

## Advent in Graz, the Capital of Delight: 22/11 till 24/12/2019

Advent in Graz – this means arriving in an urban world of magic comprising romantic markets, glittering alleys and an enchanting atmosphere anticipating Christmas that captivates both young and old alike. Over these few weeks, Graz presents itself as the Capital of Delight for all the senses.

### 14 Advent and Christmas markets

The time leading up to Christmas is the time for markets. The Advent and Christmas markets open in Graz on Friday November 22nd. All of them are arranged with loving attention and present their various special themes till December 24<sup>th</sup>. There's also another outstanding feature of the Advent markets in Graz: the route from one to the next is easily covered on foot. We call it the "Advent of short strolls".

*A trip through the Christmas markets of Graz:*

- The route along Herrengasse high street, resplendent in Christmas decorations, leads towards a highlight in Hauptplatz main square: the huge **Christkindlmarkt on the Hauptplatz**. This festive village in the centre of the city, featuring traditionally-styled huts and stands, offers everything of delight to the palate, heart and soul. The new pavilion entertains not only with its "Engelspiel" feature but also offers space for small shows and events. Anyone indulging in pre-Christmas delights at the Christkindlmarkt after dusk gets the best view of the **Advent calendar**, brilliantly projected onto the façade of Graz Town Hall.
- Counting among the true yuletide classics are the many **arts & crafts markets**, which have been enormously popular for decades. Anyone who values style, handicraft and quality is sure to find the perfect item. Indeed, many a little last-minute gift has been tracked down here ... The arts & crafts market on **Färberplatz** square, along with those on immediately neighbouring **Mehlplatz** square (with designer-Advent-huts!) and on **Glockenspielfplatz** square, invite you to a cheerful stroll in the heart of the historic city centre.
- Just as popular is the market on **Tummelplatz** square which, for 20 years now, has drawn Bohemians, globetrotters and craftspeople from lands afar to Graz. This underlines the theme of "eclectic crafts from all over the world" – browse through cosy fabric items, brightly coloured handicrafts in silver and wood, whilst revelling in the emotive aromas of frankincense, myrrh and incense sticks.
- Not so far away, the **Charity Market at Eisernes Tor** merges yuletide atmosphere with charitable purpose. The proceeds from mulled wine, hot fruit punch and the like pass to a wide variety of aid projects.
- Just a few steps along the narrow alleys to the west of Hauptplatz square bring you to the Franziskanerviertel district, there to encounter the **Altgrazer Christkindlmarkt**, the oldest Christmas market in the city, bringing Styrian delights and rural traditions to the centre.
- There's a busy, modern and urban atmosphere right by the new **Joanneumsviertel**. Awaiting guests in this hotspot in the heart of the city are exciting architecture, inspiring design and top-quality catering, providing a veritable feast for the senses. Anyone on the lookout for out-of-the-ordinary Christmas gifts is sure to find something at the "**STIKH – Steirische Initiative Kunsthandwerk**" market in Lesliehof and Lesehof courtyards.

- Continue on across the River Mur, where the market on **Südtiroler Platz** square awaits you. Experience the heart-warming cheer with Styrian treats and exquisite mulled wine set around the well-loved “Steirerhütte” [Styrian hut].
- Moving on from Südtiroler Platz along Mariahilferstrasse street to the heart of the suburb by the Mur: “**WonderLend**” promises a chill-out atmosphere in the city’s up-and-coming creative district, complete with unusual and individual designer products and gift ideas.
- “Aufsteirern” celebrates all that is Styrian in Graz not only in its September fair – leading up to Christmas too, the “**Aufsteirern**” **Christmas market** on Schlossberg hill delivers cheer way above the city’s roofs.
- The **Grieskindlmarkt** on Nikolaiplatz focuses on local designers and follows strongly the mindset of sustainability and „less waste“.

### Being a child (again) at Advent

What would Advent be without children? For all the little guests, Advent in Graz has a lot to offer: the **Children’s Advent market on Kleine Neutorgasse street** lifts kids’ spirits sky-high – and not just on the nostalgic big wheel! Their eyes light up at the sight of the carousel, fairy tale train, “Schaumbecher” dessert treats and candy floss. It’s a similar reaction at the **Children’s Winterworld on Karmeliterplatz square**, where a 1000 m<sup>2</sup> ice rink awaits skaters, both small and large. No chance of boredom in the kids’ tent thanks to the biscuit-baking studio, creative workshop, story-telling, playground and Advent nursery rhyme singing.

If that feels like enough walking, then the **Adventzug** train conveys both young and old through the historic centre – from one market to the next. Operating again this year is the **Adventbim**, a veteran tram festively decked out and inviting you to ride along through the Christmassy city. The enchanted forest on Schlossbergplatz is a consumption-free zone, where passers-by can linger in a relaxed atmosphere. In the enchanted forest, alongside a big Advent crown there’s furniture made of pallets, inviting you to sit down.

### “Cool” art: the ice nativity scene

It’s the magical attraction during Advent: the ice nativity scene in the Landhaus courtyard. Ice sculptor Kimmo Frosti shapes 35 tonnes of ice into a unique work of art. Incidentally, the Graz ice nativity scene is the first on this scale in the world. It opens on November 30<sup>th</sup>, at 6pm.

### What else is going on

The Graz Advent programme includes many more festive events brimful of the anticipation of Christmas. Christmas carols, gospel concerts, regional choirs and music groups, guided Advent tours and the mock-satanic “Krampus- und Perchtenlauf” parade on 1/12/2019 provide settings for contemplation, the perfect mood and that joy of looking forward to the festival of the year.

For the second time an unprecedented spectacle of water, fire, laser and light will provide an overwhelming performance on the **main square** and will turn the **New Year’s Eve** into an unforgettable highlight.

Check out all the information about the events at: [www.adventingraz.at](http://www.adventingraz.at)