

#DISCOVER GRAZ REGION



FROM CITY TO COUNTRYSIDE IN 10
MINUTES: DISCOVERING SUSTAINABLE
ATTRACTIONS, HOTELS AND EVENTS IN
THE GRAZ REGION

*Personal tips and advice
from travel blogger and
author Elena Paschinger*



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I would also like to thank all the passionate Graz residents I have met in the course of my many

journeys in and around Graz. You will find them immortalised both in this book and in numerous posts on my travel blog. I hope their commitment will bring as big a smile to you as it did to me.

Last but not least, my thanks go to you, dear reader! By going through this book, you have decided to delve even deeper into the stories of Graz and the Graz Region. May the following pages inspire you to explore the Graz Region in a delightful and sustainable kind of way.

Elena Paschinger

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How to best use this book for your experiences:

Almost all travel tips and recommendations for your next trip to the Graz Region are personally curated, based on my many trips to Graz and its surroundings. Use them and all links contained in this eBook for your very own travel planning in and around Graz. Videos and photos shown provide you with even more inspiration and background information.

See you in Graz!

Legend for sustainable accommodation providers:

 MEMBER OF BETT+BIKE
 BIKE FRIENDLY
 ACCESSIBLE BY PUBLIC TRANSPORT
 GRAZ CITY CENTRE
 BUSINESS LOCATION
 ON-SITE RESTAURANT
 FAMILY FRIENDLY
 WHEELCHAIR ACCESSIBLE
 LONG STAY
 QUIET LOCATION
 DOG FRIENDLY
 INDOOR POOL
 E-CHARGING STATION

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Introduction & Overview

The first chapter deals with an introduction to the Graz Region, explaining its claim "From city to countryside in 10 minutes" and how you, too, can be a sustainable traveller in Graz.

The following chapter has even more details and travel stories on: which hotels and accommodation providers are particularly sustainable, and why? What sets them apart from the rest? And why should you stay there on your next trip to the Graz Region?

The third chapter teaches you everything you need to know about the central topic of the so-called GenussHauptstadt Graz, Austria's Capital of Delight: how and where to best eat and shop sustainably. Find tips on farmers' markets, restaurants, gourmet producers, local shops, even wines from Graz and its immediate surroundings. As a foodie, you will love the culinary city tours (food tours) that Graz offers in a variety and frequency that is unrivalled across Austria.

In the fourth chapter of my book, I reveal where (and how) you can move around and explore Graz and the Graz Region in the most sustainable way possible. Being Austria's second-largest city, you will benefit from a well-developed public transport network, or the option to combine your exploration of the city and countryside through an e-bike.

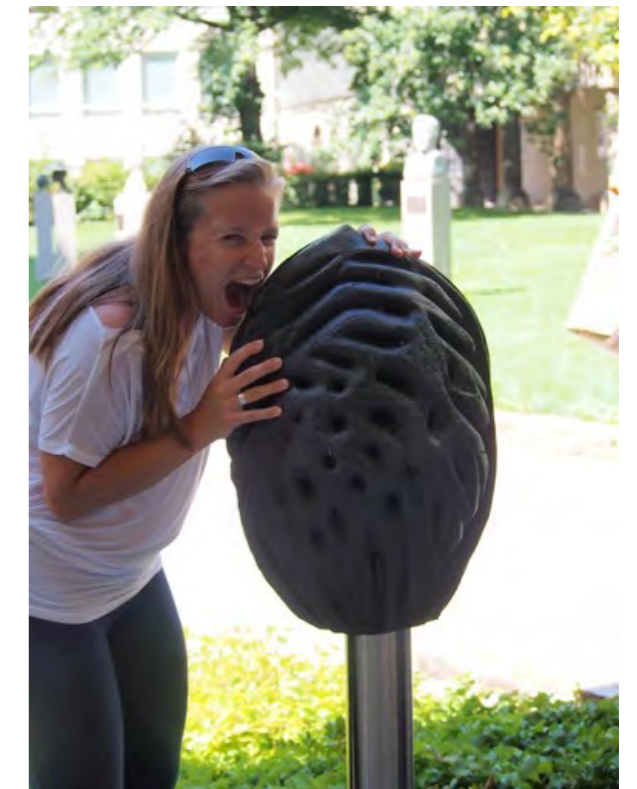
The practical thing about all the hiking and cycling routes that lead through the centre of Graz, including restaurants and attractions? On an active tour like this, you can combine fitness with indulgence

All the sustainable event tips that I recommend in the last chapter of my book also fit in with this motto. The range of culinary and cultural events throughout the season stretches from early spring to the Christmas season in December.

Your pick on when to come and enjoy Graz!

Finally, I will briefly describe the benefits of the Graz Card and provide you with additional web links, tips and ideas to help you plan your next stay in Graz.

I hope you enjoy reading this book and gain a wealth of new insights and knowledge on Graz.



Graz, a mouth-watering Austrian city! The "Graz City Stone", created by the artist couple Peter and Anne Knoll, is located in the second courtyard of the Graz Castle and is always worth discovering.

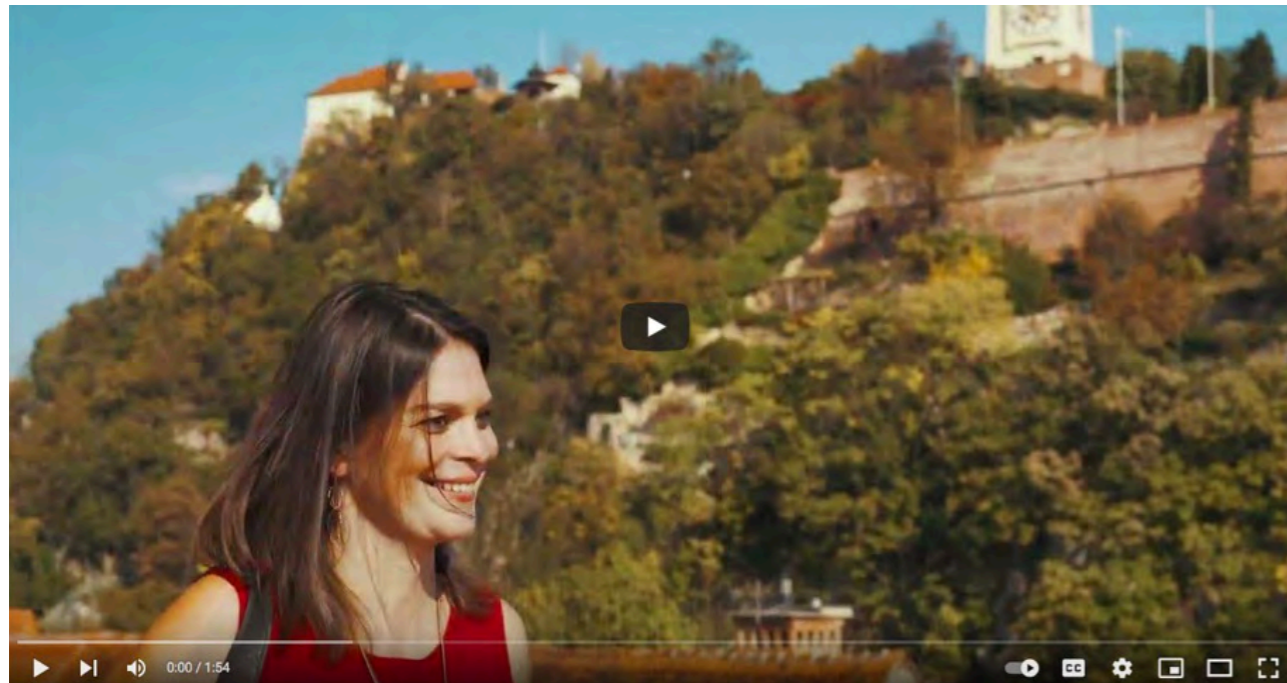
GRAZ REGION

From city to countryside in 10 minutes

The Graz Region is one of 11 travel destinations within the province of Styria, located in the south-east of Austria. It combines the southern flair of the so-called GenussHauptstadt Graz, or Capital of Delight, with a wide-spread range of attractions, accommodation options and events in the Graz Region. Many of them can be reached within 10 minutes using public transport services, hence the

area's claim, "From city to countryside in 10 minutes".

Thanks to the many, many times I've spent visiting Graz, I can confirm the Graz Region's claim all too well. If you look beyond the immediate urban area of Graz, and into the Graz Region, you will be rewarded with many more interesting natural and cultural



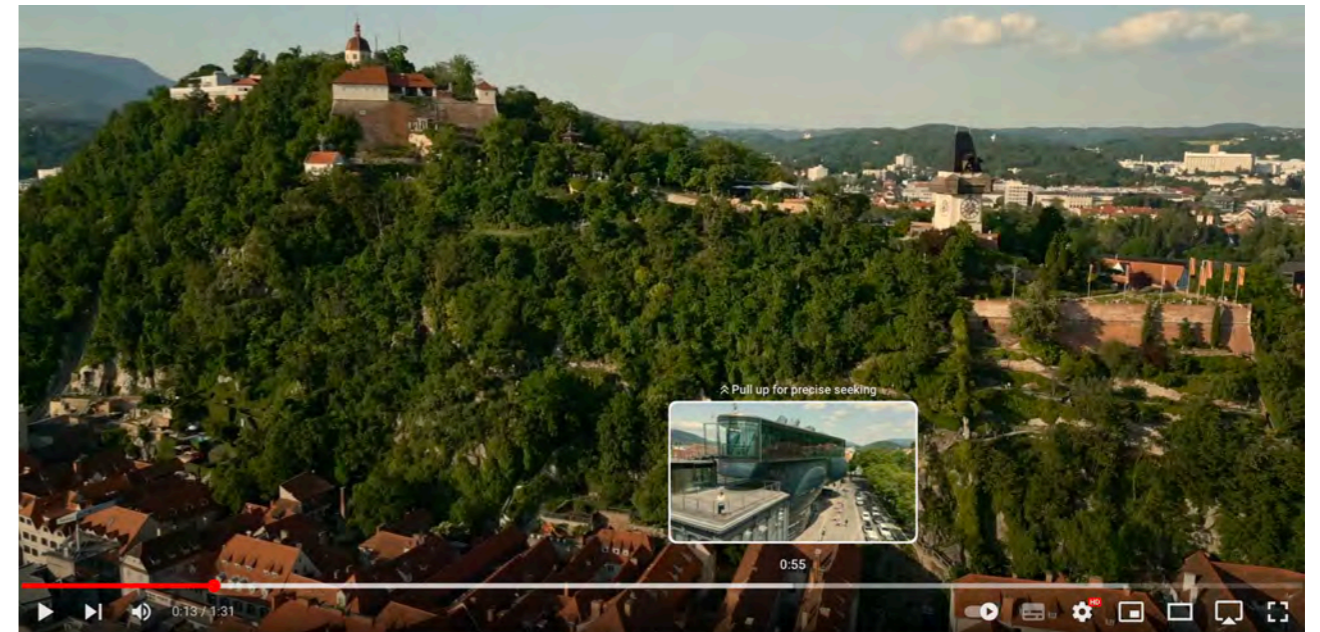
Graz Region - From city to countryside in 10 minutes (video in German language only).

experiences. What makes the city of Graz, Austria's second largest city and the country's only Capital of Delight, so special?

At the heart of the Graz Region, the UNESCO City of Design combines world-class cultural attractions with the typical Styrian comforts of home. There hasn't been a single visit where I haven't been mesmerised by this constant exchange of international culture and the buzz of local atmosphere in Graz. One example: you are standing

in front of the city's Friendly Alien, the Graz Art Museum on the south bank of the river Mur, which is known far beyond the borders of Austria. In the immediate vicinity of the "Blue Bubble" of Graz, there is a multitude of cosy hipster bars, where you can easily strike up a conversation with the locals. As you gain new impressions of Graz, learning about its history is complemented by new insights from everyday conversations. Effortless and easy. Like the transition from city to countryside in - you guessed it - 10 minutes!

enjoy sustainably



Graz - the multifaceted capital of Styria.

Everyone talks about it, everyone wants it, and yet it's a road full of questions: (how) can I ensure to be a sustainable traveller in Graz? Is it even possible?

Many trips and even more conversations have taught me that it is indeed possible. A good tip right from the start: look out for hotels, restaurants and museums that bear the Austrian Ecolabel as a recognised seal of quality for sustainability. This confirms that your Graz host or event business is honestly trying to do far more than just "greenwashing". I can also recommend [the \(free\) app "Nachhaltig in Graz" \(German website only\)](#). It lists everything from farmers' markets to upcycling shops, including a calendar of sustainable events in Graz.

As is so often the case, when it comes to sustainability, it is all about the famous solidarity between everyone involved. How well developed is public transport? How easy is it to get an e-bike to explore the city's neighbourhoods and the Graz Region? Where can I find the partner restaurants of

the GenussHauptstadt Graz Capital of Delight, the ones that are fully committed to regional and seasonal offers? And finally: how can I contribute with my shopping choices?

You will find answers to these and many other questions in this book. Let's gooo!



Thinking outside the box: from the city of Graz to the countryside by e-bike, out towards Schöckl Hill, the local mountain in Graz at slightly more than 1,000 metres above sea level. Sustainable and easy.

#DISCOVERGRAZREGION

sustainable accommodation tips

Sustainable accommodation in the Graz Region: (how) does it actually work?

Hotels in Austria can be certified with the Austrian Ecolabel for hotels and tourism businesses. This national seal of quality includes a series of criteria for socially responsible, environmentally friendly and economically sustainable tourism. If you see this label on the website or in the hotel of your choice, both you and the business are definitely making a valuable contribution to sustainability.

Graz goes one step further by promoting especially family-run hotels. Why, you may ask, are family-run businesses particularly sustainable? By choosing to stay in a family-run hotel, you are strengthening the local economy. You are also more likely to become a "temporary local in Graz", as you will very likely meet the local team, have a critical exchange concerning all

aspects of sustainability, and get a lot of personalised tips for your stay.

I myself have already had the pleasure of staying in all of the hotels that I would like to introduce to you below. Other than caring about their commitment to sustainability, what they have in common is a special concern for the well-being of their guests. To help you find your way around when booking, you will also find a list of the hotel's special features in addition to each hotel description. A map shows you where all of them are located at a glance.

Check out [this link for even more tips on sustainable hotel and travel options in Graz](#).

HOTEL GOLLNER

I remember the Hotel Gollner all too well because - as simple as it sounds - I slept incredibly well there. Centrally located and family-run, the hotel's green courtyard exudes a wonderful sense of tranquillity. The proximity to the famous Graz farmers' market on Kaiser-Josef-Platz presents you with a difficult choice: breakfast at the hotel or at the market?

Tip: The Graz Opera House, the Jakominiplatz transport hub, the historic old town, the Graz City Park: you can find all these attractions and spots within a radius of just five minutes from Hotel Gollner.



Farmer's market on Kaiser-Josef-Platz and leafy courtyard at Hotel Gollner.

#DISCOVERGRAZREGION

sustainable accommodation tips

HOTEL DAS WEITZER

From Hotel Das Weitzer, you have perhaps the most beautiful view of the historic centre of Graz on the banks of the River Mur. As a guest on the third floor of the hotel, the view of the Schlossberg is simply amazing, as is the breakfast at Engelreich Angels' Hall on the ground floor, an apt name for a heavenly breakfast service.

Tip: The hotel is located in the immediate vicinity of the restaurant Der Steirer, one of my favourite addresses for good, local cuisine and wines from Graz and Styria (make sure you book in advance and try the famous Styrian tapas!).



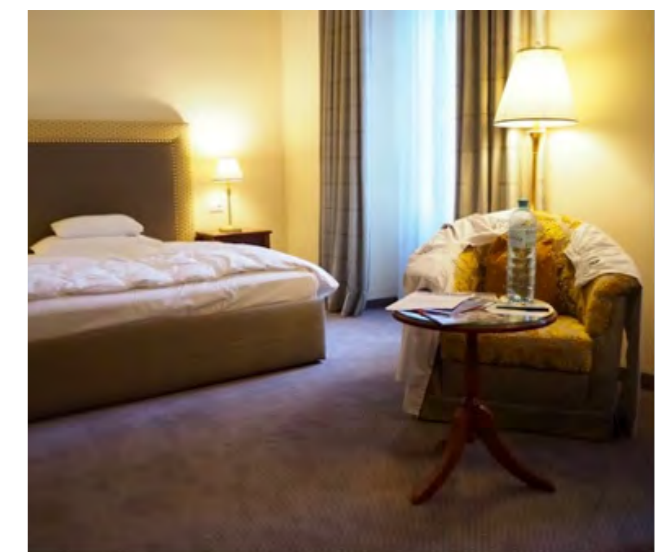
PARKHOTEL GRAZ

At the family-run Parkhotel Graz, you can visibly meet and greet the family all around. The location of this four-star superior hotel next to Graz City Park makes it an attractive choice for your stay in Graz, including a small but cosy wellness area with indoor pool.

Tip: The restaurant is highly recommended for its selection of food and drinks; the hotel terrace is the perfect place to relax on warm summer evenings.



Rooms at the Hotel Das Weitzer and a view towards Graz city centre © Hotel Das Weitzer (left picture).



Restaurant & rooms at the Parkhotel Graz .

#DISCOVERGRAZREGION

sustainable accommodation tips

The Hotel Liebmann and the Hi5Hotel Seiersberg are located just outside the city centre in the Graz Region. Here, you have the advantage of being surrounded by peace and nature: you may even want

to extend your stay to a long stay or workcation option! There are good public transport connections to the city centre of Graz in both cases.

HOTEL LIEBMANN

Bernadette and Stefan Liebmann will have you take a deep breath in the climatic health resort Laßnitzhöhe, around fifteen minutes from Graz. The view of Graz to the south is sensational. Stefan himself is a gin fan and invites you to taste his very own gin, Yin Gin, preferably on the hotel's spacious terrace. The food also tastes great; some of the fruit and vegetables that Bernadette, Stefan and their team use in the hotel come directly from the surrounding orchards and vegetable fields. A few years ago, the four-star hotel was awarded the Austrian Ecolabel for its achievements in sustainability.

Tip: You can walk along the "sebastian RELOADED®" adventure trail right below the Hotel Liebmann. It is dedicated to the famous spa physician Sebastian Kneipp. Take a break, catch your breath and relax along several different adventure stops.



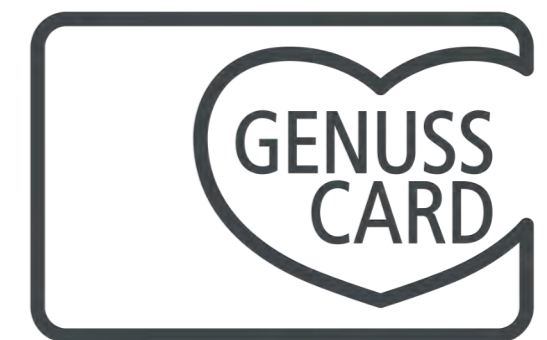
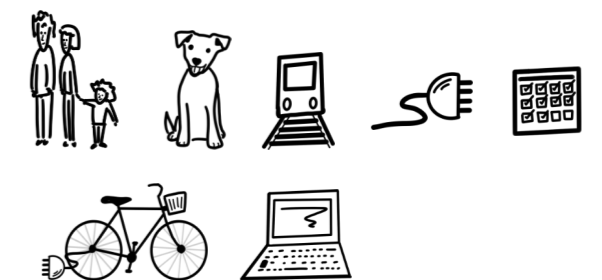
HI5HOTEL SEIERSBERG

Fancy staying at Austria's first climate-neutral hotel? The Hi5Hotel in Seiersberg-Pirka in the south-east of Graz is completely self-sufficient: it requires no additional heating or air conditioning. All rooms are designed in a modern and colourful way. During my stay, I had the pleasure of a guided tour with the hotel technician. He explained to me how a zero-emission house actually works. The key? Efficiency on all levels! The kitchen offers all kinds of vegan and vegetarian options; a rooftop terrace bar is currently being planned.

Tip: The hotel includes a petrol station and a supermarket all in one. You can stock up here ahead of your departure, as well as taking provisions for your day out. E-bikes are available for rent in the nearby bike box.



Restaurant and bar area © Hi5Hotel Seiersberg.



Make sure to get your free copy of the local [GenussCard](#) from the first night spent at either Hotel Liebmann or Hi5Hotel Seiersberg.

This card is your ticket to exploring four different Styrian regions, including the Graz Region, with many attractions that are free of charge.



A view of Hotel Liebmann and one of the stops along the nearby "sebastian RELOADED®" adventure trail.



#DISCOVERGRAZREGION

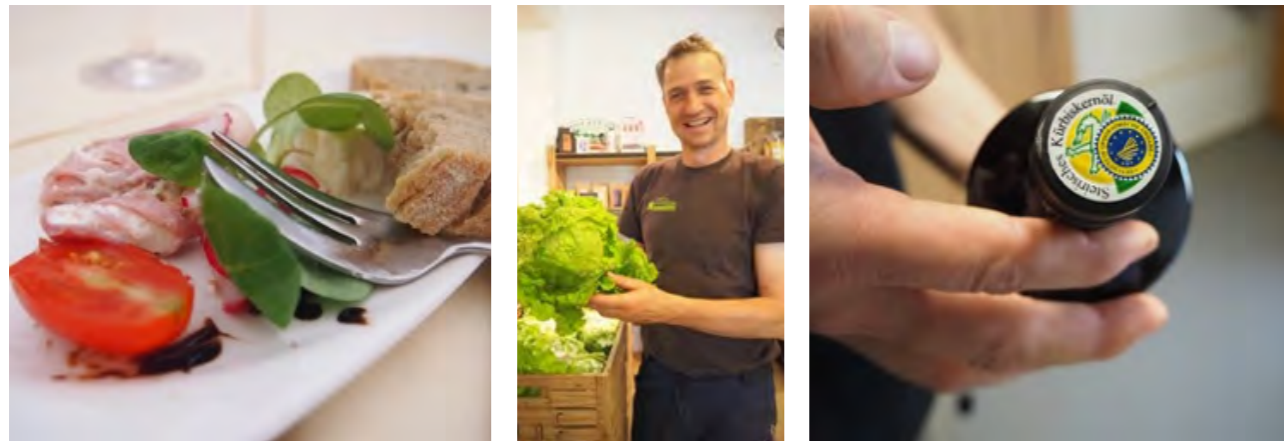
sustainable foodie exploration tips

How and where can you enjoy a particularly sustainable foodie experience in the Graz Region?

In this chapter, I follow the reputation of Graz as the only Austrian Capital of Delight, listing predominantly culinary travel recommendations in and around Graz for you. Luckily, both the city as well as the Graz Region have plenty to offer, as you're about to learn.

Tip: Click here if you want to [find out more about the official accolade GenussHauptstadt Graz, or Capital of Delight](#). Read more about why this award is so special and unique for Graz, and why it has already persisted since the year 2008.

The following overview of farmers' markets, restaurants, gourmet producers, local shops and culinary tours in the Graz Region is but a personal, non-exhaustive selection.



Culinary city tours in Graz, a visit of the Haindl artisan mill & oil press, and getting to know Markus Hillebrand with his flagship product, the Grazer Krauthäuptel lettuce.

The green thread that guides you through this book is my authentic look at all the culinary experiences in and around Graz that I can personally recommend as particularly delicious and sustainable.

As described in the previous chapter, the main focus is on family-run businesses as well as those with seasonal and regional offers.

To this end, the AMA Gourmet Region (a quality label awarded by the AgrarMarkt Austria, the country's national agricultural alliance) has further extended its award to include all partner businesses of the

GenussHauptstadt Graz Capital of Delight. Since 2021, it guarantees the use of regional products among all its members.



FARMER'S MARKETS

Around 20 different farmers' markets await you in the city of Graz; the entire Graz Region offers numerous other such markets. My tip: best to enquire about each market in advance with the respective municipality. This way, you can be sure that the farmers' market in question is actually taking place.

Why is a farmers' market particularly sustainable? Best ask the farmers and their families themselves: coming from the immediate vicinity of the city of Graz, they not only have delicious seasonal and regional products to offer, but also all kinds of stories to tell - stories about the circular economy, sustainable supply chains and delicious, regional specialities.

The two best-known farmers' markets, which I also visit every time I'm in Graz, are the Kaiser Josef Markt and the farmers' market on Lendplatz. Both are open six days a week (Monday to Saturday) from 6.00 am to 1.00 pm. I have had excellent breakfasts at both markets; at Lendplatz in Graz, the restaurants are also open on Sundays and public holidays.

Tip: Right next to Kaiser Josef Markt is Kitchen 12, where you can take a cookery course based on regional and seasonal market produce. I still have fond memories of Ferdinand Hladik and his team many years after my visit! As an official partner business of the GenussHauptstadt Graz Capital of Delight, this is a truly delicious experience.

Click here for [an overview of all farmers' markets in Graz, including addresses and opening times](#). I can only advise you to visit one or more of these markets while in Graz. The variety of fruit, vegetables, meat and cheese products, bread, herbs and juices - all available regionally and seasonally, in many places also in organic quality - is simply fabulous.

And maybe one or two of the official market vendors will tell you the story behind the interesting scarlet runner bean, a Styrian icon which you can see on the far right of one of my pictures ...?



Farmer's market on Kaiser-Josef-Platz.

#DISCOVERGRAZREGION

sustainable foodie exploration tips

Another tip: Buy some produce from the Graz farmers' markets and go have a picnic in the countryside or in one of Graz's many green areas.

[Click here for an overview of the best picnic spots in the Graz Region.](#)



Picnic basket on the Schlossberg Hill, well stocked with delicacies bought at Frankowisch, another partner business of the GenussHauptstadt Graz Capital of Delight

RESTAURANTS

Where to go and eat in a city that calls itself the Austrian Capital of Delight? Surely, you're well looked after pretty much everywhere here?

Indeed, even the "best culinary hotspots of the GenussHauptstadt Graz Capital of Delight" include [more than 200 foodie options](#). If you consider the entire Graz Region, [you may choose from almost 500 options](#), including the ones mentioned above. Wow!

The good thing about these listings is that you are able to conduct a completely personalised search there. By clicking on the links above, you can choose the right restaurant for you depending on location, accessibility, type of restaurant, choice of food, facilities, whether it's suitable for families, as well as checking their opening hours.

Tip: Book a table at one of the partner restaurants of the GenussHauptstadt Graz Capital of Delight. They guarantee you "seasonal cuisine with the freshest ingredients

from Styrian agricultural production" and are committed to the corresponding indications of origin. Since being certified by the AMA (AgrarMarkt Austria), they are also subject to strict quality control.

On my numerous trips to Graz, I have got to know a good third of the currently 31 partner businesses of the GenussHauptstadt Graz Capital of Delight, and can warmly recommend them for your culinary experience in Graz. Not only because of their commitment to sustainable production and use of food, but also because I simply loved eating and drinking there so much. Of course, one thing leads to the other.



Pure foodie delights, as enjoyed in the GenussHauptstadt Graz Capital of Delight: Landhauskeller Graz, Restaurant Schlossberg, Gösser Bräu.

#DISCOVERGRAZREGION

sustainable foodie exploration tips

YOU HAVE THE BEST VIEW OF GRAZ FROM THE ...

Restaurants Schlossberg and the Freiblick daytime café: looking up from the old town towards the Schlossberg and clock tower, or looking down from the Schlossberg over a large part of the city of Graz. I was able to get to know the Schlossberg restaurant as part of the Graz Truffle Festival (you can read more about the Truffle Festival in the chapter “Sustainable event tips”); the menu served here is simply sensational.

MODERN, HIP AND TRENDY DINING IS POSSIBLE IN THESE LOCATIONS ...

Kunsthauscafé Graz, Aiola Upstairs, Delikatessen Frankowitsch, Dreizehn by Gauster. I like all four locations, although it's difficult to get a table at peak times. People just know what's good!

YOU CAN ENJOY A CLASSIC, HOME-STYLE MEAL AT THE ...

Stainzerbauer, Landhauskeller, as well as the Florian Restaurant at the Parkhotel Graz. All of them top addresses for excellent culinary findings according to the motto: the GenussHauptstadt Graz Capital of Delight on your plate!

FOR BEER LOVERS (YES, THAT'S GRAZ TOO!), I CAN RECOMMEND ...

Glöckl Bräu as well as Gösser Bräu. Both restaurants and event locations offer you excellent food pairing options with local beer and Graz cuisine as part of the city's guided beer tour. Well worth tasting and experiencing!

#DISCOVERGRAZREGION

sustainable foodie exploration tips

GOURMET PRODUCERS & LOCAL SHOPS

A visit to one of the many producers and local shops, who vouch for the excellent culinary quality of the GenussHauptstadt Graz Capital of Delight, is a feast for all the senses. Where better to understand and experience how a product is made than directly at the farm or shop itself?

I had the pleasure of getting to know several gourmet producers in the immediate city area of Graz, or very close to it. True to the motto "From city to countryside in 10 minutes", many of them are perfectly connected to the public cycling and local transport network. You may therefore ideally combine visiting one (or many) Graz gourmet producers with the area surrounding Graz, for example on a gourmet cycle tour (read more about this in my chapter "Sustainable mobility tips").

The Haindl mill, for example, an artisan mill and oil press, is located directly in Kalsdorf near Graz, south-

east of the city. The "black gold" of Styria, the famous pumpkin seed oil, is extracted here in front of my very eyes. The historic mill is completely self-sufficient, as it runs on hydropower. In addition to initiating ground-breaking events, such as the "Long Night of the Mill", the family-run business offers bread baking courses based on the five elements guided by managing director and business owner Johanna Haindl.

All recipes are handed out in smart booklets that you can take home with you. Johanna's daughter Daniela tells me that "most people who have been here once care to come back and shop or bake with us again". Surely a wonderful, and very intimate foodie experience on your next visit to Graz!

Tip: During the summer months, guided tours are regularly offered at the Haindl Mill. It's best to book in advance as soon as you know a date for your visit.



Visit of the Haindl artisan mill and oil press in Kalsdorf near Graz.



Markus Hillebrand, ambassador of the Graz Krauthauptel lettuce and his gourmet farm.



The GenussBauernhof Hillebrand, then, is an ambassador for the Graz Krauthauptel lettuce, one of the agricultural flagship products of the Graz Region alongside wine and pumpkin. As soon as I enter the "first gourmet farm in Austria", I realise that a farm can also be an experience!

Markus Hillebrand knows how to do this: for years he has been winning over Graz residents and visitors for his flagship product, the Grazer Krauthauptel lettuce. Even if he and his fellow lettuce farmers have had to parade around the main square of Graz with countless heads of lettuce, reinforcing the message that their lettuce is "a lot more than just green salad": the Graz Krauthauptel lettuce must be crisp, fresh, tender and, of course, seasonally available.

"Great.Regional.Enjoyment" is the philosophy of the friendly family farm, producing high-quality vegetables on around 30 hectares in the sunny Graz fields. "We are partly responsible for the title of the GenussHauptstadt Graz Capital of Delight. We supply what the top chefs in Graz need for creating

their excellent meals", Markus Hillebrand says with pride in his voice.

Tip: The GenussKochSchule cookery school run by Markus' wife Sandra Hillebrand is located right on the farm premises. Chefs can hire the facilities, and there are also plenty of specially organised cookery courses here. I feel like staying and getting right into it!

Further gourmet producers and local shops in the Graz Region, including beekeepers, pumpkin farms and other shops selling typical regional delicacies, will become available in an (English) online listing soon. [For now, you can follow this link for an overview of all producers and shops in German.](#)

You can find a list of all owner-managed gourmet producers in Graz here: [culinary souvenirs from Graz.](#)

#DISCOVERGRAZREGION

sustainable foodie exploration tips

CULINARY CITY TOURS

I'd say: no visit to the city of Graz without taking part in a culinary city tour, or food tour! This delicious way of exploring a city has been growing in popularity over the years, especially in well-known European cities such as Amsterdam, Paris, Rome and Porto. At this point, you will hardly be surprised that Graz, the Austrian Capital of Delight, has created a wide range of such food tour offers.

A culinary city tour in Graz is ...

„...A LEASURELY STROLL WITH SEVERAL APPETISING STOPS; GARNISHED WITH AMUSING STORIES.“

In my experience, participating in a food tour is one of the best ways to get to know a city, pick up a few restaurant tips and get your bearings at the same time. Graz offers you the opportunity to take part in a variety of culinary city tours through different Graz neighbourhoods. You may even enjoy a food tour in a convertible bus or end the year with a culinary New Year's Eve tour. [Click here for more information on all tours \(only in German\).](#)

Tip: All food tours in Graz are very popular and book up quickly. Secure your place as soon as you have finalised dates for your next trip to Graz!



A culinary tour in Graz with various tasting stops.



CALLING ALL #WINELOVER TRAVELLERS!

Styria cultivates a total of around 5,000 hectares of wine. This corresponds to around 10% of Austria's total wine-growing area. Did you know that more than half of Styrian wines are grown on (very) steep inclines? Take a trip along the Schilcher Wine Route, which starts in Ligist in the Graz Region, and see the breath-taking location of the vineyards for yourself.

Along the Schilcher Wine Route, you may find three exclusive wine travel hotspots within the Graz Region: the Buschenschank Zach, Dokter and Kremser-Greitbauer. Like the Austrian capital city Vienna, the Austrian Capital of Delight Graz also cultivates its own vineyards: be sure to visit the Kehlberg vineyard in the south-west of the city. What is so special about it? Well: viticulture in Graz has a history of over 800 years!



Exploring the Schilcherland wine growing district near Graz.

#DISCOVERGRAZREGION

sustainable foodie exploration tips

Graz city wines are currently produced using the FALTER EGO label, run by the southern Styrian winegrower Hannes Sabathi. These include typical Styrian grape varieties such as Sauvignon Blanc,

Gelber Muskateller and Pinot Gris. All vines are 100% located within the Graz city area, which is part of the West Styria wine-growing district.



Graz city wines with a view of Graz in the back © Falter Ego, Grazer Wein Hannes Sabathi GmbH.



Winemaker Hannes Sabathi uses a refractometer to check the ripeness of the grapes © TV Region Graz - Studio Draussen.

Tip: You can really get to know the Graz city wines on a guided vineyard tour with the Graz Guides. In the middle of the vineyards, you can enjoy a breath-taking view of Graz and literally let the Graz city wines melt in your mouth during the subsequent tasting at St Martin's Castle. The GUSTmobil Graz, an inexpensive shared taxi, takes you from the nearest public transport stop directly to St Martin's Castle and back again. Practical, isn't it? You can read more about the GUSTmobil Graz in the next chapter on "Sustainable mobility tips".

Good to know: All of the Graz city wines [have been awarded the "Sustainable Austria" quality label](#). It ensures responsible wine tastings and production, based on economic, ecological and social criteria. Awarded members are reviewed every year and must adhere to strict criteria covering the entire process from the grape harvest to the finished wine

Here's yet another sustainability tip for you when it comes to wine: the so-called Styrian bottle, or Steiermarkflasche. Millions of bottles of Styrian wine have been given their own bottle design, resulting in the typical, unique Steiermarkflasche. They can be recycled at over 400 return points. Check out [this website for more information about this truly GREEN wine bottle](#); green in the very best sense of the word.

#DISCOVERGRAZREGION

sustainable mobility tips

Easy, convenient, inexpensive: that is sustainable mobility in and around Graz! Visiting Austria's second largest city, you have the advantage of a well-developed public transport network, including frequent and fast connections to important transport hubs such as Vienna, Linz and Klagenfurt. All my stays in Graz have confirmed it: it really is super easy to get around by bus, tram, by bike or walking. No need to take the car with you at all.

This also applies to all your discoveries in the Graz Region. Regional trains, buses, suburban trains and shared taxis such as the GUSTmobil take you to the most important sights just outside the city centre: from city to countryside in 10 minutes!

I can also recommend the sustainable mobility portal TIM Carsharing. This allows you to stay flexible without your own car, exploring the entire Graz Region as you please.

My experience has also taught me how nice it is to hire an e-bike for the day. The cycle paths in and around Graz are really well developed and signposted. Riding an e-bike gives you a radius of discovery that you would not have by simply walking. In terms of mobility, it gives you the necessary slow travel pace to really get to know the country and its people.



Conveniently located at Graz main station: The Graz Rad Station with all rental options for bicycles available.

CITY TOURS & EXCURSIONS

Fancy a creative tour through the City of Design? A Schlossberg tour during the Christmas season? Or a classic tour of the historic city centre? Whatever tickles your fancy, rest assured that Graz has something to offer you every day of the year.

All of the official city tours are led by a certified city guide, for example from the Graz Guides team. They are also guiding all of the local round trips and excursions. In addition to lots of factual information, the guided city tours and excursions offer an ideal opportunity to talk to your guide about life in Graz, as well as any further ideas and events while you are in the city.

Tip: If you are travelling with a group, I strongly recommend that you make a reservation in advance. Many of the tours are very popular and book up quickly - especially seasonal offers.

I can also recommend the "Grazer Grazien" virtual tour. You can download the tour on your smartphone through the Locandy app; the tour is also available offline (via GPS). The Grazer Grazien is a quiz where you can check in digitally at various stops around the old town, featuring additional app information about each of the 17 stops. It is a fun scavenger hunt that I did on my own, but recommend to share with friends and children, too.

You can find an attractive combination of city tours and walking routes [in the practical brochure "Moving through the city", which is also available online.](#)

This brochure describes a total of ten hikes and walks in Graz, including culinary recommendations, which lead through parks, local recreation areas and even up some mountains! (Yes, there are also hills that can

be considered mountains in the city of Graz!). From cosy and suitable for pushchairs to sporty and ambitious, everything is included here.

Good to know: all starting points of the hikes and walks are easily accessible by public transport. Some of these points may even be reached by walking straight out of the Graz city centre.



#DISCOVERGRAZREGION

sustainable mobility tips

HIKING IN AND AROUND GRAZ

Have you ever heard of the #7SummitsGraz ? No? Then you should plan to visit at least one of the “summits” on your next visit to the Graz Region.

The Seven Summits actually describe the highest mountain peaks on each of the world’s seven continents. Graz has adopted this to match local mountain tops, listing seven summits for their wonderful views of Graz.

Incidentally, the initiative was inspired by the pandemic-related rush to Graz’s local mountain, the Schöckl. The Seven Summits Graz were founded to equalise the flow of visitors at the time, as there are indeed many other viewpoints in and around Graz with views of the city.

I myself opted for the several-hour hike to the Plabutsch - Fürstenstand. On the whole, this hike is rather leisurely, with only a few, somewhat steeper climbs. You can take a well-earned break in the Waldcafé bar and restaurant at Thalersee lake, before the final ascent to the Fürstenstand. It wouldn’t be Graz if there wasn’t a little bit of foodie stops everywhere.

You may also take the bus directly from the city centre to Graz-Gösting and start the hike there: all starting points of the Seven Summits Graz can be reached by public transport. [Click here for more information including route descriptions, tips on equipment, as well as arrival and departure options.](#)

Of course, the Seven Summits Graz are but a start to your hiking exploration of the Graz Region.



At the summit of the Fürstenstand hill (763 metres above sea level), with a view of the city Graz in the back.

Click on the following website for more information about many other hikes around Graz, [which are conveniently listed here.](#)

Included above are hikes rewarding for their magnificent views, trails more suitable for families, tips on places to stop for local restaurants, bars and pubs, as well as hikes that lead to rivers and lakes,

ensuring much needed breaks in the hot summertime.

Tip: You can also combine hiking with cycling, for example on a Bike & Hike tour up the Schöckl mountain (recommended!).



Exploring Schöckl Hill: Bike & hike tour combining both activities in a full day activity in the Graz Region.

E-BIKE LEISURE TOURS

The Graz Region is perfect for exploring on two wheels. The central axis of the entire region is the Mur Cycle Path, which runs from north to south through the centre of Graz and provides numerous connections to other cycle paths. The city’s cycle paths are well developed and signposted; rental options such as the “Rad Station” bike station at Graz Central Station make it easy to organise a bike or e-bike for the day.

What is the advantage of an e-bike leisure tour in the Graz Region? It’s the great combination of (moderate) exercise, fresh air and scenic experience,

including culinary discoveries in the form of attractive restaurants and other food stops in and around Graz. For example, I would never have imagined that I would easily make it up the Schöckl on my e-bike, at well over 1,000 metres of altitude a mountain alright, and enjoy fantastic 360° views from its plateau summit.

[The website “Leisure cycling in Styria” includes a great overview of individual e-bike leisure tours.](#) It highlights the best time of the year for each cycling trip, and lists answers to typical questions about technique, fitness, elevation, climbs and lengths of the tours.

#DISCOVERGRAZREGION

sustainable mobility tips

All of the 17 e-bike leisure tours around Graz are also summarized in a practical brochure, including elevation profiles, details of the routes and insider tips. QR codes take you to digital route descriptions, tips and information. [Click here to access the website and download it \(only available in German\).](#)

Personally, I would opt for the foodie “Schmankerl” tour, the Flair of the South tour or the Pilgrim's Tour. Whatever you decide to do, you're sure to find what you're looking for here!



Cycling along the Mur Cycle Path in Graz, and right up towards the „Schöckl Hexe“ next to the Schöckl Hill Cable Car, a convenient charging stop for e-bikes

SUSTAINABLE CULTURE TOURS

Culture and sustainability are not mutually exclusive – quite the opposite. Did you know that two museums in Graz, the Kunsthaus Graz and the Volkskundemuseum (folklore museum), have even been awarded the Austrian Ecolabel for museums? In their commitment to sustainability, they follow other renowned cultural centres in Austria, such as the Museum of Applied Arts in Vienna, the Austrian National Library or the Roman town of Carnuntum in Lower Austria.

By visiting the Kunsthaus Graz and the Volkskundemuseum, you are supporting the ecological and social management of both art centres. In the coming years, even more museums in Graz are to be certified with the Austrian Ecolabel

You should definitely visit the Kunsthaus Graz, which I referred to earlier on as the Friendly Alien of Graz. The architecture alone makes it worthwhile to see the exhibitions taking place there!



The Kunsthaus Graz has been certified with the Austrian Ecolabel since 2021; it really cares about sustainable cultural operation
© Kunsthaus Graz / L. Trichtel

There are, of course, other sustainable travel options when it comes to cultural attractions in and around Graz. I can recommend three that will give you a wonderful cultural as well as sustainable visitor experience:

- The Austrian Open-Air Museum Stübing to the north-west of Graz
- The Austrian Sculpture Park in Premstätten to the south of Graz
- The Schwarzenegger Museum, together with the Jakobuskirche Church and the Thaler See Garten café and Restaurant in Thal

The Austrian Open-Air Museum Stübing is located about half an hour outside the city centre of Graz. You can get there by bus, by calling the GUSTmobil shared taxi service, by train or bike via the (very beautiful) Mur cycle path. A tip on the GUSTmobil: best book it around one hour before your desired departure time.

On the grounds of the museum itself, you can expect more than just an exciting tour through the construction history of Austria's farmhouses, from Burgenland to Vorarlberg. The museums's so-called Craft Competence Centre introduces you to traditional crafts through attractive courses and hands-on, creative cultural activities. [Check out this website for all further information connected to the museum.](#)

#DISCOVERGRAZREGION

sustainable mobility tips



The Austrian Open-Air Museum in Stübing displays original, reconstructed farmhouses from all over Austria.

Another great option for a sustainable culture tour in the Graz Region is a visit of the Austrian Sculpture Park in Premstätten, south of Graz. This unique combination of art and nature shows you sculptures by renowned artists such as Erwin Wurm, Michael Schuster and Yoko Ono (yes, THE Yoko Ono!). Some

80 sculptures are seemingly scattered "at random" in the middle of a big landscape park. Each and every one of them deserves your visit!

I recommend that you plan at least one hour, preferably two, for your visit of the sculpture park: the grounds of the landscape park are pretty large. I also recommend taking part in a guided tour. Listening to your guide really brings the sculptures, their story(s) and the artists who created them to life.

Tip: During the summer months, you can make the trip worthwhile on two levels: the neighbouring Schwarzsee lake will have you refreshed from the summer heat in no time!

The Austrian Sculpture Park, which is open from the end of March to the end of October, is also easily accessible by public transport. It is only 30 minutes away from Graz main station, and takes around 45 minutes by bike from Graz city centre.



Exploring the Austrian Sculpture Park.



An artistic feast for the eyes: the uniquely decorated parish church in Thal .

Thal is probably the most famous municipality outside of Graz. It is famous because it is home to two unique attractions that are unrivalled anywhere in the world.

Firstly, the Arnold Schwarzenegger Museum, which brings you closer to "the man behind the myth". The museum, curated by Arnold Schwarzenegger and his primary school friend Peter Urdl, offers you curious, interesting and often astonishing details from the life of the world star. Arnold's breakthrough came at the incredibly young age of 19 when he was voted Mister Universe. The museum skilfully describes how and why he was able to embark on such an extraordinary career - all the way to becoming Governor of California.

Secondly, just a few minutes away, you will find another world-famous cultural gem in Thal: the parish church of Thal, also known as the Ernst Fuchs Church. It is the life's work of the famous Austrian artist Ernst Fuchs. Here, he realised "the most beautiful commission of my life", as he is quoted as saying after finishing the artistic construction work. The church is dedicated to St. Jacob and shines in a unique variety of colours and shapes. Be sure to visit this particular cultural gem on your next visit to the Graz Region.

Tip: You can easily reach both locations, as well as the nearby Thaler See Garten, by public transport from the city centre. Arnold Schwarzenegger asked his wife Maria Shriver to marry him on Thalersee lake: you can still visit their "Boat of Promise" today.



A view of the Thaler See Garten during summertime.

#DISCOVERGRAZREGION

sustainable event tips

Graz is full of life! There is never a visit to the Austrian Capital of Delight without some kind of festival, event or concert taking place.

If you do come to Graz and find no big event happening, you can enjoy many other attractive events on a smaller scale. Ever thought about joining a city tour on a convertible bus, including culinary delights offered on the bus? Or perhaps a guided beer tour? Graz offers many different food and culture tours throughout the year, including popular districts such as Lend and Gries.

I can also recommend booking an event tour with Discover Graz and the Graz Guides, teams of charming, hard-working and competent city guides, many of whom I have had the pleasure of meeting in person over the years (thanks to Ruth Nezmahen, David Zottler, Sigrid Alber and many more). Click here for [an overview of all tours offered by the Graz Guides](#), and here for [an overview of all Discover Graz - Young and Free Tours Graz](#).



Discover Graz Guide Ruth Nezmahen, convertible bus tour in front of the Kunsthaus Graz, Graz Truffle Festival.

The entire Graz Region is home to hundreds of smaller and larger events throughout the year.

In this chapter, I present you with a personally curated selection of events. I have witnessed most of them myself, highlighted once more for their commitment to sustainability.

LONG TABLE OF GRAZ

Since 2010, the so-called Lange Tafel der GenussHauptstadt Long Table of Graz has been the

undisputed highlight of Graz's culinary events programme. Back in 2013, I had the pleasure of joining the event on Graz's main square - a unique experience that I can only recommend you book well in advance! This is because ticket sales for the Long Table of Graz in August start as early as mid-November of the previous year; places are highly coveted and usually book up quickly.

[So what is so special about the Long Table of Graz event?](#) In my opinion, the art of serving hundreds of guests an excellent multi-course menu all at the same time, prepared by the chefs of the GenussHauptstadt

Graz partner businesses. The logistical and culinary effort that goes into this is unrivalled all across Austria.

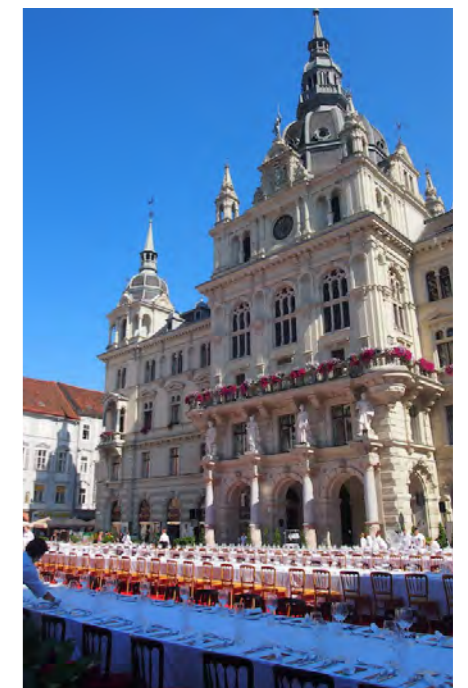
Following my experience of the Long Table, I write on my blog: "700 guests, five long tables, almost 200 service staff and 27 chefs: that's the Long Table of the GenussHauptstadt Graz Capital of Delight! Top chefs and their teams from the best restaurants in Graz provide a unique sensory experience. When the atmosphere on Graz's main square comes alive with culinary magic, then this can only mean one thing: the most impressive culinary event of the year is taking place – and I'm right there, placed at the heart of all the fun and excitement!"

Good to know: The outdoor event Long Table of Graz only takes place in good weather; alternatively, you will receive a voucher with the amount of your ticket price, which you can redeem at one of the partner businesses of the GenussHauptstadt Graz Capital of Delight.

Tip: The event is organised adhering to the criteria of the Austrian Ecolabel for Green Events. [Click here if you like to find out more about the strict environmental requirements that apply to events of this size \(website in German only\).](#)



A view of the Long Table Graz event.



#DISCOVERGRAZREGION

sustainable event tips

LA STRADA GRAZ

Street art, puppet theatre, new circus and community art: [the international La Strada Graz festival](#) has been showcasing an impressive range of contemporary art in public spaces and the Graz theatres for over 25 years.

As a visitor in Graz, you can be up close with the artists when the festival conquers the city, explore hidden places and rethink what you have learned about Graz so far. La Strada puts its main focus on events and artistic works that deal with Graz, its inhabitants, and you as a visitor. Besides this focus, there is plenty of time and space for celebrations during this week-long summer festival.

I attach an interesting quote from Werner Schrempf, the artistic director of La Strada Graz:

„THE IDEA THAT ART CREATES PASSION AND SHOULD BRING US JOY WAS VERY IMPORTANT TO US FROM THE BEGINNING OF LA STRADA GRAZ. OUR ARTISTS MAKE SURE THE PROGRAMME IS DEDICATED TO IMPORTANT TOPICS OF OUR TIME IN A DIVERSE, SUBTLE AND HUMOROUS WAY: SOCIAL CHANGE, PROCESSES OF CHANGE IN EUROPE AND, OF COURSE, SUSTAINABILITY IN ALL ITS FORMS.“

STYRIARTE

Like the La Strada Graz festival, [the Styriarte music festival](#) also takes place in Graz during the summer months – over the time of four weeks. If you visit Graz during summer, you will have a good chance of experiencing one or two Styriarte performances during your trip.

Mathis Huber, the festival's artistic director, takes a rather refreshing approach to staging music and culture:

„IT DOESN'T MATTER WHETHER YOU ARE SITTING IN MY CONCERT HALL IN JEANS OR WEARING A HAWAIIAN SHIRT: THE MAIN THING IS THAT YOU ENJOY THE MUSIC AND OUR PERFORMANCE!“

The Styriarte is thus not a conventional, classical music festival, but constantly reinvents itself. In doing so, it leaves the beaten track - for example with the highly successful bicycle concerts in the city of Graz. The focus is on young people; on the one hand to promote young musicians and on the other hand to inspire a younger audience for classical music.

Styriarte has also written sustainability into its own manifesto. This ensures sustainability in production, in operations, in communication and in the work of all those involved.

As a visitor, you can rest assured that the festival organisers are taking real responsibility. This includes simple and effective measures such as the aforementioned bicycle concerts (I really want to try this out myself!), offering fair trade coffee, vegetarian and vegan catering alternatives, gender-appropriate language, diversity and much more.



La Strada Graz © La Strada Graz / Nikola Milatovic.



Styriarte bicycle concert and the „Treppauf, Treppab“ performance © Nikola Milatovic.

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sustainable event tips

GRAZ TRUFFLE FESTIVAL

A truffle hunt in Graz? Yes, that is possible. Rest assured though: If the specially trained dog Camou hadn't dug up real truffles out of the Graz Forest floor right under my nose, I would still be inclined not to believe the story about the Graz truffles.

It has been around 10 years since the first truffles were found in the Graz city forests. Since then, the Graz Forest School has been offering guided truffle hikes in the Leechwald forest every year, working together with the city government.

To get to the truffles or simply to enjoy a nice walk in the forest, just hop on tram line 1 in the centre of Graz and get off at the Hilmteich - Botanischer Garten stop. From there, it is only a few minutes to the Graz Forest School and the entrance to the Leechwald forest.

During the impressive search in the autumnal forest, Camou and her dog friends actually track down the now famous Graz truffles. As part of the hike, we even get to savour a few of them on the spot: freshly grated over a simple pasta dish. The result is a wonderful, memorable, very flavoursome experience

Truffles are considered a "diamond" in the kitchen: unique, precious and rare. With the International Truffle Festival, Graz offers you several attractive

opportunities to experience truffles in all their form and variety. [Click here for an overview of all the culinary events in Graz, leading you to an annual description of the International Truffle Festival Graz.](#)

You should also head over to the International Truffle Market in the Paradeishof, freely accessible to the public near Graz's main square. Here, numerous exhibitors from Austria and abroad present exquisite, high-quality truffle specialities from their respective regions. What I learnt from the conversations on site is that the Graz Truffle is really worthy of international attention.

Of course, you can also experience and taste the Graz Truffle in one of the numerous partner businesses of the GenussHauptstadt Graz Capital of Delight.

Tip: To enjoy Graz truffles as part of a truffle menu, book a table at one of the truffle festival's partner restaurants. I can recommend Restaurant Schlossberg, dreizehn by Gauster and Café Sacher for a true truffle experience in Graz.



Fresh Graz truffles, dug up by the specially trained dog Camou in Graz's Leechwald forest. Truffles are also used to flavour the simple pasta dish at the International Truffle Market in the Paradeishof in Graz: a unique experience that is well worth living!

CHRISTMAS SEASON IN GRAZ

Christmas markets, conviviality and the season's colourful hustle and bustle all over town: let the smell of roasted chestnuts guide you while holding that steaming cup mulled wine in your hands! The Christmas season really is a very special time of year to visit the Graz Region. Graz asks you: would you like to try a Schilcher mulled wine this time, a hot drink unique to Graz and Styria?

Besides, Graz has a fascinating, larger-than-life size Nativity Scene made entirely out of ice to look and marvel at. You can explore Graz visiting one of the city's 14 Christmas markets, even try and sing Christmas carols at the local Christmas Carol Office (no previous experience needed). The Steirisches Heimatwerk running the Christmas Carol Office is your go-to address for learning more about famous Christmas songs, their lyrics and melodies, as well as Christmas customs from all over the world.

Tip: The city of Graz also offers special guided city tours during the advent season. I have had the pleasure of joining one such tour with Graz Guide Sigrid Alber. We went to Mehlplatz, Glockenspielplatz, the "Artvent" in the Joanneum museum district and, of course, the Christmas market at the main square. [Click here for all information about the Christmas markets and event tips in the Graz Region.](#)

Short distances are another main characteristic of the Graz Christmas markets: you can walk easily from one market to the next, or use another fairy-tale like option of transport: the Graz Christmas tram! All of these offers combined will ensure you'll have a wonderful pre-Christmas experience, enjoying the special atmosphere in town.



Christmas season in Graz.

#DISCOVERGRAZREGION

sustainable event tips

LUMAGICA LIGHT PARK

I have had the pleasure to visit Lumagica Light Park as part of my Christmas trip to Graz and can only recommend you do the same. The light park and its even grounds, easily accessible by wheelchair and strollers alike, will lead you across the grounds of the Murhof Golf Club near Frohnleiten. Its sound and light show is second to none, a great juxtaposition to the merry hustle and bustle in downtown Graz.

Good to know: the Lumagica Light Park continues its offers well beyond the Christmas season, and remains open for visitors over the New Year and into the month of January.

As for making the one-and-a-half-kilometre journey, I recommend you take at least one hour, if not more. Access is granted through virtual ticket windows in order to steer visitor flows; make sure you book yours on time. Some Lumagica lights even change light or sound upon touching; I even remember a light dragon breathing real fire

Should you feel cold towards the end of your visit, you can warm up visiting one of the nearby huts offering hot drinks and snacks.

Tip: You can easily reach the magical Lumagica Light Park using public transport. Simply take the regional tram line all the way to Frohnleiten, where a free shuttle will provide a "last mile" transfer to the Lumagica Light Park (please check to make sure the shuttle runs on the days of your visit, as sometimes, it may only run on weekends).

Personally, I think it's great that [the light park publishes an account on its energy footprint](#). Read more about its contribution to sustainability, what with energy-efficient LED lighting technology making a significant contribution to consuming as little energy as possible.

GRAZ CARD

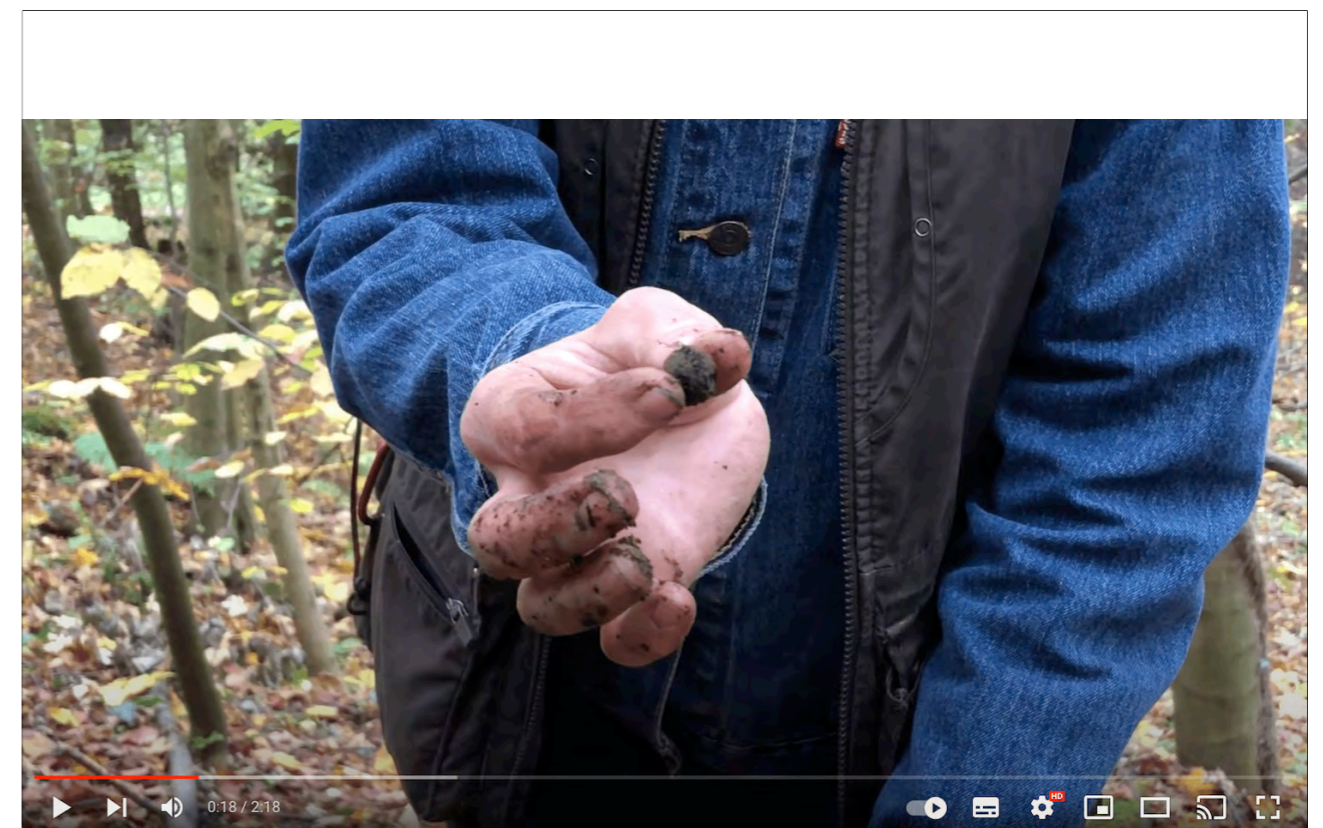
The Graz Card offers you many discount benefits in and around Graz, as well as the use of all public transport within Zone 101 free of charge. This includes the S-Bahn, trams, buses, the Schlossbergbahn funicular and the Schlossberg lift. It also includes a free guided tour of the historic city centre, which you can book at the Graz Region Tourist Information Office

You can buy the Graz Card for 24, 48 or 72 hours, save a mobile version on your smartphone or take a printed copy with you. With every Graz Card, two children up to the ages of 15 are included free of charge.

Check out this website and [learn more about all the discounts, attractions and other advantages you have in exploring Graz with the Graz Card](#).



Some of my impressions of the Lumagica Light Park in Frohnleiten near Graz.



My experience at the truffle festival in Graz

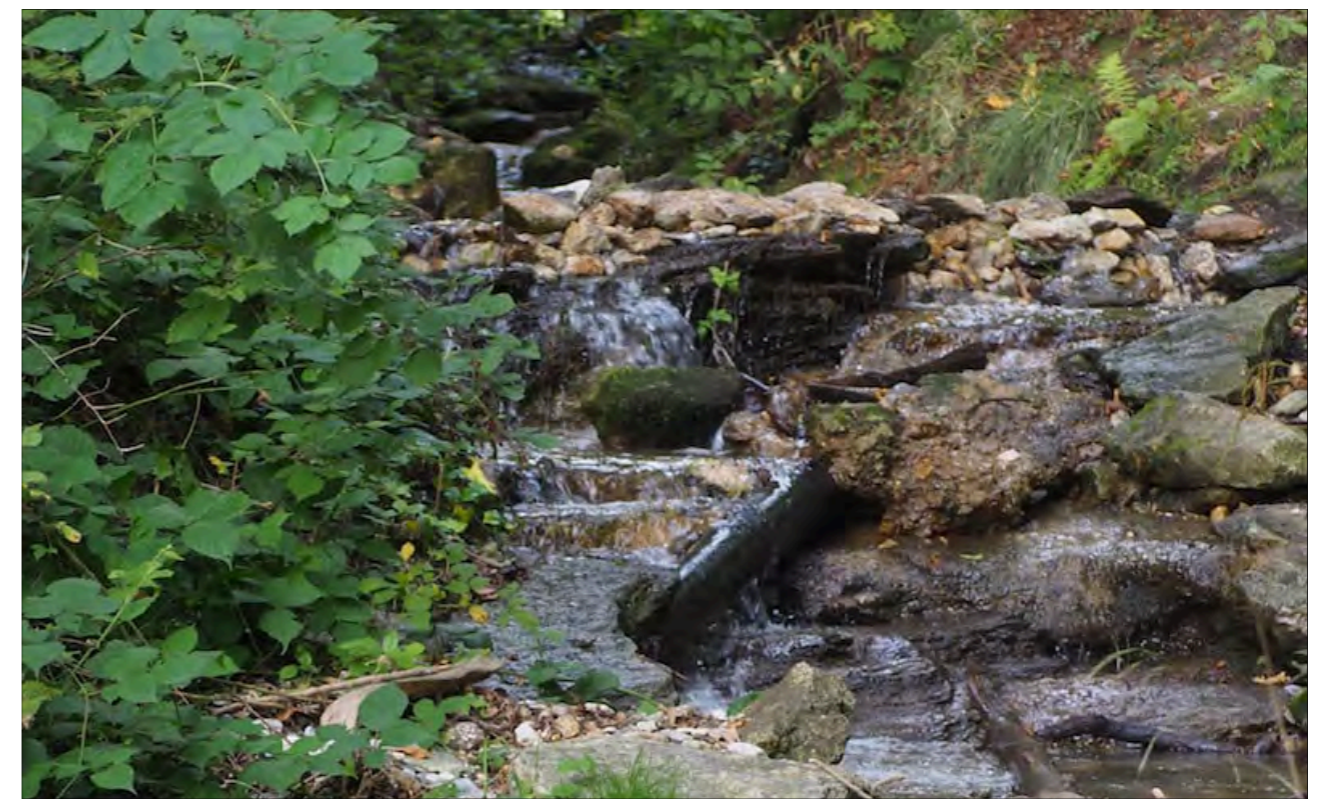
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sustainable event tips

FURTHER WEBLINKS, TIPS AND IDEAS TO HELP YOU PLAN YOUR NEXT STAY IN GRAZ

Below, I have put together a selection of books and blogs that will further help you prepare for a visit to Graz and/or will make you want to visit (again)!

As for books, all my recommendations are in German language only:



Just as the spring bubbles up here in the Graz Region, there are many enthusiastic authors who share their experiences online.



The following blogs about Graz are particularly worth reading, especially where sustainable travel is concerned:

- [International Blog Section about Graz](#), written by different bloggers from all over the world visiting Graz and Austria
- [Sustainable Cities – For Concious Travellers](#), curating responsible travel stories about Graz
- [Personal tips about Graz](#), written and published on my Creativlena travel blog

My German-speaking friends and content creators have published the following tips and useful advice about Graz:

- Smaracuja: [Tips about Graz written by Nina Hüpen-Bestendonk](#)
- Gepackt & Los: [Tips about Graz written by Janine Wenzel](#)
- Reisepsycho: [Tips about Graz written by Barbara Horvatits-Ebner](#)
- AnitaAufReisen: [Tips about Graz written by Anita Arneitz](#)
- Kofferpacken: [Tips about Graz written by Maria Kapeller](#)



All is well that ends well – also in Graz

Ready to pack your bags? The Graz Region awaits you with all of the wonderful activities and experiences mentioned throughout the course of this book.

Do you have a question left unanswered, or would you simply like to contact us? We will be happy to assist you in any way possible.



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Did you know ...

AT 290 KM THE MUR IS THE LONGEST RIVER IN STYRIA

THE GRAZER KRAUTHÄUPTL WAS FIRST MENTIONED IN 1913

The Busserlstiege in Graz is an important double spiral staircase from the 15th century.

REIN ABBEY IS THE OLDEST, ACTIVE CISTERCIAN ABBEY IN THE WORLD

THE BICEPS OF THE SCHWARZENEGGER STATUE MEASURES 76,5CM

OVER 140 DESTINATIONS

THE PREMSTÄTTEN SCULPTURE PARK IS ONE OF THE TOP 10 IN EUROPE

See you soon in Graz!

#DISCOVER GRAZ REGION



*„Graz is a city,
that you don't leave,
without becoming truly fond of it.“*

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe