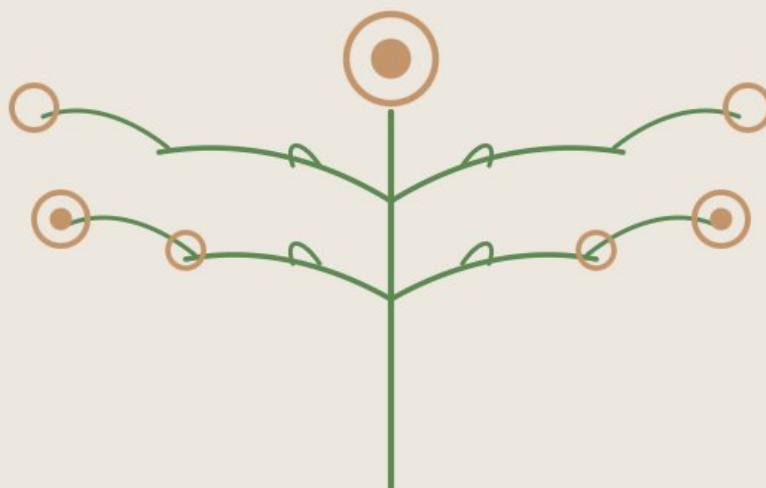




48 HOURS IN

Salzburg

BLOOM WHERE YOU WANDER

WELCOME

GoingSolo.Life

Welcome to Salzburg.

Salzburg is one of the best-preserved baroque cities in the world, the birthplace of Mozart, the setting of The Sound of Music, and the home of one of the most important classical music festivals on the annual calendar. It is also — for a city of 150,000 — remarkably easy to inhabit. The Altstadt is compact and UNESCO-listed. The fortress looks down from the hill. The Salzach divides the old city from the modern quarter. The Alps appear at the end of every street.

This guide gives you 48 hours built around how Salzburg actually works: the Mirabell Gardens before 9:30am, the fortress ramparts at opening, the trick fountains at Hellbrunn on Day 2. It also tells you where the Sound of Music ends and the actual city begins — which is almost immediately after you leave Getreidegasse.

How to Use This Guide

- Read through once before you arrive — get the geography of both river banks in mind.
- Day 1 covers the right-bank Mirabell, the Altstadt Getreidegasse, and the cathedral quarter.
- Day 2 climbs to the fortress early, then goes south to Hellbrunn, then ends on the river.
- The Salzburg Card covers all buses, the Festungsbahn cable car, and most museum entries.
- Festival season (July–August) means higher prices, more crowds, better concerts. Plan accordingly.

Essential Quick Facts

Currency	Euro (€). Cards widely accepted. ATMs throughout the Altstadt.
Transport	Salzburg Card (24h €29 / 48h €38) covers buses, cable car, most museums.
Weather	Alpine climate with high rainfall. Umbrella essential year-round. Warm June–August.
Time Zone	CET (UTC+1) winter · CEST (UTC+2) summer.
Emergency	112 all emergencies. Tourist police at Mozartplatz.
Tipping	5–10% at restaurants. Round up at coffee houses. Not expected at beer halls.
Festival	Salzburg Festival (late July–Aug): book hotels 6+ months ahead. Ticket scarcity is real.

DAY ONE

Day One

Mirabell · Getreidegasse · Cathedral Quarter

Day One stays within the UNESCO Altstadt and the Mirabell Gardens across the river — a concentrated area of extraordinary baroque architecture, Mozart's documented life, and the medieval commercial street that now functions as the city's most famous promenade. The three baroque squares at the end of the day — Domplatz, Residenzplatz, Kapitelplatz — are Salzburg at its most monumental.

MORNING 9:00 AM – 1:00 PM**9:00 AM****Mirabell Palace & Gardens**

Baroque palace built in 1606 for the Prince-Archbishop of Salzburg and rebuilt after a fire in 1818. The palace houses municipal offices; the gardens are the destination. Geometrically formal with a central marble fountain, they offer the definitive framed view of Hohensalzburg Fortress above the city roofline. The Marble Hall inside (Marmorsaal) hosts regular chamber concerts — one of the most beautiful small concert halls in Europe.

INSIDER TIP

The Mirabell Gardens are free and open all day. The view of the fortress from the garden's northern terrace is the best photograph in Salzburg taken from ground level. Come before 9:30am to have it without a Sound of Music tour group in the frame. The garden's dwarf statues along the hedge borders are 18th-century originals — look for the ones with intact faces.

10:00 AM**Mozart's Birthplace (Geburtshaus)**

Getreidegasse 9. The apartment where Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart was born in January 1756 and where the family lived until his seventeenth year. Three floors contain period instruments including the violin he played as a child, portraits, family letters, and the domestic environment of a 18th-century Salzburg musician's household. Essential even for those indifferent to classical music — the building itself is extraordinary and the collection is authentic.

INSIDER TIP

The audio guide is included in the ticket and worth using. Allow 75 minutes. Do not rush the instrument room on the top floor — the original viola and keyboard instruments are the most affecting objects in the museum. The contrast between Mozart the man (revealed here) and Mozart the global brand (visible throughout the city) is one of Salzburg's more interesting tensions.

11:15 AM**Getreidegasse — The Guild Street**

Salzburg's medieval main commercial street: narrow, cobbled, lined with wrought-iron guild signs projecting from 15th-century building facades. Now primarily a retail street, but the architecture and the ironwork are museum-quality. The side passages (Durchgänge) connecting to inner courtyards are the most interesting feature — these are where the city's actual commerce operated for five centuries.

INSIDER TIP

Look up at the signs rather than at the shop windows. The ironwork represents one of the finest collections of civic guild signage in Central Europe. The Durchgänge on the north side of the street open into courtyards that still show the original medieval urban structure. Avoid the Getreidegasse restaurants — one street in either direction is significantly better value.

AFTERNOON 1:00 PM – 7:00 PM**1:00 PM****Lunch: Stiftskeller St. Peter or Café Tomaselli**

Stiftskeller St. Peter in the courtyard of St. Peter's Abbey: one of the oldest continuously operating restaurants in the world, documented to 803 AD. Authentic Austrian cooking in an extraordinary setting — Tafelspitz (boiled beef with accompaniments), Salzburger Nockerl (soufflé dessert native to this city), and a serious Austrian wine list. Or Café Tomaselli on Alter Markt: Salzburg's oldest coffee house since 1705, for Kaffee und Kuchen before the afternoon walk through the cathedral quarter.

INSIDER TIP

Stiftskeller is more expensive than average Salzburg restaurants but the setting and cooking quality justify it. Book ahead at stiftskeller.at for weekend lunch. The Tafelspitz is the order. Café Tomaselli is the correct choice if budget is a concern — the Melange and pastry at the marble-topped bar is one of the most authentic coffee house experiences in Austria.

2:30 PM**Salzburg Cathedral & DomQuartier**

The most important baroque cathedral in the German-speaking world, consecrated in 1628 after thirty years of construction. The facade faces Domplatz — one of the finest baroque squares on the continent. The font in which Mozart was baptized is in the south nave. The DomQuartier ticket links the Cathedral museum, the Residenz State Rooms, and the Panorama Museum in a single combined entry, including a cathedral roof walkway.

INSIDER TIP

Buy the DomQuartier ticket at domquartier.at — CHF 14, worth it for the State Rooms alone. The cathedral roof walkway is included and gives a view across the Altstadt roovescape that few visitors take. The Residenz State Rooms on the floor above the courtyard are among the finest secular baroque interiors in Austria — the painted ceilings alone are worth the entry.

4:00 PM**Residenzplatz & Mozartplatz**

Walk from Domplatz through Residenzplatz — the civic centre of baroque Salzburg, with the largest baroque fountain north of the Alps — to Mozartplatz. The three connected squares (Domplatz, Residenzplatz, Kapitelplatz) form the most complete ensemble of baroque urban planning in Austria. The Kapitelplatz sphere (Stephan Balkenhol, 2007) is a large contemporary sculpture — a man standing on a golden globe — entirely incongruous and entirely successful.

INSIDER TIP

Residenzplatz at dusk is the best time to be here — the evening light on the baroque facades and the carillon bells from the Dom create a specific atmospheric effect that is difficult to find elsewhere. The Residenz itself (the Prince-Archbishop's palace) has State Rooms included in the DomQuartier ticket. The concert schedule for the Marmorsaal and cathedral performances is at mozarteum.at.

EVENING 7:30 PM – LATE

DAY TWO

Day Two

Hohensalzburg · Hellbrunn · River Walk

Day Two climbs to the fortress that has defined this city's skyline for nearly a thousand years, descends through the abbey grounds, then moves south to the most extraordinary outdoor installation in Central Europe. The day ends on the Salzach with the Altstadt reflected in the water at dusk — the finest urban view in Austria and one of the most photographed in the alpine region.

MORNING 9:00 AM – 1:00 PM**9:00 AM**

Hohensalzburg Fortress

Europe's largest fully preserved medieval castle, built from 1077 and expanded continuously through the 18th century. The fortress ramparts offer a panorama of the entire Salzburg basin: the Alps in every direction, the city spread flat below, the Salzach glinting in morning light. The interior contains the Prince-Archbishop's State Rooms, including the Goldene Stube (Golden Chamber) — the finest secular medieval interior in the city — and the Salzburg Bull, a barrel organ from 1502 that still functions.

INSIDER TIP

Book tickets online at salzburg-burgen.at to skip the cable car queue. The fortress opens at 9am — arrive at opening to walk the ramparts without the main tour group volume. The Goldene Stube is the interior highlight: tilework stove, gilded carved wood, and ceiling decoration from the early 16th century. The views from the Reckturm bastion are wider than Fisherman's Bastion in Budapest and less photographed. Best in morning light.

10:45 AM

Nonnberg Abbey & Kapitelplatz

Below the fortress, Nonnberg Abbey (founded 714 AD) is the oldest continuously occupied women's convent in the German-speaking world. The abbey church is open to visitors; the medieval interior contains frescoes dating from the 12th century. Walk down through the abbey grounds to Kapitelplatz — the large square at the foot of the fortress hill, with its 1732 spherical monument and the contemporary Balkenhol figure.

INSIDER TIP

Nonnberg Abbey was the convent of Maria von Trapp (the real Maria from The Sound of Music). The Benedictine community still lives here in full enclosure. The church interior is small and genuinely medieval — different in scale and feeling from the baroque grandeur of the Dom below. The acoustics in the nave during a quiet morning are remarkable. No photography inside.

AFTERNOON 1:00 PM – 7:00 PM**12:00 PM****Lunch: Müln Quarter or Café Bazar**

Cross the Salzach to the Müln quarter for lunch — the quietest and most locally-lived neighbourhood in Salzburg. Bärenwirt on Müllner Hauptstrasse for traditional Salzburg cooking at fair prices, or the small cafés along Steingasse for a lighter lunch before the afternoon drive to Hellbrunn. Or Café Bazar on Schwarzstrasse: the grand riverside café with a wood-panelled dining room, Austrian classics, and a terrace over the Salzach.

INSIDER TIP

Café Bazar is the most atmospheric lunch option in the city — a genuine grand café that has been the meeting place of Salzburg's cultural life since 1926. The terrace over the Salzach is particularly fine in summer. The Müln neighbourhood cafés are cheaper and more local. Both are significantly better than eating in the Getreidegasse tourist zone.

1:30 PM**Hellbrunn Palace & Trick Fountains**

6km south of the Altstadt — take Bus 25 from Rudolfskai (every 30 minutes, 20-minute ride). The 1615 summer palace of Prince-Archbishop Markus Sittikus was built as a pleasure ground and contains the most remarkable outdoor installation in Central Europe: 31 trick fountains and water-powered mechanical figures, all still operational, all still surprising visitors four centuries later. The oldest intact outdoor theatrical space in the world is in the garden.

INSIDER TIP

The trick fountain tour is only available with a guide (departures every 30 minutes, 45-minute duration). You will get wet — there is genuinely no way to avoid it and no appropriate footwear exists. The experience is unlike anything else in Austrian tourism. The mechanical theatre with water-powered figures depicting 17th-century trades is extraordinary — 113 figures, all moving. Buy tickets at hellbrunn.at. Allow 2 hours total.

4:00 PM**Return to Salzburg & Makartsteg**

Bus 25 back to Rudolfskai. Walk the Salzach embankment south from the Staatsbrücke — the longest view of the Altstadt from the right-bank promenade. The Makartsteg footbridge crossing to the Müln side gives the closest view of the old city from the water level. The reflection of the Dom, the fortress, and the old city in the Salzach at late afternoon is the defining Salzburg photograph.

INSIDER TIP

The left-bank (Altstadt side) embankment walk from the Staatsbrücke to the Mozartsteg gives the best elevated view of the city's full riverside facade — fortress above, cathedral dome, the baroque spires of St. Peter and Franciscan Church. Late afternoon light in summer from 5–7pm is the peak window for this photograph.

EVENING 7:30 PM – LATE

Where to Eat

The No-Tourist-Trap Food Guide

BREAKFAST & COFFEE

Café Tomaselli

€6–14

Alter Markt 9

Salzburg's oldest coffee house since 1705. The correct Salzburg breakfast: Melange (Vienna coffee with milk), fresh Kipferl, and the daily newspapers on wooden holders. Standing at the bar or sit-down table service — both correct.

Bäckerei Braun

€3–7

Multiple locations

Salzburg bakery chain for a proper Austrian Frühstück — fresh bread, butter, cheese, ham, and soft-boiled egg. The benchmark for an early breakfast before the Mirabell Gardens.

LUNCH

Stiftskeller St. Peter

€22–40

St. Peter Bezirk 1/4

One of the oldest restaurants in the world, documented to 803 AD. Tafelspitz, Salzburger Nockerl, Austrian wine list. The setting is extraordinary; the cooking matches it. Book ahead at stiftskeller.at.

Zum Fiden Affen

€16–28

Priesterhausgasse 8

Long-running Austrian tavern one block from Getreidegasse. Bauernschmaus, Käsespätzle, local wine. The best-value dinner option in the Altstadt — also excellent for lunch.

Café Bazar

€18–30

Schwarzstrasse 3

Grand riverside café since 1926. Wood-panelled dining room, Austrian classics, terrace over the Salzach. The most atmospheric lunch in Salzburg.

DINNER

Esszimmer

€55–90

Müllner Hauptstrasse 33

The most ambitious kitchen in Salzburg. Modern Austrian seasonal menu, Michelin-recognised, serious wine programme. Book well ahead at esszimmer.com.

Bärenwirt

€14–24

Müllner Hauptstrasse 8

Traditional Salzburg cooking on the right bank, Müln quarter. Local crowd, fair prices, no tourist markup. The most authentic neighbourhood dinner option in the city.

Ikarus, Hangar 7

€120–180

Wilhelm-Spazier-Strasse 7a

Monthly rotating guest chef format at the Red Bull Hangar 7 — extraordinary setting, extraordinary cooking. Check the programme at hangar-7.com. Book months ahead.

BARS

Augustiner Bräustübl

€5–9/L

Augustinergasse 4/6

Self-service brewery beer hall since 1621, operated by monks. Litre ceramic mugs, wooden barrel service, four indoor halls and a summer garden. Cash only. The real thing.

Saiten Sprung**€8–16**

Steingasse 11

Wine bar in the most atmospheric street in Salzburg. Small, serious, local. Best after 9pm.

Sternbrauerei**€6–12**

Griesgasse 23

Historic Stern brewery courtyard beer garden. Salzburg's second major beer hall option — less famous than Augustiner, more central, equally authentic.

A Note on Eating in Salzburg

Salzburg is priced significantly below Vienna but above typical Austrian small cities. Festival season (July–August) adds 20–30% to most prices. The restaurants visible from Getreidegasse are tourist-priced — one street away, quality improves and prices drop noticeably.

Navigating Salzburg

Salzburg's Altstadt is almost entirely pedestrianized — leave luggage at the Hauptbahnhof and navigate on foot within the old city. The trolleybus network covers the outlying districts; Bus 25 is essential for Hellbrunn. The Salzburg Card is the best single purchase for a 48-hour visit.

Routes You Will Actually Use

Bus 25

Rudolfskai Hellbrunn (every 30 min). Essential for Day 2. 20-minute ride south of the city.

Bus 1/4

Hauptbahnhof Mirabellplatz Altstadt. The main connection from the train station to the historic centre.

Bus 3/8

Altstadt Mülln. Cross-river connection to the Mülln neighbourhood restaurants and Augustiner.

Festungsbahn

Cable car from Festungsgasse to Hohensalzburg Fortress. Runs daily; included in Salzburg Card. 14€ without card.

Bus 10

City centre Airport. 30-minute journey; runs every 15–20 minutes.

Practical Tips

Salzburg Card (24h €29 / 48h €38 / 72h €44) covers all buses, the Festungsbahn cable car, and free entry to most museums — the best single purchase for this visit. Buy at the airport or any tourist information office.

The Altstadt is pedestrianized — most streets are walking-only between 8am and 8pm. Don't attempt to drive in. Taxis stop at the Altstadt perimeter.

The Festungsbahn cable car queue can be 20–30 minutes on busy mornings. Book online at salzburg-burgen.at to skip it.

Bikes: Salzburg has 450km of cycle paths; Nextbike rental stations throughout the city — flat, easy cycling along the Salzach embankment.

Salzburg Airport (SZG) is 4km from centre. Bus 10 (30 min, €2.40) or taxi (€12–15). No direct train connection.

Contingency

Backup Plans

Salzburg in the rain is one of the most comfortable cities in Austria. The museum concentration in the DomQuartier, the covered Augustinerkeller, and the exceptional indoor cultural programme (chamber concerts, opera, organ recitals) all improve in wet weather.

Museum der Moderne

Contemporary art on the Mönchsberg cliff-top, reached by lift from Gstättengasse. The building itself is architecturally significant — cast concrete above the baroque city. Programme changes quarterly.

Haus der Natur

Natural history museum with one of the best aquariums in Austria and a science centre. Outstanding for its scale relative to the city — a full half-day museum, genuinely excellent.

Mozart Wohnhaus

The Mozart family's second Salzburg apartment at Makartplatz 8, where they lived from 1773 to 1787. Less visited than the Geburtshaus and gives a more complete picture of Mozart's Salzburg years. The replica instruments on the upper floor are playable.

Mirabell Marble Hall Concerts

Regular chamber concerts in the most beautiful small concert hall in Salzburg — the Marmorsaal inside Mirabell Palace. Check schedule at mozarteum.at. Often the only ticket available at short notice during festival periods.

Museum Carolino Augusteum

Salzburg's city museum with Celtic and Roman archaeological finds from the region. The Roman mosaics from the Salzburg excavations are among the best-preserved north of the Alps.

Queue-Beating Strategies

Hohensalzburg: Book online at salzburg-burgen.at. The cable car queue is longest between 10am and noon.

Hellbrunn: First guided tour of the trick fountains at 9am (May–Oct) avoids the main group crush.

Mozart Geburtshaus: Book ahead at mozarteum.at during high season (June–August).

DomQuartier: Book at domquartier.at. Combined ticket worth buying even for a single attraction.

Augustiner Bräustübl: No booking required — just arrive. Busiest Friday evenings, calmest weekday afternoons.

Know Your City

Know Your Neighbourhoods

The districts that matter for your 48 hours in Salzburg.

Altstadt / Innenstadt

LEFT BANK · UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE

Cathedral, Residenz, Getreidegasse, Festungsberg. The entire historic core. Almost entirely pedestrianized. Contains most of Day 1.

Möln / Andräviertel

RIGHT BANK NORTH · OLDEST NEIGHBOURHOOD

Augustiner Bräustübl, Steingasse, riverside walk. The most local and atmospheric quarter in Salzburg for an evening.

Neustadt / Elisabeth

RIGHT BANK SOUTH · MODERN CENTRE

Mirabellplatz, Salzburg Museum, Mozartsteg footbridge. The modern administrative centre of Salzburg across the river.

Nonntal / Festungsberg

LEFT BANK SOUTH · FORTRESS APPROACH

Nonnberg Abbey, the path to Hohensalzburg, residential quiet. The correct morning approach to the fortress before the cable car crowds.

Schallmoos

RIGHT BANK EAST · LOCAL COMMERCIAL

Local commercial district with airport bus connections and residential authenticity. Worth knowing for early departures.

Aigen / Gnigl

SOUTHEAST · RESIDENTIAL

Wealthier outer district. Schloss Aigen day walk if you have extra time. The neighbourhood where Festival visitors often stay.

Essential Tips

What Nobody Tells You About Salzburg

The Sound of Music is optional

The tour buses and the soundtrack can be entirely ignored. The actual city — fortress, baroque squares, Augustiner beer hall, Steingasse — is more interesting than the film locations.

The fortress view from below

The best view of Hohensalzburg is from the Mirabell Gardens, not from inside the fortress. Know both; photograph from both.

You will get wet at Hellbrunn

The trick fountains at Hellbrunn are still operational and still surprising. There is no appropriate footwear and no way to avoid the water. Accept it before you arrive.

Salzburger Nockerl

The local soufflé dessert — three mounds representing the three peaks of the Untersberg — should be ordered at Stiftskeller St. Peter, where it was historically perfected. Serves two people minimum.

Festival season doubles prices

July and August: hotel prices increase dramatically, most museum entries need advance booking, and the atmospheric pressure of 250,000 festival visitors is real. Book 6+ months ahead.

Monday museum closures

Most Salzburg museums close on Mondays. The Mirabell Gardens, Getreidegasse, and the Altstadt streets are always open, but plan around Monday museum closures.

Altstadt restaurants

The restaurants directly visible from Getreidegasse and Mozartplatz are tourist-priced. One street in either direction (Priesterhausgasse, Kaigasse) the quality improves and the prices drop.

Alpine weather is serious

Weather changes fast in the Alps. Morning sun does not guarantee afternoon sun. Carry a layer and an umbrella any time of year — this is especially true for Hellbrunn (outdoor, no shelter from sudden rain).

Connections

Rail & Onward Connections

Salzburg sits at the centre of the Eastern Alps and functions as the transit point between the German-speaking world and Austria's eastern cities. The Railjet and EuroCity services are punctual and comfortable; the mountain scenery on the routes to Innsbruck and Villach is among the finest rail travel offers in Europe. Book at oebb.at for best fares.

By Train

Salzburg Vienna	2h 30 min Railjet direct Several daily
Salzburg Munich	1h 30 min Railjet/EC direct Hourly
Salzburg Innsbruck	2h EC/IC via Kufstein Several daily
Salzburg Zürich	3h 45 min EC via Innsbruck Daily
Salzburg Budapest	3h 30 min EC direct via Villach Daily
Salzburg Hallstatt	1h 15 min Train to Bad Ischl + bus Daily (Bus 150 direct from Salzburg)
Salzburg Graz	3h 30 min IC via Leoben Daily
Salzburg Venice	5h 30 min IC via Innsbruck and Verona Daily
Salzburg Prague	6h Railjet via Vienna Daily

Nightjet overnight services from Salzburg: to Hamburg, Amsterdam, and Rome (the Napoli Express, one of the great overnight train journeys remaining in Europe). Book at nightjet.com or oebb.at.

Salzburg awaits.

You have the plan. You know which gardens to reach before 9:30, which fortress room contains the golden chamber, and where to drink beer poured directly from a barrel by monks. The rest is just showing up.

BEFORE YOU LEAVE: FINAL CHECKLIST

Screenshot Day 1 and Day 2 itineraries for offline use

Buy Salzburg Card at airport or tourist office — 48h covers everything

Book Hohensalzburg tickets online at salzburg-burgen.at

Reserve Stiftskeller St. Peter for lunch at stiftskeller.at

Book Esszimmer for dinner at esszimmer.com — essential

Check Hellbrunn operating dates at hellbrunn.at (May–October)

Download Google Maps Salzburg offline before you land

Your interactive map is one scan away.

All locations from this guide, colour-coded by day, open on your phone.

goingsolo.life/maps/salzburg

GoingSolo.Life

TRAVEL ALONE. LIVE FULLY.

