

# Old masters – young experts

The world's largest Bruegel collection and the prettiest kiss immortalized by Jugendstil (Art Nouveau) genius Gustav Klimt in his world-famous painting can only be found in Vienna. The cultural capital is also a place where you can discover a rich diversity of styles and eras. Baroque opulence and cool avant-garde coexist in an exciting creative environment. Artworks by talented young designers now hang in the ornate staterooms and are just as impressive as the old masterpieces found in Vienna's modern museums.

The Albertina, a former Habsburg palace, houses one of the most important art collections in the world. Important exhibitions are held here, and the museum's own collection is spectacular, featuring names such as Matisse, Renoir and Miro. The Kunsthistorisches Museum Vienna on the Ringstrasse is devoted to Old Masters. Treasures of the art scene from all the key eras are on display here, in particular examples from the Renaissance and Baroque periods by Rubens, Titian, Rembrandt and Raphael. The museum also holds the world's largest collection of works by Bruegel. The Kunstammer is one of the most important galleries in the world: it exhibits more than 2,100 objects that were collected over centuries by the Habsburgs.

The Baroque Belvedere Palace is home to the biggest collection of Klimts in the world, including The Kiss. The Secession Building, which was used as an exhibition space by Klimt's secessionist group of artists, awaits at Karlsplatz. While Klimt's world-famous "Beethoven Frieze" can be marveled at on the ground floor, contemporary art is presented in the main exhibition room. Also located on Karlsplatz in 2023 is the reopened Vienna Museum after several years of renovation work, which documents the city's history and is home to artworks by Klimt and Schiele as well as pieces from the Wiener Werkstätte among others.

Renowned 20th century artists are exhibited at the MuseumsQuartier. Built by Baroque architect Fischer von Erlach, the former court stables now make up a whole new district. The area is once again brimming with life thanks to the Leopold Museum — the Schiele collection is world-renowned — the museum of modern art Ludwig Foundation Vienna (MUMOK), Kunsthalle Wien, Architekturzentrum Wien, Designforum, and various shops, cafés and restaurants. The Belvedere 21 near the Upper Belvedere, built in 1958 for the World Expo, has been renovated and exhibits Austrian art of the 20th and 21st centuries. And Vienna continues to grow as a city of culture. Since 2020, the Albertina modern has been a branch of the world-famous Albertina and presents contemporary art on around 2,500 m<sup>2</sup> of exhibition space in the completely renovated Künstlerhaus. The most important collection of Austrian art post-1945, the Essl Collection, and the Jablonka Collection make up the bedrock of this new art hot spot. And another one opened in 2022: the Heidi Horten Collection, a private museum that builds on the spectacular art collection of patron Heide Goëss-Horten.

Numerous galleries, especially in the 1st and 4th districts, also offer contemporary art and impress with small but striking exhibitions on their premises. A historic bread factory in the 10th district is now home to more than ten institutions of contemporary art, including Galerie OstLicht, which together with WestLicht has dedicated itself entirely to photography. The Kunst Haus Wien – together with the nearby Hundertwasserhaus – was designed by the famous Viennese artist Friedensreich Hundertwasser in his

very unique style. It hosts international exhibitions of contemporary art with a focus on environmental issues.

Young artists also create a buzz about themselves every year in the autumn at the “viennacontemporary” art fair and “Parallel Vienna”, at the gallery festival “curated by”, and in November at “Vienna Art Week”. Art fairs are held in Vienna each spring – for example the SPARK Art Fair, which was launched in 2021. The Foto Wien (Photograph Vienna) festival has been growing since it was launched in 2019, takes place in spring every other year and involves a month-long photo exhibition across the whole city. Local creative types also exhibit their works during Vienna Design Week. Stars of the Austrian and international art scene can always be found at the Albertina modern, Belvedere 21, the mumok and the Museum of Applied Arts, or MAK for short.

A rest in one of the city’s traditional coffee houses is highly recommended following a visit to a museum. Take a seat — with any luck it will be a Thonet — and treat yourself. This too is very much a part of Viennese culture. [www.vienna.info](http://www.vienna.info)

# Facts and figures “Art”

- World's biggest collection of paintings by Gustav Klimt in the Upper Belvedere: 24 paintings (incl. “The Kiss”) (Source: [www.belvedere.at](http://www.belvedere.at))
- World's biggest collection of drawings by Gustav Klimt in the Vienna Museum: 400 drawings (not on permanent display) (Source: [www.wien.gv.at/presse/2012/05/15/weltweit-groesste-klimt-sammlung-im-wien-museum](http://www.wien.gv.at/presse/2012/05/15/weltweit-groesste-klimt-sammlung-im-wien-museum))
- World's biggest Egon Schiele collection in the Leopold Museum: 42 paintings, 187 original graphics (drawings and colored sheets) and manuscripts (letters, etc.) (Source: [www.leopoldmuseum.org/de/sammlung/egon-schiele](http://www.leopoldmuseum.org/de/sammlung/egon-schiele))
- Kunsthistorisches Museum Vienna:
  - 12 paintings by Pieter Bruegel the Elder – the world's biggest collection
  - world's biggest collection of Flemish paintings: 800 paintings
  - one of the biggest collections of Venetian paintings in the world (with works from all of Titian's creative periods): 400 paintings
  - biggest and most important wonder-room in the world: 2,200 objects (Source: Kunsthistorisches Museum Vienna)
- The Kunsthistorisches Museum Vienna was voted one of the 15 most beautiful museums in the world in 2017 by Condé Nast Traveler (Source: [www.cntraveler.com/galleries/2016-02-25/the-most-beautiful-museums-in-the-world](http://www.cntraveler.com/galleries/2016-02-25/the-most-beautiful-museums-in-the-world))
- Albertina: one of the biggest collections of graphics in the world – around 900,000 graphic reproductions and about 50,000 drawings and watercolors (incl. Albrecht Dürer's “Young Hare”, which is not on permanent display, however) (Source: [sammlungenonline.albertina.at](http://sammlungenonline.albertina.at))
- MuseumsQuartier: one of the ten biggest cultural spaces in the world (total area of 87,800 m<sup>2</sup>) (Source: [www.mqw.at](http://www.mqw.at))
- The collection of the mumok – museum of modern art ludwig foundation vienna encompasses around 10,000 works. This makes it the biggest museum of modern and contemporary art in Central Europe, which also owns the world's biggest museum collection on Viennese Actionism (Source: [www.mumok.at/de/uber-mumok](http://www.mumok.at/de/uber-mumok))
- Austria (largely thanks to Vienna) had a market share of 1% of the world market for art auctions in 2018 (the same as Germany, Italy or Switzerland) (Source: The Art Market 2019. An Art Basel & UBS Report, published by Dr. Clare McAndrew, Founder of Arts Economics)