
VIENNA & SALZBURG EASTER FESTIVAL

Monday, April 3rd through Wednesday, April 12th

This Tour can be combined with our Berlin RING Tour, April 12th – 18th



Salzburg Castle

“Whether the Salzburg Easter Festival, with prices even higher than its summer counterpart, is socially exclusive, is no longer the point. What matters is that it is artistically exclusive: it has finally set a standard which the world can envy.”

Opera

“In the title role (‘Elektra’), Nina Stemme offered blazing, beautifully judged vocalism and potent acting . . .”

Review of the MET’s ‘Elektra’, Opera News, July ’16)

Anja Harteros: *International OPERA Awards: Best Female Singer, 2015*

Christian Thielemann: *“Germany’s most sought-after conductor”*
Daily Telegraph, London

“Daniil Trifonov was a brilliant, uncommonly poetic soloist . . . Though he brought astounding technique to his performance, he favored subtlety and clarity over sensationalism.” (

Anthony Tommasini, NY Times

“Christopher Ventris produces a fresh, blossoming tenor, a Siegmund at the height of his vocal powers.” Die Presse

“At the center of Glyndebourne’s performances is Gerald Finley’s deeply sympathetic and thoughtful portrayal of the cobbler-poet Hans Sachs. . . The audience rose to acclaim him at the curtain calls.”
The Telegraph



Christian Thielemann

For the past twenty-one years, we have offered an annual visit to the prestigious **Salzburg Easter Festival** encompassing the complete four performance cycle of opera and concerts. For 2017, the Festival remains under the direction of the prestigious German conductor **Christian Thielemann**, and the orchestra will be the **Dresden Staatskapelle**. Maestro Thielemann will conduct two of the performances, and **Myung-Whun Chung** and **Franz Welser-Möst** will lead the others.

This year, we are able to include an extraordinary **Fifth Concert** in Salzburg! Christian Thielemann will lead the visiting **Vienna Philharmonic** and a quartet of international soloists in a performance of Beethoven’s *Ninth Symphony* (‘Choral’) in the Large Festival Hall.



Vienna Staatsoper

In most years, we have combined Salzburg with a second city where the opera program is the most enticing of the season – sometimes Munich, Vienna, Prague or Zürich. This year, we have chosen to return to the nearby Austrian capital of **Vienna**, for **four nights** at the renowned **Sacher Hotel** and **three performances** at the revered **Wiener Saatsoper (Vienna State Opera)**. We will encounter the glorious sound of the **Vienna Philharmonic** in the pit for all three evenings. Our first evening will be the romantic

ballet of Tchaikovsky's **Eugene Onegin** in the celebrated John Cranko version. This will be followed by Gioachino Rossini's 'bel canto' comedy **L'Italiana in Algeri** and Richard Wagner's sacred Easter music-drama **Parsifal**, appropriately scheduled on the day before Good Friday.

Vienna and Salzburg are two of our favorite destinations. We look forward to this convenient combination of exhilarating music in two cities with enticing restaurants and state-of-the art theatres for our diversified performances. Wagnerian 'aficionados' should take note of both 'Parsifal' and 'Die Walküre' with exceptional casts. This Tour is highly recommended for those who have never experienced the refined ambience of Salzburg's Easter Festival or the high musical standards of Vienna's glamorous State Opera. For this writer, our program is 'not-to-be-missed' because of **Nina Stemme** in 'Parsifal', **Anja Harteros** in both 'Die Walküre' and Beethoven's *Ninth*, and the unusual extra Salzburg concert by the **Vienna Philharmonic**.

Monday, April 3rd, departure from New York's Kennedy Airport at 5:40 on Austrian Airlines flight #88, arriving in Vienna at 8:20 am on the morning of the 4th. Or independent travel to Vienna.

VIENNA: April 4th – 7th

Accommodations for **four nights**, with a lavish **buffet breakfast** included at the deluxe **Sacher Hotel**, among a handful of Europe's finest properties by virtue of the full personal service and the old-world charm of the bedrooms and public spaces. The Sacher enjoys an optimum position directly across the street from the Opera House and at the head of the shops along the **Kärntnerstrasse**. Both the main restaurant and the Café boast superb cuisine, and the concierge has earned an enviable reputation for arranging any independent activities. Your stay in Vienna will be greatly enhanced by the comfort and location of this renowned hotel. *Because there is a performance on our first*



evening, you may want to arrive a day earlier to adjust to the time change. You should let us know NOW if you want us to reserve your room for the additional early night of April 3rd.

Hotel Sacher lounge
Vienna Staatsoper and Hotel Sacher

Early Tuesday evening, April 4th, a cocktail



reception will provide an opportunity to meet other members of the tour. Our party will be in one of the small private salons of the Sacher, where the fin-de-siècle style remains virtually unchanged in the past hundred years.

Tuesday evening, our first performance at the **Vienna Staatsoper** will be the full-length ballet, **Eugene Onegin**. Pushkin's 19th century verse drama inspired the late **John Cranko** to create his most beautiful and romantic choreography to a score drawn from various Tchaikovsky works. We are always gratified when we encounter this favorite ballet in Vienna's lavish production. The **Vienna Philharmonic** will be led by **Guillermo Garcia Calvo**.

Wednesday morning, April 5th, is left free for you to adjust to the time change and to walk through the city's spacious parks or along the neo-classical architecture of the Ringstrasse. Vienna's luxury shops are within easy walking distance along the **Kärntnerstrasse** adjacent to the hotel and the spacious **Graben** leading from the front of **St. Stephen's Cathedral**. Of major importance are the **Kunsthistorische Museum** of European masters and the upper **Belvedere** galleries of Gustave Klimt, Egon Schiele and other Jugendstil painters of the early 20th-century. "No art-loving visitor to Vienna should miss the Breughels and the



Salzburg guild signs

Vermeer in the grand Kunsthistorisches Museum, but the best view of the city is from what may be its most traditional gallery, the Belvedere... The magnificent Baroque interiors of this former prince's palace are matched by its formal gardens and astonishing view across the city's spires and domes to the Vienna Woods and mountains." (*Departures*)

Mid-afternoon on Wednesday, we will indulge in the Viennese habit of **coffee and pastry** at **Demel's Café** behind the Hofburg Palace. Demel's is Vienna's leading confectionery restaurant, renowned for its cakes and strudels, and you will want to return on your own after you discover its charm.

Wednesday evening, we will return to the **Staatsoper** for a performance of Rossini's light-hearted 'bel canto' comedy, **L'Italiana in Algeri**. The charming and often hilarious production reprises the **Jean-Pierre Ponnelle** staging which was created for Marilyn Horne at the MET in the 1970's. Vienna's cast of newcomers will include Russian contralto **Margarita Gritskova** in the low-tessitura title role of Isabella, Russian tenor **Maxim Mironov** as her loyal suitor Lindoro, the Trieste-born baritone **Paolo Rumetz** as Isabella's companion Taddeo, and the striking Czech bass-baritone **Adam Plachetka** in the buffo role of Mustafà, the ruling Bey of Algiers. The conductor is 'bel canto' specialist **Evelino Pidò**. *Sung in Italian with English titles. The Staatsoper's titles are similar to the MET, indicated on the back of the seat in front of you.*

Late Thursday afternoon, April 6th, our very long performance at the **Staatsoper** will be Richard Wagner's **Parsifal**. First presented in Bayreuth in 1882, 'Parsifal' was expressly composed as an Easter celebration and features the solemn Good Friday Spell during the first scene of Act III. The extended Kundry-Parsifal duet of Act II is among Wagner's most passionate passages, and the final scene of redemption as Parsifal heals Amfortas' agonizing wound brings resolution to "a work of unique expressive power and endless fascination" (*New Grove Dictionary of Opera*). Vienna's experienced cast of Wagnerian interpreters will feature the charismatic British heldentenor **Christopher Ventris** in the title role; today's reigning dramatic soprano **Nina Stemme** as Kundry, another major assumption for Sweden's beloved star; Canada's consummate baritone **Gerald Finley** as the wounded Knight Amfortas (Mr. Volle has recently been announced as Wotan in the MET's next Ring Cycle); and Germany's sought-after bass-baritone **Hans-Peter König** as the veteran Knight of the Grail, Gurnemanz.



*Dürer's Adam and Eve;
Albertina Museum, Vienna*



Semyon Bychkov will conduct the **Vienna Philharmonic** through Wagner's rapturous score, and **Alvis Hermanis** is responsible for the direction and set designs for the important *new production*. *Sung in German with English titles.*

Friday, April 7th, a guided Tour will take us through the "newly revamped **Albertina Museum**, one of the world's largest museum complexes". The Pritzker Prize winning architect Hans Hollein has designed the Albertina's new entrance – described as a 'knife in the air'. "Re-opened in March '03 after almost ten years and a \$117 million overhaul, the Albertina occupies the ingeniously reconfigured 18th-century Neoclassical Hofburg palace. It's now full of high-tech installations to better display and showcase a world-class collection of more than 65,000 works by Michelangelo, Rembrandt, Picasso and Dürer." Special exhibitions of major interest add further import to the Albertina's leading position in Vienna's cutting-edge art scene: "Vienna today is an art lover's paradise." (Quotes from *Departures*)

After the museum visit, a relaxed **lunch** is planned in the **Augustiner-Keller** adjacent to the Albertina. The Keller is the city's most popular site for Wiener schnitzel and other local dishes.

Friday is our one evening without a performance. The Sacher's concierge will be happy to assist you with dinner reservations or perhaps another performance on your own.

Saturday morning, April 8th, a several-hour drive by private coach will take us through the scenic landscape of Austria from Vienna to Salzburg.

SALZBURG: April 8th– 11th

Our accommodations in Salzburg are for **four nights** (with a generous **buffet breakfast**) at **'The Pitter'** – a traditional Salzburg hotel centrally located near the Mirabel Gardens and a short walk from the Mozarteum. The Pitter retains the classic Austrian atmosphere that attracts local residents to its several well-known dining areas. Both the **Rainerstube Keller** and the gourmet **Imlauer Restaurant** serve regional menus before and after the Festival performances, and the **Plaza Bar** is a popular gathering spot for international visitors. Our twin/double rooms are **upgraded to spacious Junior Suites**, and our single rooms are **upgraded to double rooms for single occupancy**. Following a major renovation, the Pitter has recently reopened with important on-site improvements and services. The top floor now offers the **Sky Restaurant Imlauer** for breakfast with a beautiful view over Salzburg, and a fitness, sauna and relaxation area.

The famed **Easter Festival** was initiated in Salzburg by the legendary Herbert Von Karajan close to thirty years ago. Von Karajan was then succeeded by the beloved Italian conductor **Claudio Abbado** (recently deceased) and the British conductor **Sir Simon Rattle**. The baton has now passed to Germany's **Christian Thielemann** and his **Dresden Staatskapelle Orchestra**. The Easter Festival ranks with Bayreuth and Glyndebourne as the most prestigious cultural and social events of the European musical season. Tickets for the two Cycles of performances are in the hands of the elite subscribers who rarely release them.

As usual, our limited number of tickets for 2017 include one entire Cycle of performances extending over the long Easter Weekend: **one opera and three orchestral/choral concerts**. (*Our tickets in the Large Festival Hall will be in the Rang ('Balcony'), where the acoustics are optimum and sightlines are excellent.*) The Festival performances are in the early evening and allow for leisurely dinners after the performances.

At 5:00 pm on Saturday evening, April 8th, we are among the fortunate ticket-holders for the Festival performance of Wagner's **Die**

Walküre in the **Large Festival Hall**. This second installment of the towering RING Cycle includes the great Act I duet for Siegmund and Sieglinde, the Ride of the Valkyries and the solemn Todesverkündigung leading to Siegmund's death at the end of Act II, and the emotional Magic Fire Music and Wotan's Farewell to Brünnhilde at the close of Act III. Traditionalists will be



Christopher Ventris



Nina Stemme



Gerald Finley



Semyon Bychkov

happy to encounter this re-creation of **Günther Schneider-Siemssen** staging from 1967, and **Vera Nemirova** will be the director. **Christian Thielemann** is the conductor, and he has assembled a thrilling cast of today's foremost Wagnerian interpreters: Ukrainian bass **Vitalij Kowaljow** as Wotan, German soprano **Anja Kampe** as Brünnhilde, German heldentenor **Peter Seiffert** opposite the radiant German soprano **Anja Harteros** as Siegmund and Sieglinde, German bass **Georg Zeppenfeld** as Hunding, and German mezzo-soprano **Christa Mayer** as Fricka.



Vitalij Kowaljow



Anja Kempe



Peter Seiffert



Anja Harteros

Because the emphasis on the music is all-pervasive during Easter Week and because Salzburg is best explored on foot, no sight-seeing excursions are planned during our few days. Our intention is for you to feel that you are a Patron of the Festival even more than a member of our Tour. As a Patron, you will be able to attend a **midday rehearsal** for one of the orchestra concerts (probably Saturday, but date to be announced later). You may also want to attend a **Palm Sunday** service on April 9th, as several of the local churches will offer musical masses.

At 7:00 pm on Sunday, we will return to the **Large Festival Hall** for a concert by the **Dresden Staatskapelle** under the Austrian conductor **Franz Welser-Möst**. The program is Gustav Mahler's final *Symphony No. 9*, in which the composer takes leave of his life with four long movements culminating in the hushed phrases of his last breaths.

Monday, April 10th, is a busy day with two events. At 5:00 pm in the **Large Festival Hall**, we will be treated with an unexpected additional concert this year featuring the peerless **Vienna Philharmonic** in a performance of Beethoven's *Symphony No. 9* ('Choral'). **Christian Thielemann** will be on the podium, and the vocal quartet includes soprano **Anja Harteros**, mezzo-soprano **Christa Mayer**, tenor **Peter Seiffert**, and bass **Georg Zeppenfeld**.

Between our two concerts today, **dinner** will be arranged at the atmospheric **Peterskeller** in the Baroque square adjacent to the Festival venues.

At 8:00 pm, we will return to the **Large Festival Hall** for the Festival's choral concert. Gabriel Fauré's heartfelt *Requiem* will be performed by the **Bayerischen Rundfunks Choir** and soloists **Anna Prohaska** and baritone **Adrian Eröd**. The conductor will be **Myung-Whun Chung**, who will also lead the Dresden Staatskapelle in Camille Saint-Saëns' rousing *Symphony No. 3* ('Organ').

On Tuesday, April 11th, a short walk will take us to the **Café Fingerlos** on nearby Franz Josefstrasse for **coffee and cake**. Only a couple of blocks from the Pitter, the Fingerlos offers "the best sweets and cakes in town" (*Rainer Hochhauser, our local guide and longtime friend*).

Our final concert will be on Tuesday evening at 7:00 pm in the **Large Festival Hall**. Maestro **Christian Thielemann** will lead

his **Dresden Staatskapelle** in Mozart's *Piano Concerto No. 21 in C-Major* and Anton Bruckner's *Symphony No. 4* ('Romantic'). The soloist is the Russian pianist **Daniil Trifonov**, who dazzled audiences last winter in the NY Philharmonic's Rachmaninov Celebration.

Wednesday, April 12th, departure from Salzburg at 8:20 am on Austrian Airlines flight #920 (operated by Tyrolean Airways), arriving at Vienna's international airport at 9:15 am. This connects with Austrian Airlines flight #87, departing Vienna at 10:45 am and arriving at New York's Kennedy Airport at 2:15 pm. Or independent departure. (There are optional later flights through Frankfurt.)

If you are combining this Tour with our **Berlin RING Tour**, our suggested flights are Austrian Airlines #920 at 8:20 am, arriving in Vienna at 9:15 am; and Austrian Airlines #291, departing Vienna at 12:50 pm and arriving at Berlin's Tegel Airport at 2:10 pm.



Large Festival Hall

Vienna & Salzburg Easter

Price per person, based on double occupancy	\$ 6,670*
Single room supplement	\$ 880**

*Our price includes a mandatory Patron contribution to the Easter Festival.

** We regret the high single supplement during the busy Palm Sunday week.

Air fare NOT included.

Airfare: Prices are subject to change depending on time of booking. Please contact our agent Linda Botros (see inside back cover) for current fares. **IMPORTANT: Air reservations should be made early during the very busy Easter period.**