

USEFUL INFORMATION

Where are we staying?

From Thursday 26th until Tuesday 31st July we shall be at:

A&O Wien Hauptbahnhof,

Sonnwendgasse 11,

AT-1100 WIEN

Telephone (from the UK): 00 43 149 30480 - 3900

In an emergency, parents may also ring Andrea Hemmett's mobile number:

07980 618019. Our tour/coach operator is Equity Tours.

A&O Hotel Wien Hauptbahnhof is a student friendly hotel which specialises in group bookings. It is located near to the new Central Station, and close to the Belvedere Palace. It is within 35 minutes walk of the Vienna Opera House, and the main sight-seeing areas. There is a large dining room, where buffet meals will be served and the orchestra can rehearse, a bar area, communal games area and TV room. **I am still trying to negotiate a lockable room for instruments!**

Accommodation will be in rooms of four and six, each with ensuite shower and toilet. Towels are provided. Please be aware that **there will be other guests staying at the hotel, so late night noise will not be appreciated.**

Our accommodation is half board. Usually this will mean breakfast and dinner. Look at the detailed itinerary for more information on when you have to provide your own meals.

Phoning home

Dial 0044 then the area code omitting the first 0

eg for Nottingham dial 0044 115 xxxx

Set your mobile phone address book so that numbers are in the format +44 115 etc. This applies to UK mobile numbers too. You may want to check that you have access to enough credit before we leave the UK.

The hotel has free wi-fi and there are **internet cafés** all over Vienna.

Stamps can usually be bought when you purchase postcards. Post boxes are yellow and pretty visible. Postcards sent home from Austria should only take a few days to arrive.

Emergency telephone numbers

General emergencies	112	Ambulance	144
Police	133	Fire brigade	122

CHECK LIST OF THINGS TO TAKE

Passport NB **DO NOT PACK IT IN YOUR LUGGAGE** (it has been known!). Keep it accessible but in a safe place and **know where it is at all times!**

European Health Insurance Card

Money/travellers cheques/credit cards (see notes on currency). **YOUR PERSONAL BELONGINGS (INCLUDING MONEY PASSPORT CAMERA & MOBILE PHONE) ARE ENTIRELY YOUR RESPONSIBILITY.**

Student Card or other age ID card (if you have one) for discount entry fees to museums

Instruments, music & folder, 1 music stand per desk (clearly named), spare strings/reeds etc. Cellists need floor protectors and a set of elastic luggage straps to secure instruments in the van. String players are advised to have humidifiers in their instrument cases. **Clothes pegs** for outside concert (6 per stand is about right)

Concert dress:

Girls: **all black:** long black dress or skirt or trousers and black tops- strappy tops are OK as long as they look formal. However, both the church and castle we are playing in are insisting on shoulders being covered, so come prepared with a black scarf or suitable top. **Absolutely no cropped tops or split skirts.** Please make sure that skirts are long or at least mid-calf length - they should cover your knees when you sit down.

Boys: black trousers, black shoes and **black socks**
2 black **long sleeved** shirts, 1 black short-sleeved shirt for outdoor concert

Washing things -& personal medication. Towels are provided by the hotel. **Bring your own swimming towel if you think you will want to swim (and a plastic bag to carry it home in!).**

Adaptor for electrical items such as razors and hair driers, and mobile phone charger. The voltage in Austria is 220V AC with two-pin round-pronged plugs.

Sun glasses, sun hat, and sun cream with factor at least 20. Please do not go outside without using some protection. **Swimming gear** for the pool at Schönbrunn, including a towel.

Comfortable shoes to wear while sight-seeing plus **something to wear if it rains** (Vienna can have heavy thunderstorms in the summer).

A sensible bag to carry around with you - one which is as "thief-proof" as possible. You can buy small backpacks which have a zipped pocket at the back (i.e. not facing outwards) which are probably the safest kind to have in order to guard against pickpockets.

Drinks and snacks for the coach journey.

Plastic bottles to use for carrying cold drinks when we are out and about.

Other items: Camera, headphones, alarm clock, DVDs for the coach journeys, spare batteries, **mobile phone charger**, hair drier, books, guide books, German phrase book or pocket dictionary, a plug-in insect repeller for nights, roll-on or spray-on insect repellent for evenings. You should also bring a small pillow and rug or warm sweatshirt/fleece for nights on the coach, when it can get quite chilly. A small packet of tissues and pocket-sized anti-bacterial handwash to carry with you on the coach and when sight-seeing.

LUGGAGE

Please limit your luggage to:

- One suitcase (pack your music and stand in this)
- Your instrument (write your name and address on a card inside)
- One small piece of hand luggage with things for the journey **and your passport.**

KEEPING HEALTHY AND SAFE

We will carry a first aid box with plasters and bandages, normal painkillers and treatments such as Imodium which can be administered only if your parents have given permission on the medical consent form.

Any other medication you must take yourself (e.g. strong painkillers, asthma inhalers, antihistamines for bites and stings, migraine tablets etc). Please make sure that your parents have given full details on the consent form of medication which you need to take regularly or in an emergency along with the doses required.

If you or any of your friends feel at all unwell during the trip, **for whatever reason**, even during the night, **PLEASE TELL US**. There will be places in the hotel where you can rest undisturbed if you are ill, but we need to know about it. If someone has been sick, they could be in danger if they are allowed to go to sleep without being checked.

Protection against the sun and heat

Vienna can be very hot in July. Temperatures average around 25-30°C and the sun is very strong, particularly in the middle part of the day. Please take sensible precautions to avoid sunburn / heatstroke / dehydration:

Always use a sunscreen which protects against UVA and UVB and apply it regularly. Remember to cover areas like the back of your neck and legs!

When you are out in the middle of the day, cover up with loose clothing - T-shirts are better than strappy tops - and wear a sun hat or cap.

Take care when swimming - you can still get burnt when you are under the water.

Wear sunglasses to protect your eyes from the sun.

Take after-sun lotion and something like Soleve sunburn relief lotion (available from Boots) to soothe burning. If you do burn, a cold shower will ease the heat. Then come and tell us and we will assess the damage...we do have a magic cream which has served several tours well!

Try to drink 2 litres of water a day if it is hot. Dehydration can rapidly make you feel quite ill. Remember to carry a bottle of water or other drink with you whenever you are out and about. All cafes and bars sell chilled bottled water. The water in Vienna comes from underground springs and is very safe to drink so a cheap option is to refill plastic bottles each day in the hotel.

Remember that alcohol dehydrates you very quickly, so those over-18s who want to drink, please be very aware of the effects. If you are thirsty, a coke is better than a beer.

Take insect repellent and wear it, especially in the evening. **Remember to take it with you on concert evenings.** It should be put on over anything like moisturiser or sunscreen. You could also take one of the plug-in devices which give off vapour during the night to repel mosquitoes. If you are particularly sensitive to bites, you can get very effective patches, which have to be renewed every other day, from companies like www.themosquitocompany.co.uk They cost £7.45 for a pack of 20 which is more than enough!

When you are sight-seeing or out and about in Vienna, never go off in groups of less than four and stay within the areas that staff tell you are safe.

If anyone collapses when you are sight-seeing and out-of-touch with staff, call the **emergency number which is 112 or 144 for an ambulance**. Andrea's mobile number is +44 7980 618019 and her phone will always be on. You will all be given a small card with the mobile numbers of all members of staff. **Please store these numbers in your mobile phone before the start of the tour and carry the card with you at all times.**

MONEY MATTERS

Currency

The currency in Austria is the euro (€). At the time of writing, one euro is worth around 88 pence.

Cards

Credit cards are widely accepted for larger purchases. **You must know your PIN.**

Cash cards from the big banks will work in most cash points. You should have no difficulty in getting cash from machines, even in small towns. We will be out and about most days, so there is no need to bring large amounts of cash with you.

n.b. Banks in the UK now charge a commission per transaction so you may want to avoid making lots of small withdrawals. Check this with your bank before you leave.

You could also take some euro travellers cheques as a back up — make sure that you have signed them and made a note of the numbers before we set off. No commission is charged when you change these. When you cash them you will need to produce your passport. Banks are usually open from 8am - 12.30 and 1.30 - 3pm from Monday to Friday

How much to take

The hotel provides us only with breakfast and one main meal, either lunch or dinner. You will therefore have to buy your own lunches or evening meals for the five days we are in Austria plus two-three meals during each of the two coach journeys.

We recommend you allow at least **£15 per day (€17/day)** to allow for a light meal and other drinks, ice creams, museum entries etc. It really depends on how hungry you think you'll be! Even in the centre of Vienna (so long as you avoid the obvious tourist traps) you should be able to sit down in a café and get a main course and a drink for around €12. The cheapest way to eat (and possibly the most pleasant) is to buy a picnic from a supermarket and take it to one of the city parks. Supermarket chains like Billa and Zielpunkt have deli counters which sell cheese and meat, and will usually make up rolls for you if you ask. Or you can buy bread rolls (semmel) separately and make up your own. Note that if you buy fruit in a supermarket, you usually have to weigh the fruit yourself rather than have it weighed at the checkout.

Some sample prices (these vary, depending on where you are):

coffee €2-3; coke €1-2; bottle of water €1 from a vending machine or €2.50 in some cafes; large pizza slice or sandwich to take away €2 - €4. If you want to sit down to eat in a restaurant or cafe it will cost more than if you take away; for example, a bowl of chips €2.50; wiener schnitzel & potato salad €7, bottle of coke €2.

In Vienna, avoid eating in bars or cafés in prime tourist areas. There is a reasonably cheap sandwich/takeaway chain called Ankers which have outlets in most parts of Vienna. Rotenturme Strasse, off Stephansplatz in the centre of mediaeval Vienna, has several food outlets, including a branch of Ankers and (opposite) a takeaway pizza bar where whole pizzas cost from around €5.50. There are stalls called Wiener Würstel around the centre (for example on the Graben, off Stephansplatz) where hot dogs cost €3 - €5. There is a Billa supermarket on Singferstrasse (near Stephansdom in the centre), and Mariahilferstrasse, 20 minutes walk from the hotel, has branches of Billa, Zielpunkt and Merkur.

You will also need some cash for the Zoo or Schonbrunn Swimming Pool on Saturday, and also for rides or stalls at Prater Park on Sunday. You may also want to bring some extra money for entry to museums / sightseeing in your free time. There are usually discounted prices if you are 18 or under or a student, but **you will need to carry some kind of ID card** to make use of this. Prices for the most popular tourist sights are detailed later in this book. And don't forget money for souvenirs or presents to take home.

Ensure you have some sterling with you for any snacks this side of the channel. Sterling can also be used on the ferries.