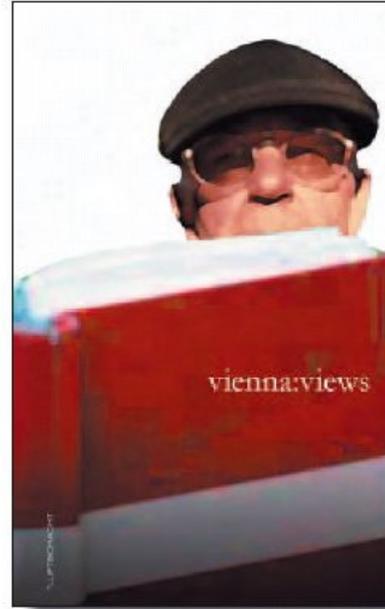


Multicultural Vienna?

The following paragraphs are taken from two short stories in the book *vienna:views*.

Both paragraphs have to do with an idea of “multicultural Vienna”. Compare the authors’ opinions on this subject.

- What positive aspects do they mention?
- Which problems do they address?



Austria’s capital does have a cosmopolitan flair, created by the different cultures and myriad nationalities infusing the city’s life, which lends it an international touch that is without equal. I still find myself captivated by the plurality of facets Vienna has to offer: the traditional coffee houses, the bazaar-like Naschmarkt, the numerous theatres, the incredibly wide assortment of food, the quietness of the parks or the city’s buzzing nightlife. Vienna is the perfect blend of a busy metropolis and that somewhat relaxed and easy-going lifestyle that is so typical for Italian towns.

(taken from “A Traveller’s Guide to Austria”)

[A] street cleaner once got talking to me, asked me where I come from. I said “Britain” and he was proud to talk about Vienna the great metropolis, meeting-place for all the peoples of the empire. Then, shaking his head sadly, he sighed “now of course it is all the Africans and Muslims, they are ruining this city.” Confusion again: I am just nodding in agreement about the city of many peoples when I have to start shaking my head, or moving away.

(taken from “A Breath of Fresh Air”)

A Traveller's Guide to Austria

Read about the experiences of a German woman in Vienna:

I soon felt at home here, a feeling that hasn't changed although I have experienced some kind of awkwardness. Before moving here I wasn't aware of the fact that Austrians hold a certain, let's put it nicely, "reservation" towards their German neighbours, often fuelled by the media with headlines such as *"Deutsche überschwemmen Unis"* and the like.

...

Putting these differences aside, it is easy to become assimilated into the Viennese culture and cherish the beauty of this city. I'm still filled with astonishment at how I can walk through the city centre, turn around three corners and suddenly find myself in front of yet another beautiful church, square or astounding building. ... There are certain clues which allow you to estimate how far you have assimilated into the Viennese community:

- you know what you get when ordering *"eine Topfengolatsche mit Schlagobers"* and *"einen Verlängerten"*
- you know what the *"D-Wagen"* and the *"2-er Linie"* are
- you understand catchphrases taken from *"Muttertag"*
- you can get on a ski lift without causing the person in charge to stop the facility altogether
- you order *"Weißer Spritzer"* instead of *"Weißweinschorle"*
- you have understood the true meaning of "private conversation" and can actually converse on a sound level that doesn't force the whole restaurant to listen to what you have to say (still working on that one)
- people stop giving you copies of *"Sprechen Sie Wienerisch"* for your birthday
- you use those "flexible" Austrian measurements such as *"Wengerl"*, *"Schluckertl"*, *"Euzerl"* and sometimes even *"1 Oasch voll"*
- you give German tourists a dirty look and pretend not to understand them when they approach you for help
- you are sympathetic towards demonstrations against transit traffic which paralyse half of Europe, after all the traffic overwhelms "your" country
- you start to believe that Beethoven was Austrian while Hitler was German

And, last but not least:

- the remark "now, you are from Germany, aren't you..." is not thrown at you within the first three seconds of a conversation but it takes at least a few sentences to unveil your origins

(taken from *A Traveller's Guide to Austria* in the book *vienna:views*)

Questions:

- What Austrian stereotypes about "the Germans" does the author mention?
- What would you tell people who come to Vienna for a living? Do you have any practical advice for them?
- Which characteristics would you include in a "travelling guide to the Viennese people"?