

Belvedere Palace, Vienna



This summer palace was commissioned by Prince Eugene of Savoy and is situated between Rennweg and Schweizergarten. Its name, which refers to the unique view over Vienna, originates from the time of Maria Theresia.

Prince Eugene bought the land at the Rennweg in 1697 and extended it in four stages until 1721, when it reached the extent it has today.



The Lower Belvedere castle was built between 1714 and 1716. It is an elongated single storey building consisting of a seven-axial central projection, two wings and two corner pavilions. The three-axial middle pavilion houses the Marble Hall. The owner, scarcely staying in Vienna, used the castle as a pleasure palace during the summer months. Only in 1720 did the construction work on the Upper Belvedere commence although initial plans were extant in 1717. Compared with the Lower Belvedere, the Upper Belvedere is especially luxurious in both dimension and stylistic design. It had primarily representative purposes and was used as a place for illustrious receptions and festivities. The building history of the Belvedere cannot be consistently explored in detail, due to the loss of the Eugenic building archive. By 1723, the Upper Belvedere is considered complete (1721/22 according to Rizzi). The architect J. L. v. Hildebrandt, worked repeatedly for Prince Eugene, and the development of the Belvedere is considered his chief work. With its diverse architectural as well as dimensional structuring, it is among the most significant Baroque buildings of the 18th century. The garden situated between the Upper and Lower Belvedere is part of this ensemble. It was created by Bavarian garden engineer D. Girard and is roughly the same today as it was originally. The designs for the interior decoration were penned by C. le Fort du Plessy. After the death of the Prince, the Belvedere passed over to the ownership of Eugene's successor, Victoria, the Duchess of Saxe-Hildburghausen. She sold the Belvedere to Maria Theresia in 1752.



At the command of Joseph II., the imperial picture gallery was transferred there in 1775, and was opened to the general public for the first time in 1781. In 1806, the Ambraser Collection was housed in the Lower Belvedere. Both collections were transferred to the Kunsthistorische Museum in 1890. In 1984, the castle became the residence of the heir to the throne, Archduke Franz Ferdinand. After the First World War, the Republic of Austria set up the Austrian Gallery in the Belvedere. By 1945, the Belvedere had sustained severe war damage. The “gold cabinet”, situated in the north eastern corner pavilion of the Upper Belvedere, was destroyed in a fire in 1950 and replaced by a copy. The overall refurbishment, in progress since 1988, is to be finished in 1996.

from



aeiou - das kulturinformationssystem des bm:bwk

14.000 keywords and 2000 images from Austrian history, geography, politics and economics

www.aeiou.at

Austrian Gallery Belvedere

Situated in the centre of Vienna, the Belvedere castles with their extensive parks constitute an impressive Baroque work of art. The museum in the Upper and Lower Castle offers an exquisite overview of Austrian art from the middle ages to the present. Furthermore, the collections of the 19th and 20th centuries comprise an exquisite selection of international art.



You will see world-famous works by Klimt (picture left: The Kiss), Schiele, Kokoschka, Renoir or Monet in the Upper Belvedere, where you can also enjoy the spectacular view of the centre of Vienna. The historical rooms of the Lower Belvedere exhibit works of art from the middle ages and the Baroque period.

Österreichische Galerie Belvedere
Prinz Eugen-Straße 27, A - 1037 Vienna
Tel. +43/(0)1/79 557 - 0
Fax +43/(0)1/ 79 84 337
belvedere@belvedere.at

Oberes Belvedere
Sammlungen des 19. und 20. Jahrhunderts
Prinz Eugen-Straße 27, A - 1037 Vienna
belvedere@belvedere.at

Unteres Belvedere
Barockmuseum und Museum mittelalterlicher Kunst
Rennweg 6a, A - 1030 Vienna
belvedere@belvedere.at

