

## From a trout pond in Canada to a river cruise in Austria: summer arrives at last

### From the President

Last month I had the good fortune to spend some time in a lovely part of the world in northern Alberta. It's called Peace Country and the town Peace River is named after the river it is situated on.



Along with some (awful) golf, lots of eating, drinking and sitting around the fire pit until 11 pm when it was still daylight, I had the chance to throw a line into a private pond where some large captive trout lived. The action was swift and often. It was catch and release, although we kept one for the pan.

It was a beautiful spot out in bear country where the owners love to escape to their little cabin on weekends.



I was particularly struck by the flag that flew over

the cabin. The Canadian flag is a maple leaf. But a closer look revealed another kind of leaf. Not that I would know, but someone told me it's a leaf that some people like to smoke!



So welcome to summer at long last. As we have done in past years, this newsletter is for July and August due to the fact that many people are away for the summer. But for those staying in town or will be back from their break, there will be a bar night during both months.

We will also have our annual summer barbecue this month. See details on page 6

Despite the not-so-kind weather, 15 of us celebrated the coming of summer by cruising down the Danube for the annual Sonnenwendfeier in the Wachau. As part of this medieval festival, some 20 ships gather at a point upstream then turn and cruise down in line to Dürnstein beneath exploding fireworks while bonfires and burning pots illuminate the vineyards and castle ruins in the surrounding hills. It's a great night and we must try and do it again next year.

Finally I want to say something about Leon Schupelius. Leon has been a regular at OzCon functions since I have known him. He was always there to help me set up for the annual UN bazaar and he was at more bar nights and functions than most members. He and wife Nancy are back in their home

town Adelaide. I recall about four years ago when Leon and I were having a beer and getting to know each other I asked what he did before retirement and he said he worked in a bank. Which bank? I asked. The National, he said. Turns out he worked for my father who was a manager at Glenelg. A small world indeed. - Brett

### STOP PRESS



*Photo: The Australian*

Australia has its first woman Prime Minister. Julia Gillard was elected unopposed as leader of the ALP on 24 June and thus became Prime Minister. See profile on page 6 and Aussie Briefs on page 7

## Fireworks, bonfires and illuminated vineyards in the Wachau

The hills were alive – with the sound of exploding fireworks and ship sirens and the sight of bonfires and illuminated vineyards and castles.

It was the Sonnenwendfeier in the Wachau, or the midsummer solstice cruise, a festival that dates back to medieval times. Fifteen OzCon members and friends witnessed the spectacle from the comfort on the Ms Anton Bruckner as it and about 20 other ships cruised in line down the mighty Danube as fireworks exploded over the river, bonfires were lit on the shores and hill tops and vineyards and castle ruins lit up

Our ship started and ended the three-hour cruise at Dürnstein and, despite light rain, it was a night to remember.



*The gang is almost all here*

Diana Teplyj and Peter Korcsek were among those who had a good night. They wrote: “Just a word of thanks for your inspirational idea for the OzCon members having the opportunity to experience the Sonnenwendfeier in



*Fireworks and bonfires on both sides of the valley*

the Wachau. What a fabulous evening! The flotilla of illuminated cruise ships making their way up the Danube was truly an



*Gabrielle and Sharon enjoy the show despite the rain*

impressive sight. But the ultimate treat was unforgettable – fireworks, bonfires, sparkles and stardust (in between the raindrops!) over the water and across the hills... wow!!! Just fantastic! A superb evening in good company – a huge thank you for the idea and to the organizers - we had such a good time.”

George and Meredith Park wrote: “The rainy weather didn't dampen spirits or the bonfires and fireworks along the Danube. We all had a good time on board the MS



*Brett, George and Meredith board the Anton Bruckner*

Anton Bruckner. I liked the fact that these celebrations have been going on for hundreds of years and the bonfires were lit to help the sun do its job of growing the crops.”

Jeanette Hannaford wrote: “Had a really lovely Midsummer night although we needed many layers of clothes, my husband kept wishing people a Happy New Year, and it did rain quite a bit. Unfortunately we may not be able to persuade our teenage children to come along next year as we were humming the hits of the dance band all the next day - take me home country road and other 5AA hits (please excuse SA cultural reference). It really was a nice thing to do though and the train ride up was the most peaceful moment of my week.”



*One of some 20 ships to cruise downriver in line*

Jacque Montanaro wrote: “The Sonnenwandabend was really delightful. I loved the fire pails in the vineyards that outlined the hills and then the big bonfire on the top...like a volcano. Then, the fireworks were really spectacular. I would love to go again next year. From me, high praise indeed.”

Gabrielle Costigan wrote: "The cruise was amazing -and I have been trying to get one of these hot little tickets the last few years. It's a cruise that I have never experienced before, beautiful backdrops of hills and castles. I've already marked this event in my calendar for 2011."

## Bar night at the Roo Bar

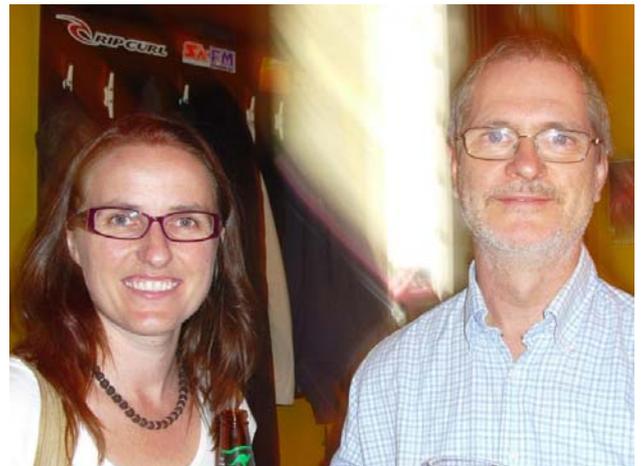
There was a change of venue for bar night in June.

World Cup fever saw our usual venue at Flanagans already booked so more than 20 of us assembled at the nearby Roo Bar.



*Canberra visitor Faye chats with Charles*

It's a nice enough venue, the problem being there is still no menu and so it will be back to Flanagans this month. Final farewells were given to Leon Schupelius and Sam Ranger who departed for Australia at the end of last month.



*Sharon and Paul*



*Gabrielle, Meredith, Chris and Patricia*



*Wolfgang with Edith and Sam*

## **Bach, Schumann and Mendelssohn** ---a musical excursion to Leipzig



*Goethe and Schiller in Weimar*

***By George Park***

Towards the end of May I was looking at upcoming concerts and festivals around Europe and came across the Bachfest in Leipzig. “What do you think?” I asked Meredith. “Shall we see if any tickets are still available?” “Why not,” was the reply. “Leipzig is one of the places we’ve always wanted to visit.”

The Leipzig Bachfest has been held every year since 1999, and this year was planned for June 11 to 20. Since it’s now one of Europe’s top music festivals I thought our chances of getting tickets at this late date would be next to impossible. But thanks to the power of the internet we managed to get tickets for both the opening concert in the St. Thomas Church on Friday the 11th and the gala

opening concert by the Gewandhaus Orchestra for the next day.

Johann Sebastian Bach is one Leipzig’s most famous residents and served as music director and organist at the Thomaskirche for 27 years from 1723 until his death in 1750. Bach was a very prolific composer and among other works, composed about 200 pieces of sacred music during this period.

Meredith and I could only think how fortunate we were to be able to listen to a performance of Bach’s music in “his” church.

We were equally fortunate to hear a performance by the Gewandhaus Orchestra in its home city. As one of Europe’s best orchestras, the performance of Bach’s Suite for Orchestra No. 2, Schumann’s Concerto Op 54 for Piano and Orchestra, and Mendelssohn’s Symphony No. 5 was magnificent. And there was an additional treat. During the intermission, the Mendelssohn Foundation awarded its fourth annual International Mendelssohn Prize to a German actress and activist (Iris Berben) and to the Chinese pianist Lang Lang.

We had never heard of Iris Berben, but Lang Lang is well known and we have heard him play on a number of occasions. But this time he was in the audience, applauding madly after each piece was performed. We wondered if Margarita Höhenrieder, the pianist playing the Schumann concerto would have been a bit more anxious about her performance knowing that Lang Lang was in the audience.

Over the past 20 years a lot of work has been done to redevelop the inner city of Leipzig and much more is still underway. There are many excellent shops and department stores and good restaurants as well many historical sites, including those related to its musical history.

Among other places, we visited the Mendelssohn house and museum where he lived with his family during the last four years of his life, the house where Schumann first lived in Leipzig with his wife and equally talented musician Clara Wieck, and the recently remodelled Bach museum which offers a fascinating journey exploring the life and times and music of Johann Sebastian.

Leipzig is about 700 kms by road from Vienna so it’s only a seven or eight hour drive to get there.

We took longer on the way up, stopping for a night to visit Schärding, a small town just inside the Austrian border close to Passau in Germany. It has a delightful old town dating back to medieval times which is well worth a short visit.

We also stopped for a day and night in Weimar, visiting the house where the poet and dramatist Johann Wolfgang Goethe lived for some 50 years as well as the home of the poet, philosopher and historian Frederick Schiller. Schiller is perhaps best known for his poem "Ode to Joy" which forms the basis for the chorale part of Beethoven's Ninth.

All in all it was an excellent short trip and one we can fully recommend. Indeed, we are thinking about doing the Bachfest again in a few years time.

## From Bach in Germany to Rednecks in Alberta

*By Brett Bayly*

Peace Country is an oil-rich region of northern Alberta where everything is BIG. Distances are big, homes are certainly big by European standards, streets are wide and vehicles are huge.

The Canuks call them trucks. We Aussies would say pick-ups because trucks are those big 16-wheel monsters we constantly dodge on the autobahns. Canadians drive their trucks like we drive our cars. They come in all sizes and would not fit on some Viennese roads or in our car parks. This is a small model Ford. The first time I got out of it I almost broke my leg when the ground was not where I expected it to be.



This Hummer is good for getting through the heavy winter snows and bog conditions in the oil fields.



My VW Golf Plus records an average fuel consumption of between 5L and 7L per 100 km. I noticed when I was driving the Ford the fuel consumption was 26L per 100 km!

The town of Peace River is nestled in a valley about 600 km south of the North West Territories and the temperature drops to -40 in winter. It is farming country with oil and gas deposits and a big saw mill. It would be unfair to say that 'rednecks' dominate the terrain. However, they come from far and wide as I found when I spotted these two trucks in the main street.



And the competition between the various makes of truck is fierce.



*Putting it bluntly: Dodge eats fords and shits chevys*

## OzCon Events



### The Summer BBQ

If we are lucky we might still be experiencing summer by the time Sunday 18 July arrives. If so, we encourage you to come to the annual OzCon summer barbeque on the Naturfreunde Club at An der alten unteren Donau 51 at the Old Danube recreational area.

As it is FREE entry to all OzCon members we urge you to RSVP to Susanna Martin at [susanna.martin@chello.at](mailto:susanna.martin@chello.at) so that we can get an idea of numbers and arrange payment for the group. You can grill your own, bring a picnic lunch or buy something at the club's kiosk. If the weather is favourable, some of us will swim in the Alte Donau so bring your gear. Children are welcome.



### July and August Bar Nights

It will be safe to come out again because the World Cup will be over and the crowds will be gone. So this month's bar night will be on Friday 23 July at Flanagan's, Schwarzenbergstr. 1-3, 1010 Vienna from 5.30pm.

For August let us aim for Friday 20 August, also at Flanagan's. Should this change for any reason members will be notified by email.

## *Julia Gillard Australia's first woman Prime Minister: profile*

Ms Gillard was four years old when her family migrated to Australia from Wales. As a baby she contracted a lung infection and was in an oxygen tent for weeks, so her parents, Moira and John, decided to move to Australia in the hope that the warmer climate would help their daughter.

In high school, Ms Gillard chose a career as a lawyer and she became involved in university politics during the early 1980s.

She was elected the Member of Lalor in 1998 and became the opposition's spokesman for population and immigration in 2001 under former Labor leader Kim Beazley.

After a three-year stint as opposition health spokeswoman, where Tony Abbott was her direct opponent, Ms Gillard was elected unopposed as opposition deputy leader in 2006.

After Mr Rudd's 2007 election victory, Ms Gillard was appointed Deputy Prime Minister, Minister for Employment and Workplace Relations and Education Minister, leading to her being dubbed the "minister for everything".

She is credited for putting an end to the infamous Australian workplace agreements under the former Coalition government's WorkChoices laws.

But Ms Gillard has also faced criticism over the Rudd Government's Building the Education Revolution schools building program, with allegations that contractors were seriously overcharging schools for work done and that some projects were wasteful and unnecessary.

She also came under fire for the Government's My School website, which many teachers and principals said failed to give an accurate indication of schools' performances. (AAP)

## Aussie News Briefs

28 June – **PRIME Minister Julia Gillard has left her predecessor Kevin Rudd out of her new cabinet** but says she would be "absolutely delighted" to see him serve as a senior minister if the government is re-elected. Ms Gillard unveiled her new cabinet in Canberra this afternoon, with few changes announced to the frontbench. She said Mr Rudd would be accommodated as a senior minister if the Labor government won the next election. Instead, Ms Gillard has handed her own portfolios of education, employment, workplace relations and social inclusion to former Labor leader Simon Crean. Foreign Minister Stephen Smith will take on the added role of Mr Crean's portfolio of trade. (Sydney Morning Herald)

26 June - **JULIA Gillard is expected to call an August election** to seek a quick mandate as Prime Minister and avoid the fallout of an inquiry into the \$16 billion schools stimulus program she has been overseeing. Labor strategists are confident her elevation will give the Government a bounce in the polls and Ms Gillard is anxious for voters to authenticate her prime ministership at an election. A snap Nielsen poll taken after Kevin Rudd was dumped on Thursday already shows she has catapulted Labor back to an election-winning lead over the coalition. Labor had a two-party preferred lead of 55 per cent to 45, an eight-point swing to the Government in three weeks. (West Australian)

25 June - **JULIA Gillard will aim to rescue Labor from electoral oblivion by cutting a mining tax deal and recrafting border protection policies.** And Ms Gillard, who yesterday ousted Kevin Rudd to become the nation's first female Prime Minister, has already begun dismantling her predecessor's centralised leadership style, promising genuine consultation with colleagues and interest groups. The Welsh child migrant was sworn in after an extraordinary 12 hours during which Mr Rudd confronted the sudden and spectacular evaporation of the support of his ministers, MPs and faction leaders after weeks of poor polls. His support collapsed so quickly he did not even contest yesterday's 9am leadership ballot that elected Ms Gillard and new deputy Wayne Swan unopposed. (Australian)

24 June - **FORMER Adelaide schoolgirl Julia Gillard has faced Tony Abbott in Federal Parliament as Australia's first female prime minister, just hours after deposing Kevin Rudd.** Ms Gillard defended her role in a leadership ambush of Mr Rudd, saying she did what was best for her party and the country. The prime minister of two hours told parliament she'd done lots of thinking about the direction of the Labor Party in recent days. She said it was a good government that in some areas had "lost its way". Ms Gillard, sworn in 90

minutes earlier by the governor-general, was welcomed

to the chamber by Mr Abbott, who shook her hand. In one of her first acts as prime minister, she tabled a new ministerial list, which also notes Mr Swan's new position as deputy prime minister. (Advertiser)

24 June - **AUSTRALIA'S mining industry and the government have agreed to a truce in the fight over the resources tax, after Julia Gillard was appointed the country's new prime minister.** The government and the sector have been locked in a bitter battle over the controversial 40 per cent super-profits tax, with both backing extensive campaigns to push their views on the proposal. In an attempt to ease hostilities, Australia's first female prime minister, Ms Gillard, offered an olive branch to mining companies over the proposed tax, pushing mining shares higher. In a clever political move, Ms Gillard said she would cease the taxpayer-funded campaign to sell the tax and asked the mining sector to also end its fierce campaign of opposition to the tax. (Australian)

23 June – **CAMEROON'S aviation authority** said on Tuesday it had retrieved and identified all 11 bodies from the plane crash that killed Australian mining magnate Ken Talbot and his colleagues in Congo's thick jungle at the weekend. Authorities from Congo-Brazzaville had found the wreckage on Monday, some 30 kilometres from Yangadou, a small mining town where the flight was due to land. (WA.Today)



21 June - **THREE Australian commandos were killed and another two severely injured** during a mysterious helicopter crash in Afghanistan's mountainous Kandahar region. The deaths came two weeks after Australia's first multiple deaths on a single day in Afghanistan when two other Diggers - Sappers Darren Smith and Jacob Moerland - died as a result of a roadside bomb blast. Sixteen Australian soldiers have died in Afghanistan, and the mounting death and injury toll is certain to raise fresh questions about our involvement there. (Advertiser)



20 June - **THE outback came to life yesterday** when thousands of people gathered at a vast stretch of the Barkly Highway, more than 1000km from Darwin. Travellers, race fans and cowboys, more than the entire population of the town of Tennant Creek, mingled at the 100th Brunette Downs races on the dusty plains of the Barkly Tablelands. By the end of the day most high heels, fascinators and fancy dress had been swapped for blue jeans, boots and cowboy hats. (NT News)

19 June - **LAWYERS acting for Black Saturday fire victims** yesterday lodged legal documents in Victoria's biggest class action, alleging a private power company was responsible for a blaze that cost 119 lives. The statement of claim, lodged in the Supreme Court, alleges international electricity provider Singapore Power failed to monitor and maintain the power line that caused the East Kilmore blaze. One of the key planks to the case is the allegation that an ageing 1.1-kilometre-line failed because the power company refused to fit a \$10 plastic anti-vibration protector. (Age)

11 June - **QANTAS has slammed a new German "environmental" departure tax** that will mean Australians will pay more to fly to Europe. The airline also believes the tax will add to what it already sees as an unfair burden from the European Union's proposed emissions trading scheme. Angry airlines claim the E1 billion (\$1.45bn) that the E14 per person departure tax would pour into government coffers would exceed the combined annual profit of Germany's carriers. "It is crazy," said Qantas chief executive Alan Joyce, who confirmed that the tax would hit Australian travellers on the airline's Frankfurt route. (Australian)

8 June - **THE financial and personal details of Australians could have been "hoovered up" by Google** as it photographed Australian streets, and the web giant may be seeking to patent the program it used to do it. Google is under fire in North America, Europe and Australia after collecting 600 gigabytes of data from unsecured wireless internet connections while taking photographs for its map function, Street View, in as many as 30 countries. "If ... you were doing a banking transaction or transmitting personal information, they could have hoovered it up, sucked it into their machine,"

Communications Minister Stephen Conroy said yesterday. (Age)

## Notice from the Australian Embassy, Vienna

Register with us!

The Australian Embassy in Vienna encourages all Australians travelling or residing in Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Slovakia, Slovenia, Kosovo and Ukraine to register with us. The registration information provided by you will help us to find you in an emergency - whether it is a natural disaster, civil disturbance or a family emergency. It may also be used to pass other information to you such as, new travel advisories, notice of elections and information on other matters relevant to travellers and expatriates.

Your information is strictly protected by the Privacy Act 1988 ([www.privacy.gov.au/ACT/privacyact](http://www.privacy.gov.au/ACT/privacyact)). To ensure this information is kept safe during transmission the Department uses Secure Socket Layer (SSL) and Firewall technology. You can register on-line at [www.orao.dfat.gov.au](http://www.orao.dfat.gov.au) If you have any difficulties please contact the Australian Embassy in Vienna via email at [austemb@aon](mailto:austemb@aon).

## Revamped Vienna website



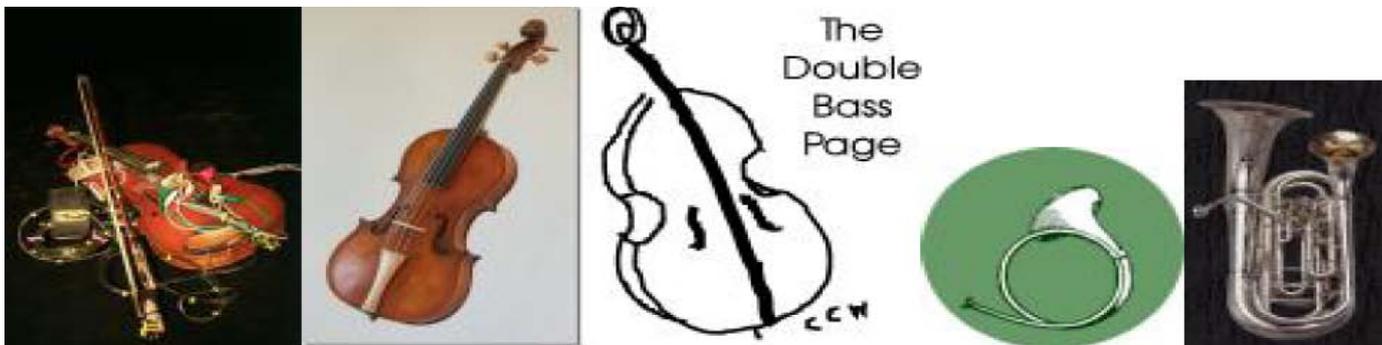
Here's a useful website, especially for newcomers to Vienna. Have a look at [www.wien.gv.at](http://www.wien.gv.at)

It has heaps of information for everyday use right down to a city map that shows you where the traffic bottlenecks are. During a recent tour of the Rathaus a group of us were shown how to navigate the revamped website. The traffic conditions were updated every 10 minutes during peak hours, we were told.

You can find an English-speaking doctor, rent a bike, find a museum, know where to avoid construction sites, or where to catch and how to use the public transport systems.

There is information on housing, visas, health services, city administration, culture and history, environment and leisure, living and working, education, business, media, even politics.

– Brett Bayly



## Performances with Australian Artists and other events

From the Australian Events Calendar, Australian Embassy Vienna

<b>Until 7 July</b>	<b>Portraits of Aborigines - Exhibition</b>	Art-com gallery, Schottenfeldg 69, 1070 Vienna Ph 0699-1923.0569 Email: office@art-com.at	Austrian photographer and artist Peter Korrak's exhibition.
<b>12 May - 13 Sept</b>	<b>James Cook and the Discovery of the Pacific</b>	Museum für Völkerkunde, Opening hours 10-18, except Tuesday (closed) Heldenplatz 1010 Vienna For more information, please refer to <a href="http://www.ethno-museum.ac.at">www.ethno-museum.ac.at</a>	From 12 May, the Austrian Museum of Ethnology will be exhibiting one of the largest exhibitions on English explorer James Cook, navigator and cartographer.
<b>8 July, 7.30 pm</b>	<b>Muthspiel/Grigoryan/Towner in Concert</b>	Vienna City Hall/Arkadenhof <a href="http://www.viennajazz.org">www.viennajazz.org</a>	Australian guitarists Slava Grigoryan and Ralph Towner are teaming up again with Austrian artist Wolfgang Muthspiel for another performance. All three virtuosos share a background in classical music
<b>27 to 29 August and 3 to 5 September</b>	<b>Niederösterreichische Kindersommerspiele 2010</b>	Stift Herzogenburg, north of St Poelten. <a href="http://www.noekiss.at">www.noekiss.at</a> Ph 02782 - 83445	The festival's focus country this year is Australia. This highly popular festival for children up to 10 years attracts large crowds.
<b>Saturday 4 September, 7 pm</b>	<b>Sydney Symphony Orchestra in Concert</b>	Grafenegg Castle, Lower Austria <a href="http://www.grafenegg.com">www.grafenegg.com</a>	As part of a European tour, this will be the first time the SSO has played in Austria since 1974. With renowned conductor Vladimir Ashkenazy.

Unless otherwise specified, all telephone numbers are in Vienna

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### ***Helpful Tips Living in Vienna***

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Contact AWA for stockists

### ***Handbook Vienna (FREE!)***

Published by Austria Today

[handbook@austriatoday.at](mailto:handbook@austriatoday.at)

### **Useful Websites:**

[www.wien.gv.at](http://www.wien.gv.at)

[www.nucolorvue.com.au](http://www.nucolorvue.com.au)

[www.australien-lifestyle.de](http://www.australien-lifestyle.de)

[www.australien-info.de](http://www.australien-info.de)

[www.virtualvienna.net](http://www.virtualvienna.net)

[www.ninemsn.com.au](http://www.ninemsn.com.au)

[www.kids-days.com/Wien/index\\_wien.html](http://www.kids-days.com/Wien/index_wien.html)

[www.expats.com](http://www.expats.com)

[www.homesick.com.au](http://www.homesick.com.au)

[www.viennababiesclub.com](http://www.viennababiesclub.com)

[www.abc.net.au/vod/news/](http://www.abc.net.au/vod/news/)

[www.australianaonline.com.au](http://www.australianaonline.com.au)

[www.news.com.au](http://www.news.com.au)

[www.expatriates.com](http://www.expatriates.com)

[www.australia.gov.au](http://www.australia.gov.au)

[www.amadeus.net/home/dialing\\_codes/en/top.htm](http://www.amadeus.net/home/dialing_codes/en/top.htm)

[www.austrain.vc](http://www.austrain.vc)

[www.vienna-expats.at](http://www.vienna-expats.at)

### **Austrian media in English:**

Austrian Times, daily English news

[www.austriantimes.at](http://www.austriantimes.at)

The Vienna Review, monthly produced by Webster University [www.viennareview.net](http://www.viennareview.net)

Ether magazine, monthly [www.ethermagazine.at](http://www.ethermagazine.at)

Worldwide media guide [www.mondotimes.com](http://www.mondotimes.com)

### ***Guided Walks***

Places of Human Rights, Shadow of the Past  
Schonberg and Freud

Roman Findings in Carnuntum and the National  
Park

More information visit: [www.viennawalks.at](http://www.viennawalks.at)

The Old City of Vienna

The Third Man

More information visit: [www.wienguide.at](http://www.wienguide.at)

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