

The Donau-Auen National Park

Donau-Auen National Park 2011 Group Programmes

Preserving Nature for Generations



The Danube Wetlands

Stretching from Vienna to Bratislava, the Danube wetlands enjoy special protection: in 1996, the entire area was declared a National Park.

A large number of habitats are created by the constant rise and fall of the free-flowing Danube waters and are home to a wide variety of fascinating flora and fauna.

Humans are only guests here, and thus must take care to act responsibly and respectfully when visiting this unique natural sanctuary.

Get to know the Donau-Auen National Park! There are many different ways to discover and experience its wonders – select one which meets your needs. National Park rangers accompanying you can offer insights into how Mother Nature and her cycles work and will direct your attention to special and fascinating things you might have otherwise missed.

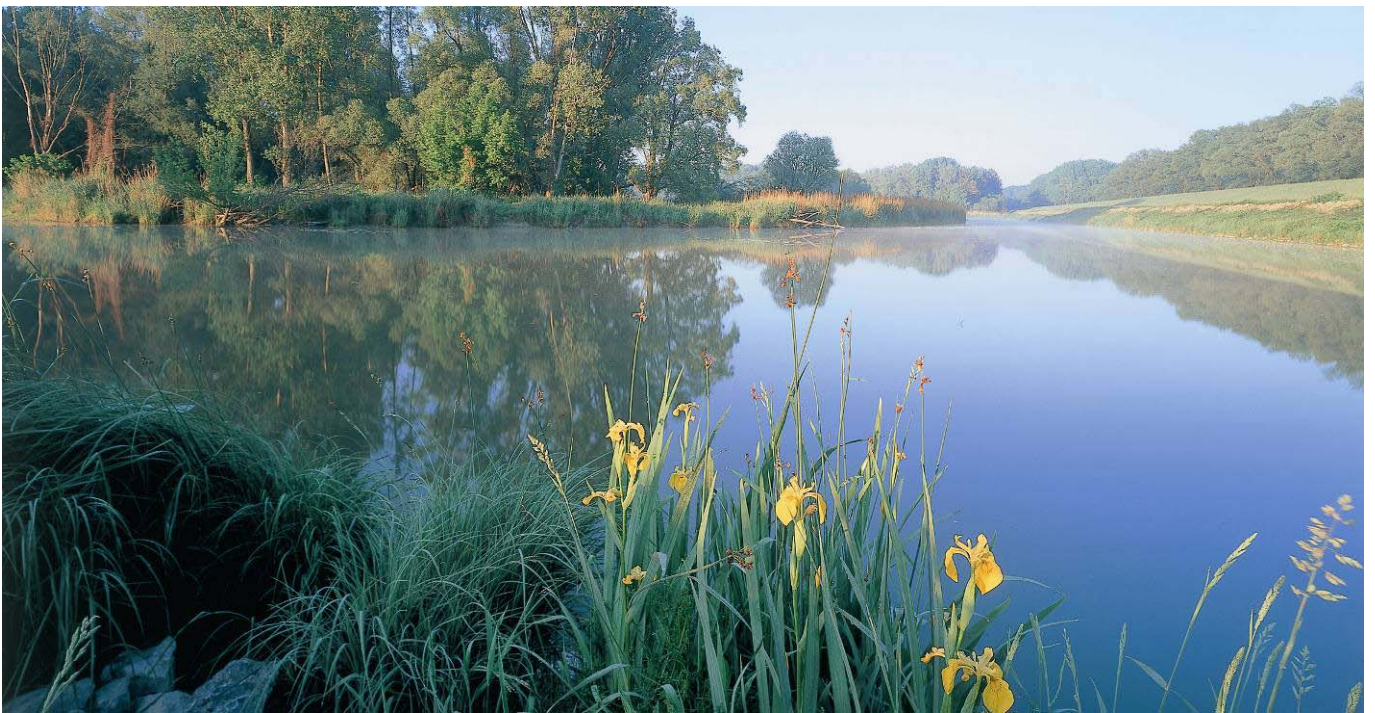
Because time flies quickly on National Park tours, be sure to schedule at least two to three hours for your visit – the memories you have will linger on even longer. Nature can also be unpredictable: be prepared for inclement weather, especially when taking outdoor tours.

Please be aware that dogs are not allowed at the schlossORTH National Park Centre, on the schlossINSEL, or on boat excursions.

If for any reason a booked tour cannot take place as scheduled (due to flooding, inclement weather, storms, mosquito plagues etc.) we will make every effort to arrange an interesting alternative plan for you.

We highly recommend the following gear: weatherproof clothing, rain gear, sturdy footwear, head covering, mosquito repellent, sun screen and something to drink. The Nationalpark-Donau-Auen GmbH and National Park rangers assume no liability for personal injury or property damage.

We invite you to turn the page and discover the many ways to experience the Donau-Auen National Park!



Bookings and Information

schlossORTH National Park Centre

Schloss Orth, 2304 Orth/Donau

21 March to 30 September: daily from 9:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.

1 October to 1 November: daily from 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

2 November to 20 March: closed for the winter

For telephone inquiries during winter season: Mon-Fri from 8:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Tel. +43 (0) 2212/3555, Fax +43 (0) 2212/3450-47

E-mail: schlossorth@donauauen.at

www.donauauen.at

National Park Info Point Schloss Eckartsau

Schloss Eckartsau, 2305 Eckartsau

1 April to 31 October: daily from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

1 Nov to 31 March: telephone enquiries only, Mon - Fri from 9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Tel. +43 (0) 2214/2335-18

E-mail: infostelle.donauauen@bundesforste.at

www.bundesforste.at/donauauen

Rates valid from 21 March to 1 November 2011.

Special rates are available for large groups.

Please be sure to book your tour at least 7 days in advance.

Tours may also be carried out in English or Slovakian. Other languages available upon request.

Imprint: Publisher/owner: Donau-Auen National Park GmbH, Schloss Orth, 2304 Orth/Donau; Tel. +43 (0) 2212/3450

E-mail: nationalpark@donauauen.at; Photos: Christopher H., Festschloss Schlosshof, Haider, Kern, Kovacs, Kracher, Popp



Boat Tours

Experience Nature on the Danube

Boat tours on the Danube are probably the most up-close and immediate way to get to know the National Park.

With National Park rangers as your guides, get into a rubber dinghy and float down the powerful Danube, passing steep bluffs, gravel banks and ships. Become one with nature! Feel the elementary power of the river with every paddle. If you listen carefully, you might even hear the siren-like song of the Danube gravel beds.

Kick back and relax on one of the many gravel banks. Take in the wetlands with all your senses. Observe the lush flora and be on the lookout for rare fauna. National Park rangers will let you in on nature's secrets and point out the many fascinating and unique aspects of the Danube wetlands.

Choose from any of the options below.

"The Land of the Barbarians" – Special Programme in conjunction with the 2011 Lower Austrian Provincial Exhibition

Danube boat tour from Bad Deutsch Altenburg to Hainburg

Meeting point is in Hainburg at the Kulturfabrik Hainburg. After a short greeting, National Park rangers will escort you to the coach taking you to Bad Deutsch Altenburg.

A brief walk through the park leads to the Danube and a direct view of the "Land of the Barbarians." And now the real journey begins. After getting into the dinghies and receiving instructions on how to paddle, it is off, across the powerful Danube! At the Stopfenreuth Arm, one of the most idyllic former river arms in the entire National Park, you will paddle with your rangers all the way to a riverside road.

After this, a short walk to the Au-Terrasse Stopfenreuth with views across the land of the ancient Romans.

After a brief stay here, it's back into the dinghies and another Danube crossing. This Danube boat tour with many historical highlights ends once again in Hainburg.

Approx. 3 hours

Minimum of 6, and maximum 10 persons per boat; participants must be at least 15 years old

€ 210 per boat

Tip:

Combine this National Park tour with a visit to the Lower Austrian provincial exhibition "Conquer – Discover – Experience: Ancient Roman Carnuntum" (go to www.noe-landesausstellung.at for more information).

Hainburg Danube Boat Tour

Meeting point is in Hainburg at the harbour. After a short greeting, National Park rangers will provide instructions on how to paddle. The group will paddle along the foot of the ruins of the Röthelstein castle, then cross the river and disembark on the Danube's north bank. During a stay on the gravel bank, your guides will relate interesting facts about the National Park riverbank restoration project and the revitalization of the Danube and its banks.

The next stop on the Danube tour is at the mouth of the March River with its unique and breathtaking view of the Devín Castle ruins in Slovakia. After this, the powerful Danube will be crossed several more times before arriving at the tour's final destination just below Hainburg. Here, either a coach is waiting, or you will be returned to the tour's point of departure.

Approx. 3 hours

Minimum of 6, and maximum 10 persons per boat; participants must be at least 15 years old

€ 210 per boat

Bonus programme:

This Danube boat tour can be expanded to fill an entire day:

Alternative A: visit to Devín Castle ruins with historical focus

Alternative B: excursion to the Sandberg near Devínska Kobyla with natural history focus

Approx. 5 to 6 hours

Upon request

Schönau – Orth Danube Boat Tour

Meeting point is at the Uferhaus restaurant in Orth/Donau. National Park rangers will lead the group on a shuttle bus to Schönau. After participants have been given instructions on how to paddle, the group and the rangers set off in dinghies. First stop is an idyllic Danube side arm. Things get really exciting when the boats enter the free-flowing reaches of the Danube and are carried along down the river by the strong current. The focus during this part of the tour is on the unique water connectivity project being carried out by the National Park and the benefits it brings to native fauna. The tour ends full circle at Orth/Donau. An experience never to be forgotten, this tour is one of the most popular of all National Park tours.

Approx. 3 hours

Minimum of 6, and maximum 10 persons per boat; participants must be at least 15 years old

€ 210 per boat

Experience Nature in the Backwaters

Canoe Tour in Stopfenreuth

Experience one of the most beautiful former branches of the Danube in a canoe with National Park rangers. In Stopfenreuth you will learn the basics of paddling and then set out across the calm waters, going only as far as the mouth of the branch at the Danube.

Stopfenreuth is known as the "birthplace" of the National Park. It was here, in 1984, where protesters were able to put a stop to plans for a Danube power plant at Hainburg by occupying the wetlands.

When water levels are as they should be, the waters are very clear. Fish can be observed swimming among the lush aquatic plants and floating lilies. Depending on the season, tour highlights may include sightings of European pond turtles, beavers, kingfishers, wild boars or deer.

Once the opposite Danube bank has been reached, the group disembarks and enjoys the marvellous view of the city of Hainburg and the Schlossberg. In the summer, take a refreshing dip in the river or look for shells, pretty Danube pebbles or even beaver tracks.

Stopfenreuth Wetlands Information Centre on the Dyke

Approx. 3 hours

Minimum of 9 and maximum of 27 participants

€ 196 per canoe (min. of 6, max. 9 persons)



Combination Tours

Experience Nature on Water and Land

Our combination tours are the best possibility to experience the Danube wetlands in all their complexity.

What makes the Danube wetlands so complex? The Danube and its branches form invaluable habitats. The dynamics of the river have always shaped the surrounding landscape in a very special way. Riverine wetlands exhibit enormous biodiversity! This is why the Danube wetlands have been granted the highest protection status possible and have been made into a National Park. By taking a combination tour on land and water, guided by National Park rangers, you will be able to discover all the many facets of the wetlands.

On water:

Alternative A

Together with National Park rangers, take a rubber dinghy on a side arm in Orth/Donau. You will receive basic instruction in paddling. See the characteristic wetlands willows from the water. Take a closer look at beaver tracks and learn to identify the tracks of nocturnal wetlands inhabitants. If water levels allow, a gravel bank may also have emerged, providing a good look at what is essentially the nucleus of the wetlands. The very lucky might even be able to spot herons, kingfishers or beavers.

Dinghy Tour: approx. 1½ hours

Alternative B

For those who do not wish to paddle themselves, going by *tschaike* – a replica of one type of historic Danube vessel – is a good alternative. Feel the power of the free-flowing Danube as you float past steep banks and gravel shoals. Both rigid river embankments and stretches of revitalized banks can easily be seen from here. And here the Danube's importance as an international waterway becomes apparent. National Park rangers explain what these things have to do with each other and outline the important goals of National Park projects.

Tschaike Tour: approx. 1½ hours

On land:

Alternative C

Take a round trip around the wetlands with National Park rangers! No matter what the season, this walk is always full of surprises. The flora and fauna of the Danube floodplains are especially rich: learn about the advantages of deadwood (which is surprisingly alive) or the reproductive and survival tactics of plants. High-water marks in the wetlands are true eye-openers, showing clearly just how dynamic this riverine landscape is. Amphibians and insects may cross your path, and you might even spot rare birds and mammals!

Wetlands Walk: approx. 1½ hours

Alternative D

This route is a particularly attractive option in the summer, leading down along the Danube to the Orth islands. Shells, coloured pebbles, young willows, poplars, reeds and other native flora and fauna are waiting to be discovered. The Danube itself also plays a role in this tour, as one can get a direct glimpse of the inflow area of the first water connectivity project from the bank on the other side. Relax on the gravel banks and watch the ships floating by, or do some birdwatching from the jetties and maybe spot a heron or cormorant.

Orth Islands Walk: approx. 1½ hours

It is possible to combine the alternatives as follows:

Alternatives A + C: Dinghy Tour & Wetlands Walk

Alternatives A + D: Dinghy Tour & Orth Islands Walk

Alternatives B + C: *Tschaike* Tour & Wetlands Walk

Alternatives B + D: *Tschaike* Tour & Orth Islands Walk

Another possibility is to combine a dinghy or *tschaike* tour with a guided tour of the schlossINSEL, or with an exhibition at the schlossORTH National Park Centre. For logistical reasons these combinations are only possible when your group is travelling by own coach.

Orth/Donau, parking lot of the Uferhaus restaurant

Each approx. 3 hours

Minimum of 15 persons required

€ 22 per person



Special Programme: Tie-in with 2011 Lower Austrian Provincial Exhibition

Boat trip on the Danube and walk to the Röthelstein ruins

Hainburg is the home port of the "Carnuntum," an excursion vessel, and is the point of departure for this tour which is guided by National Park rangers. The confluence of the March and Danube as well as the re-emergent natural steep banks and gravel shoals across from Hainburg are highlights of this boat excursion.

Afterwards, walk accompanied by rangers along the Danube to the foot of the Braunsberg, all the way to the Röthelstein ruins. This scenic path offers impressive views of the expansive Stopfenreuth wetlands (the site of the legendary 1984 Hainburg occupation) before eventually leading back to the Danube landing.

Hainburg, parking lot on the Danube landing

Approx. 3 hours

From 1 April – 31 October: minimum of 20 persons required

*From 1 November to 31 March: minimum of 15 and maximum of 25 persons
€ 23 per person*

Tour may be booked all year round!



Get to know nature

schlossORTH National Park Centre

Welcome to the Donau-Auen National Park!

As the gateway to the wetlands, the schlossORTH National Park Centre offers many exciting possibilities to learn more about the Danube wetlands. National Park rangers are available to accompany visitors on science and nature tours.

Indoors:

"DonAUräume" National Park Exhibition

This exhibition in our Baroque theatre offers a playful way to learn more about how the wetlands were created. Let yourself be taken on a multimedia journey through landscapes and history. Afterwards, an unusual bird's-eye view of the Danube wetlands provided by a map as big as an entire room that you can actually walk on. Finally, virtual Danube Mermaids tell stories about the National Park and its precious inhabitants.

Indoors:

Lookout Point

There are 107 steps leading up to the lookout point of the National Park Centre! Visitors who overcome this obstacle are richly rewarded with a view of a stork's nest via monitor. Depending on the season, it may be possible to observe the comings and goings of the schlossORTH house storks!

Each year one of the countries through which the Danube flows is invited to organize an exhibition in the lookout point. In 2011, Romania is the guest exhibitor, presenting the Danube Delta. Stop by and have a look!

Tour: approx. 1½ hours



Indoors:

Castle History: Stories of the Medieval Moated Castle at the Nature & Culture Centre

Schloss Orth on the Danube looks back on a rich and varied history. Enjoy a cup of tea or coffee in the Schloss Café and an entertaining lecture on the history and culture of the place. Our guest historians have much to say about the life stories of Orth castle owners and town inhabitants: Nicholas, Count of Salm, who defended Vienna in 1529, once owned the castle. Prince Eugene of Savoy's good friend, the beautiful Lori of Vienna, had relatives in Orth. Crown prince Rudolf caught fish for his fish & chips here. And these are only a few of the colourful characters with whom you will become acquainted!

Lecture: approx. 1 hour

Outdoors:

Schlossinsel Gardens

A tour of the Schlossinsel wetlands gardens with National Park rangers is a good way to see the many special features of the Danube wetlands. Observe the *Emys orbicularis*, or European pond turtle, up close. This turtle was once a popular fasting food but is now one of the most prominent examples of protected National Park species. Or glimpse a colubrid, a native snake, sunning itself or hunting for prey. Enter our walk-in underwater world, where you can see all sorts of Danube fish species as well as aquatic plants such as Nuphar and Mare's-tail. Watch the pearl-like bubbles produced by the plants as they "breathe" underwater.

Learn more about different kinds of animal tracks: even for scientists, these tracks are valuable clues to the presence of animal life.

The sheer variety of plant species in the Danube wetlands forms a massive green curtain, from the climbing vine Traveller's Joy to tasty hops to the rustling leaves of the White Poplar.

A new and different experience in every season!

Tour: 1 to 1½ hours



Outdoors:

Wetlands Walk

The schlossORTH National Park Centre is truly the gateway to the wetlands – proof is provided by a guided walking tour along the Faden Creek, a former side arm of the Danube. This walk will allow you to learn much about the habitats of the riverine forest, former river branches and dykes.

Depending on the season, this tour offers highlights ranging from spring blossoms to bird calls; the vegetation of dry grasslands; amphibians, molluscs and of course lots and lots of insects. All these creatures make their home in the wetlands – come visit them!

Tour: approx. 1½ hours

It is possible to combine the various tour alternatives as follows:

"DonAuräume" exhibition, Lookout Point and Schlossinsel Gardens

Approx. 3 hours

Minimum of 15 persons

€ 10.50 per person

"DonAuräume" exhibition, Lookout Point and Wetlands Walk

Approx. 3 hours

Minimum of 15 persons

€ 10.50 per person

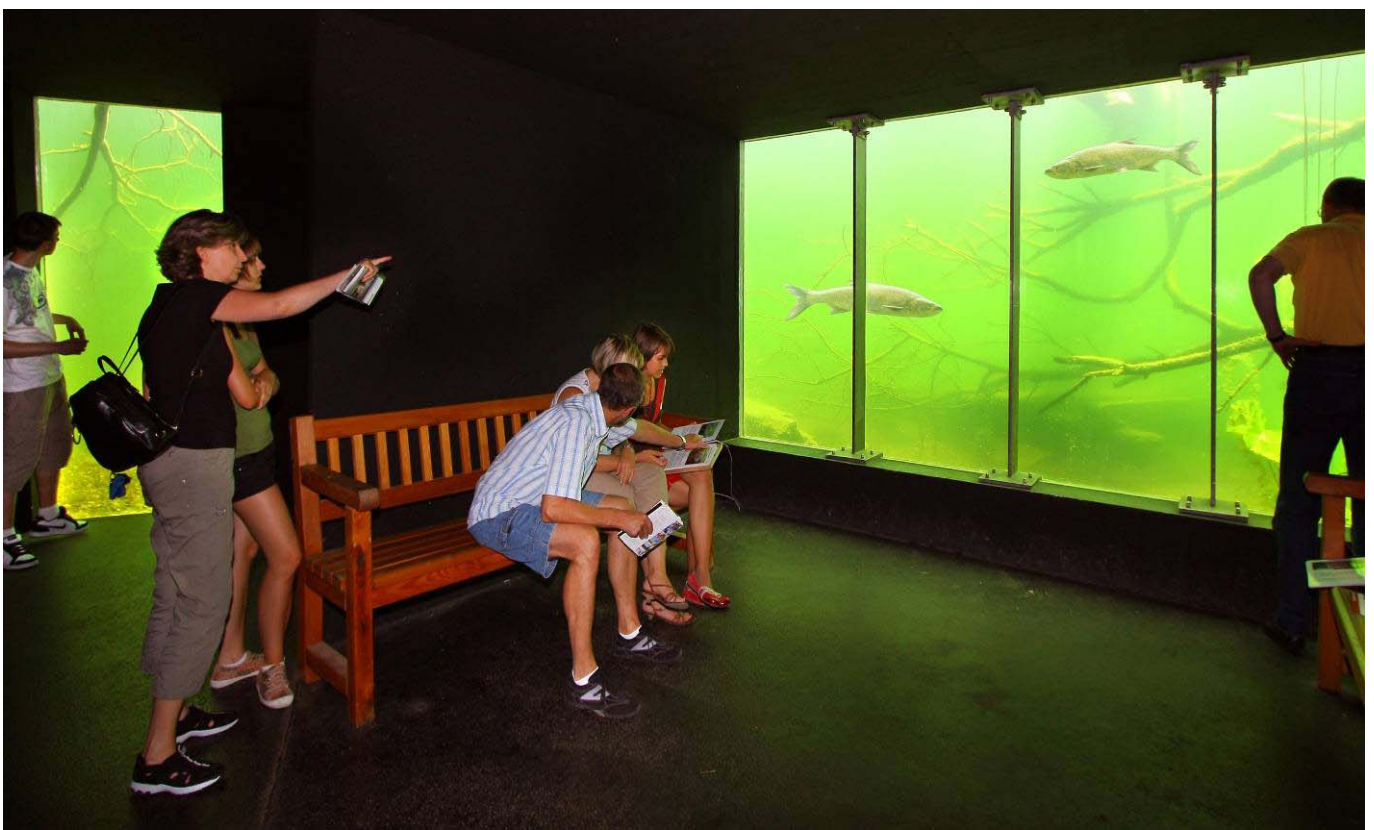
"DonAuräume" exhibition and Castle History

Important notice: for organizational reasons this tour can only be booked Monday-Friday at 10:00 a.m., 11:00 a.m., 1:00 p.m., 2:00 p.m., 3:00 p.m. and 4:00 p.m.

Approx. 2 Hours

Minimum of 15 persons

€ 9.90 per person, incl. one beverage



Walks and Hikes

Discover Nature on a Walk or Hike through the Donau-Auen National Park

Taking a wetlands walk or hike with a National Park ranger or forester as your guide will open your eyes to the many hidden wonders of nature. The best seasons for tours on foot are spring, fall and winter.

Select from among the following programmes:

Lobau Nature Discovery Walk

Xeric (very dry) landscapes are one unique characteristic of the Upper Lobau. In the spring an amazing variety of native orchids bloom here. This environment is home to rare insects such as the Praying Mantis. The reed belts in the backwaters provide a safe haven for native bird species.

In the fall, attention is turned to the many wild fruits such as the Blackthorn and barberry.

For history lovers, this tour may be adapted to include relevant points of interest. The paths hiked by visitors together with National Park and forestry staff from the Vienna centre are between two and five kilometres long.

wien-lobAU National Park House

Approx. 3 hours

Minimum of 6 persons

€ 10 per person (reduced rate of € 5)

Please be sure to book this tour at least one week in advance of your planned tour date.

Booking and Information:

wien-lobAU National Park House

Municipal Dept. 49 (Forestry Office and Urban Agriculture)

Dechantweg 8, 1220 Vienna

Tel. +43 (1) 4000-49495, Fax +43 (1) 4000-49500

E-mail: nh@ma49.wien.gv.at

www.nph-lobau.wien.at

Schönau

Near Schönau it is possible to experience a huge variety of wetlands habitats within a relatively limited area: dyke, former river branch, dynamic wetlands, side arms replenished with fresh water, and of course the free-flowing Danube itself. You will be amazed at the richness of flora and fauna in these habitats.

Snack stand on the dyke

Orth/Donau

Two possible routes may be selected: either the dammed-up side of the wetlands which is no longer directly affected by high waters; or the dynamic side, which is flooded regularly. The dividing line between the two is the dyke, which itself has developed into a valuable habitat for numerous plants and animals over the years.

Route A (wetlands inside the dam): schlossORTH National Park Centre
Route B (wetlands outside the dam): Uferhaus restaurant on the Danube

Eckartsau

The traditional imperial hunting grounds of the past live on today as spacious meadows offering sanctuary to many plant and animal species. The expansive Schlosspark surrounding Eckartsau Castle is a marked departure from the wild meadows. The charm in this route lies in the transition from controlled nature in the Schlosspark to the broad meadows and again to the wild wetlands formed by the powerful Danube.

Eckartsau Castle National Park Info Point

Stopfenreuth

A tour through the Stopfenreuth Au, the site of the legendary wetlands occupation of 1984, leads along the dyke and then into the flood areas, across former river branches and all the way out to the Danube. A towpath and then the riverside road lead back to the point of departure. Feel the magic of the wetlands while walking, and learn interesting facts about the area from your National Park guides.

Stopfenreuth, Wetlands Information Centre at the dyke

Hainburg

Here is where the Danube carves out its bed through the *Porta Hungarica*. First, the tour leads downstream along the foot of the Braunberg then moves upward toward the old Röthelstein ruins. A scenic path offers panorama views of the newly emerged, revitalized gravel banks across from Hainburg as well as interesting perspectives of the medieval city itself.

Parking lot on the Danube landing

Maria Ellend – Haslau/Donau

In marked contrast to the north bank, the banks on the south side fall steeply down to the National Park. This unique aspect is reflected in the special flora to be found here.

For nearly 20 years, the mighty Danube has again been able to regularly replenish her side arms, leading to the formation of impressive and fascinating landscapes.

Maria Ellend railway station

Approx. 3 to 3½ hours (for two to five km respectively)

Package price € 130 (for a maximum of 20 persons)

Please book walks and hikes in Schönau, Orth/Donau, Eckartsau, Stopfenreuth, Hainburg, Maria Ellend/Haslau at the schlossORTH National Park Centre.

Cycling Tours

Cycling Tours in the Donau-Auen National Park

It is possible to book guided cycling tours for the Viennese part of the Donau-Auen National Park. The Lobau is one of Vienna's most beautiful recreational areas.

A cycling tour is a leisurely mix of nature and sport enabling participants to discover the beauty of Danube wetlands habitats while on the go. The tour begins at the wien-lobAU National Park House and continues on through the Upper Lobau. With expert National Park forestry staff as your guides, learn more about the wetlands ecosystem while pedalling away!

wien-lobAU National Park House

Approx. 3 Hours

Minimum of 6 persons

Rates upon request

Please book your tour at least one week in advance of your planned tour date.

Booking and Information:

wien-lobAU National Park House

Municipal Dept. 49 (Forestry Office and Urban Agriculture)

Dechantweg 8, 1220 Vienna

Tel. +43 (1) 4000-49495, Fax +43 (1) 4000-49500

E-mail: nh@ma49.wien.gv.at

www.nph-lobau.wien.at



The Region as Tourist Destination

From Day Trip to Vacation Week

The Donau-Auen National Park lies in the middle of a region boasting many places of historical and culinary interest.

The Imperial Festival Palace Hof, the Carnuntum Archaeological Park and Eckartsau Castle are located in the immediate vicinity. Marchfeld and the Roman Carnuntum regions are directly adjacent to the National Park.

Nothing stands between you and a relaxing, rewarding stay!

For more information and bookings:

Donau Niederösterreich

Regional Tourism Office Auland-Carnuntum

Tel. +43 (0) 2163 3555 10

Fax +43 (0) 2163 3555 12

E-mail: auland-carnuntum@donau.com

www.aulandcarnuntum.com

Vienna Tourist Board

Tel. +43 (1) 24 555

Fax: +43 (1) 24 555 666

E-mail: info@wien.info

www.info.wien.at



Special Offers

Create a custom tour by combining a rubber dingy or *Tschaika* tour in the Donau-Auen National Park with a culinary trip through time at the Imperial Festival Palace Hof.

This tasty tour leads through the castle and into the formerly secret cellar labyrinth before heading into the sumptuous Meierhof garden and the imposing Prince Eugene orangery.

This special tour allows you to experience the culinary aspects of the Baroque era with all the senses, including samples of dishes created using actual Baroque recipes. And wine tastings allow you to compare aromatic Baroque wines to the contemporary wines produced by local winemakers of the region.

And there is an educational aspect to the tour as well: learn more about the culinary preferences of aristocrats in the era of Prince Eugene and Maria Theresa. Discover century-old traditional varieties of fruits and vegetables which had nearly been forgotten but are now being actively cultivated at the Imperial Festival Palace Hof.

For a grand culmination to this "culinary trip through time"-programme, book a Baroque menu at the restaurant "Zum weissen Pfau" at the Meierhof.

Afterwards, return to the Donau-Auen National Park in order to follow the tracks of beavers, herons and kingfishers. Discover the beauty of the Danube wetlands on both water and land.

Schlosshof and Orth/Donau, parking lot at the Uferhaus restaurant in Orth/Donau

Full-day programme

Minimum of 15 persons

€ 44 per person including tastings (please add an additional € 15 per person for Baroque menu)





- Treffpunkte für Exkursionen**
- 1 nationalparkhaus wien-lobAU
 - 2 Saltenstraße, Lobaubrücke
 - 3 Lobaumuseum/Vorwerk
 - 4 Panozzalacke, Parkplatz
 - 5 Groß-Enzersdorf, Endstat. Bus 26A
 - 6 Schönau, Imbiss-Stube bei Schutzdamm
 - 7 Maria Ellend, Bahnhof
 - 8 schlossORTH Nationalpark-Zentrum
 - 9 Orth/Donau, GH Uferhaus
 - 10 Haslau, Haltestelle S7 od. Parkplatz (Sportpl.)
 - 11 Schloss Eckartsau, NP-Infostelle
 - 12 Stopfenreuth, Auen-Info-Zentrum
 - 13 Stopfenreuth, Au-Terrasse, Uferstraße
 - 14 Hainburg, Parkplatz bei Donaulände

General Map of the Donau-Auen National Park

Donau-Auen National Park GmbH
2304 Orth/Donau, Schloss Orth
Tel. +43 (0) 2212/3450
Fax +43 (0) 2212/3450 17
E-mail: nationalpark@donauauen.at
www.donauauen.at