

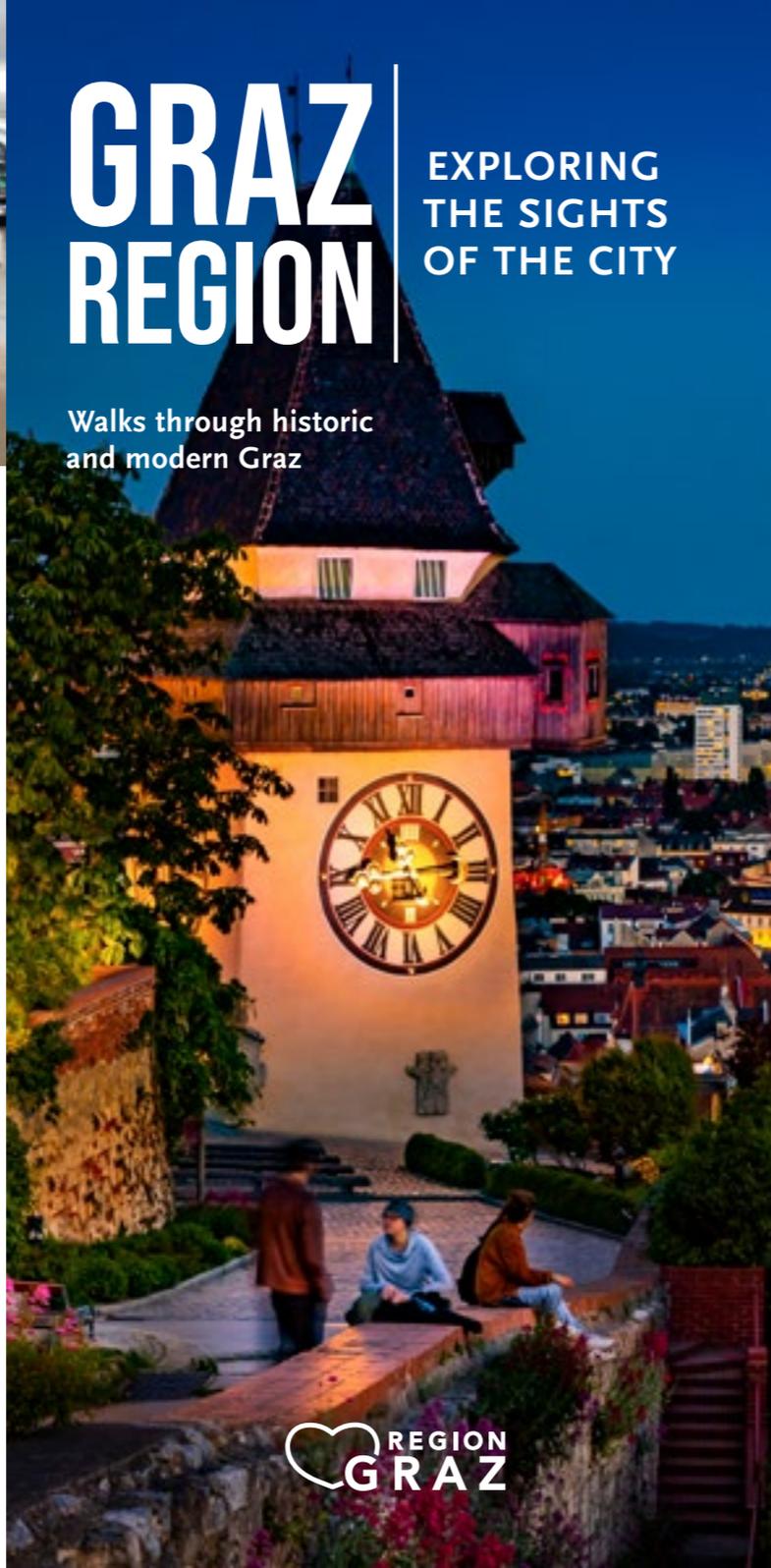
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GRAZ REGION

EXPLORING THE SIGHTS OF THE CITY

Walks through historic and modern Graz



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The Graz Region combines a city feeling with southern flair in Austria's only capital of delight with nature, culture and many top excursion destinations in every direction.

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HOW MUCH TIME HAVE YOU GOT FOR YOUR STROLL ROUND TOWN?

Three selected walks to the most beautiful and fascinating sights of Graz.

This brochure aims to help you relax and enjoy your exploration of both historic and modern Graz. The three walks we have selected focus on different themes. Or you can of course combine all three walks in any order you like. We have also included suggestions for trips to interesting places just outside the city centre.

Please note opening times according to season.

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GUIDED CITY TOURS

Guided city tours and excursions (English and German) with various themes to suit your appetite or mood can be booked at Tourist Information Graz Region.

INFORMATION AND BOOKING:

Tourist Information Graz Region, Herrengasse 16, 8010 Graz
T +43/316/8075-0, F ext. 15
info@graztourismus.at, graztourismus.at/en

BEFORE WE START: A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE CITY.

Fast forward Graz: imperial city, Renaissance gem, centre of science and learning, of (modern) architecture, cultural capital...

Over 900 years of living history in the second largest city in Austria: the many testaments to its eventful past, references to the present and so much vision for the future are waiting to be discovered on a guided walk around the city. Nowhere else in the world will you find outstanding architecture of all styles in such a concentrated area – from the Middle Ages through to the 21st century. In 1999 Graz was added to UNESCO's list of World Cultural Heritage sites.

- 1128/29: First documentary mention as "gradec" (small fortress)
- 1230: Granted town status and walled
- 1379: Designated capital of Inner Austria
- 1440–93: Imperial residence under Friedrich III
- 1564: Residence of Archduke Karl II
- 1585: University founded
- 1594–99: Johannes Kepler in Graz
- 1809: Besieged by the French, coercive destruction of the fortifications. Clock tower and bell tower ransomed by the citizens of Graz
- 1945: Fifteen percent of all residential buildings destroyed in air raids
- 1958: "Forum Stadtpark" founded
- 1963: Foundation of the University of Music and Performing Arts Graz
- 1968: "steirischer herbst" founded
- 1985: "styriarte" founded
- 1999: Designated a UNESCO World Cultural Heritage site
- 2003: Cultural capital of Europe
- 2008: Nominated Capital of Delight
- 2010: Extension of the UNESCO World Heritage Zone: Eggenberg Palace
- 2011: Nominated City of Design
- 2020: Graz Year of Culture 2020 – culture creates an urban future



THE SIGHTS OF GRAZ

The three following city walks are a relaxing way to explore the many sights of Graz. Highlights are marked with a 🏰

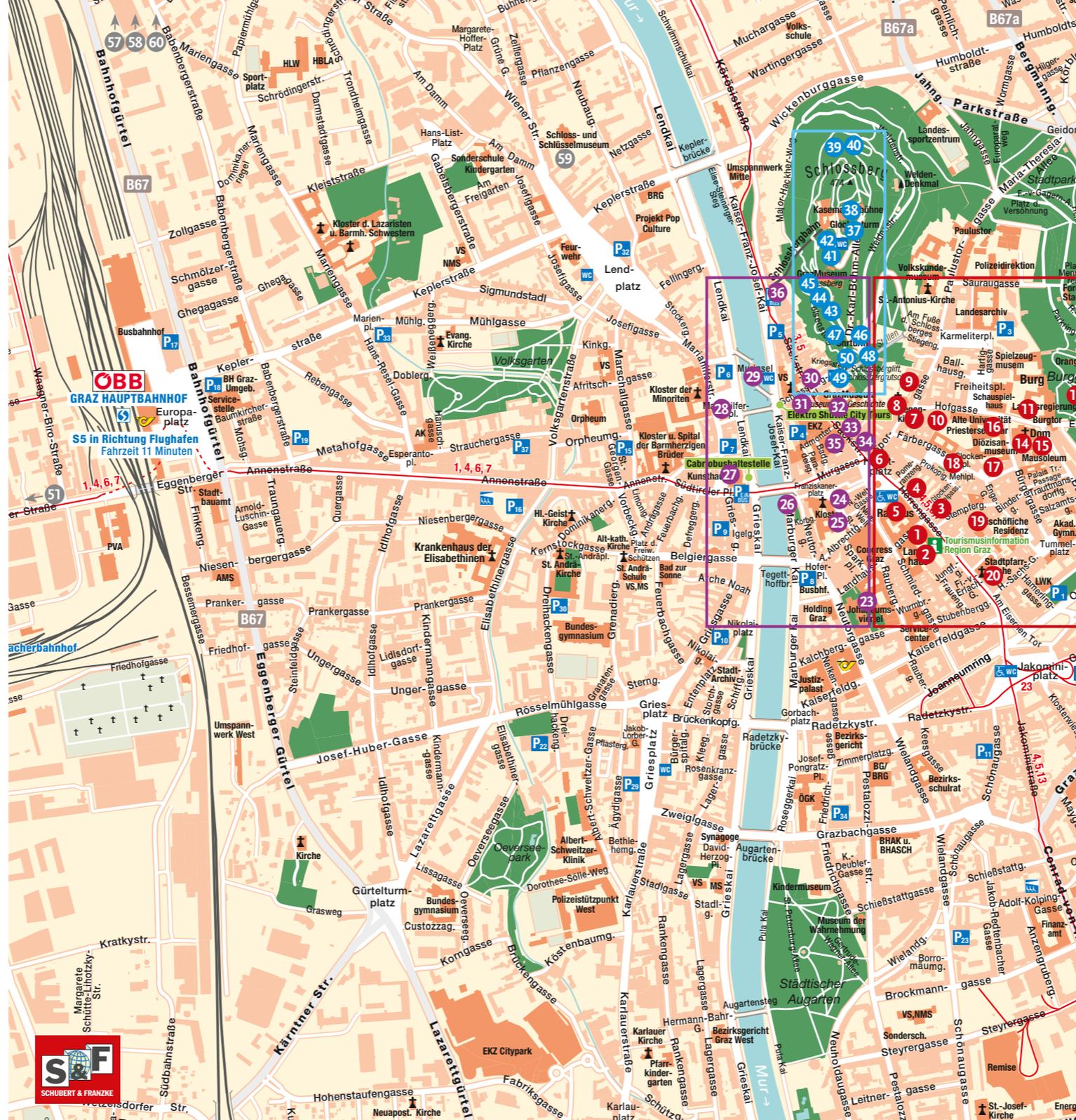
- A** The Graz historic centre walking tour: An enlarged map section of sights 1–22 can be found on page 4.
- B** Graz historic and modern: An enlarged map section of sights 23–36 can be found on page 16.
- C** Above the roofs of Graz: An enlarged map section of sights 37–50 can be found on page 27.

Points where you can join other walks are marked **A B C** in the enlarged map sections.

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| 1 Landhaus courtyard 🏰 | 28 Mariahilferplatz |
| 2 Armoury 🏰 | 29 Murinsel 🏰 |
| 3 Generalihof | 30 Schlossbergplatz |
| 4 Painted House/Herzoghof | 31 Palais Attems |
| 5 Hauptplatz/Town hall | 32 GrazMuseum |
| 6 Luegghaus | 33 History Museum |
| 7 Hof des Deutschen | 34 Sackstrasse |
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| 8 Stiegenkirche | 36 Schlossbergbahn |
| 9 Palais Saurau | 37 Bell tower |
| 10 Hofbäckerei Edegger-Tax | 38 Kasematten stage |
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| 12 Burggarten | 40 Hackher lion |
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| 14 Cathedral 🏰 | 42 Cannon bastion |
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| 18 Bermuda Triangle | 46 Clock tower 🏰 |
| 19 Stempfergasse | 47 Descent to historic centre/
Felsensteig |
| 20 Parish church | 48 Herbersteingarten |
| 21 Opera house | 49 Schlossberg tunnel system |
| 22 Kaiser-Josef-Market | 50 Schlossberg slide |
| 23 Joanneumsviertel | 51 Schloss Eggenberg 🏰 |
| 24 Franziskanerviertel | 52 Mariatrost Basilica |
| 25 Franziskanerkirche & Kloster | 53 Graz universities |
| 26 Mur Promenade | 54 Botanical gardens |
| 27 Kunsthaus Graz 🏰 | 55 Hilmteich/Leechwald |
| | 56 Leechkirche |
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| | 58 Kalvarienberg |
| | 59 Schell Collection |
| | 60 Nova-Air |

FACTS AND FIGURES

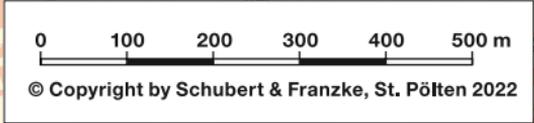
Population: approx. 290,000
 Area: 127.6 km²
 Average altitude: 353 m



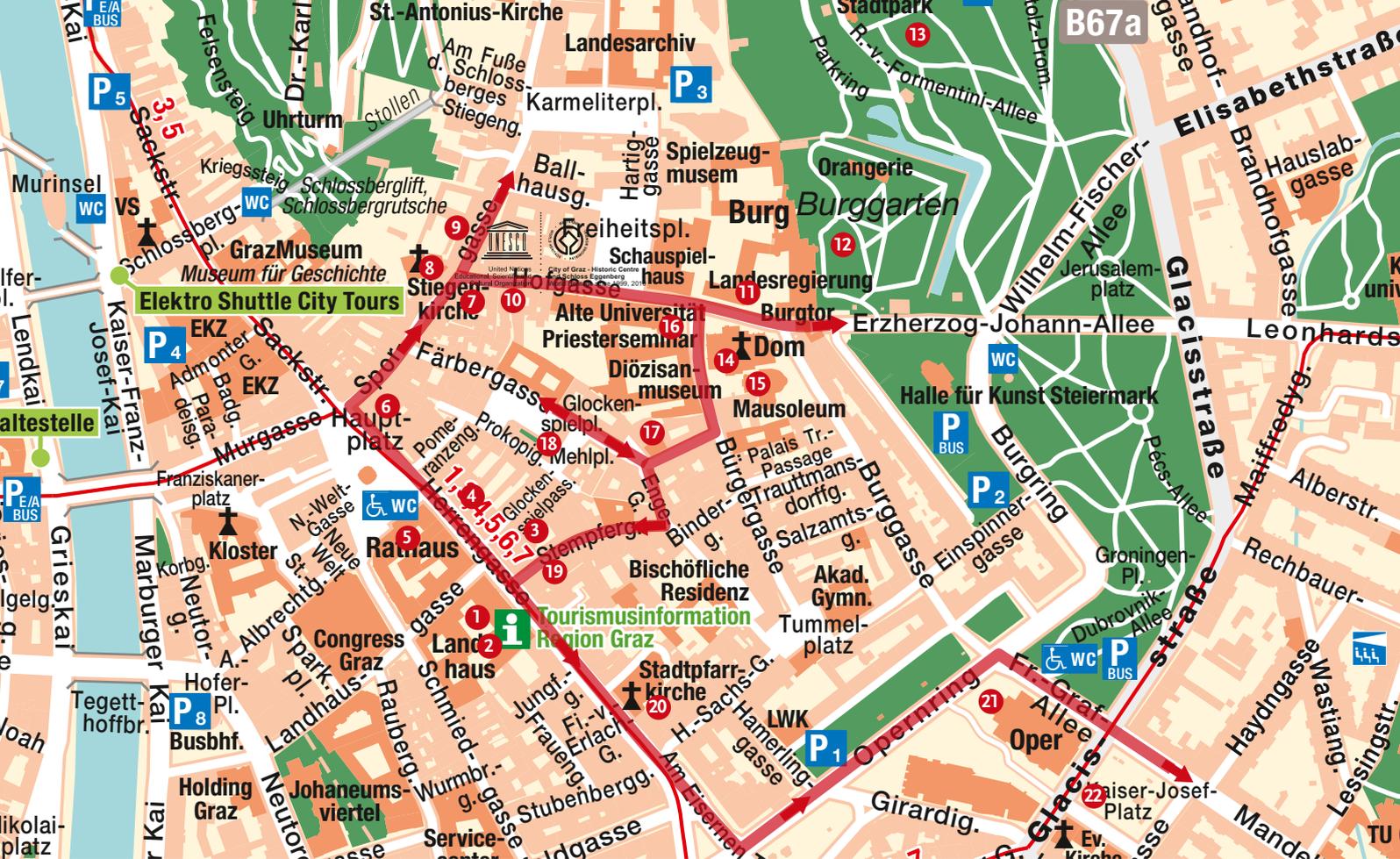


GRAZ

(363 m)



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WORLD CULTURAL HERITAGE: GRAZ HISTORIC CENTRE WALKING TOUR.

Stroll through the outstanding historic city centre, a UNESCO World Cultural Heritage site. This varied historic centre walking tour begins at Tourismusinformation Graz Region, Herrengasse 16.

Just take a walk and let yourself be surprised. A new discovery awaits you around every corner: Tucked away alleyways, romantic courtyards, artistic façades and magnificent buildings by the aristocracy and citizens from past centuries. Gothic, Renaissance, Baroque and the Habsburg dynasty's Historicism live side by side in Graz. Together

they form the “best preserved city centre in Central Europe” – included in the UNESCO World Heritage List in 1999 and extended by the Baroque Eggenberg Palace in 2010.

The old town's historically dense atmosphere with its green Schlossberg was an important element in the great international response that Graz received as “European Capital of Culture 2003”. During the warm months, the streets, squares and courtyards are a stunning backdrop for high-calibre events. Fascinating modern architecture and creative industries led to the title City of Design in 2011.



WORLD CULTURAL HERITAGE: GRAZ HISTORIC CENTRE WALKING TOUR.

Set off from Graz Tourist Information at Herrengasse 16 – just a few steps take you to the entrance of the Landhaushof courtyard.

Herrengasse is the focal point of public life in Graz, lined with many beautiful palaces and magnificent buildings between the squares of Hauptplatz and Jakominiplatz. Here you can marvel, for instance, at the “Landhaus”, “Luegghaus”, “Painted House” or the Palais of the Grazer Wechselseitige Versicherung insurance company, which has been located in the city centre for 186 years and now operates in 13 European countries. Herrengasse is reserved for pedestrians, cyclists and trams, and is considered Graz’s main street for retail.

1 LANDHAUS COURTYARD 🏡

The arcaded inner courtyard of the Landhaus ranks among the masterpieces of the Italian Renaissance (Domenico dell’Allio). Behind the round arched windows, the Styrian regional parliament convenes in the assembly hall. Here, in the warm season, flowers decorate the magnificent arcades and, at Advent, the celebrated ice nativity scene finds a perfect setting. In between, concerts, theatre and indeed all manner of festivities take place in the splendid atmosphere of the Landhaus courtyard.

TIP: 2* ARMOURY 🏰

Directly next to the Landhaus lies the armoury, once the most important arsenal in Inner Austria and today the largest historical collection of weapons in the world, containing over 30,000 exhibits. (Entrance: Herrengasse)

3 GENERALIHOF / 4 HERZOGHOF

Graz is famous for its romantic inner courtyards – some of which you will discover on this walk, such as the Generalihof (entrance Herrengasse No. 9) and, a little further on, the “Painted House” (No. 7). The façade was painted with frescoes in 1742 by Baroque artist Johann Mayer and shows the gods of Greco-Roman mythology. The inner courtyard is known as the “Herzoghof”.



* Armoury – among the impressive exhibits, you will discover a special gem: one of only seven fully preserved horse armours in the world.

WORLD CULTURAL HERITAGE: GRAZ HISTORIC CENTRE WALKING TOUR.

Walking along Herrengasse and passing inviting restaurant terraces, after just a few minutes you will have reached Graz Hauptplatz, the main square.

5 HAUPTPLATZ/TOWN HALL

The Hauptplatz (main square) and the town hall are the heart of the city. At the centre of the Hauptplatz stands the Archduke Johann fountain, built in 1878 in honour of the “Styrian Prince”. The dome, clock and corner towers of the magnificent Rathaus have dominated the Graz main square since the end of the 19th century.

6 LUEGGHAUS

Amongst the superb façades around Hauptplatz main square, the “Luegghaus” on the corner of Sporgasse is particularly striking thanks to its elaborate stucco façade and arcades. The mouths and noses hidden among fruit and flower garlands on the façade will not escape attentive beholders. Today, the “Luegghaus” is home to the Swarovski Store in Graz.

TIP: ALTSTADT TRAM

Take the “Altstadt Tram” through the city centre free of charge. By tram, you can travel FREE OF CHARGE through the historic city centre of Graz: between Jakominiplatz and Hauptplatz plus an additional stop in both directions, e.g. to Schlossbergplatz square or to the Kunsthaus.

7 HOF DES DEUTSCHEN RITTERORDENS COURTYARD

The Gothic arcaded courtyard of the “Hof des deutschen Ritterordens” is definitely worth a visit. It is paved entirely with “Murnockerl”, the Graz name for the cobblestones smoothed round by the river Mur, which were used as paving material for streets and courtyards. The stone portal bearing the cross of the order on the headstone dates back to the first quarter of the 16th century (entrance: Sporgasse 22).



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SOUVENIRS FROM GRAZ

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Herrngasse 16

Entrance to the Styrian Armoury

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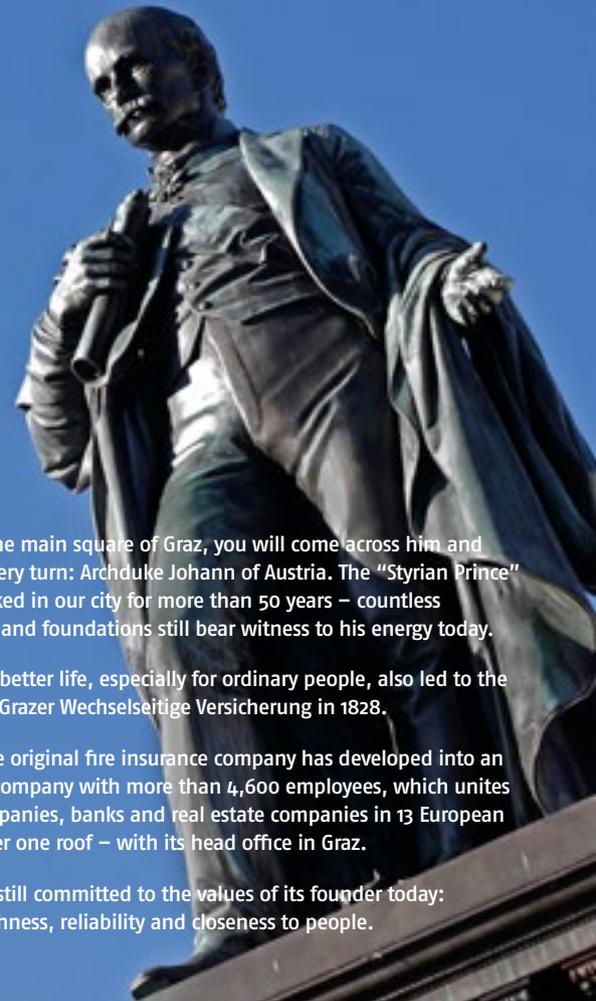
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Out of a vision that changed our city.



Like here, at the main square of Graz, you will come across him and his ideas at every turn: Archduke Johann of Austria. The "Styrian Prince" lived and worked in our city for more than 50 years – countless developments and foundations still bear witness to his energy today.

His vision of a better life, especially for ordinary people, also led to the foundation of Grazer Wechselseitige Versicherung in 1828.

Since then, the original fire insurance company has developed into an international company with more than 4,600 employees, which unites insurance companies, banks and real estate companies in 13 European countries under one roof – with its head office in Graz.

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WORLD CULTURAL HERITAGE: GRAZ HISTORIC CENTRE WALKING TOUR.

From the Hauptplatz, walk gently uphill along cobbled Sporgasse, one of the most romantic streets in the city.

8 STIEGENKIRCHE (not pictured)

The oldest parish church in Graz was first mentioned in a historical document in 1343. Known chiefly as a church for students, it lies in the historic centre of Graz close up against the southern side of the Schlossberg, concealed behind the heavy walls of a former Augustinian monastery.

9 PALAIS SAURAU

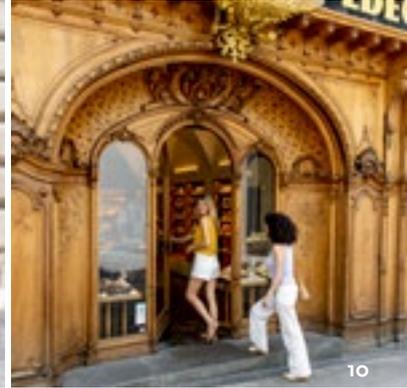
In 1566, close to the medieval city wall that still stood at that time, Pankraz von Windischgrätz built a mighty four-winged palace, known today as the Palais Saurau. Assault from above? A man with a beard, turban and dagger gazes down threateningly, capturing the attention of passers-by. It's OK, the well-known Turkish warrior under the roof merely decorates one of the finest buildings in the city (courtyard not accessible.)

TIP: 10 HOFBÄCKEREI EDEGGER-TAX

A little way down Sporgasse turn left into Hofgasse, where you cannot miss a splendid wooden shop-façade – crowned with a gilded double-headed eagle. This is the Edegger-Tax bakery, where you can sample exquisite confectionery from the imperial era such as their “Sissibusserl” or “Kaiserzwieback” biscuits.

11* BURG/DOUBLE SPIRAL STAIRCASE 🏰

Follow Hofgasse along to Freiheitsplatz square and the Classicist theatre building of the Schauspielhaus (theatre). Just before the Burgtor gate is the entrance to the Burg (Hofgasse 15) – cross the first courtyard to arrive at the double spiral staircase (1499), a masterpiece of stone masonry from the end of the Gothic period (next to Staircase III). Today the Burg is the seat of the Styrian regional parliament.



* Double spiral staircase – let yourself in for interesting twists and turns, surprising encounters, the successive separation and merging of both staircases over three floors.

WORLD CULTURAL HERITAGE: GRAZ HISTORIC CENTRE WALKING TOUR.

Across the Burgtor walk downhill along Bürgergasse – towards more “Graz classics”.

TIP: 12 BURGGARTEN / 13 STADTPARK

Go through the Burgtor gate to get to the entrance to the Burggarten (Burg garden) and then on into the Stadtpark (city park). A highlight is the Stadtpark fountain, acquired at the 1873 Vienna World Exhibition.

14 CATHEDRAL 🏰

Kaiser Friedrich III had the cathedral built as court church between 1438 and 1464. To the left, on the south wall of the cathedral underneath a small porch, is the Landplagenbild, the “picture of plagues”, depicting the three plagues (the Black Death, the Turks and locusts) which afflicted Styria in the annus horribilis of 1480.

15 MAUSOLEUM 🏰

Commissioned by Kaiser Ferdinand II while he was resident here as ruler of Inner Austria, this is the most significant Habsburg tomb in terms of art history. The Italian court artist Giovanni Pietro de Pomis was responsible for the planning. **(Opening times according to season!)**

16 PRIESTS' SEMINARY (not pictured)

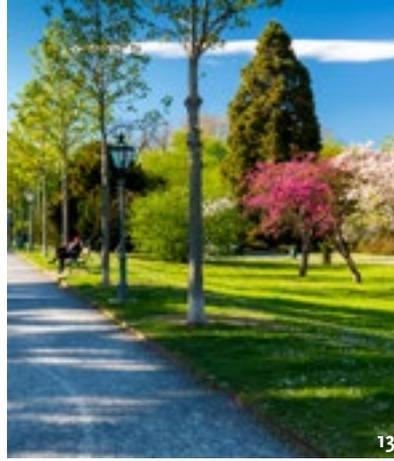
Diagonally opposite the mausoleum, an imposing façade conceals the Renaissance courtyard of the Jesuit college (today the priests' seminary). Next door to this is the “Old University” (Hofgasse 14), founded in 1585.

TIP: 17 GLOCKENSPIEL 🏰

Following Abraham-a-Santa-Clara-Gasse will bring you down to Glockenspielplatz square. At 11 am, 3 pm and 6 pm, two windows open and a pair of carved wooden figures in traditional costume dance to the sound of the Glockenspiel.

18 THE AREA AROUND MEHL- AND FÄRBERPLATZ

Look up from the busy restaurants, cafés and bars and you will be rewarded with a view of the wonderful Renaissance architecture surrounding you – alongside M1, a stunning contrast provided by modern architecture in the heart of the city. With its lively nightlife, this area of town is also known as the “Graz Bermuda Triangle” – because it's easy to go “missing” here for hours...



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WORLD CULTURAL HERITAGE: GRAZ HISTORIC CENTRE WALKING TOUR.

Already hungry and thirsty (again)?

In just a few minutes you'll be at the farmers' market!

19 STEMPFERGASSE (not pictured)

Retrace your steps over Mehl- and Glockenspielplatz and through the alleyway of Enge Gasse to arrive in “elegant” Stempfergasse, one of Graz's shopping highlights, lined with extravagant boutiques and top international labels. Stempfergasse was also once home to Johannes Kepler – take a quick look at the beautiful inner courtyard (No. 6)! Now turn left along Herrengasse.

20 PARISH CHURCH (not pictured)

An opulent Baroque tower belonging to the Stadtpfarrkirche, the City Parish Church. During its eventful history it was for a time a small Gothic chapel in the former Jewish quarter, saw a spell as the church of a Dominican monastery, Baroque and neo-Gothic renovations and the bombs of the Second World War. Portraits of Hitler and Mussolini included in the stained glass windows serve as a reminder of darker times.

21 OPERA HOUSE GRAZ

Carry on along Herrengasse and then turn left via the Opernring to reach the Graz Opera House, designed by the famous architects Hemler and Fellner and built in 1899. Here you will find a spectacular mix of tradition and modernism: Hartmut Skerbisch's steel “Lichtschwert” sculpture (sword of light), a symbol of openness and tolerance, forms a stunning contrast to the Opera House.

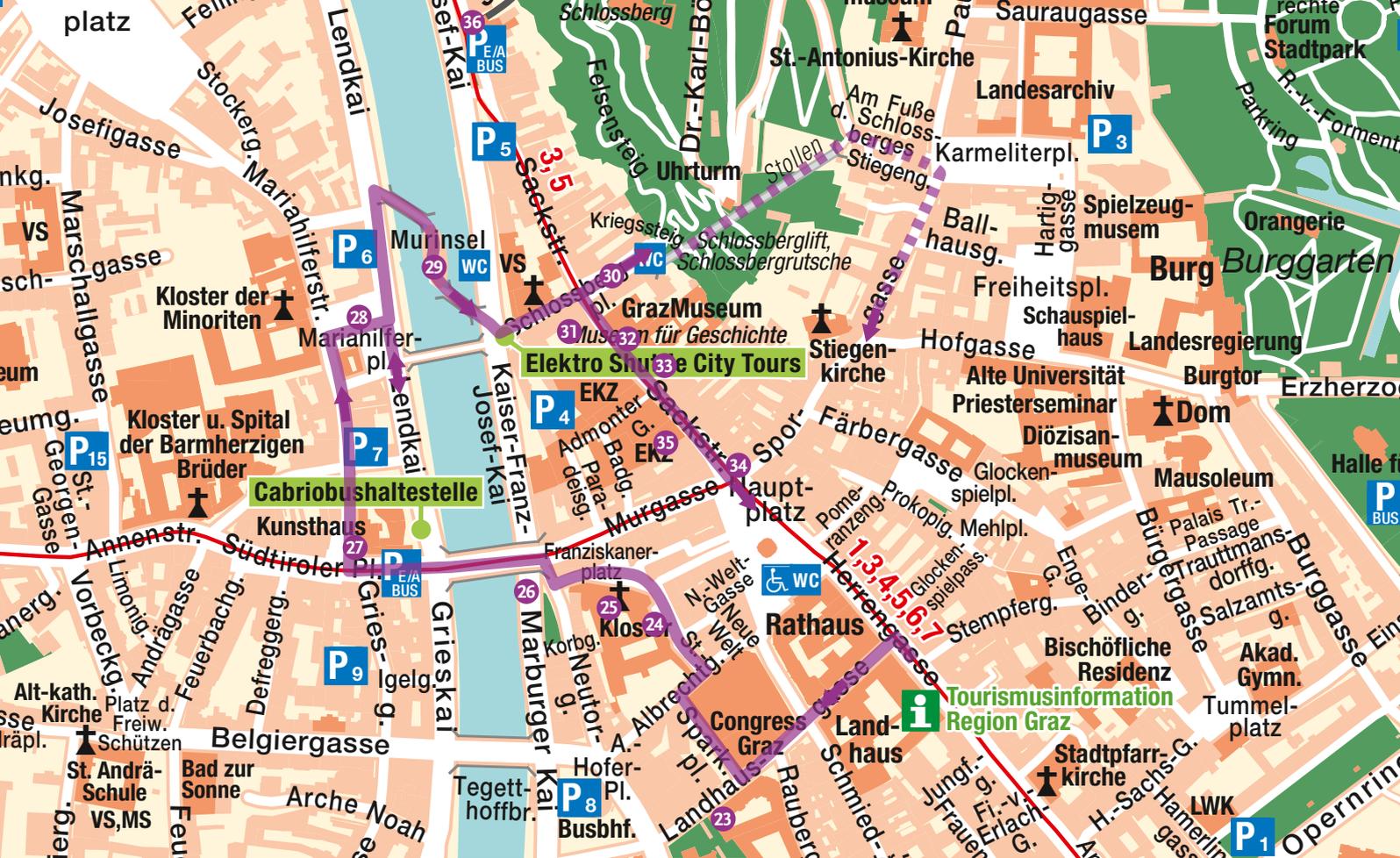
22 KAISER-JOSEF-MARKT

Behind the opera house, Kaiser-Josef-Platz square is home to the largest farmers' market in Graz. Farmers from around the region bring their self-produced goods into the city, offering fruit and vegetables, plants and flowers, pumpkin seed oil, bread and many other specialties for sale. A visual and culinary delight. (Mon–Sat, 6 am–1 pm)

Tip: STYRIAN PUMPKIN SEED OIL TO TAKE AWAY!

Pumpkin seed oil, Styria's “black gold”; delicious taste and extremely healthy – wonderful on salads, as a finishing touch for various dishes and even on vanilla ice cream (you read it right!) – get a bottle from the farmers' market to take home.





HISTORIC AND MODERN: ACROSS THE MUR AND BACK AGAIN.

The spectacular contrast between traditional and modern Graz. Here is where the “Cultural capital of Europe” project has left its clearest traces. You can also start this walk at Graz Tourist Information, Herrengasse 16, or on the Hauptplatz (main square).

On one side of the river: narrow alleyways that are cool and shady all day long, small boutiques, a rich variety of scents, sun-drenched squares, the lively hubbub of the street cafes, cheerful people of all ages. The playful, ‘southern’ side of the city.

A couple of steps across the Mur – the river that divides Graz – provide a welcome contrast.

Ever since 2003, the year when Graz was cultural capital of Europe, this has been home to the future: the enigmatic “friendly alien” Kunsthaus has made itself at home, nestled between the ancient houses. Local people love the unique beauty of this beast, and see it as the city’s new second landmark. A floating shell in the river connects the two sides of the city: the island in the Mur.

HISTORIC AND MODERN: ACROSS THE MUR AND BACK AGAIN.

Follow Herrengasse to the Hauptplatz and from there go left via narrow, shady Franziskanergasse into the Franziskanerviertel quarter.

23 JOANNEUMSVIERTEL

The Joanneumsviertel complex is not only the very core of Austria's second largest museum but also an important urbanistic highlight of the inner city of Graz.

24* FRANZISKANERVIERTEL

The Franziskanerviertel quarter is also known as the "Kälberne Viertel" or Veal Quarter, an old name originating from the centuries-old tradition of butchers' shops that are still to be seen in the area. Today the quarter is also a meeting-point for young and old, with a feel of the south about it both in the surroundings and in the cuisine: whether it's Italian or Styrian specialities – you'll find both here.

25 FRANZISKANERKIRCHE

Apart from the Clock Tower, the tower of the Franziskanerkirche church is probably the most definitive landmark on the Graz skyline. It belongs to the oldest monastery in the city, founded in 1239 as a monastery of the Minorites. The stately tower was located to the southwest, up against the town walls, in a strategically important position uncommon for a begging order; it was built in the 17th century as a municipal tower on the orders of the city authorities.

TIP: 25 FRANZISKANERKLOSTER

Take a look inside the Franziskanerkloster monastery: the Gothic cloisters leading to the Jacobean chapel are an oasis of calm and peace right in the middle of the hubbub of the city.

26 MUR PROMENADE (not pictured)

From Franziskanerplatz it is just a couple of paces to the "Erzherzog Johann Brücke" (main bridge). Here you will find the staircase down to the "Mur Promenade" – an ideal spot to take a short break and maybe dangle your tired feet in the waters of the Mur. The Mur Promenade has in recent years become a favourite relaxation area for locals.



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* Culinary beer tour – from May to September. Entertaining tour, tasting included, during which you will learn the difference between a "Pffiff", "Seitl", "Glas" and "Krügerl".

HISTORIC AND MODERN: ACROSS THE MUR AND BACK AGAIN.

Across the Hauptbrücke (main bridge) walk along the other side of the river – before you rises the new, second landmark of the city: the Kunsthaus.

27* KUNSTHAUS GRAZ 🏠

Architects Peter Cook and Colin Fournier designed the spectacular Kunsthaus; it was built in 2003. The exciting interplay between the new structure on the banks of the Mur and the old Clock Tower on the Schlossberg has already become the trademark of this city and reveals how productive the tension between tradition and avantgarde can be.

The Kunsthaus houses temporary exhibitions (N.B. closed Mondays!), the “Camera Austria” (photographic exhibitions) and a restaurant.

28 MARIAHILFERPLATZ

Carry on past the Palais Thienfeld, which has been developed into an “art cluster” (housing the Haus der Architektur and Grazer Kunstverein), along the street to Mariahilferplatz, a square dominated by the Mariahilferkirche church, the monastery and cultural centre of the Minorites. The church was built at the beginning of the 17th century, the imposing double tower added later in 1742.

29 MURINSEL 🏠

Built in the cultural capital year of 2003, the “Murinsel” is an unusual landmark that sits in the water. It was designed by New York artist Vito Acconci and takes the form of a floating shell linked by footbridges to the banks on either side of the Mur. It houses a café and an amphitheatre.

TIP: GRAZ CARD

Enjoy Graz with your family!

Explore Graz in 24, 48 or 72 hours comfortably with bus, train or tram and discover lots of attractions free of charge. Ideal for families: 2 children under 15 enjoy all benefits for free with each Graz Card holder.



27



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* The idiosyncratic protuberances covering the Kunsthaus are known as “Nozzles”; some serve as a source of light.

HISTORIC AND MODERN: ACROSS THE MUR AND BACK AGAIN.

Crossing the river by the Mursteg footbridge brings you to Sackstrasse and then to Schlossbergplatz square – with a wonderful view of the Schlossberg and the Schlossbergstiege stairs.

30 SCHLOSSBERGPLATZ

On the right, next to the entrance to the Schlossberg tunnel system, stands the oldest documented building in Graz, the 13th-century Reinerhof, which once belonged to the Rein monastery. The Schlossbergstiege stairs are one of four ways to get to the top of the Schlossberg. They were carved into the cliff by prisoners of war during the First World War; originally there were 260 steps.

31 PALAIS ATTEMES

With its impressive scale, the Palais Attems building has been a distinctive feature of Sackstrasse street since 1702. The family, who owned it till 1962, allowed hardly any alterations to the building, with the result that, in the Palais Attems, Graz has a valuable Baroque palace maintained in its original splendour. (The facilities are not accessible to the public.)

32* GRAZMUSEUM

GrazMuseum is a meeting place for everyone interested in the city's urban development, its political, economic and social history as well as art and culture linked to Graz. It has the role of a historical museum striving to present history from a modern point of view, setting physical media in the kind of atmosphere that only a museum can make possible.

33 HISTORY MUSEUM

The entire spectrum of the Cultural History Collection. The new display depot presents the entire wealth of the Collection, which was founded in the 19th century with for the purpose of documenting cultural eras in Styria since the High Middle Ages. Today, the collection includes more than 35,000 objects. A good 2000 musical instruments, furniture, women's men's and children's fashion, decorations and medals, pattern books and carpets, locks, candelabras and grave crosses, drinking vessels and vases are now presented as a dense collage of thousands of objects over an area of approximately 450 m².



* The permanent exhibition “360 GRAZ – die Stadt von allen Zeiten” at GrazMuseum. Here you can follow the tracks of Graz's history through time as you walk around GrazMuseum at your own pace.

HISTORIC AND MODERN: ACROSS THE MUR AND BACK AGAIN.

Continuing along Sackstrasse towards Graz Hauptplatz main square, passing antiques shops and second-hand dealers, the town hall comes into view ahead.

34 SACKSTRASSE (not pictured)

Sackstrasse street – the extension of Herrengasse leading away from Hauptplatz main square – is the “Kunst Meile” of Graz, the street of arts. Reaching as far as the Schlossbergbahn funicular, you will find antique shops, galleries, jewellery shops, workshops, museums and studios offering modern and antique art, popular art and handicrafts. A fascinating ambiance combined with traditional retail make this street of arts a special attraction.

35 KASTNER & ÖHLER

A veritable Graz institution is the department store Kastner & Öhler, both steeped in tradition and ultra-modern. Austria's most beautiful department store, which has already won an international award, extends over 6 floors covering 20,000 m2 and offers the greatest choice of fashion in all of Austria! On the roof terrace on the 6th floor you can enjoy an amazing view of nearby Schlossberg hill and the city's typical red roof-scape. Along the Skywalk you hover above the city, and the clock tower seems to be within your grasp.

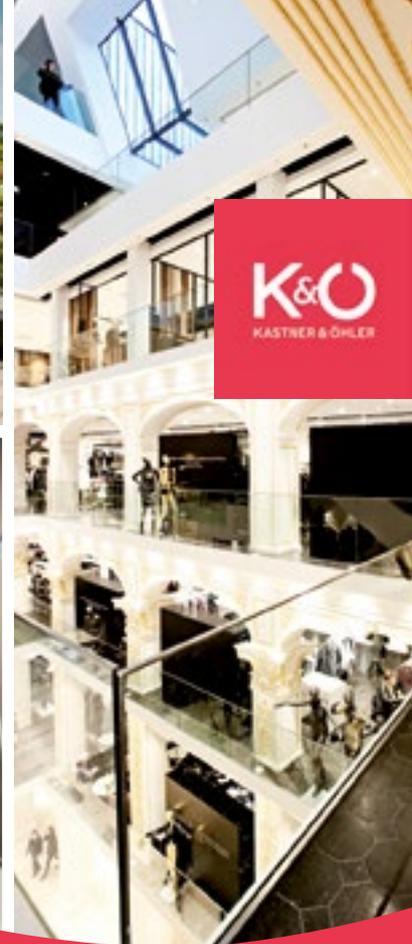
36 SCHLOSSBERGBAHN (picture on page 31)

The Schlossbergbahn (funicular railway) can be reached from the Hauptplatz by following Sackstrasse past Schlossbergplatz as far as Kaiser-Franz-Josef-Kai. It ascends from the lower station at an incline of 61% (!) – as it has done for the last 100 years. (Graz Linien public transport tickets are valid.)

TIP: Schlossberg LIFT (picture on page 37)

An unusual, fast and yet comfortable way to achieve the ascent of Schlossberg hill is the Schlossberg lift. The altogether aesthetically appealing design of this lift, set in the very core of the hill, is also particularly practical if you're in a hurry or not inclined or able to walk. During the ride, the lift's glass cabins offer a clear view of the illuminated rock-lined elevator shaft – a mountain view from within.

The focus of our next tour is Schlossberg hill.



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SCHLOSSBERG: ABOVE THE ROOFS HISTORIC CITY CENTRE.

Our third walk takes you up onto the Schloßberg. Enjoy the wonderful view looking down onto the sea of red tiled roofs of the Old Town. The third walk begins on Schloßbergplatz.

Where in the world but Graz would you find a beautiful mountain, covered in trees and footpaths, right in the middle of the city? The Schloßberg draws people: in the spring its fresh greenery enjoys the first rays of sun; in the summer it offers shady trees and open-air performances; in the autumn it is ablaze with colour; and in the winter it provides respite from the grey of the city below.

Once you're on top of the Schloßberg there's a lot to discover and a fabulous view to enjoy: from here you can see the red-tile roofscape, the hills and the mountains in the distance.

New lovers, however, are usually less interested than most – and this has always been Graz's favourite spot for romance. It's still well worth taking a look around: the clock tower alone is a fascinating curiosity. The small and big hands are swapped, causing some visitors to check their watches in confusion.

SCHLOSSBERG: ABOVE THE ROOFS HISTORIC CITY CENTRE.

There are four ways to get to the top of the 473-metre high Schlossberg: on the Schlossbergbahn funicular railway, in the glass lift that ascends inside the mountain or on foot up the Schlossbergstiege stairs and via Karmeliterplatz.

ON THE SCHLOSSBERG

Over 1,000 years ago the small fort that stood on a rock ledge here gave the city its name. Derived from the Slavic word 'Gradeč', Graz means "little castle". After 1544, according to plans drawn up by Domenico dell'Allio, it was extended into a huge Renaissance fortress, now listed in the Guinness Book of Records as the strongest fortification of all time. Even Napoleon found it impossible to capture at the beginning of the 19th century; it was only in 1809, when he had occupied Vienna and was threatening to destroy the Austrian capital, that Graz surrendered. Almost all of the fortifications were razed to the ground – only the bell tower and clock tower were allowed to remain, ransomed by the citizens of Graz and so spared.

37* BELL TOWER

Our first stop on the Schlossberg is the bell tower, built in 1588, which houses Graz's most famous bell, the "Liesl". It is unclear whether the name originates from an earlier chapel dedicated to St. Elisabeth or from the word "Verlies", meaning dungeon (the fortress's cruellest prison was in the cellar vault). The bell weighs nearly 5 tonnes: it took two blacksmiths working full tilt to construct the special ringing mechanism that allowed it to sound.

38 KASEMATTEN STAGE

Do you have any idea what a 'casemate' was? Casemates were stores that were also used as sleeping quarters for prisoners. Today the Kasematten stage is the atmospheric backdrop for dazzling operas and concerts. From here it is not far to the plateau at the top and the Gothic fortress gate.



* The "Liesl" was cast from 101 Turkish cannonballs in 1587 and so strikes 101 times, three times a day, at 7am, 12pm and 7pm.

SCHLOSSBERG: ABOVE THE ROOFS HISTORIC CITY CENTRE.

The Schlossberg is covered by an extensive network of footpaths. You can easily stroll from one sight to another without any great effort.

39 THE GOTHIC GATE (not pictured)

Rediscovered in 1982, the fortress gate led from the “outer ward” to the interior of the Medieval castle and was known as the “back gate”. In the Middle Ages there was a crenellated gate tower with two archways, the outer of which is still well preserved today. In 1894 the plateau was made into a panoramic terrace. The Gothic gate was excavated between 1998 and 2001 and made accessible to the public.

40 HACKHER LION

The Hackher Lion is a monument to the last military defender of the Graz fortress, Major Franz Xaver Freiherr von Hackher, who in 1809 together “with a handful of soldiers” withstood months of siege laid by the superior forces of the French. Since there was no portrait of Major Hackher a statue of a lion was erected in his honour instead. In the middle of the plateau area is the cistern. This huge cistern was built in the 16th century and has a capacity of 900,000 litres.

41 GRAZ MUSEUM SCHLOSSBERG

The new Graz Museum Schlossberg opens the door on the history of the city hill in Graz. Open all year round and partly an open-air museum, it is the first point of contact for all visitors to the Schlossberg. Graz Museum Schlossberg provides visitors with information and orientation with regard to history and topography. This new, family-friendly museum presents the history of the Schlossberg and its significance for Graz in a contemporary way.

42 CANNON HALL

The cannon hall in Graz Museum Schlossberg houses four cannons, which remind us of the old cannon bastion’s function as the main Graz fire station.



SCHLOSSBERG: ABOVE THE ROOFS HISTORIC CITY CENTRE.

On the Schlossberg it's a gentle stroll in the direction of the Graz landmark – passing other sights on the way.

43 CHINESE PAVILION

The Chinese Pavilion was built in 1890 and replaced an older Romanesque vine-covered terrace. The stone bench with weathered inscriptions and Gothic tracery on the rear side is known as the “Bishop’s seat” since, according to legend, it was here in 1796 that, released after enduring 40 years’ imprisonment in the dungeons of the Schlossberg, the Bishop Count Nádasdy died.

TIP: 44 THE TURKISH WELL (not pictured)

From 1554 to 1558 this “deep well” was dug 94 metres down to the groundwater of the Mur in order to be able to provide the fortress with enough water during prolonged sieges. It acquired its current name only in the 19th century, because there were supposedly Turkish prisoners involved in digging it.

45 STARCKE-HAUS

In 1575 a powder tower was built at the foot of the stable bastion which was then destroyed by the French in 1809. A winegrower’s house was built on its ruins and grapes planted on the terraces below. It was named after court actor Gustav Starcke, who lived in the house. Today it houses a restaurant with terraces providing a wonderful view over Graz.

46* CLOCK TOWER 🕒

And finally you come to the clock tower, the traditional landmark of the city. And, although the clockwork in the 28-metre high tower has struck the hour precisely since 1712, it is still possible to lose track of time beneath this romantic symbol of Graz with its wonderful view over the city. The originally Medieval defence tower acquired its current structure in around 1560, as did the distinctive wooden walkway for the fire brigade. Three bells strike in the clock tower and three crests adorn its walls.



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* Do the clocks work differently in Graz? No. The fact that there was originally only a big hand for the hours and the minute hand was added later led to the hands being reversed on the clock tower.

SCHLOSSBERG: ABOVE THE ROOFS HISTORIC CITY CENTRE.

There are a lot of stories surrounding the Schlossberg. One thing is for sure: many of the young people from Graz come here for their first kiss...

47 WAY DOWN TO THE OLD TOWN / FELSENSTEIG

There are three options for the route back down to the historic centre: in the comfort of the spectacular glass lift inside the mountain, or on the footpath down to Karmeliterplatz square in the direction of Sporgasse; but probably the most romantic way takes you past the fascinating Herbersteingarten down the Schlossbergstiege, nearly 260 steps.

48 HERBERSTEINGARTEN

In 1930 access was opened up to the Herbersteingarten from the "Kriegssteig", so that the "hanging gardens of Graz" could be visited by the public. Mediterranean plants (such as fig trees, lemon trees, ginko trees and wisteria) make the terrace one of the finest examples of garden architecture from the interwar years.

49 THE SYSTEM OF TUNNELS IN THE MOUNTAIN (not pictured)

During the Second World War, an extensive system of tunnels was built inside the mountain, which served as air raid shelters for up to 40,000 people. Some of these tunnels are still in use today; for example as a footpath through the mountain from Schlossbergplatz to Karmeliterplatz, or as access to the glass lift in the mountain and to Dom im Berg, an underground event hall. The Graz Fairytale Express in the Schlossberg also uses part of the old system of tunnels..

50 SLIDE GRAZ & THE FLIGHT GRAZ 4D MOTION RIDE

Slide Graz in the Schlossberg is the tallest underground slide in the world at 64 metres. Whizzing down spiralling bends on 175 metres' of track in about 40 seconds, this is a very special experience for all ages. The Flight Graz 4D Motion Ride takes visitors to more than 25 attractions in the city on an exciting drone flight from the perspective of a fly. You can experience Graz like never before thanks to full motion chairs and effects such as wind, fog, soap bubbles and water.



THE RESTAURANTS ON SCHLOSSBERG HILL

High above the city you enjoy first class catering; the restaurants on Schlossberg hill are popular meeting places, not only for residents.

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GRAZ

INTERESTING TRIPS OUTSIDE THE CENTRE.

Just a few minutes away from the Graz historic centre you will find many more beautiful sights of the city – most of them easily reached by public transport.

51* SCHLOSS EGGENBERG 🏰 (Tramline 1, Schloss Eggenberg stop)
UNESCO world heritage site and a journey into the universe. Time made into a work of architecture. In 1625 Prince Johann Ulrich von Eggenberg built a palace themed around macrocosmic symbolism: four towers for the seasons, 12 gates for the months and 365 windows for the days of the year. The Schloss is part of the Landesmuseum Joanneum and, besides the state rooms, also houses the Alte Galerie, the numismatic collection, the magnificent planetary garden and a wonderful park.
(Opening times according to season!)

52 MARIATROST BASILICA (Tramline 1, terminus Mariatrost)
This double-towered pilgrimage church sits on top of a hill on the eastern edge of Graz. It was commissioned by the Order of St. Paul the First Hermit in 1714 and most probably built by architects Andreas and Johann Georg Stengg. At its heart stands a statue of the Virgin Mary, whose famous miracles drew great numbers of pilgrims as early as the 17th century.

53 GRAZ UNIVERSITIES
There are around 40,000 students in Graz and at the city's four universities. The most traditional is the University of Graz, where teaching has taken place on one campus since the end of the 19th century. World-renowned architects have emerged from the Graz University of Technology and the University of Music and Performing Arts Graz has the oldest jazz department in Europe.

54 BOTANICAL GARDEN (Tram line 1, Hilmteich/Botanischer Garten stop)
In the middle of the villa district of Schubertstraße in Graz, three slanted parabolic cylinders made of acrylic glass fuse with each other. Their ideal orientation allows for the lush growth of plants from four different climate zones inside.

55 HILMTEICH / LEECHWALD (not pictured) (Tram line 1, Hilmteich stop)
Which activity do you prefer? A romantic boat ride? A cool climbing experience at the adventure park? Or do you want to explore the forest trails in running shoes? Both the Hilmteich and adjacent Leechwald offer a wide variety of adventures.



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* Does Schloss Eggenberg look familiar to you? It's often used as a setting in German-language films.

INTERESTING TRIPS OUTSIDE THE CENTRE.

Modern architecture, sacred art or Medieval ruins: surroundings to contemplate with a deep breath of fresh air!

56 LEECHKIRCHE (not pictured)

Leechkirche is the oldest Church of Mary in Graz and one of the most precious early Gothic buildings in Austria. The stained glass windows in the choir are particularly remarkable. (Bus number 31, Zinzendorfsgasse bus stop)

57 GÖSTING CASTLE RUINS (not pictured)

This once proud Medieval castle fell into ruin following a fire in the 17th century. Today there remains only the castle chapel and the keep together with a few fragments of wall. The tower holds a small museum and a café and offers a fine view over the Graz basin and the hills of eastern Styria. (Bus line 40, Gösting terminus + 20 minutes on foot)

58 KALVARIENBERG CALVARY HILL

On the Stations of the Cross, but still right – that’s you when you visit Calvary Hill in Graz, on the Austein. The Austein is, next to the Schlossberg, the second mountain-like hill in Graz, outside the city centre. The most important and largest open-air scenic portrayal of the Passion of Christ has been reconstructed here.

(Tram lines 1, 3, 6, 7 to the Roseggerhaus stop, change to bus number 67 to the Schippingerstraße stop)

59 SCHELL COLLECTION – LOCK AND KEY MUSEUM

The key to happiness – could you find it here? Everything is possible at the fascinating Schell Collection, Austria’s museum of locks, keys, coffers, ornamental boxes and ornate cast iron, and also the biggest specialist museum of its kind in the world (Bus line 40, Zeilergasse stop).

60 NOVA-AIR

Unique in the world – two aircraft on one roof! The Boeing 727-200 is run as “Restaurant Boeing” and can be viewed down to the last detail. The second aircraft, a Russian Ilyushin Il-62M, is an “80s Bar & Restaurant”. In addition to fancy drinks and a terrace with a view of the Schlossberg in Graz, this plane also has an open “cockpit door” for visitors. Free entry! (Bus numbers 40, 52, 67, parking possible on the premises)