

**THIS ISSUE:**

- Austria's Mountain Roads
- Readers' Forum
- LTU Special Winter Fares
- Cologne-Dresden Reports

**DEAR SUBSCRIBER**

October 28, 1995

### Why Not Now?

Here we stand, eyeball to eyeball with winter. In Europe, only the hardiest boulevardier still sips his coffee outdoors. Most of the leaves have fallen and table umbrellas are being put away all over the Continent.

Still, it's a great time to go. Opera companies and symphony orchestras are up and running full throttle. The great museums, always an indoor activity, are a lot less crowded at this time of year. And the Christmas season, celebrated in Europe as nowhere else, is about to launch. Most Christmas markets will be open by the end of November and hot drinks like *Glühwein* and *Weihnachtspunsch* will soon be for sale in restaurants and on street corners.

And the best part is...a trip to Europe doesn't cost as much in winter.

Roundtrip airfares are available from the low \$500s from the East Coast and the high \$600s and low \$700s from the West.

Car rental companies are also running promotions. Through **DER Tours** (phone 800-521-6722), **Hertz** and **Sixt-Budget** are offering two free days with any one-week rental. At that rate, an Opel Astra, perfect for a couple, is just a little over \$15 per day for nine days, including German Value Added Tax.

Many hotels have established winter discount rates. The **Sofitel** group (800-763-4835), for example, is offering rates of \$118 to \$138 per room, per night at more than 50 European hotels. Resort hotels, hard up for customers between the summer season and the midwinter

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# GEMÜTLICHKEIT

The Travel Letter for Germany, Austria, Switzerland & the New Europe

*The Grand Tour, Part 2...*

## AUSTRIA BY AUTO

*Many of Europe's remotest and most beautiful mountain roads are in Austria. This second segment of our "Grand Tour" traverses several of them.*

**I**n August we launched the "Grand Tour" series; suggested 14-day automobile journeys to many of our favorite cities, towns, village, sights, hotels and backroads.

In order to cover as much new ground as possible, we chose an "open jaw" format; each journey begins in one major gateway city and ends in another. Our first tour, though it was mostly through Germany, started

**By  
Bob  
Bestor**

in Zürich and finished in Frankfurt. We also settled on 14 days as the most common time frame for a European vacation.

This month's drive is almost entirely through Austria. It begins 50 miles south of the Munich Airport in Bad Aibling, Germany, and ends with four days in Vienna. In between, are short visits to Graz and Salzburg and some of Europe's most thrilling and beautiful mountain driving.

In planning this itiner-

ary, we were forced to make difficult choices about what to include and what to bypass. Except for Vienna, Salzburg and Graz, one could design several tours of equal or even greater interest than the one that follows. Stops on this itinerary were selected in part to give the trip continuity and provide for "quality" driving time. Thus, some wonderful parts of Austria were left out. In addition, numerous towns along our route, or just a short detour off it, — places like Kitzbühel, Bad Ausee, Bad Ischl, St. Gilgen and St. Wolfgang come to mind — are destinations as interesting as some of the stops we chose. But, we will see more of Austria in subsequent "Grand Tour" segments.

Like the first "Grand Tour," this itinerary is a guideline. We assume you will adjust it to suit your own style of travel.

**DAY ONE** **Bad Aibling, Germany**

Suggested Map(s): *Die Generalkarte Germany #23, Die Generalkarte Germany #26*

**Activities:** Arrive Munich. Pick up your rental car and head south for Bad Aibling (about 80

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## TRAVELER'S DIGEST

*Among the normally slim pickings culled by our clipping service this month are two informative New York Times articles.*

### Munich's Schwabing District

The *New York Times* travel section seems to operate on the novel premise that travel writing should be more informative and less dramatic. Seldom does the Times reader have to suffer the "I inhaled the crisp, clean Alpine air" style so pervasive in travel magazines and Sunday travel sections. Recently, there have been several good articles on Germany.

One is a September 24, 1995, piece by J.S. Marcus entitled *The Bohemian Side of Munich* on the city's Schwabing district. A few excerpts:

"Schwabing, the district north of the city's old medieval center and a traditional stomping ground of students, artists and assorted hangers-on, has often been thought of as Munich's other half, artistic rather than bourgeois, cosmopolitan rather than Bavarian...These days, Schwabing has been rigorously gentrified, populated, as some would have it, by fashion editors and swinging

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## DEAR SUBSCRIBER

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ski rush, are ready to deal. Smaller hotels, too, cut their prices, especially those in the countryside. Or, you can really save money by renting an apartment or condominium for as little as \$250 per week (see *Gemütlichkeit*, August 1985).

This time of year in Europe, I have the feeling I'm seeing the countries as they really are, not as in summer when everyone is whipped into shape and braced for the tourist invasion. In November, that little restaurant on a side street in Zürich can't be a tourist trap because there are no tourists; the patrons are all locals. A European trip now is like visiting Disneyland with the park's employees as its only customers.

But is it as much fun when the trees are bare and the streets windy and cold? Speaking for myself, ducking into a cozy Gasthof on a chilly day for a bowl of soup and glass of beer is just as appealing as a summer lunch at a sidewalk table.

I'm not putting down summer travel. Each time of the year has its own charm; but all we have now is winter. And lower prices.

### Another Uncle John Report

This month we turn the rest of "Dear Subscriber" over to John Bestor, for the past nine years a member of the *Gemütlichkeit* advisory board, and a man who can find his way around Germany, Austria and Northern Italy as well as anyone we know. Heed his words.

In prior years we traveled in Germany, Austria and Northern Italy almost entirely by car. I think auto travel in Europe creates the tendency to bypass the center of some of the larger cities. This year we used rail the first two weeks of the trip and took the opportunity to spend three nights in Dresden and several in Cologne.

In Dresden, we were primarily interested in seeing the buildings and sights in the historic center and our hotel choice was the **Terrassenufer**

(Terrassenufer 12, D-01069, tel. 02508/440 9500, fax 02508/440 9600). Our double room for three nights, including one dinner, was \$394. Recently constructed, it is close to the Elbe river and about a 10-minute walk to the town center.

While in Dresden we took a day-trip by train to Meissen to see the porcelain. The train ride was interesting but the porcelain showroom at the factory was overly crowded and difficult. We would not go back to Meissen.

Dresden's historic center is fascinating with considerable evidence of reconstruction and cleanup since reunification. The Dom, the Schloss, the Swinger Galleries and the Opera House are restored and ready for visitors. The jewel collection at the Albertinum is fantastic. Reconstruction of the Frauenkirche, which was completely destroyed in that one last gigantic bombing raid before the end of the war, is just starting. The pieces of the bombed church have been carefully numbered, labeled and stored on numerous metal racks in the nearby area. Completion of the restoration of the Frauenkirche is scheduled for some four to six years after the turn of the century.

In the town center are two large, expensive hotels, the **Dresden Hilton** and the **Grand Hotel Taschenbergpalais**. The Hilton complex includes several restaurants and sidewalk cafes. A more traditional German restaurant, the **Paulaner**, is adjacent to the Steigenberger. We enjoyed two meals there.

Cologne was wonderful. Of course, the Cathedral is awesome, and there are many other places of special interest.

During the first three centuries after the birth of Christ, Cologne was a Roman city and during part of that period, it was the capital of the Roman government for that part of Europe. The old city, a semicircle facing the Rhine, is literally built on Roman ruins, some of which can be visited below street level. My wife, "H," calls it an "archaeological smorgasbord." The existence of these ruins continues to delay construction of new buildings, subways and underground garages.

We spent most of the day going through the two large museums near the Cathedral. One of these is loaded with items uncovered during the excavations, including a large mosaic floor. So many artifacts have been recovered that many of them are stacked on racks in other buildings close to the museum.

We stayed at the **Altstadt Hotel** (Salzgasse 7, D-50667, tel. 0221/257-7851, fax 0221/257 7853) which we chose primarily for its price and perfect location; a short walk to the Cathedral area, the Hauptbahnhof (for the *International Herald Tribune*) and the Altes and Neues Rathausen. It is also very close to the restaurants, bars and all the other activity along the river-front area.

Our double room at the Altstadt was on the fifth floor facing a small square in the back. It was quiet and the price was \$100 per night. This is modest compared to the other hotels in the downtown area.

One problem was the hotel's rooms are located in two adjoining buildings and our fifth floor room was in a building with NO LIFT! Access to our room was by climbing a very narrow circular staircase. Oxygen stations are not provided. We would return to Altstadt but only with a guaranteed reservation in the building with the lift.

There are a large number of restaurants along the river but our top choice was **La Colombe**, located in a quiet area near Gross St Martin Church. The meals were excellently prepared, and we were served by the owner, Rosemarie Hahn. One evening we had lamb and rabbit and it was such a pleasant experience, we went back a second night for *Hirsch* medallions and quail.

Large Rhine cruise boats docked within two hundred yards of our hotel, and we took a day cruise up the river to Bonn. This was a break in tramping through all the Roman ruins we could find. The boat left at 9:30 a.m. There were very few passengers either going to Bonn or on the early evening return trip. It was a weekday, and the

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# GEMÜTLICHKEIT

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**Editor & Publisher:** Robert H. Bestor, Jr.  
**Associate Editors:** Elizabeth Schiller, Bruce Woelfel  
**Contributing Editors:** C. Fischer, R. Holliday  
**Design & Composition:** Paul T. Merschorf  
**Consulting Editor:** Thomas P. Bestor  
**Subscription Dept:** Andy Bestor, K. Steffans

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## HOTEL RESTAURANT RATING KEY

Rating Category	Scale	Hotel Rating Criteria	
Unacceptable	0 - 3	People/Service	30%
Adequate	4 - 7	Location/Setting	15%
Average	8 - 11	Guestrooms	30%
Above Average	12 - 15	Public rooms	5%
Excellent	16 - 20	Facilities/Restaurant	20%

### Special Designations

**G** By virtue of location, decor, special charm, warmth of management, or combination thereof, an especially pleasant establishment.

**\$** Offers significant value.

### Restaurant Criteria

Food	65%
Service	20%
Atmosphere	15%

## AUSTRIA BY CAR

Continued from page 1

km/50 miles) and the **Romantik Hotel Lindner**. The Lindner's best rooms are in a quiet annex at the rear of the property. The hotel's decor features a classic Baroque facade, windows with striped shutters, dark wood wainscoting and vaulted ceilings. A walk around town, a good meal and night's sleep will begin the jet lag healing process.

**Directions:** Go south from the Airport on the Red Road that circles the eastern edge of the town of Erding. At Hohenlinden turn right to Ebersberg and Grafing. The road is scenic between Hohenhann and Beyharting. Bad Aibling is just 5 km north of the Munich-Salzburg Autobahn (map coordinates 53.1-2.8).

### DAY TWO Zell Am See

Suggested Map(s): *Die Generalkarte Austria #7 & #6*

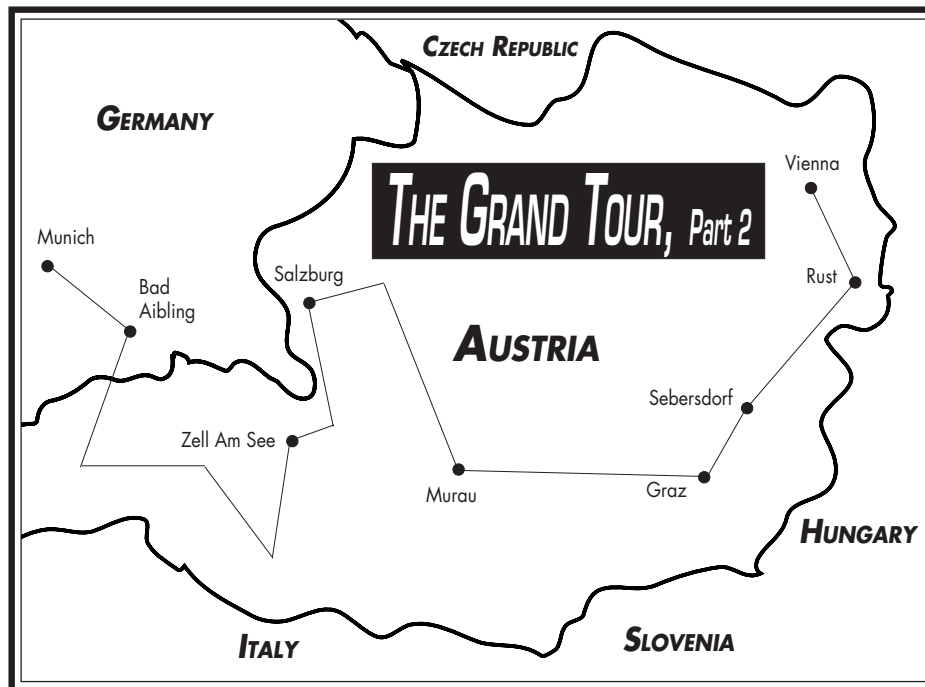
**Activities:** This morning begins two days of great mountain driving.

You will negotiate the **Gerlos Pass** to the Upper Pinzgau, see the **Krimml Waterfalls** and, finally, drive one of Europe's most spectacular mountain roads, the **Grossglockner**. The overnight is in Zell Am See at the **Hotel Berner**; try dinner at **Gasthof Steinerwirt** (Dreifaltigkeitgasse, tel. 06542/2502). An option would be to stay near the Grossglockner summit in the **Alpenhotel Kaiser-Franz-Josefs-Haus**; nothing special as a hotel but it is an interesting experience to overnight at about 8,000 feet. Even July can seem like winter.

You'll need some cash for this drive. The Grossglockner toll is 350

AS (\$35) in high season and the fee for the Felbertauern Tunnel is 190 AS (\$19) in high season. There may be other tolls as well.

**Directions:** To save time, take the Munich-Salzburg Autobahn east to Autobahndreieck Inntal and from there south on Autobahn 93 in the direction Kufstein and Innsbruck. Past Kramsach, take the Achensee Zillertal exit (map coord. C-4) and go south on Red Road 169. At Zell am Ziller, head east on Red Road 165 through Gerlos and over the pass. In Gerlos you might purchase the makings of a picnic lunch to be eaten at the magnificent Krimml Falls (map



coord. D-7).

At Mittersill go south on Red Road 108 through the Felbertauern, through Lienz and from there back north on Red Road 107 over the Grossglockner (map coord. B-6). (The road is usually closed from early November to the beginning of May.) At the top, take a side trip to the Franz Josefs-Höhe and see the Pasterze Glacier. After the descent, continue on to Zell Am See.

### DAY THREE Salzburg

Suggested Map(s): *Die Generalkarte Austria #7 & #4*

**Activities:** The day starts with another spectacular mountain drive and ends in Salzburg, one of Europe's most beautiful cities. However, because the town is visited daily in summer by hundreds of tour buses, it is best seen in the off-season. Our recommended hotel downtown is the friendly little **Trumer Stube**. Outside the city, in Oberalm near Hallein, some of the warmest hospitality you'll ever experience is at **Schloss Haunsperg**.

**Directions:** From Zell Am See, go north to Saalfelden then east on Red Road 164 to the picturesque village of Maria Alm. The road on to Dienten,

another pretty town, is particularly scenic, with an abundance of flower-bedecked houses. From there continue to Mühlbach and then to Bischofsshofen. Then go north on the Red Road along the Salzach river into Salzburg. If you plan to stay at Schloss Haunsperg take the Hallein exit. Oberalm is on

the east side of the river.

### DAY FOUR Salzburg

**Activities:** Salzburg's top sights are well covered in the *Michelin Green Guide for Austria*. Two of our favorites are the cemetery at **St. Peter's Church** at the foot of the Mönchberg — while you're there have a beverage or lunch in the **Stiftskeller**, said to be the oldest restaurant in Austria — and **Archbishop Wolf Dietrich's mausoleum** in **St. Sebastian Cemetery**, which contains his ostentatious instructions for his own funeral. The Mozart family tomb is also here, though "Wolfie" was buried in Vien-

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## AUSTRIA BY CAR

Continued from page 3

na. A good excursion is to **Hellbrunn Castle**, combined with lunch or dinner at **Maria-Theresien-Schlößl** (Morzger Strasse 87, tel. 0662/820 191).

### DAY FIVE Murau

Suggested Map(s): *Die Generalkarte Austria #5*

**Activities:** Another day of pleasant and very scenic motoring through the Austrian countryside, with a stop at the unique lakeside village of **Hallstatt**, ending in the small town of **Murau**. Overnight at **Der Murauer Gasthof Hotel Lercher**, whose restaurant specializes in game dishes. In **Hallstatt**, don't miss the **Chapel of St. Michael** with its collection of skulls of former town residents. Later, you will traverse the scenic **Erzherzog Johann Strasse** in the green, sparsely populated province of **Styria**.

**Directions:** Go east from Salzburg on Red Road #158 toward **St. Gilgen**. From there turn left and north on Red Road #154 to the south shore of the **Mondsee**. Take the Yellow Road east and then, just before the **Attersee**, go right on Red Road 152 and at **Schoberstein** head southeast on Red Road 153. At Red Road 145 turn right and pass through **Bad Ischl** and then south toward **Hallstatt**, along the west shore of the **Hallstättersee**. After a walk around the town — and perhaps lunch at the **Hotel Grüner Baum**

(Marktplatz 104, tel. 06134/263) or the **Bräu Gasthof** (Seestrasse 120, tel. 06134/221) — head south via the Yellow Road around the south end of the lake and on east to **Bad Aussee**. From there turn right and south on Red Road 145 through **Bad Mitten-**

and is closed in winter. At Red Road 36 turn left and continue to **Murau**.

### DAYS SIX & SEVEN Graz

Suggested Map(s): *Die Generalkarte Austria #5*

**Activities:** After a fairly short drive to **Graz** you will have almost two full days to explore this terrific city. We like it because it's authentic and, though not a metropolis, is still large enough to offer plenty of central European urbanity.

See the **Landeszeughaus** (arsenal), the **Cathedral**, the facade of the **Hof Backerei** at **Hofgasse 6** and the **Mausoleum of Ferdinand II**. If there is time, take half a day to drive south to explore one of Europe's little-known wine roads; the **Südsteirische-Weinstrasse** (map coord. E-10) along the Slovenian border. Our recommended hotel is **Erzherzog Johann**; dine at **Kepler-Keller** (**Stempfergasse 6**, tel. 0316/72 4 39).

**Directions:** The goal today is to get to **Graz**. Proceed east on Red Road 96 toward **Judenburg**. At the junction, take Red Road S36 northeast toward **Knittelfeld**. Then follow the **Autobahn (A9)** southeast into **Graz**.

## SUGGESTED GRAND TOUR HOTELS

**Alpenhotel Kaiser-Franz-Josefs-Haus**, A-9844 Grossglockner, phone 04824/2512, Moderate to Expensive, RATING: 9/20.

**Der Murauer Gasthof Hotel Lercher**, A-8850, Schwarzenbergstr. 10, Murau, Austria, phone 3532/2431, fax 3532/3694, singles 550 to 950 AS (\$175 to \$243), doubles 1000 to 1800 AS (\$175 to \$243). RATING: 12/20

**Seehotel Rust**, A-7071, Am Seekanal 2-4, Rust, Austria, phone 2685/381, fax 2685/381-419, singles 980 to 1150 AS (\$98 to \$115), doubles 1560 to 1900 AS (\$156 to \$190). RATING: 13/20

**Schloss Haunsperg**, A-5411, Oberalm bei Hallein (Salzburg), Austria, phone 6245/80662, fax 6245/80680, singles 900 to 1350 AS (\$900 to \$1350), doubles 1800 to 2700 AS (\$180 to \$270). RATING: 18/20 G

**Trumer Stube**, A-5020, Bergstrasse 6, Salzburg, Austria, phone 662/874767, fax 662/874326, singles 550 to 900 AS (\$55 to \$90), doubles 900 to 1450 AS (\$90 to \$145). RATING: 15/20 G

**Schloss Obermayerhofen**, A-8272, Sebersdorf, Austria, phone 3333/2503, fax 3333/2503, singles 1500 AS (\$150), doubles 1950 to 3000 AS (\$195 to \$300). RATING: 16/20

**Pension Aviano**, A-1010, Marco d'Avianogasse 1, Vienna, Austria, phone 1/512 83 30, fax 1/5312 81 65-65, singles 620 to 740 AS (\$62 to \$74), doubles 980 to 1500 AS (\$98 to \$150). RATING: 16.5/20 G

**Pension Pertschy**, A-1010, Habsburgergasse 5, Vienna, Austria, phone 1/534 49-0, fax 1/534 49-49, singles 580 to 740 AS (\$58 to \$74), doubles 980 to 1240 AS (\$98 to \$124). RATING: 11/20

**Pension Nossek**, A-1010, Graben 17, Vienna, Austria, phone 1/533 70 41, fax 1/535 36 46, singles 550 to 700 AS (\$55 to \$70), doubles 900 to 950 AS (\$90 to \$95). RATING: 10/20

**Pension Altstadt**, A-1070, Kirchengasse 41, Vienna, Austria, phone 1/526 33 99-0, fax 1/523 49 01, singles 850 to 1450 AS (\$85 to \$145), doubles 1150 to 1750 AS (\$115 to \$175). RATING: 17/20 G

**Romantik Hotel Römischer Kaiser**, A-1015, Annagasse 16, Vienna, Austria, phone 1/512 77 51-0, fax 1/512 77 51/13, singles 1500 to 2100 AS (\$150 to \$210), doubles 1900 to 2900 AS (\$190 to \$290). RATING: 16/20 G

**Hotel Kaiserin Elisabeth**, A-1010, Weihburggasse 3, Vienna, Austria, phone 1/15 526-0, fax 1/15 52 67, singles 950 to 1450 AS (\$95 to \$145), doubles 1900 to 2600 AS (\$190 to \$260). RATING: 16/20 G

**Hotel Sacher**, A-1010, Philharmonikerstrasse 4, Vienna, Austria, phone 1/514 56, fax 1/5145 7810, singles 1900 to 2450 AS (\$190 to \$245), doubles 3700 to 5400 AS (\$370 to \$540). RATING: 18/20 G

**König von Ungarn**, A-1010, Schulerstrasse 10, Vienna, Austria, phone 1/515 840, fax 1/515-848, singles 1500 to 1950 AS (\$150 to \$195), doubles 2100 AS (\$210). RATING: 15/20

**Hotel Berner**, A-5700, Zell Am See, Austria, phone 6542/2557, fax 6542/25577, singles 700 to 1500 AS (\$70 to \$150), doubles 1100 to 2600 AS (\$110 to \$260). RATING: 15/20 G

**Romantik Hotel Lindner**, D-83043, Marienplatz 5, Bad Aibling, phone 8061/90630, fax 8061/30535, singles from 100 DM (\$70), doubles to 230 DM (\$162). RATING: 16/20 G

dorf. At the intersection of Red Road 308 (map coord. C-9), turn right and west toward **Großnig**, where you then turn south on a Yellow Road; the approximately 35 km (22 mile) long **Erzherzog Johann Strasse**. It is narrow, lacks guard rails or shoulders

### DAY EIGHT Sebersdorf

Suggested Map(s): *Die Generalkarte Austria #5*

**Activities:** This is a day to relax and enjoy one of Austria's most charming castle hotels, **Schloss Obermayerhofen** in **Sebersdorf** about half

an hour north of Graz. Check in early, enjoy your room, take a long walk, an afternoon nap and have dinner in the **Hofstüberl**, once part of the castle's stables.

**Directions:** From Graz go north via the main Vienna-Graz Autobahn (A2) and exit Sebersdorf-Waltersdorf. Note the words 'Schloss Obermayerhofen' on the map to left of the exit.

#### DAY NINE Rust

Suggested Map(s): *Die Generalkarte Austria #5 & #2*

**Activities:** Day nine features a drive through vineyards and a short visit to the province of Burgenland, a very different and undiscovered part of Austria on the Hungarian border. Stroll the towns of Mörbisch and Rust, noting the rooftop storks' nests, and don't fail to stop for a snack and a made-on-the-premises glass of fresh white wine at a *Heuriger* (wine tavern).

Stay at **Seehotel Rust** directly on the Neusiedler See, a seven-foot deep, 124-square-mile body of water that sometimes mysteriously disappears. The last time was for four years in 1968.

**Directions:** Proceed north on the Autobahn and exit at Pinkafeld. Take the Yellow Road east through Pinkafeld to Red Road 50, then turn left and north passing through Bernstein and Günseck. Just past Langeck, take Red Road 55 north through Pilgersdorf. At Kirchsschlag take the Yellow Road east for about one or two kilometers and then turn north toward Stang. There is quite a network of roads in this area but use the map to continue to work your way north through Wiesmath to Hochwalkersdorf. From there follow the green-lined Yellow Road toward Mattersburg. Almost immediately after crossing Red Road S31 take a right on the Yellow Road toward Marz. Follow the Rotwein Strasse (Red Wine Road) through Rohrbach, along the Hungarian border through Schattendorf, then up to Draßburg, Siegendorf and to St. Margarethen where you turn right on Red Road 52 and into Rust.

#### DAYS TEN, ELEVEN, TWELVE & THIRTEEN

#### Vienna

Suggested Map(s): *Die Generalkarte Austria #2*

**Activities:** Use the late morning to visit the spa town of Baden, perhaps for lunch. One of many addresses in and around Vienna once occupied by **Beethoven** is at 10 Rathausgasse, now a small museum.

Just north of Baden, the village of Gumpoldskirchen produces one of the few Austrian wines sold in the U.S., Gumpoldskirchner, a white wine.

West of Baden is Mayerling, site of the 1888 double-suicide of 30-year-old Archduke Rudolf — son of Emperor Franz-Josef and Empress Elizabeth — and his 17-year-old mistress, Maria Vetsera.

*Gemütlichkeit* recommends several hotels from which to choose your Vienna headquarters. In the luxury category, the **Sacher** has great old-world style. Favorite small, charming hotels inside the Ring include the **Römischer-Kaiser**, the **Kaiserin Elisabeth** and the **König von Ungarn**. We think the best combination of comfort and value is found at the **Pension Aviano**. Plainer accommodations, also good value, are the **Pension Nossek** and the **Pension Pertschy**. Just outside the Ring is an establishment we liked well enough to make the "Gemütlichkeit Hotel of the Year" in 1994, the **Pension Altsadt**.

Vienna has many good restaurants in all price categories. We recommend: **Restaurant Korso** (Mahlerstr. 2, tel. 01/51-516-546, very expensive), **Zum Kuckuck** (Himnelpfortgasse 15, tel. 01/512 8470, expensive), **Restaurant Boheme** (Spittleberggasse 19, tel. 01/933 173, moderate) **Zur Hohen Brücke Gästatte** (Wipplingerstrasse 23, inexpensive) and **Gösser Bierklinik** (Steindlgasse 4, tel. 01/535 6897, inexpensive).

Guidebooks, particularly the *Michelin Green for Austria* and the *Eyewitness Guide Vienna*, provide ample information about the city's many sights. Among our favorites: the **Hofburg's Schatzkammer** (Imperial Treasury); **Kunsthistorisches Museum** (Museum of Fine Arts); the **Kaisergruft** (tomb of the Hapsburgs); the **Prater** (an amusement park); the

**Zentralfriedhof** (main cemetery) with its graves of Beethoven, Schubert, Brahms and the Strauss family; the **Belvedere Palaces**, the grounds at **Schönbrunn**, **Hundertwasser Haus**, a fancifully designed apartment house; the Saturday morning **Flohm-arkt** (flea market), any performance at the **Volksooper**, and **Kunst-HausWien**, a new museum designed by Hundertwasser.

**Directions:** Go north from Rust on the Yellow Road through Oggau. At Red Road 50 turn left toward Eisenstadt. From there take the Yellow Road north through Stotzing, Loretto and to Unterwaltersdorf; then the Red Road 210 west through Ebreichsdorf to Baden. From there, one can continue north to Gumpoldskirchen and on to Vienna, or head west to Mayerling and the Vienna Woods.

DAY FOURTEEN Fly Home from Vienna Airport

## READERS' FORUM

### Not Everyone Loves "The Old Philosopher"

Sir:

Cancel my subscription to *Gemütlichkeit* immediately and please refund any unearned subscription fee.

Your extended condescending comments in your August 30, 1995 edition (*The Old Philosopher*) concerning your "unique" newsletter was difficult enough to stomach, but your response to Dennis A. Bell's letter concerning the lack of information about air-conditioned hotels in Europe was beyond the pale.

"Hot muggy days are not nearly as common in Europe as in the U.S." Oh, really? What Europe do you travel in? As one who lived in Germany for 11 years I can assure you that German weather routinely approximates the same weather conditions as the Midwest in the U.S.

But, that is not the point of this letter. The point is that some of your

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## READERS' FORUM

Continued from page 5

subscribers have medical problems which require the use of air-conditioned rooms if at all possible. The same holds true for nonsmoking rooms. I speak from personal experience.

If you are going to fill your newsletter with PR flack for those "unique hotels," you might at least exert yourself and ask about the availability of air-conditioned and nonsmoking rooms and provide that information in your newsletter. Your front page letter from Mr. Halbach in the current issue of *Gemütlichkeit* regarding Mr. Bell and his air-conditioning was the final straw.

Get a life, indeed! We'd love to and that is why we handicapped are still trying to travel.

Please enlighten Mr. Halbach and the rest of your subscribers about we "Ugly Americans" need for accurate information concerning air-conditioning and smoke-free rooms.

I hope your beer is better than your newsletter.

Robert Claytor, San Francisco CA

*(Ed. Note: In our comment on Mr. Bell's letter in the August issue we meant no slight to readers with physical handicaps. Mr. Bell's letter did not indicate that his preference for air-conditioning was related to a medical condition.*

*We do, in fact, inquire at each hotel about the availability of no-smoking rooms and, if the answer is yes, mention it in our report. However, European hoteliers have told us they find it almost impossible to keep smokers out of no-smoking rooms. In the future, we will also indicate the presence of in-room air-conditioning.*

*For the record, according to the National Weather Service, the average high and low temperatures during the month of July in Kansas City, Missouri, are 88.5 F and 68.5 F respectively. The average highs and lows in key German cities during July are: Berlin 76/58, Bonn 74/57, Freiburg 76/58, Hamburg 72/56, Munich 74/55.*

*Mr. Claytor's subscription has been refunded in full.)*

### Trip Report: Austria

A few random thoughts on some experiences my wife and I had on a June, 1995, trip to Austria:

- We shared a Kilometerbank Pass (3000 km for 3,450 AS, \$357) for travel on the trains. The mileage for each segment is subtracted by the conductor en route. It was an economical and convenient way to travel. The trains were comparable to the trains we used in Switzerland last year, although not as frequent on every line.

- The prices for rooms, meals, etc. were surprisingly reasonable, even with the weak dollar. In general, we spent no more than we would have in the U.S. Some examples: 0.5L beer for 35 AS, entrees for 150-250 AS, rooms 700-800 AS for double room with extensive breakfast buffet and very drinkable wines starting at 25 AS per liter.

- No one should miss Vienna.

- We like some of the smaller, less well-known places (Feldkirch, Klagenfurt) better than the more famous and much more expensive and crowded Innsbruck and Salzburg.

- In late June — with the exception of Vienna, where we had a reservation just in case — we found very satisfactory hotels without advance reservations in each place we stayed. Two of our favorites were **Hotel Angelika** in Neustift im Stubaital (700 AS Db1) and **Hotel Maria Theresia** in Mayrhofen (750 AS Db1). Frau Koch at the Maria Theresia generously volunteered to drive us to the train station the morning of our departure.

- We used our limited German even less in Austria than we did in Switzerland.

- The scenery is superb.

All in all, it was a thoroughly enjoyable trip and if forced to choose we would rather go back to Austria than Switzerland.

Jeff Keller, Salt Lake City, UT

### Seeking Headquarters

A friend and I are planning a trip to Germany in September, 1996. We will be arriving via train from Vienna, Austria and are looking for an inn

or B & B in an interesting locale for hiking, biking and "soaking up atmosphere." We prefer a small town with good train transportation as we plan to take some day trips and do not wish to drive. We have been told that the Harz Mountains or Bavaria are areas to consider but we are open to any and all suggestions. We plan to stay in any selected area(s) for 5 to 10 days. We will be going by train to Frankfurt or Munich for the flight home. Any recommendations?

Also, what would be some good airlines for flying into Vienna and out of either Frankfurt or Munich? Our entire stay will be about 17 or 18 days. Janet Keith, Washington, DC

*(Dear Ms. Keith: Given your headquarters requirements we recommend Garmisch-Partenkirchen in Bavaria, about an hour by train southwest of Munich; Freiburg im Breisgau, at the southern end of the Black Forest; and perhaps Würzburg, near Frankfurt. By B & B we assume you mean a small Pension or Zimmerfrei in a private home. For a list of such accommodations write Verkehrsamt, Dr. Richard-Strauss-Platz, Garmisch-Partenkirchen, D-82467, fax 8821/50657; Freiburg Information, Rotteckring 14, Freiburg im Breisgau, D-79098, fax 761/37003; or Verkehrsamt im Würzburg-Palais, am Congress Centrum, Würzburg, D-97070, fax 931/37652.*

*Several airlines can meet your flight itinerary requirements. Contact a knowledgeable travel agent or an airline consolidator such as DER Tours. Remember, as a Gemütlichkeit subscriber, both you and your friend qualify for reduced fares on Swissair. Begin shopping for air tickets early next spring.*

### Austrian Hotel


I read with interest your article on Oberstdorf and the Allgau region of Bayern in the November 1994 issue.

It is true that this area is very scenic and it's also unique in that the Kleinwalsertal section of Austria cannot be reached (except on foot) from it's mother country. Because of this unusual geographic phenomenon, we found it more interesting to cross the German-Austrian border and actually stay in the Kleinwalsertal itself for a few days.



Our hotel was the **Ifen Hotel** (Oberseistr. 6, D-87568, phone 08329/507 10, fax 08329/3475) in Hirschegg, Austria, which is just a few kilometers from Oberstdorf. We recommend it highly. There are 69 rooms and some suites and a good restaurant. It is also beautifully situated and rooms facing the mountains afford views equal to any we've seen in the Alps. It is a couple of years since we were there but the 1995 Michelin Red Guide lists room rates from 164 to 465 DM per room per night, including breakfast and dinner.

As you state in your article, this very beautiful area receives no through road traffic and hence is off the beaten track and peaceful.

Matthias Sheeleigh, Summit, NJ 

## E U R O P E T R A V E L B R I E F I N G

### LTU Special Winter Fares

LTU, the German airline, is now offering a \$598 roundtrip to Düsseldorf and Munich from Los Angeles, San Francisco, San Jose, Las Vegas and Phoenix. The flights are on Thursdays only and are nonstop from Los Angeles to Düsseldorf with connections to Frankfurt. Travel must be completed by March 14. Departures through December 14 include a free rental car for one week. For the December 21 departure add \$100. There is a 7-day advance purchase requirement and other restrictions.

Book through a travel agent or call LTU at 800-888-0200. Fax your reservation request to LTU at 800-898-9140.

### Winter Travel Packages

DER Tours has just released *Europe on Your Own*, a collection of European winter travel products including its "Christmas Markets From Munich" package priced from \$658 per person.

These one-week tours begin December 2 and 9 and include hotel accommodations with breakfast; motorcoach excursions to Christmas markets in Nürnberg, Salzburg and Rothenburg; excursions to Linderhof

Castle and Oberammergau; English-speaking guides; admission to all sights; city tours; welcome reception; farewell dinner; flight bag and an inflatable neck pillow.

There are also numerous city packages ranging from two nights in London, including a tour of the city for \$139 per person, to a Rome-Florence-Venice nine-night arrangement, for from \$1128 to \$2118, that includes air tickets from the U.S. to Rome with return from Venice, hotel with breakfast, a tour of each city, first-class rail tickets between cities and a free guidebook.

The Munich Holiday package, from \$798 to \$2568, depending on hotel, U.S. point of origin and time of travel, is airfare plus six nights hotel, city tour, free guide book and Munich Welcome card for free public transport and local discounts. Similar deals are available for Berlin and Frankfurt. Two-night arrangements begin at \$155.

For a copy of the brochure, fax DER at 800-860-9944.

### Online Travel Help

The **Austrian National Tourist Office** has established a page on the **Internet's World Wide Web** (<http://www.anto.com/>) The site is for the U.S. market only and while it includes a complete listing of events there is limited information about hotels.

**Switzerland Tourism** (former Swiss National Tourist Office) reports their WWW site will be up and running in "about two months."

Other WWW sources for online travel info are:

**The Rough Guides** (<http://www.hotwired.com/world>)

**Conde Nast Traveler** (<http://www.cntravler.com/>)

**Lonely Planet Online** (<http://www.lonelyplanet.com/>)

**Travelweb** (<http://www.travelweb.com/>)


**Internet Hostel Guide** (<http://www.hostels.com/hostels/>)

### New Swiss Currency

Switzerland has a new 50-franc note, the first to bear the portrait of a woman — artist Sophie Täber-Arp, who died in 1943. The new note is also the first in a series designed to

make counterfeiting more difficult. Those of you who have a suitcase full of them at home are advised that the 500-franc note will soon be discontinued.

### Swissair Awards

Swissair has been named "Most Punctual Airline" in a readers' poll of Britain's *Business Traveller* magazine. In addition, Swissair was named "Best International Carrier" in a survey of travel agents; "Best Airline Worldwide" in a poll conducted among travel trade managers by Germany's *Holiday Magazine*; and was voted the leading European carrier in the *Zagat Airline Survey*. 

## TRAVELER'S DIGEST

*Continued from page 1*

aristocrats...Architecturally the side streets often have a pleasing turn-of-the-century look, with many houses boasting restored Jugendstil facades."

"Named after the Schwabing magazine, Jugend (Youth), Jugendstil was Central Europe's version of Art Nouveau..."

"Visitors expecting to find a contemporary Bohemia in Schwabing are invariably disappointed, but there is still a feeling of being 'outside' Munich, beyond the rules and pleasures of Germany's, if not Europe's, gliztiest city."

"It could be argued that the 20th century began in Schwabing. In the years just preceding World War I, Kandinsky painted Western art's first abstract painting there, Hitler was hanging out in coffee houses on Schellingstrasse, and Lenin, midway through his long exile, was writing his most influential political pamphlets in an apartment off Leopoldstrasse."

The author also reveals some of the district's sights and hangouts:

- **Roxy**, a cafe-bar at 48 Leopoldstrasse (tel. 89 349 393) is owned by glamorous German TV star Iris Berber and "attracts the kind of crowd generally referred to in Germany as Schicki-Micki (a contraction of Mickey Mouse chic)." A meal for two here is about \$70 including wine.

*Continued on page 8...*

## DEAR SUBSCRIBER

Continued from page 2

waiter on the boat told us that over the holiday weekend there had been as many as 2,000 people on the boat.

The scenery was pastoral. Dinner on the return trip was excellent. Service was very personal and with so few passengers, we were the only diners. The entire trip was most excellent.

Bonn has a lovely market square in front of the Rathaus but, unlike Cologne, does not make extensive use of the river-front. Beethoven's house was closed for renovations. ☒

## TRAVELER'S DIGEST

Continued from page 7

- **Drugstore**, another chic cafe (12 Feilitzschstrasse, tel. 89 347 531, meal for two with wine about \$55).
- **Cafe Reitschule**, chic and elegant (34 Königinstrasse in English Garden, tel. 89 333 402, meal for two with wine, \$70).
- **Cafe Puck** (33 Türkenstrasse, tel. 89 280 2280, three-course meal for two about \$57) features Italian food and is the author's favorite.
- **Anglia Bookshop** (3 Schellingstrasse), "one of Germany's best English-language bookstores."
- Some of Munich's finest examples of Jugendstil can be found just west of Roxy on **Ainmillerstrasse** where artists Paul Klee and Vassily Kandinsky lived and worked.
- **Hohenzollernstrasse**, one block north, is famous for its small, unusual fashion boutiques.
- The grand main building of the **University of Munich** is "one Munich's architectural treasures."

• **Bavarian State Library**, "one of Europe's largest libraries and home to perhaps the most imposing staircase in Munich."

### Frankfurt Hotels & Restaurants

Following are excerpts from Nathaniel C. Nash's report on Frankfurt in the October 1, 1995 edition of the *New York Times*.

#### Hotels

"A city service, (69) 212-30808, can assist in finding a room - important during the busy fair days."

"In the quieter, fashionable West End of the city is the **Mozart Hotel**, 17 Parkstrasse; (69) 55-0831, fax (69) 569-4559. Its 35 spacious rooms, with heavy, old-German decor, bright maroon carpeting and plenty of pictures of the boy genius, cost \$106 for a single and \$153 for a double, with breakfast. (Prices given are for private bath rooms.)"

"Also in the West End, at 121 Kettenhofweg, near Frankfurt University, is the 21 room **Hotel Silvana**; (69) 97 4020, fax (69) 9740 2222. Its clean, bright rooms have a modern, spare look. Singles cost \$91 and doubles \$120, with breakfast."

"Budget: The atmosphere is postwar German - dark furniture in bright rooms - at the 26 room **Hotel Diana**, also near the University, at 83 Westendstrasse; (69) 747-007, fax (69) 747-079. With breakfast, a single costs \$66 a night, a double \$115."

"For a traditional Gasthaus experience in an old but well kept building with a family feel, try the **Hotel Pension Sattler**, 46 Beethovenstrasse; (69) 746-091, fax (69) 7480466. Rates

with breakfast are \$72 a night for a single, \$108 for double. The decor in the 37 modest rooms (some with shared bath) is old fashioned, plush but dark."

"Luxury: **The Frankfurter Hof**, a 19th century grand hotel in the center of town at 33 Bethmannstrasse, (69) 215-02, fax (69) 215-847, is one of the city's most elegant and dignified. Its 150 spacious rooms have high ceilings and regal looking furnishings: its French restaurant is renowned. Singles range from \$228-\$361, doubles from \$336-\$409."

"There are 588 glitzy-modern rooms across from the convention center at the **Frankfurt Marriott Hotel**, 2 Hamburger Allee; (69) 795-52222, fax (69) 795-52432. Singles cost \$266, doubles \$309, with breakfast."

#### Restaurants

"In Sachsenhausen, **Die Gans**, 76 Schweizer Strasse, features candlelight dining, and heaters keep a canopied terrace warm even on the coldest nights. Fish and poultry are the specialties. A three-course meal — tagliatelle with German mushrooms called *Pfifferlingen*, followed by a saltimbocca of anglerfish (*Seeteufel*) with leeks and potatoes and exotic-fruit salad with passion fruit sorbet — will cost \$139 for two with wine, but not tax and tip. For reservations, which are recommended, call (69) 61-5075."

"A lesser known but equally fine dining spot with lovely terrace for sunny lunches is **Avocado Le Bistro** at 27 Hochstrasse, near Hauptwache; (69) 29-2867. The menu, mainly French and Italian, includes marinated lachs (salmon) on cucumber salad and

duck breast in cassis-and-berry sauce. A three-course meal with wine is about \$153 for two."

"Frankfurt's native drink washes down heavy meat and mushroom dishes at it's Apfelwein (apple wine, a ciderlike alcoholic drink) restaurants, where everyone eats elbow to elbow outside at long wooden tables; in bad weather the indoor seating is usually limited."

"One of the best of the apple wine restaurants is the **Speisekammer**, at 41 Alt Hedderheim, about 10 minutes by cab (\$14.50) from the center of town. The wine is served in blue and grey ceramic jugs called Bembel. The noise and the food are plentiful. For hearty eaters, a rump steak with roasted onions, pan-roasted potatoes, salad, bread pudding with fruit and vanilla sauce and apple wine would cost \$77 for two. For reservations — a must, especially on weekends — call (69) 58-7711."

"Equally known is the typically German-rustic **Solzer**, 260 Bergerstrasse, (69) 45-2171, also a short cab ride from the center. For about \$44 two can have hearty portions of grilled pork ribs with sauerkraut and potato salad, apple wine and a thick blueberry compote with vanilla sauce on top."

"The cafes and bars on the Fressgasse are a good choice for budget meals. **Plöger's Delicatessen**, (69) 20-941, offers a variety of cold and warm salads and other prepared dishes. One can either eat standing or sit down and be served along the Fressgasse. The menu changes daily, and two can eat, with a glass of beer or wine, for \$44." ☒