

Maria Theresia

Franziskaner

Kapuziner

Einspänner

Melange

Pharisäer

Vienna Coffeehouses

Meeting Place for Great Minds

You are not expected to rush the time you spend as the guest of the *Kaffeehaus*. In fact, hurrying is somewhat of an insult. Sip, chat, stir, read, sniff, and ponder.

For centuries, the coffeehouses of Vienna have been an Austrian institution. The aromatic blends of *Kaffee* have fuelled the conversations and cultural aspirations of a nation. Coffeehouses remain today a living link with the past and a respite from the hectic pace of life.

The beginnings of the Viennese coffeehouse go back to 1683, when the armies of Grand Vizier Kara Mustafa tightened around Vienna in a deadly noose, and the besieged Habsburg capital seemed lost. Yet through the eleventh-hour heroics of Georg Franz Koltschitzky, a Polish spy and adventurer who disguised himself as a Turk and slipped through enemy lines to summon Vienna's allies, the city was saved.

When the grateful city fathers invited Koltschitzky to name his reward, he merely asked for "camel fodder" – a few bags of greenish beans that the Turkish forces had abandoned in their retreat.

The Viennese happily agreed and gave him a small house near St. Stephen's Cathedral in the bargain. Here the crafty Koltschitzky began brewing a dark, stimulating drink, which he had tasted during his travels in the East, a beverage known to the Turks as kahve. And so history was made.



Café Central Vienna

Today there are around 1,720 *Kaffeehäuser* in Vienna, including a growing number of Starbucks, and coffee remains the cultural lifeblood and a refined science with individual selections bestowed with unforgettable names.

Example: A Franziskaner is a "coffee with enough milk to resemble the color of a Franciscan monk's robe." Perhaps the most precious quality of the coffeehouse experience is this: the sense of return to a more leisurely age to savor the slow, voluptuous, bittersweet passage of time.

To discover and uncover the delights of ordering a coffee in Vienna, turn to:

Historic Coffeehouses: Vienna, Budapest, Prague

Dittrich, Carol. Lemieux International Ltd., Milwaukee, WI., 2002, \$14.95 US.

Kaffeehaus: Exquisite Desserts from the Classic Cafés of Vienna, Budapest, and Prague

Clarkson Potter Publishers, New York, 2002. \$37.50 US.