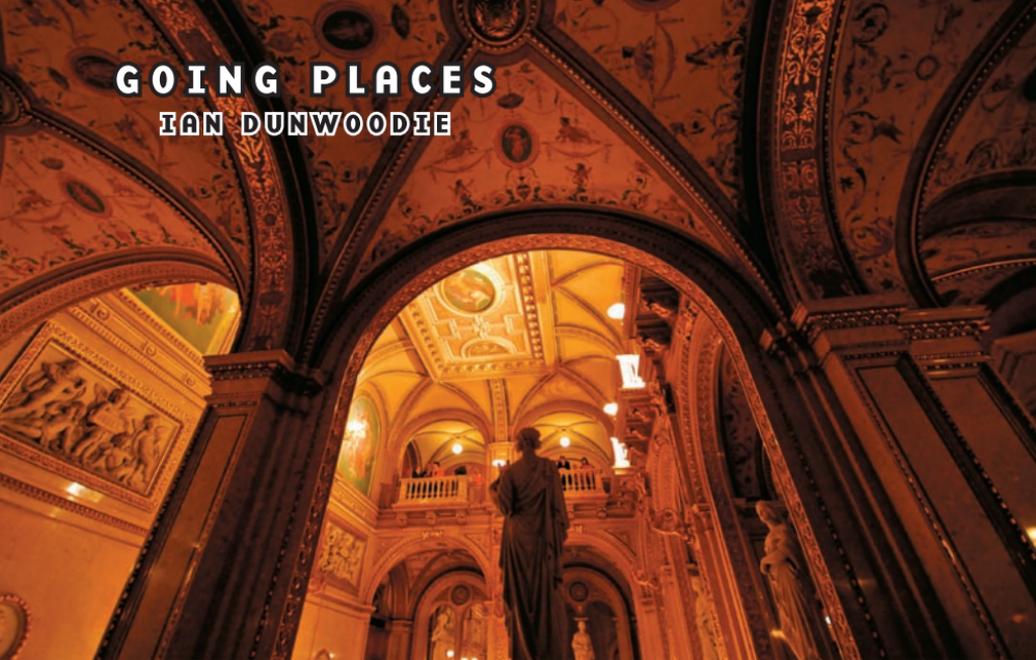
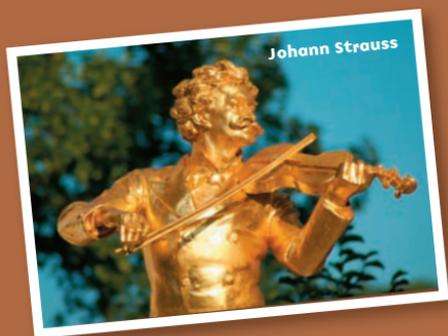


GOING PLACES
IAN DUNWOODIE



VIENNA IN YOUR SOUL



You may not know this – but you have Vienna in your blood. Me too, as I found out when I finally visited the grand old city. Although I was distracted at first by the glories of the place. Noble palaces, towering churches, spacious squares, statues, parks, the Danube River ...

Vienna is one of the great imperial cities of Europe. Nowadays it's the capital of Austria, but before *that* it was the capital of the Austro-Hungarian Empire ... and before that the capital of the Holy Roman Empire. When you have a history full of such pride-and-glory stuff, you can't stop building vast and sumptuous palaces.

Especially when you're an Emperor of the powerful Hapsburg Dynasty. For centuries the Hapsburgs ruled great swathes of Europe, and their Imperial Palace – with 2600 rooms – dominates the centre of Vienna. If you viewed five rooms a minute you still wouldn't get through them in a day!

So yes, visit Vienna on the Danube and be awed by its treasures. It won't take long

me, one of the concert halls. You'll find musicians dressed in the silk finery playing and dancing to the pop music of the 19th century.

Vienna is the home of the world's greatest composers. Beethoven and Mozart flourished here. *And* Brahms, *and* Haydn, *and* Schubert. In fact, whole families caught the music bug.

Take the Strauss family. Dad Johann Strauss was famous. You may know his dancing *Radetzky March*. But son Johann Strauss managed to outdo dad. His melodies are still played everywhere, and his *Blue Danube Waltz* is one of the world's best-loved.

And then there was brother Eduard Strauss ... and brother Josef Strauss ... (Josef was actually an engineer, but when Johann



for the old city to conquer your heart. That's because before you even arrive it has already stolen your soul. This city, you see, has a charm that rests on a very special history. A sweet history.

For Vienna is the beating heart of Europe's great music.

When you get here you absolutely **MUST** go to a performance. In the colossal Opera House if that's your style. Or, if you're like

Junior was ill the family persuaded him to look after his brother's orchestra. So Josef became a great composer too – as you do.)

But it's not just the music of Vienna that swirls in your blood. I'll bet this city has conquered your stomach as well. I know this, because I sat down at one of Vienna's taverns and savoured a *Wiener Schnitzel*.

Wiener is the German word for Viennese, and in Austria this dish has to be



made just right. It's actually protected by law! Some say that Field Marshal Radetzky himself introduced it to Vienna in 1857 – so the man *deserves* to have a march named after him!

If schnitzel was a must for my first course, my second had to be ... *apfelstrudel*. The apple strudels we eat in New Zealand are made with sweet filo or puff pastry, but my waitress brought me an *apfelstrudel* that was subtly different – based on a recipe that's been in existence for more than 300 years, and made with a plain, unsweetened dough that has to be stretched so thin (they say) you should be able to read a newspaper through it.

All of which explains why, in Austria, the hills are alive with the sound of music...

Cream-coloured ponies and crisp apple strudels,

Doorbells and sleigh bells and schnitzel with noodles ...

But don't think that it's just great buildings, divine music and memorable meals. There's at least one other essential ingredient.

Viennese coffee!

Like everything else here, coffee is part of the history – as I learned when I walked into the elegant Tirolerhof Café. In past centuries ladies used to come here for cards and Schnapps. But the Tirolerhof





is just one amongst many. In the 1800s they were the meeting places of the city, and novelists even wrote at these tables.

Even now, at the genuine old ones, along with your coffee the waiter will bring you a glass of water. It's a courtesy thing. When you finish your coffee you might feel you ought to get up and leave – but so long as your glass has water in it, then you have a reason to linger.

That's because the Viennese believe that drinking coffee is something you should do at leisure. And that's why I skipped the modern espresso places and the new *Starbucks* that have appeared even in this dignified old city – and went to the Tirolerhof.

As I sat there enjoying the expansive style I thought, "Why not have another *apfelstrudel*?" But I suppose the waiter knew that if I stayed long enough I'd do exactly that ...



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