



## THE DANUBE – A River's Lure

**PRESS SERVICE October 2005**

### **DANUBE CLEARED FOR NAVIGATION – Pontoon Bridge at Novi Sad Removed**

On Friday, 7 October 2005, the Sloboda Bridge was finally re-opened as the third bridge that was destroyed during the war, and the pontoon bridge was removed.

On Oct 17 and 18, the very last remains of the pontoon bridge will be taken out of the river.

This means that navigation on the Danube has been fully restored.

In 1999, all three Danube bridges in Novi Sad were hit by missiles.

With the aid of the European Union, the Danube Commission, Corridor VII-Management/TINA Vienna, to name but the most important supporters, a water way could be cleared and the pontoon bridge was opened three times a week. Thus, the Danube was at least, even with some restrictions, made navigable again as far as to the delta in Romania. On the initiative of the Danube Tourist Commission, passenger ships did not have to pay any toll.

### **Danube Delta**

According to the information provided by the Romanian Tourist Authorities on 11 October 2005, the Danube delta has not been placed under quarantine contrary to other information. Following the death of some poultry flocks, the Government decided to **close several villages** at the Chilia arm in the Romanian-Ukrainian border zone to prevent the spread of the disease.

### **The European Commission states as per Oct 13**

“As a precautionary measure following the confirmation of the H5N1 virus in Turkey on 13 October, the Commission had already been working on the assumption that the virus found in Romania was also the H5N1 strain. Therefore appropriate measures are already in force”, said Commissioner Kyprianou. A measure blocking the import into the EU of live birds, poultry meat and other poultry products from Romania came into force last Thursday and a Commission decision on reinforced preventive measures was endorsed by Member State experts yesterday.

The Romanian authorities have taken the necessary culling measures and imposed restrictions on the movement of birds within Romania.”

*Please find more information at [rumaenien@aon.at](mailto:rumaenien@aon.at).*

### **13<sup>th</sup> Danube Travel Mart/austrian travel business Vienna 29 - 31 January 2006**

There has been growing interest in this biennial joint event in Vienna: 319 Austrian exhibitors and 55 exhibitors of the Danube countries Germany, Hungary, Slovakia, Hungary, Croatia, Serbia and Romania have already registered . From now on, visitors, too, may register at [www.austria-tourism.biz/at](http://www.austria-tourism.biz/at).

### **5 th Danube Region Business Conference**

From 9 to 11 November 2005, the DRBC 5 (Danube Region Business Conference 5) will take place in Belgrade with the topic “**The Danube - Cooperation without Barriers**”. The conference is organised by the Serbian Ministry for Trade, Tourism, and Services as well as the Serbian Chamber of Commerce and Industry in co-operation with the City of Vienna, Corridor VII-Management/TINA Vienna, the Vienna Chamber of Commerce, Department for Traffic and Infrastructure, and AOC. On the occasion of this top-class conference under the patronage of Benita *Ferrero – Waldner*, European Commissioner for Foreign Affairs, and Vuk *Draskovic*, minister of foreign affairs of Serbia-Montenegro, the economic co-operation among the Danube countries and the inland navigation in this region are to be supported. *Information and registration at [www.drbc5.com](http://www.drbc5.com)*

### **Smart River 21 Symposium 2006 in Europe**

At this year’s “Smart River 21 International Symposium on Global Commerce and Strategies for Inland Navigation and Economic Development” held in Pittsburgh/Ohio in October, prof. Gerhard *Skoff*, President of the Danube Tourist Commission gave a speech about the Danube as a tourist destination. In 2006, the symposium is to be held in Europe. Supporting participants are the European Federation for Inland Ports as well as the Corridor VII-Management/ TINA Vienna. [www.tinavienna.at](http://www.tinavienna.at)

### **Advent on the Danube**

During the Advent season, many Danube cities come alive with seasonal decorations and festive activities. Please find below the most important and most beautiful Christmas markets:

In **Straubing**, guided tours to Nativity scenes put on display in churches and museums will take place from 4 December 2005 to 1 January 2006. The tours will start in the atmospheric “Christmas Foyer” in the Gäubodenmuseum. The Christmas market will open from 30 November 2005 to 23 December 2005 ([tourismus@straubing.de](mailto:tourismus@straubing.de)).

From 25 November 2005 to 23 December 2005, the city of **Regensburg** will host even three Christmas markets: Regensburg’s classic Christmas market on the square Neu-Pfarrplatz, the handicraft market (Lucrezia market) on Haid square and Kohlmarkt, and the Romantic market at the Thurn and Taxis palace. A highlight will be a concert of the Regensburg Domspatzen boys’ choir. ([tourismus@regensburg.de](mailto:tourismus@regensburg.de))

In **Passau**, a charming Christmas market will take place in front of the St.Stephan Cathedral from 25 November 2005 to 23 December 2005. ([tourist-info@passau.de](mailto:tourist-info@passau.de), [www.passau.de](http://www.passau.de)).

The Christmas market held in **Linz** in December will enchant its visitors with the tantalizing aroma of the famous “cookie market”. There will also be workshops for making candles, and Christmas concerts ([www.linz.at](http://www.linz.at)).

In the **monastery Waldhausen/Strudengau**, a traditional Christmas market with a life-size Nativity scene will take place on 3, 4, and 8 December 2005. Another attraction will be the last peasant candle-maker of Austria. ([www.waldhausen.at](http://www.waldhausen.at)).

The **Vienna Christmas market** in front of the **Town Hall** will already open on 12 November 2005 and, as usual, closes on Christmas Eve. The festively illuminated **Schönbrunn Castle** is a spectacular backdrop for its craft- and Christmas market from 19 November 2005 to 26 December 2005. The **Old Vienna Christmas Market** will be held on the Freyung in Vienna's historic district from 26 November to 23 December 2005 ([info.wien.at](http://info.wien.at)).

The **Christmas market in Bratislava** set against the Old Town Hall evokes a particularly enchanting atmosphere, taking place from 25 November until 23 December ([sacr-wien@aon.at](mailto:sacr-wien@aon.at)).

On 26 November, the **Budapest Christmas Market** will open its gates on Vörösmarty Square, featuring arts and crafts, a large Advent calendar and fanfare blowing ([www.hungary.com](http://www.hungary.com)). The market will be open until 24 December 2005.

### **Christmas on the Danube**

The tour operator **Nicko-Tours** published a special brochure for Danube cruises during Advent, at Christmas, & New Year offering programmes on board of MS *Bolero* and MS *Flamenco* from Nuremberg to Budapest ([www.nicko-tours.de](http://www.nicko-tours.de)).

The Christmas cruise along the Main river and the Danube is organised by **CroisiEurope** and runs under the name „**Noel Danubien**“, taking its passengers from Strasbourg via Nuremberg, Regensburg, Passau and Linz to Melk and back ([www.croisieurope.com](http://www.croisieurope.com)).

Amadeus Cruises offers a cruise on board the **MS Amadeus** from Vienna via Linz, Passau and Regensburg along the Danube and the Main-Danube-Canal to Nuremberg with visits of the most beautiful Christmas markets and mulled wine (*Glühwein*) parties ([www.lueftner-cruises.at](http://www.lueftner-cruises.at)).

Aboard the ships of the **DDSG-Blue Danube** the weeks before Christmas will be ‘enchanting’. DDSG-Blue Danube offers an evening cruise with *Magic Christian* (26 November 2005), Advent brunches (4 and 11 December 2005), a *Saint Nicholas Cruise for Children* (4 December 2005), exotic “Christmas impressions” at the *Caribbean Christmas* (16 December 2005) and *Cuban Christmas* (19 December 2005) as well as a “*Waiting for the Christkind*” cruise on 24 December 2005 ([www.ddsg-blue-danube.at](http://www.ddsg-blue-danube.at)).

The shipping company **Donauschiffahrt Pyringer – Zopper** offers special theme cruises from 25 November until New Year on board the MS *Johanna*, like, for instance, a Krampus party, a Saint Nicholas cruise, and the traditional New Year's party. Charter of MS *Johanna* for Christmas parties possible.

*More information is provided by Herbert Zopper, tel. +43(0)664-3092100, [www.donauschiffahrtwien.at](http://www.donauschiffahrtwien.at)*

From 23 to 30 October 2005, **Peter Deilmann Reederei**, Germany's premier cruise ship company, offers a special cruise devoted to “Wellnes Mozart” on board of MS *Mozart* from Passau-Vienna-Budapest-Bratislava and Passau. ([info@deilmann.de](mailto:info@deilmann.de), [www.deilmann.de](http://www.deilmann.de))

### **Cruise Catalogues 2006**

**ARC Austrian River Cruises** presented the new programme “Danube & Sound” 2006. Apart from the flagship “MS *Johann Strauß*”, also MS “*Johannes Brahms*” and MS “*Franz Schubert*” will sail along the Danube from/to Vienna. Some tours will take the passengers to the Danube delta, like the 10-day cruise “*Danube Symphony*”. The programme is also available on CD (ARC/Club50. Tel. ++43/1/2186350, [vereinstouristik@club50.at](mailto:vereinstouristik@club50.at))

**Transocean Tours** Bremen is celebrating “25 years of river cruising” and puts with the MS *Bellevue* a new twin-cruise ship into service. The four star vessel which with 135 metres in length is one of the longest river cruise ships on the market, offers accommodation for up to

198 passengers in cabins with French balconies. In the 2006-catalogue for river cruises, Transocean Tours offers in total 11 Danube programmes, including cruises to the delta. ([www.transocean.de](http://www.transocean.de)).

As in previous years, the programme 2006 of **Lüftner** features a number of interesting cruises along the Danube, including an opera cruise and delta tours (“1,600 Miles on the Danube”). The company has introduced two new ships, the *Amadeus Royal* and the *Amadeus Princess* ([www.lueftner-cruises.at](http://www.lueftner-cruises.at)).

Under the title “Sometimes, dreams come true”, **Nicko-Tours** offers the most beautiful river cruises in their catalogue 2006. A number of cruises are offered on the Rhine, the Main river and the Danube, inter alia, a cruise from Amsterdam to Vienna, or delta cruises starting from Passau and Vienna. ([www.nicko-tours.de](http://www.nicko-tours.de)).

For the season 2006, **Phoenix Reisen** offers something absolutely new. Concerning dates, the individual cruises are organized in such a way that several Phoenix ships are to meet in Tulcea/Romania, thus providing the possibility to combine, for instance, a cruise along the Danube to the Danube delta with a cruise to St. Petersburg. ([www.phoenix-reisen.de](http://www.phoenix-reisen.de)).

**Plantours & Partner**, too, have already published the 2006-cruise catalogue. On the Danube, mainly MS *Swiss Crystal* will operate, at two dates even sailing to the delta ([www.plantours-partner.de](http://www.plantours-partner.de)).

### **Getting Married on the Danube**

**Nautilus Seereisen** has for the first time provided the possibility to tie the knot on board a ship sailing the Danube. Bride and groom have to give notice of marriage at their local register office. The local register office then orders the register office in Vilshofen/Bavaria to officiate the ceremony. The cruise offer includes flowers, a photographer, a reception at the captain’s with sparkling wine, music and a wedding menu. If required, church weddings including horse carriage rides can be held in Vilshofen, Dürnstein, or Melk.

Information: [t info@nautilus-seereisen.de](mailto:info@nautilus-seereisen.de), [www.nautilus-seereisen.de](http://www.nautilus-seereisen.de)

## **G e r m a n y**

### **Regensburg**

The exhibition “Maria Immaculata” is worth seeing and still on at the Treasure Museum (*Domschatzmuseum*) until 31 December 2005 ([www.regensburg.de](http://www.regensburg.de)).

### **Passau**

Since 28 December 2004, **Croatia** has been the invited guest country of the “Passauer LeuchtBox”, a large illuminated trailer situated on the banks of the Danube. In addition, the accompanying exhibition “Croatia in Germany” is on display. ([www.passau.de](http://www.passau.de)).

### **Danube Relay Marathon 2006**

Starting in Furtwangen/Germany on 14 July 2006, the non-stop marathon for relay runners organized by **ARGE Deutsche Donau** will take participants along the entire Danube to Tulcea/Romania at the Black Sea. The finish line is to be reached on 24 July 2006.

Information and registration at ARGE Deutsche Donau [www.deutsche-donau.de](http://www.deutsche-donau.de)

## A u s t r i a

### Current Exhibitions in Vienna

#### **Österreichische Galerie Belvedere** ([www.belvedere.at](http://www.belvedere.at))

*Veit Stoß and Austria* until 30 October 2005; *Physiognomy of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Republic* until 29 Jan.06

**Albertina** ([www.albertina.at](http://www.albertina.at)) *Rudolf von Alt* (until 15 January 2006)

**Technisches Museum** (Museum of Science and Technology) ([www.technischesmuseum.at](http://www.technischesmuseum.at))

*Blue – Inventing the River Danube* until 15 November 2005

*Everyday Life – Directions for Use*, permanent exhibition from 13 October 2005

**Kunsthistorisches Museum** (Museum of Art History) ([www.khm.at](http://www.khm.at)).

*Collection of Antiquities*, a recently opened permanent exhibition

*Amber for Throne and Altar* until 29 January 2006 (Alte Schatzkammer, Hofburg palace)

*Francisco de Goya* from 18 October 2005 until 8 January 2006.

#### **“Diner fantastique” at Casino Baden**

From 16 November 2005, the Congress Casino Baden will offer culinary highlights from Austria’s top catering company “Do&CO” together with entertaining show programmes and exciting games in superb atmosphere. *Find more information at* [www.ccb.at](http://www.ccb.at)

#### **“Kunst Raum Niederösterreich” in Vienna**

On 6 October 2005, the new arts gallery “Kunst Raum Niederösterreich” (Herrengases 13, Vienna) was inaugurated by Lower Austrian regional council *Ms Petra B o h u s l a v* and opened with the exhibition “Profilier” (until 26 November 2005). In future, the arts studio particularly is to serve as a forum for young artists. ([newsletter@kunstraum.net](mailto:newsletter@kunstraum.net)).

#### **Linz Sales Manual 2006**

The new catalogue for group tours by the Linz Tourist Association is already available.

In addition, there are several informative brochures on the Linz offer for groups([www.linz.at](http://www.linz.at)).

#### **World Heritage: Danube Limes**

Austria’s chances are good that its application for the Danube Limes to be inscribed on UNESCO’s World Heritage List will be accepted. After the Hadrian Wall has been inscribed as a World Heritage Site, the 500-km long Limes in Germany was added to the list only this July.

#### **Model Ships Exhibition in Korneuburg 2005**

At the shipyard in Korneuburg, model ships from various periods will be put on display in a special exhibition organised by the club “Friends of Historic Ships” from 25 to 27 November 2005. ([www.fhs-austria.com](http://www.fhs-austria.com)).

#### **New Rest Areas along the Danube Cycle Route**

This July, a new rest area was opened in Aggsbach Markt. By the end of this season, 29 new rest areas will be completed along the Danube in Lower Austria to make the popular Danube cycle route even more attractive. *Please find more information at* [www.donau.com](http://www.donau.com)

## Bratislava

A new brochure available both in English and in Russian reveals new aspects of the wide range of cultural and tourist attractions of the Slovakian capital. The brochure contains, inter alia, information about the history of the city and its present status, historic city tours, accommodation, and places where to eat.

## Coronation Celebrations 2006

Due to the great success of the historic “coronation celebrations” in Bratislava in September, the programme for 2006 has already been made available.

*Information: Daniel Lukac, Slovak Agency for Tourism Vienna ([sacr-wien@aon.at](mailto:sacr-wien@aon.at)).*

# Hungary

## Budapest

Budapest has become a booming tourist destination, with visitors' figures reaching record levels. By the *end of August*, the number of overnight stays increased by eight per cent to 3.725.000 compared to the same period of the previous year. These figures demonstrate that in terms of tourism Budapest is high above the country's average and has become Hungary's top destination. Commercial businesses saw a rise in revenues by 16.2 per cent, which is mainly due to the fact that more guests prefer accommodation at four- and five-star hotels.

Visitor numbers from the United Kingdom and Japan showed the highest increase, with more than 60 per cent and 30 per cent, respectively. This rise in visitor numbers follows mainly the growth at British Airways and European low/cost carriers flights to Budapest, in particular Easyjet and Eurowings.

According to the Hungarian Central Bureau for Statistics, figures for *September 2005* show similar results and are among the best ones ever.

In average, the three-, four- and five star hotels of Budapest had an occupancy rate of 90 per cent. In September alone, the five star hotels enjoyed a 17.7 per cent rise in overnight stays compared to the previous year; the four star hotels showed an 11.4 % rise.

## Aqua Park in Buda

In the scope of Budapest's application as European Capital of Culture 2010, a new tourist attraction is being planned. On a 40 hectare site situated in the XI district in the south of Buda that was initially designated for the world exhibition, a new leisure and tourist centre is to be erected. The centre will feature an aqua world with sandy beaches, yacht marinas, sports grounds, hotels, restaurants and even apartments. The first investment phase is to begin as early as 2006. ([www.budapestinfo.hu](http://www.budapestinfo.hu)).

### **New Hotels in Vukovar und Osijek**

Originally constructed in 1840, **Hotel Lav** reopened after extensive refurbishment as a four star hotel with 42 rooms, four luxuriously decorated apartments and a congress centre. This means that Hotel Lav has now been operating for 165 years.

Please find more information at [info@hotel-lav.hr](mailto:info@hotel-lav.hr), [www.hotel-lav.hr](http://www.hotel-lav.hr)

In **Osijek**, too, a house already in existence – **Hotel Osijek** – was re-constructed into a four star hotel. The hotel features 140 rooms on 14 floors, including rooms especially equipped for disabled or particularly tall persons. The top floor houses a large health, fitness and beauty centre. The hotel is also suitable for holding conferences as it houses, for instance, a conference room for up to 250 people. [info@hotelosijek.hr](mailto:info@hotelosijek.hr), [www.hotel-osijek.hr](http://www.hotel-osijek.hr)

### **S e r b i a**

After establishing a field office in Munich, the **Serbian Chamber of Commerce and Industry**, a supporting member of the Danube Tourist Commission will **open** a representative office **in Munich** on 12 October 2005. Mr. Urosevic is to be announced head of the office at Böhmerwaldplatz 2 (tel.: +49/89/18201718).

In **Novi Sad**, two hotels and a marina have recently been opened.

*Hotel Aleksander\*\*\*\** has 27 rooms and suits with a total of 54 beds. ([www.aleksander-hotel.yu](http://www.aleksander-hotel.yu)).

*Hotel Park\*\*\*\*\** offers all amenities of an international top-class hotel and congress venue. ([www.hotelparkns.com](http://www.hotelparkns.com)).

Please find information on the new *marina* at [www.limanmarine.org.yu](http://www.limanmarine.org.yu).

In **Sremska Kamenica**, at the banks of the Danube opposite Novi Sad, a new tourist and leisure park under the motto “the Sunny Side of the Danube” is to be constructed. The amount of one million euros has already been invested in reconstructing the town centre. The tourist new centre is to attract more guests to Vojvodina, and the comprehensive brochure “Vojvodina – cultural heritage” reflects these ambitions. Mr. Radomir *C u b r a n o v i*, **INTERDON** Tourist and Service Company, is the contact person for the leisure project:

Please find more information at [interdon@eunet.yu](mailto:interdon@eunet.yu); [www.interdonns.com](http://www.interdonns.com)

### **R o m a n i a**

A new English brochure on **Sulina**, a town situated on river kilometre 0, gives a detailed description of its cultural diversity and significance. ([sulina\\_prim@yahoo.com](mailto:sulina_prim@yahoo.com)).

At the beginning of October, the newly published “**Danube Atlas**” for water tourism was officially presented in Belgrade. This reference book is available in Serbian, German, and English and depicts the Danube sections between kilometre 1,433 and kilometre 845.65. It contains more than 60 maps.

The Danube Atlas is a project supported by the Serbian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, a supporting member of the Danube Tourist, in cooperation with the Work Group for Navigation and Tourism (NATUS), Serbian and German Ministries, gtz (Company for Technical Cooperation) as well as international institutions and sponsors.

An online-version of the Atlas is being prepared. *Information:* [zoran.novakovic@pks.co.yu](mailto:zoran.novakovic@pks.co.yu)

From the beginning of December, the **Danube Sales Manual New** will be available also in English.

Due to the great demand, the third edition of the **Donau Counter Info** will appear as a supplement of the German magazine *Fremdenverkehrswirtschaft International* in time with the 13<sup>th</sup> Danube Travel Mart in January 2006 in Vienna. *For more information at* [donau@austria.info](mailto:donau@austria.info)

“**Donau Rhapsodie**” is the title of a new guide published in Hungary (available in German, English, and French) that accompanies travellers from the Black Forest to the Black Sea. ([www.hungary.com](http://www.hungary.com)).

The illustrated book (both in German/English) by the photographer Stefan Würth of Munich was published under the simple title “**Donau**” (“*Danube*”) and takes the reader from Donaueschingen to Vienna, containing enchanting pictures und thoroughly researched descriptions. *Swiridoff Verlag, ISBN 3-89929-040-2*([www.swiridoff.de](http://www.swiridoff.de)).

The film company “**Zinnober Film und Seppia TV**” is currently working on a movie about the Danube entitled “**The Danube - a River for Europe**”. The project is supported by the European Union and produced as a co-operation of 13 broadcast stations, various national and international tourist associations, and institutions, including the Danube Tourist Commission. Shooting was finished in September 2005. The film will be presented at the 13<sup>th</sup> Danube Travel Mart in Vienna in January 2006.

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