

Graz2017



Study Abroad Handbook

A useful guide to your
summer study abroad experience



OVERSEAS STUDY

*The usefulness of this handbook depends on student input.
If you find erroneous information, please contact overseas@iu.edu.
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PROGRAM INTRODUCTION

Each summer since 1981, IU's summer program in Graz has given students the opportunity to spend six weeks in one of Austria's most charming cities, residing with Austrian host families and immersing themselves in Austrian culture and the study of German language. The IU Germanic Studies Department professor and an advanced graduate student accompany the group to Graz, provide all instruction, and arrange a lively program of meetings with Austrians and trips throughout Austria.

This booklet is a supplement to the Getting Started handbook received earlier. While it contains specific program information, Getting Started contains information relevant to all students on Indiana University Overseas Study programs. Both booklets should be used now as you prepare to leave and later while you are abroad. Since most student questions are addressed in these handbooks, please consult them before calling the Office of Overseas Study.

This handbook is also available on the Web:
<http://overseas.iu.edu/docs/Handbooks/graz.pdf>



ICONS IN THIS GUIDE



Helpful Program Information

Information to help prepare you for study abroad



Student Advice

Suggestions from study abroad returnees



Savvy Traveler Tips

Traveling tips to get you where you're going

GOALS & OBJECTIVES

Indiana University's Overseas Study Program in Graz offers students who have attained at least an intermediate level of proficiency in German the opportunity for an intensive living and learning experience in Austria. All students are housed with families who live in or near Graz. By sharing in the daily lives of their host families, students typically make rapid progress in their ability to understand and use German in everyday situations, while gaining insights into the daily culture of Austria.

A language proficiency course helps students to improve their fluency and accuracy in German, and a course on Austrian culture taught in German equips students with the basis for conducting conversations aimed at deeper cross-cultural understanding with their host families and with residents of Graz representing a range of occupations and expertise. Classroom instruction also interacts with excursions to Salzburg, Vienna, and sites in Graz and other locations in Styria to develop a deeper appreciation for the breadth and depth of Austria's history and culture.

The Program in Graz

2017 Calendar

May 12	Arrival in Graz
May 12-14	Weekend with families
May 15	First day of classes
May 25	Christi Himmelfahrt
June 5	Pfingstmontag
June 15	Fronleichnam
June 23	Last class and end of program
June 24	Departure from Graz

Note: We will inform you of the dates of excursions when this information becomes available.

Travel to Graz

There is no group flight to Austria. You are responsible for arranging your own international travel so that your arrival in Graz is Friday, May 12.

By April 15, complete the Provide Arrival Information e-form on your iAbroad checklist so that we can inform your host family of your arrival time. Some families may be able to meet your train or plane. If your family cannot meet you, take a taxi to their home. It will be critical for Overseas Study to know how to reach you by e-mail the first two weeks of May to notify you of specific arrangements for meeting your family.

Don't hesitate to travel in Europe after the program just because you don't yet have a travel companion. You are likely to find a travel companion from among the group during the time in Graz.

Arrival in Graz

You will spend the first weekend with your host family, recuperating from the flight, getting oriented to your neighborhood and the city, and getting acquainted with your hosts. You will need a good city map.

Graz

Graz is a prosperous and thoroughly modern city of 250,000 (plus 40,000 students), capital of the southeastern Austrian state of Styria. It is a beautiful, comfortable and clean city with attractive green spaces, gardens, and parks. The historic downtown area is picturesque and charming, with Renaissance palaces, medieval walls, Baroque churches, and sidewalk cafes. Getting lost along the narrow old lanes that are closed to all but pedestrian traffic is remarkably easy, and often rewarding, since you can find scores of sidewalk cafes, bars, restaurants, little parks, and quiet places in the process. Bicycles and trams are widely used, and public transportation is excellent. Graz has a rich cultural life, with opera, theater, street musicians, and summer music festivals.

Academic Program

In Graz you will take a German language course for which you will receive credit for G396 or G496, and a culture course, G361, Contemporary Austria. Classes meet from 8 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. with two scheduled breaks. The program's academic pace is intense, with daily homework. You will have about as much free time as a six-credit load would permit during a summer session at home.

G396 German Language Abroad (3 cr.) P: G250 or equivalent. Credit for intermediate to advanced German language study in a German-speaking country when no specific equivalent is available among departmental offerings.

G496 Advanced German Language Abroad (3 cr.) P: G330 or equivalent. Credit for advanced German language study in a German-speaking country when no specific equivalent is available among departmental offerings.

G361 Contemporary Austria (3 cr.) The purpose of this course is to introduce students to contemporary Austria, including an examination of geography, history, politics, economy, national identity, family, sexuality, religion, holidays, leisure, cuisine, education, culture and media, language, literature and art. Classroom discussions will focus on readings in the course textbook and experiential learning that will take place on site. Every effort will be made to incorporate interaction with Austrians into the course.

The primary language of classroom instruction will be German. Stress will be placed on discussion and active learning, rather than lecture. The course grade will be based on the following criteria: daily class participation (including two brief in-class presentations); three quizzes; one exam; and one essay.

For IUB students this course counts toward the following COLL requirements: Social & Historical Studies/Global Civilizations and Culture, and the German minor (and by permission, for the German major).

Textbooks

Once in Graz, you will need to purchase textbooks which will be much less expensive in Austria than in the United States. The program will pre-order the books for the group. Please be prepared to cover the cost of about €100 in cash.

Excursions

The program arranges trips of several days each to Salzburg and Vienna, group attendance at occasional plays or musical events in Graz, and afternoon visits to attractions nearby. This summer we plan to visit the Eggenberg castle and the ultra-modern museum in Leoben. The program also hosts two traditional parties with the families—one at the beginning of the program and one at its conclusion.

The excursions form part of the instructional program and are integrated into the courses. Participation is therefore important and counts as class attendance. Please be aware that you will have to cover the cost of most of your meals during the excursions out of pocket.

In addition to the arrival weekend, some of the weekends are intentionally unscheduled. You are free to spend this time with your host families or to make short excursions on your own.



Life in Graz

Housing

Each program student will live with one of the Austrian families selected by Volker Horn, professor emeritus of modern British culture and civilization, and the program's on-site coordinator. Most of the families that accept program students are educated, middle-class professionals. Overseas Study will match students to the families with which we think you will be most compatible. Whenever possible, housing assignments will be based on your preferences as indicated on the housing questionnaire.

You will learn your host family's name, address, and phone number just a few days before you leave for Graz. You will share breakfast, supper and sometimes lunch (usually the larger meal) with your family.

Living with a family may mean a substantial change in your living habits as well as cultural differences. Go into Austrian family life with an open mind. Do not be judgmental. Be honest, considerate and communicative. Make an effort to get to know the family that has accepted you into their home. Find out whether or not there are family rules you are expected to follow, such as cleaning your room, being on time for meals, etc. **Talk to your family right away about paying for your telephone calls.**

Let your family know your plans for the day so that they don't have to wait for you in vain with a warm meal. Show your hosts how much you appreciate their help by buying them a bunch of flowers occasionally. Flowers are inexpensive in Austria and they will appreciate the gesture.

Some of the most common adjustments regard how much you should eat at meals, how to divide time between academic demands and your family's appeals to join them for an outing or expedition, sensitivity to the extremely high cost of electricity in Europe, and the need to work out such basics as shower schedules. Graz public schools are still in session during the program, and everyone in the family may need to be out of the house early. Austrians are fastidious about never putting their shoes or feet on furniture, train seats, etc. Most families leave their shoes at the door and wear slippers in the house.

Medical Care

If you become ill in Graz, the on-site coordinator will help you get medical attention. The resident director will provide the forms that your physician must complete in order for you to submit an insurance reimbursement claim under the IU policy.

Money

The European Union monetary unit is the Euro (€). The Euro is divided into 100 cents. There are eight Euro coins denominated in 2 and 1 Euros, then 50, 20, 10, 5, 2, and 1 cents. Each Euro coin has a common European face and a face designed by each monetary member state. All coins can be used in every monetary member country.

There are seven Euro notes which are differently sized and colored, and come in denominations of 500, 200, 100, 50, 20, 10, and 5. The notes, unlike the coins, do not have national sides and are completely uniform.

E-mail

You can use the cybercafes in Graz for e-mail and Internet access for reasonable hourly fees. Most host families, however, will have Internet access.

Mail

Have mail sent to your host family's address. Little yellow boxes bolted on to buildings at elbow level are mail boxes.

Telephones

Telephone calls from Austria to the United States are more expensive than the same calls placed from the United States. One way to handle transatlantic calls is to obtain a calling card from your U.S. telephone carrier before you leave home. With it you can call collect or have a call charged to your card at the best European rates.

Increasingly, however, students also use pre-paid telephone cards purchased in Europe. Rely on your U.S. calling card or a pre-paid telephone card for calling home. In the absence of either card, go to the main post office (*Hauptpostamt* at Neutorgasse 46) where you can pay for your call in advance, or to the Postamt at the train station. Both are open 24 hours a day.

In your homestay, always offer to pay and keep your calls brief. Telephone calls are very expensive, and even local calls are metered.

Time

Local time in most of Indiana (Eastern Daylight Time) will be six hours earlier than Central European Daylight Time in Graz, so at noon in Indianapolis, it will be 6 p.m. in Graz.

Written expressions of time in Europe use the 24-hour clock, but colloquial expressions of time do not. Most Germans and Austrians say *acht Uhr* to indicate 8 p.m. or 20.00 hours. In Austria, you're likely to hear *Viertel elf* instead of *Viertel nach zehn* for 10:15. Other interesting variations to watch out for are *drei Viertel elf* for 10:45 a.m. and *halb elf* for 10:30.

Weather

Early summer weather in Graz is hard to predict. It may be cool and rainy, much like Indiana in mid-April, but you may also encounter the heat and humidity of a Midwestern summer. Be prepared for quite a range of temperatures.

Eating Out

To learn a restaurant's most economical meal, ask the waiter what the Menü (daily special) is. Remember what you eat, because you will be expected to recount it to the server when the time comes to pay your bill. Include any bread or rolls. At most places you call the server over when you are finished, and pay at the table.

In restaurants the tip is up to 10% and it is paid directly to servers when they collect what you owe for your meal. They will not expect a separate tip left at the table and will be insulted if you pay them only the exact price of the meal. Once the server tallies up the food bill and announces what is due, even though a service charge is included in the price, state the amount you are giving him for food and tip together.

The cultural norm is to round up to a number of Euros without additional cents. Thus, a bill of € 7, 20 would typically be rounded up to € 8,00; a bill of € 7, 90 to € 9,00.

Getting Around Graz

Trams

Most host families live in Graz's handsome and widely separated suburban areas, not downtown, and you will use Graz's extensive public transportation system to commute to the city center where classes are held. Your program fee includes tram/bus passes.

The procedure for riding the *Strassenbahn* is this: At the more populated stops, the door will open automatically; hop on. Otherwise, push the button beside the door and keep pushing until the door opens. Once on, stick the unstamped end or side of your ticket into the convenient *Entwerter* box. The weekly and monthly passes provided by the program are stamped only once.

Just before your arrival at your destination, push the button on one of the uprights near the door. If you don't think you'll be able to recognize the stop the first few times, the conductor will be glad to help. State where you want to get off, and the conductor will show you out at the appropriate stop.

Learn to read tram and bus schedules, posted at most stops (*Haltstellen*). Be especially careful to note the different schedules for weekdays, Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays. The schedule, like all other printed times in Europe, uses the 24-hour clock (i.e. 1 p.m. = 13.00 *Uhr*). Public transportation does not run as late as student social life sometimes does. Late at night, your best hope is an inexpensive group taxi.

Taxis

Taxis are available at any hour of the day or night. They don't cruise (although you may manage to flag one down on its way back from somewhere), but are located at taxi stands throughout the city. You can call for one, or just show up at any of the following places: Geidorfplatz, tel. 62 2 36; Griesplatz, tel. 91 12 33; Hauptbahnhof, tel. 91 122 77; Kaiserfeldgasse/Herrengasse, tel. 72 2 00; Landeskrankenhaus, tel. 32 3 04; Parkhotel, tel. 32 1 01; Sudtirolerplatz, tel. 91 41 14; Schmiedgasse/Hauptplatz, tel. 79 0 43.

Inexpensive group taxis should be reserved by phone: tel. 22 1 01, or 31 5 55, or even 36 3 11.

Walking

By far one of the most enjoyable things to do in Graz is just wander. It is usually safe even for women alone. The jumble of building facades along the *Altstadt* is fascinating. Through the archways on these streets you will find everything from blind alleys and trash cans to interesting examples of architecture.

The Stadtpark is a good place to eat a sack lunch, feed the pigeons, study or play Frisbee. With the help of your street map and a reproduction of an old map of the city you can mentally reconstruct the inner and outer defenses of the Schlossberg, remnants of which are still visible to the trained eye of the incorrigible brown-bagger. At the Hilmteich one can rent a rowboat for an hour or two.

For the inept rower, there's a forest full of footpaths behind the pond. In fact, one of these paths leads out to Wallfahrtskirche Mariatrost, a lovely old Baroque church on the outskirts of town. A beautiful running path, marked for up to half of a marathon, is laid out in the same forest. If it gets late and you're getting tired, hop on tram number 1 for the journey back downtown.

Health & Safety Precaution

Tick-Borne Encephalitis (TBE)

Please be aware that ticks that are carriers of the TBE virus are common in Austria in May and June. You could be exposed to ticks while biking, hiking or walking in grassy or wooded areas. No TBE vaccines are available in the U.S. Vaccination is available in Austria, but they are given in a series (1-3 shots) and typically do not reach fully efficacy for a number of weeks. You are strongly encouraged to take precautions by wearing long-sleeved shirts, trousers rather than shorts, socks and shoes rather than sandals, and to closely examine yourself for bites and shower after potential exposure.

Should you develop symptoms of TBE (several days of fever, fatigue, headache and muscle pain), seek medical assistance.

For further information, including a more detailed explanation and additional recommendations, please see information on the CDC website:

wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/yellowbook/2014/chapter-3-infectious-diseases-related-to-travel/tickborne-encephalitis

Vacation Travel

For vacation travel after the program ends, a Eurail pass is highly recommended. It gives you the freedom to roam about as you wish, without stopping to purchase a new ticket for every leg of your trip. There are several types of Eurail passes, all of which must be purchased in the U.S. For information on the various options consult any travel agent.

Don't plan to use your Eurail pass during the six weeks in Graz; you won't have enough free weekends to get your money's worth. The trips to Vienna and Salzburg take up two of the five weekends. Often students travel to Slovenia or Croatia on one of the remaining weekends.

For vacation travel, bring a guidebook to the places you plan to visit. *Let's Go: Europe* and the *Lonely Planet* volume on Western Europe are excellent guides for student travelers, but neither has the space to give information in depth about any single place. If you are going to travel mainly in one country, bring the separate guide to that country. Travel in France and Italy is expensive, Slovenia and Hungary much more affordable.

Packing

Pack light. This is the consistent advice from former program participants. A small, well-coordinated wardrobe is more practical than a large one. Bring wash and wear garments you will be happy wearing a lot. Few families have clothes dryers, so bring clothing that doesn't require tumble drying to look sharp. Jeans are as popular in Austria as they are in the U.S. Clothing is expensive in Europe.

Pack the following:

- raincoat, umbrella, warm jacket
- one nice outfit
- sturdy, comfortable shoes
- two warm sweaters or sweatshirts
- aspirin, antihistamines, vitamins, cold medication, and other nonprescription drugs you sometimes use
- prescription drugs in their original container to last the entire program; clearly printed copy of your prescription in generic, not brand name, terms
- extra pair of glasses or contact lenses and a typewritten copy of your prescription
- contact lens solution
- travel alarm clock
- large backpack or bag for traveling, small bag for books
- good map of Europe
- diary and address book with emergency telephone numbers
- photos of home and family
- Let's Go: Europe*, *Lonely Planet*, or other student travel guide
- gift for Austrian family
- camera
- notebooks, classroom supplies

Predeparture Reading

Begin now to read about Austrian history, culture and politics. Do you know what Austria's form of government is like and who the head of state is? What is the primary religion? Where is Graz in relation to Vienna, Venice, or Budapest? No Austrian would come to the U.S. without some basic knowledge of its geography, politics and history.

Read the introductory pages of the *Lonely Planet: Austria* guidebook for practical and general cultural information, as well as historical information. You may also find *Culture Shock! Austria* by Susan Roraff and Julie Krejci useful and informative. Finally, Insight Guides have beautifully illustrated and detailed guidebooks to Austria and Vienna.

Graz 2017 Facebook Group

If you have not already done so, please join the 'Graz 2017' group on Facebook. Be sure to check in at least every couple of days before departure to Graz and every day once you are in Graz. The Facebook group provides a simple, convenient forum for exchanging information about many practical concerns relating to the program.