

# GRAZ



# THE GREEN CITY

## INTRODUCTION

Chief town of Styria, is the second biggest city in Austria for population and it is called “the green city” for its position among the hills. On the 1<sup>st</sup> December 1999 this exceptional city center, which to this day has but a few corners of modern architecture, became a UNESCO world cultural heritage site. 2003 was one of the most significant years in its history. The city was named "Cultural Capital of Europe" by the EU Ministries of Culture.

## LOCATION

Graz is located in the south-est of Austria and it is crossed by the river Mur. The historical part of the town is located on the left side of the river and is overlooked by the Schlossberg, the hill that tower over the north part of the city.



## HISTORY

The first significant date in Graz’s history is the year 1128, marking the first documented reference to the city. In 1379, Graz had grown enough to be designated capital of "Inner Austria". As capital, Graz was residence to the Hapsburg dynasty until 1619. The city lies at the crossroads of many European cultures; this is the reason why there are Romanic, Slavic, Magyar and Alpine-Germanic influences and have all mingled and formed a uniquely distinctive character.

## SIGHTS

Hausplatz: is the centre of the city and it is a square surrounded by ancient houses. The square is overlooked by the hill Schlossberg that has on its top the famous Uhrturm, a big clock tower that is

the city symbol since 1569. This clock is very particular for one reason: it shows the time but with the hand reversed.



The Schlossberg is an attraction very popular in Graz; if you want to go to the top, on a side of the hill there is a flight of steps that is surrounded by colorful gardens.

Herrengasse: the main street flanked by ancient and modern buildings and a lot of shops; if you want to go shopping this is the best street in town.

The most important and of course the biggest and beautiful church in town, is the Stadtpfarrkirche that stand on the left side of Herrengasse.

The Landesmuseum Joanneum is the most important museum of the city: it contains 500 rooms and inside you can find collections of natural science. This museum has detached centres around the city and in each one there is an exposition of something.



On the river Mur you have to visit an artificial steel and glass island: the Murinsel, that has a shape of an half-opened shell. It is just a bar where you can relax while you are drinking something.

In Graz you can't go around and don't see a biomorphic strange construction that is in contrast with the surrounding houses and their red-tiled roofs: it is the Kunsthaus, an acrylic glass building that is a museum and inside there ia also a restaurant.



## EVENTS

In Graz there are a lot of events during the year; apart from international fairs, there are very important festivals for the all Austria. There is the classical music festival, Steirische Herbst (the stiryan autumn) and of course the Jazzsommer (summer jazz) with concerts of jazz music.

## FOOD & ACCOMMODATION

In Graz you can find every type of accommodation: from the classical Bed&Breakfasts to the luxurious hotels. In this wonderful city you will find pastry and candy shops on just about every street corner.

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