



## Top 5 sights in... *Vienna*

The Austrian capital is filled to the brim with culture served with a side of fun, finds **Alice Barnes-Brown**

### 1 THE HOFBURG

The Hofburg is as huge and ostentatious as you'd expect the seat of the Habsburg monarchy to be. Thankfully, it's split up into manageable sections, so visitors can tackle one at a time. The Spanish Riding School is where elegant Lipizzan horses practise dressage; the Sisi Museum offers a fascinating look at the beautiful yet tragic Empress Elisabeth; and the Imperial Apartments, Treasury and Silver Collection showcase the dynasty's stunning personal and public possessions.

### 4

#### BELVEDERE

This complex on the eastern side of Vienna comprises not one, but two palaces. The Upper and Lower Belvedere are separated by a baroque garden, and each contains an impressive art collection. The Lower Belvedere focuses on medieval and Renaissance art, while the Upper Belvedere (*pictured*) is known for its extensive collection of Gustav Klimt paintings.



### 2

#### VIENNA STATE OPERA

Built in 1869, the Staatsoper was one of the first buildings on Vienna's Ringstrasse boulevard, and clients can admire its amazing architecture on a guided tour. An evening performance is also not to be missed – standing tickets can be bought for as little as €15.



PICTURES: WienTourismus/Paul Bauer, Christian Stempfer

### 3

#### PRATER

Roll up, roll up! The Prater amusement park, between the Donaukanal and the Danube, is free to enter – clients pay for rides individually – and open until late. Suggest a trip on the Riesenrad, a wooden Ferris wheel built in 1897. Before stepping into the carriages, guests pass a museum that illustrates the Prater's history with dioramas, while the views from the top of the wheel stretch across the city.

### 5

#### CAFÉ CENTRAL

Vienna's cafe culture blossomed in the late-19th century and the most popular place in the city to watch the world go by is Café Central, which opened in 1876 and counted Freud and Trotsky among its regulars. There's a minimum 30-minute wait for a table, but no finer place to tuck into a flaky apple strudel or melt-in-the-mouth slice of chocolate Sachertorte.