

Viennese taste: Enjoying food and drink to the fullest

Viennese cuisine is the only type of cooking in the world that is named after a city. Vienna is also the only metropolis in the world that grows enough wine within city limits to be worth mentioning. The Viennese coffee house is known around the globe for its informal pleasantness, as an oasis of gemütlichkeit. No wonder that the bistro, wine tavern and cafe are the foundational pillars of Vienna's culture of food pleasures in all its enticing variety.

The Viennese like things simple and pleasant. So Viennese bistros are nice and comfortable. As long as we can remember, these restaurants have been serving up solid, tasty home cooking from schnitzels to goulash, liver with herbs in butter to Kaiserschmarren, a kind of shredded pancakes. This consistency has led to a renaissance of the bistro culture that is recently being celebrated in familiar restaurants such as the Ubl, Skopik & Lohn and Glacis Beisl as well as the renowned Wirten am Eck'.

The enjoyment of a good drop of wine crafted from the 700 hectares of Viennese vineyards is not limited to these places. The most exclusive local restaurants have long featured Viennese Riesling and white burgundy. Especially the guests at the heurige enjoy young and old Viennese wines along with the hearty delicacies from the buffet. These romantic and cozy taverns can be found by the dozen in the wine villages at the edge of the city such as Grinzing and Nussdorf.

The Viennese coffee house has been an oasis of gemütlichkeit for ages. Traditional cafés such as the Central, Griensteidl, Landtmann and Demel entice with a wide variety of coffee drinks, international newspapers and pastry creations. Modern representatives of the genre such as the Leopold, Drechsler or Kunsthallencafé enrich the tradition with stylish flair. A close relative of the café is the pastry shop. Their specialty, pies and cakes, are the icing on Vienna's dolce vita in the form of Bundt cake and sachertorte. In a recent addition to the scene, chocolatiers such as the Xocolat, Fruth and Blühendes Konfekt offer sweet temptation.

As in other locations, gourmet restaurants are at one end of the epicurean scale. And at the other end, you can find... fast food! However, with a special Viennese twist: A trip to the wurst stand, especially after visiting the ball, and sometimes after a concert or the opera, is quite the custom.

The city serves up a cornucopia of different taste experiences, from hearty to organic and ethnic. Offerings that are often ideally combined with a surprising ambience: Whether you are dining in the slowly revolving restaurant on the Danube Tower with its breathtaking view or in the Palmenhaus in Burgarten, or are having a drink in the American Bar designed by Art Nouveau architect Adolf Loos: The visual and taste experience go hand-in-hand. This also holds true for the wide ranging gastronomical landscape at the new Motto am Fluss next to the mooring for the Twin City Liners on the Danube Canal.

You'll find epicurean delights in every corner of the city on the Danube. Nevertheless, some quarters are especially tempting to gourmets by offering an enormous variety in a small area. Such is the case with the Naschmarkt. This highly fascinating Viennese market serves up exotic offerings from around the world and boasts of a number of must-visit gastronomical establishments in the market and surrounding streets, from the Neni to the Amacord and the new Theatercafé. Rewarding culinary experiences can also be had in the pub districts of Spittelberg, Margaretenplatz and Karmelitermarkt. Trendy pubs entice at the Brunnen and Yppen markets such as the Wetter and An-Do, and at the Franziskanerplatz, the Artner has the topic of conversation for quite a while. A host of culinary events from the Genussfestival in the City Park and special restaurant weeks to the new Snail Festival add further gustatory pleasures to the mix. **More: www.wien.info**