



## Travel Stories by Amaru & Suzanne



### Vienna - strudel, schnitzel, beer and coffee.

by Amaru & Suzanne, May 18th 2006

Europe, we are finally here.....

The flight from Kuala Lumpur to Vienna took us around 11 hours, but it didn't feel that long. Since this flight also had an in-flight entertainment system (though not on demand as Singapore Airlines had) with lots of movies, we managed to kill time efficiently. About 40 min after take-off they served us food, which you might think a bit odd considering the time was around 1am, but hey....if they serve it, we'll eat it =)

Since this was an overnight flight (we left at 12.30am and landed in Vienna at 6am) we were hoping to catch at least a few hours sleep to tide us over until we reached London. No such luck.....the seats were a bit weird and didn't really recline that much. Just as well we had the movies (Saw about 4 of them....).

We finally landed and since we were in the front of the airplane we were lucky enough to get out quickly and headed to immigration. There were two different lanes, one for EU passports and one for the rest. Since Suz doesn't have an EU passport we had to wait in line behind about a million others while the EU queue had no one. After around 5min the guy behind the desk at the EU station waved at our queue to get some people over to him (guess he was bored) and first around 20 people moved over for a fraction of a second before they moved back in our line.....hmmmmm, weird. I on the other hand just went up to the counter and was waving for Suz to follow, she hesitated since she didn't want to lose her position.



Easy to tell....  
...that we are back in Europe!



Schönbrunn Palace  
Very similar to Versailles in Paris.

When I approached the desk and showed my passport (the EU one) the guy rolled his eyes and looked at me like an idiot thinking, "What are you doing in that line?!?", he pointed towards Suz and told me to get her as well, I told him, "Australian Passport, not EU", but he just passed us both through anyway, saving us a bit of time there...

As we were flying with the same airline to London that very evening, we had checked our luggage in straight to London from KL. So we just walked through customs and were finally in Europe.

We caught the 16min express train into the city center and started exploring Vienna.

Suz had been here several years ago, I on the other hand had never done Vienna before. Since we only had around 10 hours to kill before heading back to the airport we set some goals for the day. What we wanted to do was to try the apple strudel, eat the schnitzel, try out some of the coffee houses and of course sample some of the local beers. If while trying to achieve these goals we also got to see some of the city, so be it....

We first made it to Stephansplatz which is where the St. Stephen's Cathedral is located and basically the centre of the city. Here we tried to find an open coffee house but at 7am things were still closed. So we did some walking around the quiet streets of the city centre and enjoyed some fresh, clean and cooler air for a change (we had left KL at around 35C to Viennas 12C, a slight change).

Around 9am we were back at Stephansplatz where we found a coffee house, had some coffee and also a small piece of Apple Strudel (that's 2 off our list). After that we did some more exploring, we went inside the Cathedral and then caught the Ring Tram which circles the city centre. This took us around 15min and we got off the tram a few stops from where we started it.



**Apple Strudel and Coffee**  
It just doesn't get much better than this!!

We passed the university and decided to stop for another coffee (the lack of sleep was starting to catch up with us). The coffee house was just at the end of Vienna City Hall, we sat down, got the menu, had a look and were ready to order. Suz ordered a Soda water and pointed it out in the menu to our waiter, I just told him "a Double Espresso Please", to which he replied something to me in German....."sure" I said. He came out 5min later with a soda water to Suz and a glass of Apple Spritzer.....looks like a beer but has no alcohol (or coffee for that matter). Well, I didn't know how to complain in German so I just drank it and actually enjoyed it.



**Horse Carriage**  
We thought of getting a tour...didn't

We left the coffee house with no particular destination in mind, just wandering the streets of Vienna. After around 30-40min we thought we were still completing the circle and that we should be back in the city centre shortly. After another 10min we realized that we were kind of, sort of.....lost. The only map of the city that we had was a free map from the back of a shopping guide, so it wasn't very detailed and we couldn't find where we were on it. Eventually we managed to find a train station, we had a look and saw that we were waaaaay off track. After studying the train map we decided to keep heading away from the city and go explore the Schönbrunn Palace. After having to change trains once we made it to the palace....

By now the temperature was in the 20's and all this walking was getting us thirsty (and by now I really wanted a coffee.... a real one), so we stopped at the Palace Cafe. Here we both ordered a set snack, a cup of coffee/chocolate, a soda water, a piece of Apple Strudel and the recipe! The snack arrived and it was a huge piece of strudel with cream on the side, while eating the yummy strudel Suz decided to send a text message to her sister in Australia to tell her how good it was..... nothing like rubbing it in.

We then purchased tickets to the Palace and strolled around with a self guided headset tour....everybody looked like they were on the phone. Unfortunately we weren't allowed to take photos inside the Palace, although I managed to sneak one in of the grand ballroom....

The tour took us around 40min and we then walked to the back of the Palace, the garden section. By now our feet were pretty tired from lots and lots of walking the last few days, a long flight with no sleep and I had some blisters annoying me as well. But that didn't stop us, we realized that we would have regretted not continuing up to the top of the hill. So 20min later we were standing on the top of the The Gloriette (the building on the hill) looking down at the Palace and having quite a view over the rest of Vienna as well. Well worth it.... Such a walk deserved a beer before heading back and here I had my first beer of the day (another one off the list).



**Burgtheater**  
The National Theater



We caught a train back to the city centre, got off at the opera house station. We found a toilet claiming to be "The Opera Toilet Bar".....now that sounded so strange that I had to check it out. I payed 60 cents to go in and get a photo taken, it really looked weird, the urinals were a mouth.....go figure! There was also a piano in there, just in case you needed a bit of entertainment.

Hungry by this stage we started to look for a place to eat and to cross off the last agenda item from our list. After checking some places out we chose one that was right in the city centre, quite close to Stephansplatz. Here we both ordered the Wiener Schnitzel, with veal, parsley potatoes and salad. I also got a beer and Suz ordered a Apple Spritzer. Last item off our list and it was divine.

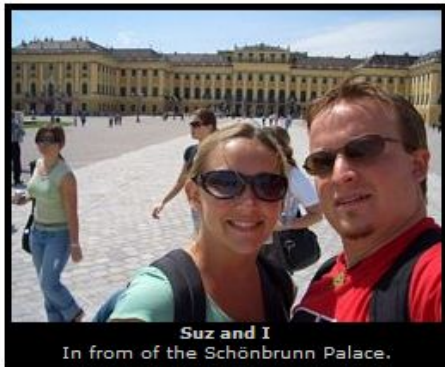
After the food we waltzed over to check out the Danube river and by now it was time to start heading back to the airport. Along the way to the train station an Asian looking girl with a big foldup map in her hand approached us for directions. We told her that we were tourists as well but managed to help her find her destination. I pointed it out to her on her map and also on ours, she replied "your map is a lot easier to see than mine", so I told her to keep it. She didn't want to take it at first but we explained that we were on our way back to the airport and it was hers if she wanted it. So she accepted it, thanked us and wished us well. That's our good deed for the day.

We made it back to the airport without a glitch and since we had some time to spare we stopped off for a drink. By now the lack of sleep was really starting to catch up with us, only a few more hours.....almost there, stay awake.

Eventually we boarded our flight after a slight delay and headed towards London.

Vienna is a beautiful city with lots of culture and history, the fact that it's so compact makes it easy to get around..... and last but not least, it's got lots of great schnitzel, strudel, beer and coffee.





**Suz and I**  
In front of the Schönbrunn Palace.



**Mmmmm....**  
Apple Strudel and Coffee....check and check!



**Inside Schönbrunn Palace**  
Schhh....we're not supposed to take photos.



**The Gloriette**  
It's a long walk up there.



**Let's start walking**  
We won't reach the peak otherwise ;)



**That's where we are going...**  
...all the way up there!



**View over Schönbrunn Palace**  
From The Gloriette.



**We made it...**  
...all the way to the top!!



**Let's celebrate with a beer**  
My first beer in Vienna....



**The fountain is on for once...**  
While we're there!



**The Opera Bar Toilet**  
...different to say the least!!



**Wiener Schnitzel at last**  
Another one of our goals reached!



**Yum....**  
We love our food



**Mozart?!?**  
Nah, just trying to sell tickets for a concert.



**Vienna Airport and a beer for the road**  
After 40 hours awake coffee doesn't work

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