

New Year's Eve in Austria: Fireworks & Lucky Charms

Ring in the New Year in style dancing in a fancy ballroom or celebrate until the early hours of the morning at an open-air party – in Austria, holidaymakers are spoilt for choice! Fireworks, concerts, balls, outdoor dancefloors, you name it, we have it all. And if you have always dreamt of waltzing through the streets with a glass of bubbly in your hand at midnight, you're at the right place too! Visitors spending New Year's Eve in Austria can expect a wide choice of events as well as the chance to experience Austrian traditions first-hand. Here's where to go, what to expect, and how to make the last night of the year a night to remember!

Austrian traditions: Lucky charms, lead pouring and the New Year's Concert

Austrians love to swap **lucky charms** on New Year's Eve. The most popular ones include four-leaf clovers, horseshoes, chimney sweeps, pigs, and elephants. While some people exchange little plastic charms, there are also edible versions made of chocolate or marzipan.

Along with these tokens of good fortune, **lead pouring** is another beloved New Year's tradition, used to peek into what the new year might hold. A classic kit consists of some tiny figures made of lead and a tablespoon. The figures are melted over a flame and the liquid poured into a bowl of cold water. The lead solidifies immediately, and its shape can be interpreted to see what fate has in store.

A tradition famous around the world is the [Vienna New Year's Concert of the Vienna Philharmonic](#) at the Musikverein. It is broadcast worldwide, including by BBC 2, reaching about 50 million viewers in over 90 countries every year. To attend it live, register for the ballot [here](#) in February, then sit tight and keep your fingers crossed.

New Year's Eve in Vienna: XXL street party, open-air waltzing, and glamour gala

Vienna's city centre and the Riesenradplatz at the Prater turn into Austria's biggest NYE party zone from 2 PM on 31 December. The so-called [New Year's Eve Trail](#) attracts up to one million people every year and features dozens of open-air dancefloors, live music, DJs and food and drinks stalls. A highlight not to be missed is the classical area on the Graben, where dance schools offer waltz classes free of charge throughout the afternoon. At midnight, it's time to show off those newly acquired skills when the city dances into the new year to the sounds of Johann Strauss' "Blue Danube Waltz" and the ringing Pummerin (the famous bell in St Stephen's Cathedral). It almost goes without saying that there are fireworks too. Those who'd rather dance in the warmth should book tickets for the [New Year's Eve Gala](#) in the town hall.

Parties and celebrations in other Austrian cities

When in [Salzburg](#), the place to be on New Year's Eve is the area around the Cathedral, where bands perform from early afternoon. At 4 PM, gun salutes are traditionally fired from Hohensalzburg Fortress and the Staatsbrücke (main bridge), and at Midnight, the Cathedral bells ring and fireworks are lit from the Fortress. There's also a [New Year's Concert](#) at the Great Festival Hall (one of the main venues of the Salzburg Festival).

In [Linz](#), locals and visitors gather at the Danube shore to watch the fireworks. There are also [cruise tickets](#) available for those wishing to toast to the new year right on the water. The Bruckner Haus hosts a [New Year's Eve Concert](#) as well as a [New Year's Concert](#) the following day, with the later one dedicated to Beethoven, who's 200th death anniversary is coming up in 2027.

[Graz](#) has banned fireworks for both environmental and animal welfare reasons and celebrates the turn of the year with a spectacular multimedia show on the main square, combining water, fire, lasers, lights and video projections instead – a unique and innovative concept in Austria (five showtimes from 5:30 PM to midnight). There's also a [New Year's Eve tram](#) and a guided [New Year's Eve walk](#) in English.

[Innsbruck](#) makes a top destination for those wanting to celebrate New Year's Eve in the mountains, while enjoying all the city amenities. During the day, visitors can explore 3D projections around the old town, and from the afternoon the forecourt of the Imperial Palace turns into a party zone with live music and a DJ. The best place to see the firework display is from the Nordkette mountain range, where gorgeous views, a bar and DJs await.

New Year's celebrations in the mountains ...

Holidaymakers seeking celebrations in smaller places should head to Austria's mountain and lake regions. Book yourself into [Kitzbühel](#) for stunning lights, street artists, traditional music, DJs, and fireworks, and take a torch-lit walk around Lake Schwarzsee on New Year's Day. Or make your way to the Arlberg region for snow-sure pistes and fireworks: A highlight are the so-called Acoustic Fireworks in Zürs, a spectacular show traditionally accompanied by world-famous hits. In [SkiWelt](#), holidaymakers can choose between open air street parties, night tobogganing and fancy 6-course dinners before watching the fireworks, while Zillertal offers rides on a [New Year's Eve steam train](#) through the region. [St. Johann in Tirol](#) takes the ski and party combo to the next level and celebrates with ski shows and a torch-lit procession on New Year's Day, and [Kleinwalsertal](#) has swapped fireworks for an open air DJ party for environmental reasons.

... and at the lakeshore

In [Salzkammergut](#), the new year is welcomed with traditional parades and runs at the lakeside in the afternoon and early evening alongside music, food and drinks stalls, plus canon balls and, of course, the obligatory fireworks. Hotspots include St. Wolfgang and St. Gilgen. [Lake Wörthersee](#) in Austria's southernmost province Carinthia celebrates with fireworks at the lake and a New Year's swimming event. In Klagenfurt, there's a [New Year's market](#) at the Neue Platz in Klagenfurt from 27 – 31 December as well as an open air party with DJs and live music on New Year's Eve.