

Die Donau

Internationale Touristische Werbegemeinschaft
Danube Tourist Commission
www.danube-river.org



The Danube—A River's Lure



Press Service

May/June 2006

Danube Diary

Danube Tourist Commission—a message from the bridge

The results of the marketing activities undertaken by the Danube Tourist Commission are reflected in solid figures: in the first three months of this year the Commission's internet portal www.danube-river.org recorded almost 50,000 visits; 20,000 in the month of March alone. The Danube Sales Manual registered 2,000 visitors at www.danubesalesmanual.com in first quarter 2006 and almost 500 downloads of cruise ship information.

Banner advertising space is now available on both Danube websites.

The Danube Tourist Commission's 2006 guides to cruises, excursion ships and yachting on the Danube are now available in English. Infos: donau@austria.info

The first prize of this year's fvw-Donau Counter Info Quiz—a Danube cruise aboard Nicko Tours' MS *Flamenco* went to Mrs. Kolmannsberger of Kiel, Germany.

Professor Gerhard Skoff celebrates his 65th birthday

Professor Gerhard Skoff recently celebrated his sixty-fifth birthday. The Danube Tourist Commission wishes its president many happy returns of the day.

Croatia

New Vienna director for Croatian Tourist Office

Ranko Vlatković recently took over as director of the Croatian National Tourist Office's Vienna bureau from long-serving Željko Tončinić, who has retired.

Information: office@kroatien.at

News from the ICPDR

An international conference on the protection of the Danube delta was organized in February in the Ukrainian port city of Odessa by the International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River (ICPDR) and UNESCO.

Among the ICPDR's chief objectives are on-going control and maintenance of water quality of the river, both of which are of increased relevance today.

Anti-flooding measures along the entire course of the Danube, which have been taken in hand since the record floods of 2002 are to be completed by the end of 2006. Hitherto, effective flood-control had not been assured, owing in particular to outdated dams in countries along the river's lower course. Projects currently underway aim to remedy this deficit and protect settled areas and exposed landscapes along the Danube. This was a central focus of the ICPDR conference in Athens, at which Professor Gerhard Skoff, president of the Danube Tourist Commission, spoke.

On 29 June the international **Danube Day** will be marked in all Danube lands for the third time. *Information: ICPDR, Tel.: ++43/1/26060-4373, icpdr@unvienna.org, www.icpdr.org*

Serbian Chamber of Commerce on-line

The Serbian Chamber of Industry and Commerce, which is headed by President Slobodan Milosavljević and Mr Zoran Novaković and joined the Danube Tourist Commission as supporting member two years ago, will launch its new internet presence at www.pks.co.yu in mid-July.

Moldova—observer at Danube Tourist Commission

At the initiative of Gerald Skoff, president of the Danube Tourist Commission, the Republic of Moldova, the country with the shortest frontage on the Danube (900 m), is to be invited to participate as observer in the work of the Commission.

Talks with the Bulgarian authorities on outstanding issues have also progressed in a positive direction recently.

On the Danube...

From Vienna to Bratislava on Danube waves

A new daily express ship service linking the Austrian and Slovak capitals will be inaugurated on June 1. The *Twin City Liner*, a modern catamaran will make the trip between Vienna and Bratislava in just 75 minutes. The Twin City Liner departs from the centre of Vienna at Schwedenplatz (Marienbrücke).

Information: DDSG Blue Danube Schifffahrt, Wien. Tel. ++43/1/58880-440, info@ddsg-blue-danube.at, www.ddsg-blue-danube.at, : Central Danube, Tel. ++43/1/72710-212, Fax ++43/1/72710-290, office@centraldanube.at, , www.twincityliner.com

The two capitals will continue to be served by hydrofoils, which depart from Thursdays through Sundays during the period May-October.

Information: SPaP-LOD Bratislava, Tel. ++421/2/52932224, travel@lod.sk, www.lod.sk

A truly imperial way of making the trip between Bratislava and Vienna is aboard MFS *Kaiserin Elisabeth*. The luxury ship sails on seventeen dates through the end of October. The three and one half hour luxury voyage includes city sightseeing in Bratislava and a four-course dinner aboard ship during the return trip to Vienna. The package can also be combined with an extension in Bratislava or return by train. *Information: Donau Touristik, Tel. ++43/732/2080, www.donaureisen.at*

Scylla Tours' fleet grows

The fleet of Basel-based Scylla Tours has again been expanded. In March, MS *Swiss Emerald*, which with sixty-two cabins can accommodate 124 passengers, will be followed towards the

end of the year by MS *Swiss Tiara* with seventy-six cabins for 153 guests. Both ships will also see service on the Danube.

Information: Scylla Tours, Tel. ++41/61/6388181, info@scylla-tours.com, www.scylla-tours.com

DDSG—from the Danube marshlands to the delta

DDSG Blue Danube offers cruises from Vienna to the Danube delta aboard MS *Hemingway*. There are five sailing dates to choose from between May and October. The eight-day cruise takes passengers from the Austrian capital to Budapest, Belgrade, Nikopol/Ruse, Giurgiu/Oltenița to Tulcea; return transfer to Vienna is by air. *Information: DDSG Blue Danube, Tel. ++43/1/58880, info@ddsg-blue-danube.at, www.ddsg-blue-danube.at*

New ferry at Grein

Appropriately for Navigation Day, April 30, a new ferry across the Danube at Grein was inaugurated. The new ferry named *D'Überfuhr* ("The Crossing") links Grein with Wiesen on the river's southern bank. A tip for an excursion from Grein is the recently re-opened Stillensteinklamm gorge.

Information: Werbegemeinschaft Donau Oberösterreich, Tel. ++43/732/7277-812, www.donauradweg.com

Vienna by ship with Pyringer-Zopper

Pyringer-Zopper's MS *Schlögen* started this year's sailing season on April 8. The ship can carry up to 100 passengers, and also offers a sun deck for sunny summer cruises. Pyringer-Zopper's 2006 program again includes daily short and long Vienna sightseeing cruises, as well as special theme and children's trips, and the ever popular "Riverboat Shuffle". *Information: Pyringer-Zopper, Tel. ++43/1/7151525-20, dspz@donauschiffahrtwien.at, www.donauschiffahrtwien.at*

Mozart at Transocean Tours

Transocean Tours is offering a nine-day Mozart cruise May 24-June 1 aboard the *Swiss Corona* to mark the composer's 250th birthday. The cruise, which departs from and returns to Passau, takes guests as far downstream as Budapest. Ports of call along the way include Melk with its Mozart exhibition, Vienna for a concert by the Mozart Orchestra in the Hofburg palace, Bratislava, and Budapest with excursions to the Great Hungarian Plain and Danube bend. A special highlight of the cruise is a tour of Mozart's hometown, Salzburg, the first time this is being offered as part of a Danube cruise. *Information: Transocean Tours Bremen, Tel. ++49/421/3336182, www.transocean.de*

...and on the River's Shores

Germany

Danube Festival in Ulm/Neu-Ulm 2006

The fifth international Danube Festival in Ulm/Neu-Ulm (July 7-16) is dedicated to the "Fascination of Encounter" and features performing arts from Hungary, Romania, Serbia and Bulgaria. A variety of concerts, dance and theatre, musicals and much, much more will be presented on the floating stage on the Danube and at other venues. Of special interest is the

literary café at the Flussmeisterei (navigation operations office) in Neu-Ulm. The festival program also includes numerous exhibitions, conferences and symposia, as well as attractive activities on the Danube itself, for example, a dragon boat race.

Information: Donaufest Ulm/Neu-Ulm, donaufest@t-online.de, www.donaufest.de

One of Ulm's traditional festivals, the "Schwörwoche" or "Oath Week", which dates back to the fourteenth century, will take place again in mid-July. The colourful week-long program comes to a climax on "Oath Monday", July 24. The festival includes a grand water-borne procession on the Danube with imaginatively decorated boats. When darkness falls on Saturday, July 22, some 5,000 candles will be cast afloat on the Danube.

Information: Ulm/Neu-Ulm Touristik GmbH, www.tourismus.ulm.de

Hiking the Danube by boat

The athletically inclined can now explore the Danube from Deggendorf by boat either independently or as part of a guided tour. The water-borne hike, "From Mountain Forests to the Danube", is considered one of the loveliest stretches of the river in Bavaria and allows participants get to know the Danube biosphere up close.

Information: Tourismusverband Ostbayern, Tel. ++49/941/58539-0, info@ostbayern-tourismus.de

European Weeks in Passau

This year's international European Weeks festival that will take place June 16-July 23 at various locations in Passau, Bohemia and Upper Austria has been conceived as a tribute to Mozart. One of the high points of the varied trans-border cultural event is the "Passau Organ Night" on June 23-24 at St. Stephen's cathedral, which lasts from 11:10 at night to 5:05 the following morning. *Information: Europäische Wochen Passau, Tel. ++49/851/752020, ew@ew-passau.de, www.ew-passau.de*

Jazz on the Danube in Straubing

The Straubing festival, which was first held twenty years ago, is now considered one of Europe's ten most important jazz festivals. International jazz greats attract fans to the Danube, July 13-16. This year, special guests will include Latin singer Juanes, saxophonist Klaus Doldinger, who composed the music for the film *Das Boot*, veteran star Joe Sample, Randy Crawford and many more. *Information: Straubing. Tourist Board, Tel. ++49/9421/944307, www.straubing.de*

Weltenburger Enge nature reserve

One of Bavaria's oldest and most important nature reserves, which has been distinguished with the Europadiplom, offers a unique experience of nature in the world-famous Danube gorge and historic hiking paths. This paradise on the Danube can be explored accompanied by experienced guides; brochures also explain the area's fascinating flora and flora to visitors.

Information: Landschaftspflegeverein Kelheim, Tel. ++49/9441/683418, www.voef.de

Austria

The Danube—Route of Emperors and Kings

A new brochure takes travellers on a "journey of discovery from Regensburg to Budapest" following history's path through the Danube valley. Hungary has recently joined the Route of Emperors and Kings marketing association, and the city of Bratislava already co-operates

closely with the group. The new guide in English and German describes segment-by-segment the highlights of the Route of Emperors and Kings with information about history, places of interest, and events on the Danube and along its shores.

Information: Route of Emperors and Kings, c/o WDG.

info@StrassederKaiserundKoenige.com, www.StrassederKaiserundKoenige.com

Passau-Bratislava cycling guide and 2006 Danube event calendar

As every year, a new annual edition of the informative Passau-Bratislava cycling guide has been produced by Upper Austrian Danube marketing association in co-operation with its Lower Austrian counterpart. The publication contains in-depth descriptions of the various stretches of the Danube Bicycle Trail and details some twenty-seven rest stops for cyclists, including services, accommodations, excursions, as well as the forty loveliest hiking routes along the Danube from Bavaria to Lower Austria. Included for the first time in the 2006 edition are Nordic walking trails. At twenty-five points along the trail there are information points with the latest brochures. The event calendar for the Upper Austrian Danube can be obtained directly from the Upper Austrian Danube marketing association, or downloaded from its website.

Information: WGD, Tel. ++43/732/7277-800, info.donau@oberoesterreich.at, www.donauradweg.at

The Danube in flames

Midsummer festivities along the Austrian Danube have for many years been one of the most spectacular Danube experiences. From Passau on the German border downstream to the Wachau valley bonfires illuminate the river's path. The most impressive view can be had from aboard one of the ships sailing in convoy on the river. In the Wachau valley there is also a "Midsummer Run" for amateur runners on June 16.

Information: info.donau@oberoesterreich.at, www.donauradweg.at, www.donauschiffahrt.de

Danube delights—"History and Wine" at Artstetten castle

"The Danube—Pure Delight" has been proclaimed this year's annual theme by the Danube Tourist Commission. Many Danube lands have taken up the theme and put together very appealing programs. Hungary has even adopted gastronomy as a special focus for 2006.

At Artstetten castle visitors not only have the opportunity to explore the life and times of Archduke Franz Ferdinand but can also sample prized Wachau vintages as part of a tour through the vaults of thousand year-old rock cellars.

Information: Schloss Artstetten, Tel. ++43/7413/8006-0, museum@schloss-artstetten.at, www.schloss-artstetten.at

Carnuntum celebrates its 2000th anniversary

With a gala evening of opera on June 10, Carnuntum Archaeological Park in Petronell marks Carnuntum's 2000th anniversary. Celebrated opera singer Montserrat Caballé will perform at the Carnuntum's Roman amphitheatre. A fascinating exhibition takes visitors back to the sixth century B.C. Another high point of the anniversary year is the house of Lucius which has been reconstructed on its original site and will be opened to the public on June 1. The tenth Carnuntum Roman Festival will take place June 10 and 11. Celebrations for young and old alike—including the ever popular gladiator contests of course—take place all through the summer. *Information: Carnuntum Archaeological Park, Tel. ++43/2163/3377-0, info@carnuntum.co.at, www.carnuntum.co.at*

Donau-Auen National Park

The visitor centre of the Donau-Auen National Park opened its doors in Schloss Orth this past March 21. To acquaint visitors with the unique biosphere of the Danube marshlands, the centre features an exhibition entitled “DonAUräume”. Expert guides are available for individual visitors and groups. *Information: Donau-Auen National Park, Tel. ++43/2212/3450, nationalpark@donauauen.at, www.donauauen.at*

Klosterneuburg monastery—uncovering forgotten treasures

On May 6 the uncompleted Sala Terrena of Klosterneuburg monastery was opened to the public as an entrance area for visitors. The new entrance area provides a contemporary and functional welcome for the lovers of art and culture who come to the monastery. Visitors can experience the development of this jewel of Baroque architecture through all the phases of its eventful 300-year history. Masterpieces of Medieval art from the monastery’s collection have been reinstalled as a permanent exhibition in the former refectory. There is also an exhibition that traces the life and work of the monastery’s Augustinian brothers, the institution’s history and development, and the outstanding personalities which it has brought forth over the centuries. In connection with the re-opening, Klosterneuburg, which cultivates Austria’s oldest and largest winegrowing estates—has expanded its range of vintages.

As a special attraction, a “bicycle bus” is operated from Klosterneuburg to Passau railway station, Thursdays-Sundays and on holidays.

Information: Klosterneuburg Tourism Association, Tel. ++43/2243/34396, info@klosterneuburg.net, www.tiscover.at/klosterneuburg

Slovakia**Bratislava City Card**

The Bratislava City Card (BCC) offers visitors to Slovakia’s capital a whole range of advantages and discounts, including unlimited use of public transportation. Cardholders also enjoy discounts of 10-20% at museums, galleries, recreational facilities, shops, and for city sightseeing tours and excursions in the surrounding region. Many restaurants also grant BCC-holders discounts. Details on participating institutions and firms are included with the card. The one-day BCC costs just EUR 5 for adults, EUR 8 for two days, and EUR 10 for three days. The Bratislava City Card can be purchased at tourist information centres, railways stations, harbour, airport, as well as in advance.

Information: info@bkis.sk, kuhn@bratislava.sk, www.bratislava.sk, sacr-wien@aon.at www.wieninternational.at

Hungary**Pécs—European capital of culture 2010**

While Germany only shortly has nominated Essen for the honour of European capital of culture in 2010, Hungary’s choice was made at the end of last year: Pécs, a UNESCO World Heritage Site won out over the cities of Miskolc and Debrecen. Under the motto “City without Borders”, Pécs will stage a range of artistic and cultural events. Austrian’s summer flight plan now includes scheduled service with Dash 8 aircraft from Vienna to the southern Hungarian metropolis, with four weekly flights on Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays and Sundays. *Information: www.pecs2010.hu*

Re-opening of Budapest's Béla Bartók Museum

Following restoration lasting a year, the former home of the world-famous Hungarian composer Béla Bartók was reopened to mark his 125th birthday. The museum, which is located in the villa district on the Buda side of the Danube, was expanded and shows objects that illustrate Bartók's daily life, including original pieces of furniture, as well as notes made and items collected on the field trips he undertook to study Hungarian folk music. The museum is an interesting and attractive complement to the Bartók archive at Budapest's Institute of Musical History. *Information:* www.ungarn-tourismus.at

New expressway section opened

Two new important sections of Hungary's road network will be completed by the end of the year: a forty-five kilometre (twenty eight-mile) segment of the Budapest-Balaton-Letenye M7 and thirty kilometres (almost nineteen miles) of the M3 that links Budapest and Nyíregyháza.

Art in hotel: prize for Budapest Art'otel

The exclusive hotel of American artist Donald Sultan is in itself a design object. The artist has placed his imprint throughout the hotel, from the lobby to the 164 guest rooms and suites, each of which is individual in design. The hotel is located on the bank of the Danube across from the famous parliament building and is just a ten-minute stroll from Buda castle—a UNESCO World Heritage Site—and the heart of Pest. The March issue of *Travel+Leisure*, the world's leading travel magazine, selected Art'otel as world-best in the category "More Night", for the best added value in service, ambiance and conveniences.

Information: www.artotel.hu

Serbia**Art in Novi Sad**

With the start of the 2006 cruise season, Novi Sad invites guests to a new art and antiques market on the Danube quay and in the old town centre. Information about Novi Sad, its sights and tourism offers is now available on-line at www.visiteuropeancities.com

Royal palace in Belgrade

Dedinje palace—in fact two palaces—was built in the 1920s and now serves again as the residence of the former royal family. The magnificent interiors, with the exception of the private quarters, can now be viewed on guided tours. Particularly impressive are the colourful state rooms on the palace's ground floor, and the Gold Hall's coffer ceiling. The tour also includes the royal chapel and White Palace. *Information:* *Tourist Organisation of Belgrade.* dvor@belgradetourism.org.yu, www.tob.co.yu

Romania**Romanian Danube counter brochure**

A new counter brochure about Romania's Danube region contains a wealth of useful information about transportation, accommodations, places of interest, events and excursions, as well as hints and tips about getting to and around Romania. A handy glossary provides useful phrases. This introduction to Romania is also available on DVD.

Information: *Romanian National Tourist Office,* rumanien@aon.at, berlin@rumanien-tourismus.de, muenchen@rumanien-tourismus.de

The Danube in print

Merian live! has issued a new edition of its special guide to the Danube and Danube region: *Donaukreuzfahrt* (“Danube Cruise”) follows a journey by ship from Passau to the Black Sea. Information: *Merian Live! 2006*, ISBN (10) 3-8342-0097-2, ISBN (13) 978-3-8342-0097-6, www.merian.de

Trescher Verlag of Berlin has published two new books about the Danube: *Donaukreuzfahrt—Von Passau bis zum Schwarzen Meer* (“Danube Cruise—From Passau to the Black Sea”) takes readers on an arm-chair journey to major cultural monuments and places of natural beauty. The book is an ideal companion for cruise passengers (ISBN 3-89794-072-8). *Serbien Entdecken* (“Discovering Serbia”) is the first comprehensive German-language guide to Serbia, both the Danube region and other areas, with a particular emphasis on Serbia’s monasteries and their art treasures (ISBN 3-89794-066-3).

The National Tourist Organization of Serbia has issued a new brochure in English that for the first time provides a comprehensive listing of all the year’s cultural and sporting events. Information: www.serbia-tourism.org

Kompass cycling map No.151 – Danube Bicycle Trail

A new edition of the popular “Danube Bicycle Trail” touring map is shortly to appear in Kompass publishing house’s series. The map will include routes, photos, details about sights and up-dated information about the bike route between Regensburg and Bratislava.

Information: info@kompass.at, www.kompass.at

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