1010, Jasomirgottstrasse 3–5) – a good but pricey Italian restaurant. It's a small chain that is also present in Florence and Zurich.
- Curry Insel (1080, Lenaugasse 4) – Indian food.
- Figlmüller 1 (1010, Wollzeile 5) – Viennese cuisine.
- Gulaschmuseum (1010, Schulerstrasse 20) – Austrian cuisine.
- Hansen im Börsegebäude (1010, Wipplingerstrasse 34) – mediterranean food and atmosphere.
- Hebenstreit (1010, Rockhgasse 1) – small restaurant close to the University of Vienna. Very good steaks and pasta. Special atmosphere. No credit cards. Main course: 10 - 15 Euros.
- Ilija Djuric (1080, Piaristengasse 36) – Croatian food, fish.
- Leopold & Kupferdachl (1010, Schottengasse 7) – Viennese food, medium price, near to conference venue. An appropriate place for beer drinkers and WLAN users.
- Livingstone (1010, Zelinkagasse 4) – colonial-style theme restaurant, but with excellent food and rather pricey. Planter's Club (next door to Livingstone) is a chic bar designed in a, well, colonial planters mansion style. Very good cocktails.
- Meidl am Graben (1010, Am Graben 19) – a top restaurant (18 of 20 in the Gault Millau guide), expensive. Next door there is a very upscale food store.
- Mandarin (1010, Singerstrasse 11a) – Chinese food.
- Melker Stiftskeller (1010, Schottengasse 3) – heavy Viennese cuisine, very nice ambience, go there in the evening. A Heuriger in the city.
- Ofenloch (1010, Kurrentgasse 8) – Austrian/Viennese cuisine.
- Oh Pot (1090, Währinger Strasse 22) – international cuisine, hotpot specialties.
- Oswald&Kalb (1010, Bäckerstrasse 14) – Viennese cuisine.
- Palmenhaus (1010, Burggarten) – situated in a beautifully refurbished, huge greenhouse right behind the Hofburg in the city centre. The location is the perfect place to sit under palms and relax after visiting the various museums, which are just around the corner. Main course: 15 - 25 Euros.
- Parterre (1010, Reichsratsstrae 11) – small Restaurant, Viennese cuisine.
- Plachutta (1010, Wollzeile 38) – excellent Viennese cuisine, very expensive.
- Wiener Rathaukeller (1010, Rathausplatz 1) – somewhat expensive, traditional local cuisine.
- Reinthaler Gasthaus (1010, Gluckgasse 5) – Austrian cuisine.
- Restaurant Fromme Helene (1080, Josefstädter Strasse 15) – Viennese cuisine and vegetarian food.
- Tiamo (1080, Florianigasse 34) – Italian restaurant.
- Tunnel (1080, Florianigasse 39) – student restaurant, very low prices, international cuisine, many vegetarian choices, daily Jazz concerts in the basement.
- Urania Bar (1010, Uraniastrasse 1) – nice and stylish restaurant/bar in the city centre. Nouvelle Cuisine. Main course: 13 - 15 Euros.
- Vestibül Restaurant im Burgtheater (1010 Dr. Karl Lueger-Ring 2) – impressive rooms, expensive but very good quality.
- Vincent (1020, Grosse Pfarrgasse 7) – good Austrian food, somewhat expensive, a bit further away than some of the others.
- Wein&Co, next door to Cantinetta Antinori – a good place to go for nice wine (Austrian and international). They also have good food, but the portions are small and not cheap. There is also a shop for great wine and wine-related products and you can take a bottle there and drink it at the bar.
- Weingut am Reisenberg (1190, Oberer Reisenbergweg 15) – wine tavern ("Heuriger") outside of the city centre in Grinzing. Spectacular panoramic view all over Vienna. Main course: 12 - 15 Euros. (Not within walking distance from the conference venue.)
- Zu ebener Erde und erster Stock (1070, Burggasse 13) – upscale Viennese cuisine, nice ambience.
- Zum Scherer (1010, Judenplatz 7) – nostalgic Austrian/Viennese cuisine.
- Zu den 3 Hacken (1010, Singerstrasse 28) – local cuisine.
- Zum Schwarzen Kamel (1010, Bognergasse 5) – medium price; they do have sandwiches as well.

These are just a few suggestions – don't restrict yourself to them. You can also get snacks or a small lunch in most if not all cafés.

I suggest to avoid Chinese and Indian restaurants in Vienna unless you get a recommendation for one. Particularly the Chinese restaurants tend to have somewhat surprising notions of what Chinese food is supposed to be like.

Advice: It is not clear that all restaurants understand your notion of vegetarianism. You will be able to get some vegetarian food at virtually all places, but you should explain what you mean by vegetarianism when you order. For example, fish is usually considered vegetarian food.

## **10. FURTHER TRIVIA ABOUT VIENNA**

- Vienna is constantly ranked among the top three or four places in the world for quality of life. The others are usually Zurich, Geneva, and Vancouver.
- Vienna is a safe city and there are basically no dangerous areas, even at night.

## **11. MAPS**

1. <http://www.wien.gv.at/stadtplan/suche.asp?lang=en>
2. <http://maps.google.com>  
(Search for “universitaet wien” to find the conference venue.)

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