

Dear Fellow Travelers:

This is our **final letter to you before we all meet in Vienna**, and it includes important information about your textbooks, social events, your Vienna metro pass, and other details to facilitate your arrival in Austria. So please read this thoroughly. We are as excited as you are; let's enjoy our final preparations.

Deadline Reminder: Be sure to pay the remainder of your tuition. Tuition became non-refundable after May 1, and students are not allowed to drop courses or seminars abroad after May 1.

Arrival in Vienna: Check-In

When you arrive in Vienna be sure to check in with us at the Atlas Hotel and pick up your program packet. We will have assistants located on the outside patio/restaurant (or in the lobby in case of rain) ready to greet you all day on the Saturday (July 4) and Sunday (July 5) of your arrival. We will also take you on a brief orientation walk to the Rathaus Festival.

At this time, you will also be given your basic textbook, *The Austrian Legal System*, for the Comparative Legal Systems course. You should have received the small introductory text that you are asked to read before the course, Merryman's *The Civil Law Tradition*. If you have not, please contact Judy Corcoran as soon as possible.

Welcome and First Week Activities

The first week is packed with special activities, as the enclosed Tentative Calendar of Events shows. These are "tried and true" activities popular over the years, and we encourage everyone to join in.

A. Welcome Dinners

1) For those of you who arrive in Vienna on Saturday, join us for an informal dinner at a trendy micro-pub, the 7 Stern Bräu (Seven Star Brewery). This popular restaurant/brewery features several types of beer and serves awesome ribs!

If you would like to join us, a group will depart from the Atlas at 5:30, or just meet us there at 6 p.m. You can order whatever you like from an interesting menu; this is a "Dutch-treat" dinner. http://www.7stern.at/en_index.html

After dinner, the group will go to the opening night of the Rathaus Film Festival for further socializing and music.

2) On Sunday, everyone should be sure to join us for our opening dinner-reception from 6:00 to 7:30 at the stunning Rathaus (Vienna's famous City Hall) on the Ringstrasse by the film festival. If you have any doubts about its location, join the group leaving the Atlas at 5:30. Following this free, introductory dinner-reception, we will guide you on the short walk to the law school and then return to the film festival to cap off the evening. This fun event offers the best opportunity to meet fellow travelers and to find the way to the law school.

B. Walks/Tours

On each weekday after class, we lead students on one-hour walks (or metro rides) to show key sights in the city.

1) Monday, 6th July, after class we will take a short walking tour to the historic center of the old city, highlighting landmarks and principal shopping streets, and concluding for refreshment in the plaza outside the great St. Stephens Cathedral.

2) Tuesday, 7th July – Right after class, we hop on the U2 for the quick ride (2 stops) to the famous Art History museum. This world famous structure offers world-class art and architecture, and you can join our free group guided tour or just roam at your leisure.

On Tuesday night, most of the group will visit a Heuriger (restaurant and winery) in the Vienna Woods. The price is approximately \$25, but more if you stay late running up your tab. We will make reservations as a group, and guides will lead the way from the law school and the Atlas.

3) Wednesday, July 8th, after class we will take an Architecture Tour in the historic center.

4) Thursday, 9th July - Right after class, we hop on the U4 to visit the Schönbrunn Palace (The Hapsburgs' Versailles).

5) Friday, we hop on the tram to go to the train station for our journey to Prague.

6) Saturday, 11th July - Three walking tours are offered in Prague on Saturday morning from 10:30 until 11:30.

D. Now for a condensed summary of our best advice for pleasant travel

Yes, Europe is Wonderful, all is prepared, and we look forward to a fun experience. All that really remains is for each of us to complete our own personal preparations. Get excited about the trip, but remember that Europe is 5000 miles away from your own apartment, your personal kitchen, your car, etc. So it will be different in day-to-day living, and thorough preparation will make it much better for you.

Remember that anytime you travel - anywhere – there is the thrill of adventure, but there will be some inconvenience. We want everyone to understand from the start that there may not be Diet Coke at every restaurant - You may have to settle for regular Coke, or even Diet Pepsi!

Sounds silly, doesn't it? But it's better now to come to grips with our American preferences and be ready to adapt to the differences of Europe. You will find lots of real butter, cream, and fresh salads - but not diet margarine everywhere. Don't worry, most people walk off these delicious extra calories.

Yes, there is McDonald's, and Starbucks near the university, but you will want to try some European food, for sure. The Austrians take pride in the purity and quality of their food. And the Austrians do meats very well. Grandma's roast beef with mashed potatoes can be found in every good Austrian restaurant. But, you will notice that they do not obsessively trim every sliver of fat from the meat. So trim it yourself, and get over it. Another minor inconvenience is that waiters in Europe tend to resist being rushed - especially when 20 of us walk in and demand immediate service - so don't push them, or you will just make matters worse. Be polite, relax and enjoy your meal time.

You should check your *Vienna Eyewitness Travel Guide*, a fantastic guide for the city and surrounding areas. Located the back of the book is a German-English phrase section with a menu guide. If you are fearful of the food out of ignorance - you will miss some delicious dishes. In any event, just order RoastBraten (Roast beef) or Wiener Schnitzel (fried veal or chicken - my kids go crazy for it), and you can't go wrong. Also, salads are exceptionally good: just ask for a green salad. There are many Italian, Chinese, and Mediterranean restaurants all over Vienna, too. So enjoy the food.

1) Hotels: If you have not made your hotel reservations for the side-trips, please consider how difficult this will be in Europe using a pay phone - and the rooms fill up. So be smart - do it now. If you have made your hotel reservations, please be sure to bring your confirmations along with you.

2) Train and bus tickets:

Prague: 1st class – 125 Euro 2nd class – 85 Euro

The train for Prague departs on July 10 from the Sudbahnhof (south train station) at 3:58 p.m. and arrives at the Prague Central Station at 8:01 p.m. on train # EC16.

We will return to Vienna on July 13 from Prague Holesovice at 1:30 p.m. and arrive in Vienna (Sudbahnhof – south train station) at 6:01 on train # EC173.

For Salzburg, we have purchased one way tickets. This way everyone can return when they we want. The trains run every hour and you can easily purchase your return ticket in the train station.

Salzburg: 1st class – 45 Euro 2nd class – 25 Euro

The train for Salzburg departs Vienna on July 18 at 1:40 p.m. from the Westbahnhof (west train station) on train # OEC566 arriving at 4:27 p.m.

For those of you that reserved tickets, payment must be paid in Vienna with Euro's. Exact change is greatly appreciated. We will be accepting payments before, during, and after class on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday of the first week.

The weekend trains are fun. Traveling in a club car with friends can make the hours pass quickly. **But pack lightly** - you have to lift your bags to the overhead racks yourself - for real!

Not everyone should buy a EURAIL PASS (they are complicated and full of "fine print"); unless you have calculated how many days you will travel, it may be cheaper to use group tickets for Prague and Salzburg.

3) Metro Pass: For the first week, we will give everyone a free metro pass - Vienna public transportation is excellent. After that ticket expires, be sure to get a new ticket or a pass; inspectors do verify tickets when you least expect it. (We are not happy to tell you that a few of our skeptical participants have been fined - it's about \$60, on the spot).

4) Money: Remember that you must have a PIN to get money from your debit or credit card. So check with your bank to be sure you are set for this. Debit and credit cards offer a much more convenient and cheaper way to get money over there than traveler's checks. We do not recommend traveler's checks - they are expensive to exchange. (AmEx offices - when they are available and open - exchange them for "free" but the rate is not so good.). Prior to your departure you need to contact your bank and let them know were you will be traveling. This way, they won't block your card.

5) Weather: In Europe the weather has been described as unpredictable, so we advise you to prepare for four seasons! Do bring a light rain shell, but you can buy nice sweatshirts in Vienna for less than here. Do bring some shorts, too. We'll have hot (in Italy for sure) and chilly days (in Prague or when it rains).

6) Laptops: You may want to bring your laptop to use in the hotel for Internet use. The Atlas Hotel is offering free internet service in your room to all Loyola students. Please be sure to bring your Ethernet cable for the hook-up.

7) You health insurance information and important phone numbers are included in the packet. Please be sure to bring this information along with you.

Finally, the Austrian beer is regarded by most of our students as magnificent (sausages and pretzels too!), and the fresh heuriger wine is light and smooth. But be cautious: it is all more potent than you expect. So we recommend the "buddy system" for this and for all aspects of the trip, so hang out together, help one another, and enjoy the trip of a lifetime!

We look forward to seeing you in Vienna!

Auf Wiedersehen!

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