

# INSTANT WEEKEND...

## WHY GO NOW?

September is a month of exhibitions and festivals in Linz and this year there's more going on than ever, as the city gears up to become European Capital of Culture 2009.

## CHECKING IN

Behind a blue pastel façade right on the main square lies the delightful **Wolfinger Hotel** (Hauptplatz 19, 00 43 732 773 2910; www.hotelwolfinger.at, doubles from €126), a converted 17th-century monastery with oodles of character and an air of calm. More in keeping with the avant-garde spirit of 'Linz09', is the ultra-modern (and very comfortable) **Spitz Hotel** (Fiedlerstrasse 6, 00 43 732 733733; www.spitzhotel.at, doubles from €135). The decor of each its seven floors is given over to a different one of the city's arts institutions, from the Brucknerhaus concert hall (the composer lived and worked in Linz) to the digital arts centre, Ars Electronica.

More unusual still is the new **Linz09 Pixel Hotel** (00 43 650 743 7953; www.pixelhotel.at, doubles from €124), so called because its rooms are dotted across the city (with breakfast in local cafes). Young architects have taken over unused spaces – from a tram to a car park roof – and are turning them into rooms inspired by their previous use. A 1960s workshop/garage, for example, now houses a red double bed, a caravan (sleeps two kids), and a lighting wall. For budget accommodation, **The Goldener Anker** (Hofgasse 5, 00 43 732 771088, doubles from €30) is the oldest guesthouse in Linz and one of Bruckner's favourite haunts.

## HIT THE STREETS

The **Lentos Kunstmuseum** (Ernst-Koref-Promenade 1, 00 43 732 7070 3600; www.lentos.at), a reflective glass arch next to the Danube, colourfully lit at night, has a permanent exhibition interestingly curated by contemporary artists and a fascinating Kokoschka show (until 5 October).

The flagship **Ars Electronica Centre** (Graben 15, 00 43 732 7272; www.aec.at) is an Aladdin's cave of interactive virtual displays for adults and children: hang from the ceiling and 'fly' over Linz, don brainwave detectors and enter 'the cave' for a psychedelic 3D tour. The centre closes on 13 October, to reopen on 2 January in its new building on the Danube. Ars Electronica is known globally for its annual competition. The best of this year's 3,000 entries – from computer animation to interactive installations



– go on show in Cyberart 08 at the **OK Centre** (OK Platz 1, 00 43 732 784178; www.ok-centrum.at) from Thursday to 12 October.

Linz is not so proud of its connection with Hitler – who grew up here and loved the city. He planned to build his art museum in Linz and this uncomfortable legacy is explored in the Linz09 exhibition, 'The Cultural Capital of the Fuhrer', opening 17 September in a newly built wing of the city's **Schlossmuseum** (Tummelplatz 10, 00 43 732 774419; www.schlossmuseum.at).

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# WEEKEND... LINZ



Take a coffee break in the Hauptplatz and enjoy one of the town's famous Linzer tortes. After that you can take in a bit of cutting-edge culture at the Ars Electronica, bottom left, before returning to the Linz09 Pixel hotel's caravan-themed suite, bottom.

Alamy, Corbis



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large traditional Viennese-style Kaffeehaus with newspapers and tuxedoed waiters, while the **Fritz Rath** (Pfarergasse 17) is small, wood-panelled and cosy. For arty coffee, go to the **Lentos Café** by the Kunstmuseum, which also serves eight different hot chocolates and all-day food.

## RETAIL THERAPY

A wide variety of Linzer torte packed for travel can be bought from **Jindrak** (Herrenstrasse 22-24, [www.linzer-torte.at](http://www.linzer-torte.at)). The **Almesberger Studio** (Hofgasse 7, [www.schmuckdesigner.at](http://www.schmuckdesigner.at)) sells Danube pebble jewellery handmade by the owner. Contemporary jewellery and clothes by local designers can be found in the **Lentos Museum Shop**.

## WORKED UP AN APPETITE

You can eat very well in Linz without breaking the bank. **Promenadenhof** (Promenade 39, 00 43 732 777661; [www.promenadenhof.at](http://www.promenadenhof.at)) serves excellent modern Austrian food in a bright relaxed interior and lovely garden. Clientele include the Prime Minister of Upper Austria and artistic director of Linz09. Small and traditional, **Leopold Struberl** (Adlbergasse 6, 00 43 732 776231; weekdays only) offers very inexpensive Austrian home cooking. Entirely different, **P'aa** (Alstaad 28, 00 43 70 776461; [www.paa.cx](http://www.paa.cx)) is a trendy place serving tasty vegetarian dishes.

## ESCAPE THE CITY

The most popular Linz excursion is up the **Postlingberg**, a hill on the edge of town topped by a pretty 18th-century pilgrimage church and 19th-century fortifications. It is reached by the steep-est adhesion railway in the world (reopening summer 2009) or by bus. There are beer gardens with panoramic views over the city and a children's fantasy train ride, the **Grottenbahn**.

## BIG NIGHT OUT

The 'Bermuda triangle' of narrow streets east of **Hauptplatz** is the centre of Linz nightlife, with numerous small international bars; try African iKaal, Italian Amore Vino or, currently the hippest, Aquarium. However, the city is more about culture than clubbing and the tourist office (Hauptplatz 1, 00 43 732 7070 1777; [www.linz.at/tourismus](http://www.linz.at/tourismus)) produces a daily events list. The free 'Cloud of Sound' festival starts on 6 September with a music and laser show by the Danube. 14 September marks the start of the annual Bruckner Festival of classical music and jazz.

Meanwhile, the annual **Ars Electronica Festival** (4-9 September; [www.aec.at/cultureconomy](http://www.aec.at/cultureconomy)), dedicated to the artistic, social and cultural impact of new technology, is this year themed 'A New Cultural Economy - the limits of intellectual property'. Linz09 brings yet more cultural activity; see the Linz09 diary at [www.linztermine.at](http://www.linztermine.at).

## GETTING THERE

Ryanair flies direct from Stansted to Linz ([www.ryanair.com](http://www.ryanair.com)) but you can also fly to Vienna with BA ([www.ba.com](http://www.ba.com)), Austrian ([www.aua.com](http://www.aua.com)) or Easyjet ([www.easyjet.com](http://www.easyjet.com)) and take the train (1hr 35mins) to Linz.

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