**December 2020 HC Newsletter – Draft**

Dear Friends of Austria!

How many more windows are still to open on your Advent calendar? The Holiday Season is here!

 **December 2:** Due to the [Public Order under the City of Los Angeles Emergency Authority](https://www.lamayor.org/sites/g/files/wph446/f/page/file/20201202%20Mayor%20Public%20Order%20Targeted%20SAH%20Order_1.pdf) issued December 2, the **Austrian Consulate General had to suspend its public hours until further notice.** The office remains open for emergency services for Austrian citizens. For more information, please see their website: austria-la.org.

 Following this announcement of the Consulate General, the **Honorary Consulate of Austria in Seattle** will not be able to accept passport applications **until the last week of January 2021** unless in emergency situations. To schedule an appointment or for more information please contact Eva Kammel at office@austrianconsulateseattle.org

 **New travel restrictions** entering Austria coming from USA between **Dec 19, 2020 to (at least) January 10, 2021**: mandatory quarantine for 10 days or one can apply for a prematurely end of the quarantine after 5 days providing a negative COVID-19 PCR test. The Austrian Government advises to refrain from any travels besides in emergency or very urgent cases. Please see attached remarks from Austria’s Ambassador to the United States. For more information on the travel restrictions check the website of the Austrian Consulate General of Austria in Los Angeles or go to: <https://www.sozialministerium.at/Informationen-zum-Coronavirus/Coronavirus---Haeufig-gestellte-Fragen/FAQ--Reisen-und-Tourismus.html>  
<https://www.sozialministerium.at/dam/jcr:c527088a-9fc8-4452-beb0-63cc76eb3ce0/201216_FAQ_Reisen_Tourismus.pdf>

**NEWS FROM AND ABOUT AUSTRIA**

 **December 4**: After 16 years of trial and proceedings, the verdict in the so-called **BUWOG Process** was handed down: former finance minister **K.H. Grasser** and accomplices got sentenced to up to 8 years of imprisonment for insider trading, corruption, witness tampering and others. The defendants are appealing the sentence.

 **December 13:** In honor of **Beethoven’s** birthday 250 years ago (he was baptized on Dec 17, 1770, but his actual day of birth is unknown): The Austrian Cultural Forum in Washington DC invites to a fantastic concert by the Austrian artists Jörg Ulrich Krah and Bernhard Parz. Follow the link and listen to Beethoven’s sonatas for cello and piano! [https://youtu.be/8YBtWiskrNk](https://t.co/GpfF2QypWy?amp=1)

 **No ski vacation** in Austria during Xmas time: All hotels and restaurants will stay closed. But the ski lifts will operate, only for day tourists. This necessary but hard Covid restriction hits Austria where skiing is a beloved pastime hard to the core.

To help bringing the challenging 2020 to a more optimistic end, here are some announcements for

**UPCOMING EVENTS**

 **Saturday, December 19, 18H MEZ = 9am PT: Adventsingen: Upper Austria’s** Advent caroling will be streamed live exclusively on LT 1, broadcasted directly from the Music Theater. Christmas stories, advent songs and interviews with cabaret artists Guenther Lainer and Silvia Schneider among others, bringing to us into a festive mood.

[**https://www.lt1.at/aktuelles/adventsingen-exklusiv-auf-lt1/**](https://www.lt1.at/aktuelles/adventsingen-exklusiv-auf-lt1/) **.**

**Saturday, December 19; 5pm**: “**Weihnachtssingen in the Park”**: **CANCELLED** following the Covid guidelines for WA.

 **Christmas Eve - Together: Weihnachtsabend - Zusammen:**

**Thursday, Dec 24; 2pm: zoom link:** [**https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82281753171?pwd=UWErQ3VYT1U4VkU2VXlLekNQd2VGUT09**](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82281753171?pwd=UWErQ3VYT1U4VkU2VXlLekNQd2VGUT09)

All Friends of Austria are welcomed to join in this very special Christmas Eve virtual contemplative get-together and celebrate Christmas together virtually**.** As many families cannot get together this year, maybe the Austrian Family can bring a bit of a the festive ambience. Jürgen Schatzer from the Austria Club of WA is looking for contributions, a Christmas song, a poem, a Christmas Story, whatever you may want to share.

**Please send your ideas and questions** to Jürgen Schatzer: [juergen.schatzer@gmail](mailto:juergen.schatzer@gmail).com

  This year, [**Salute to Vienna**](https://www.facebook.com/salutetovienna/?fref=mentions&__xts__%5B0%5D=68.ARDZRu_IcMPV2nzTEbl24WEUJyhn6X37oigHfjaawT2hMkTM3Hr0sN0LU8uOS34HAxJF4xS3xQ8xCIX28d6MNShtcVdND6W5t2uyh9WGnk17VZGSly_NrXJ28oQphdgc7YaN8HkvuV1-2wKfyKg7CnmPfTvX-StB104b5r5macqgR0R8Tuo1W0y4yBzVxifP1V7xXOjC11WV4YlnWAu1CfxhAS-THNP_B-2N7KGjHFErAt-RMRzjgU4HXn6vckJnmi2nk-3-bGgye-g3W8tT1NLhObfUk15OTlbS7d0POoJ9Ikkkc3DiuC4bqmnO3fPMoNhQ-d-ROff0fldK8yhk3gPntQ&__tn__=K-R) **and Budapest**is streaming directly into your living room Instead of life performances throughout the US. Celebrate the New Year with this never-before-seen performance, filmed in Europe. It is filled to the brim with the same joyful singing, dancing, and full orchestra that audiences all across North America have celebrated with since 1995. Ring in the New Year from the comfort of home. For more information and tickets: <https://www.salutetovienna.com/2021>

And finally, **the best way to ring in the New Year**:

 Friday, **January 1, 2021, at 9pm**: **New Year’s Concert of the Vienna Philharmonic**: Broadcast on local PBS stations (KCTS9 in the Seattle area) as part of the “Great Performances” series. Maestro **Riccardo Muti** will lead this concert, broadcasted from the Golden Hall of the Musikverein in Vienna (no live audiences) in over 90 countries followed by as many as 50 million television viewers around the world. Hope you can be one of them! Enjoy this optimistic and uplifting start of the New Year.

I am very much looking forward to being able to assist you also in 2021. Please don’t hesitate to contact me with any questions.

 

**Wildschönau in Tyrol**

Wishing you and your families health, peace and grace for the Holidays and a “Guten Rutsch” in a happy, healthy, and hopefully less complicated New Year!

Herzlichst,

Eva Kammel

Honorary Consul of Austria in Seattle

Attachment: Brief des Oe Botschafters