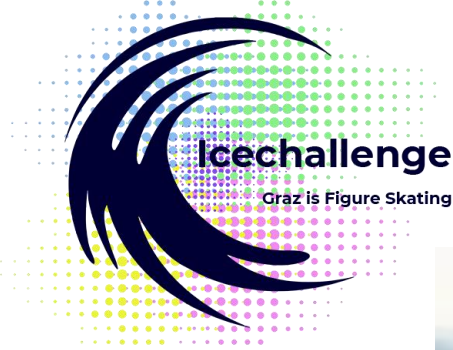




06.-10. November 2024
Graz, Austria





Welcome to Graz!

On behalf of the Organizing Team and the Grazer Eislaufverein, we warmly welcome you to the IceChallenge 2024 in Graz.

It is the 12th time, that Graz hosts such an international competition conducted under ISU rules for all categories: Singles, Pairs and Ice Dance in Novice, Junior and Senior Level. We wish the very best to all teams and hope you will enjoy the Icechallenge and Graz.

FAQS about Graz!

Graz with almost 300.000 inhabitants, is the second-largest city in Austria after Vienna and the capital of the federal state of Styria (Steiermark in German) a green and heavily forested area, lovely called the "green heart of Austria".

Graz has a long tradition as a student city: its six universities have more than 44,000 students. Graz's "Old Town" is one of the best-preserved city centres in Central Europe. In 1999, it was added to the UNESCO list of World Cultural Heritage Sites. Graz was also Cultural Capital of Europe 2003.

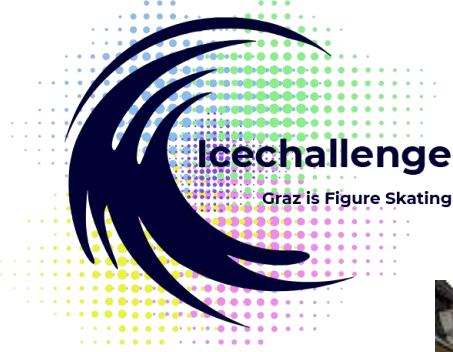
The city is riverined on the Mur, in the south east of Austria. It is approximately 200 km southwest of Vienna.

The nearest larger city is Maribor in Slovenia which is about 50 km away, which hosts the Winter Universiade 2013.

A short history of the City Graz!

The German name 'Graz' was first used in 1128, and during this time dukes under Babenberg rule made the town into an important commercial center. Later Graz came under the rule of the Habsburgs, and in 1281 gained special privileges from King Rudolph I.





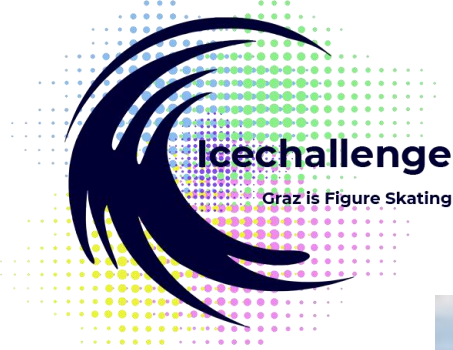
In the 14th century Graz became the city of residence of the Inner Austrian line of the Habsburgs. The royalty lived in the Schloßberg castle and from there they ruled Styria, Carinthia, and parts of today's Italy and Slovenia (Carniola, Gorizia and Gradisca). In the 16th century, the city's design and planning were primarily controlled by Italian Renaissance architects.

Graz lies in Styria, or Steiermark in German. With a strategic location at the head of the open and fertile Mur valley, Graz was often assaulted (unsuccessfully) by the Ottoman Turks in 1529 and 1532. Apart from the Riegersburg, the Schloßberg was the only fortification in the region that never fell to the Ottoman Turks. Graz is home to the region's provincial armory, which is the world's largest historical collection of Baroque weaponry. It has been preserved since 1551, and displays over 30,000 items.

Main Sights

In the last few years some ground breakingly modern new public buildings have been erected in the city. The most famous of these are the Kunsthaus (house of modern art) designed by Peter Cook and Colin Fournier, a museum constructed right next to the river Mur, and the "Murinsel" (island in the Mur), an island made of steel, situated in the river. It was designed by the American architect Vito Acconci and contains a café, an open-air theatre and a playground.



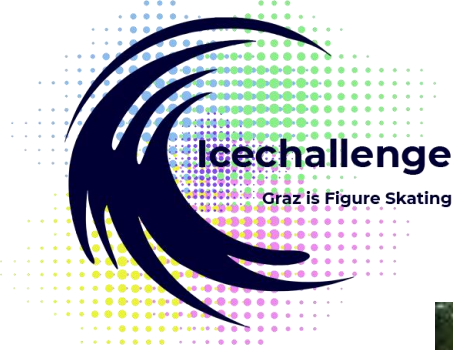


Old Town

The old town was added to the UNESCO World Heritage List in 1999 due to the harmonious co-existence of typical buildings from different epochs and in different architectural styles. Being situated in a cultural borderland between Central Europe, Italy and the Balkan States, Graz absorbed various influences from the neighbouring regions and thus received its exceptional townscape. Today the old town consists of over 1000 buildings, their age ranging from Gothic to Contemporary. The most important sights in the old town are:

- *Schloßberg*, hill dominating the old town (475 m high), site of demolished fortress, with views over Graz.
- *Uhrturm* clocktower, symbol of Graz, on the top of Schloßberg.
- The *Landhaus*, the building where the federal state parliament of Styria resides. It belongs to the most important examples of Renaissance architecture in Austria
- The *Landeszeughaus*, armoury, the largest of its kind in the world.
- *Dom* (cathedral), a rare monument of Gothic architecture.
- *Rathaus* (Town Hall).
- *Burg* (castle complex), with Gothic double staircase. The Burg remained the residence of the Inner Austrian Court until 1619. Today, it serves as residence of the government of Styria.
- The *Glockenspiel*, which comes to life with song and rotating dance figures every day at precisely 11:00, 15:00 and 18:00.





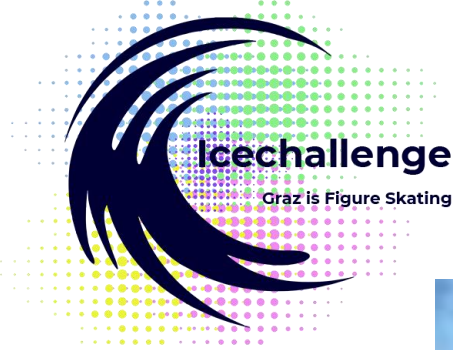
Within the greater Graz area

- Österreichisches Freilichtmuseum Stübing, an open-air museum containing old farmhouses/farm buildings from all over Austria reassembled in historic setting.
- Lurgrotte, the most extensive cave system in Austria.
- Lipizzanergestüt Piber, Lipizzaner stud where the famous white horses are bred.
- The Steirische Weinstrasse is a wine growing region south of Graz, also known as the "Styrian Tuscany". Sunny weather is a major factor in producing internationally well known premium wines on sun-kissed vineyard slopes.
- Thermenregion, spa region east of Graz.
- Riegersburg, a mighty fortress that was never taken. It was a bastion against historical Turkish invasions.

Graz the City of Universities

Graz was also a city that famous astronomer Johannes Kepler, who lived in for a short part of his life teaching mathematics in Graz. The Karl-Franzens Universität, also referred to as the University of Graz, is the city's oldest university, founded in 1585. In 1827 it was re-instituted as an university by Emperor Franz I, thus gaining the name 'Karl-Franzens Universität,' meaning 'Charles-Francis University.' Over 30,000 students currently study at this university. The University of Music and Art is famous all over the world especially for its studies of Jazz. Other universities are the University of Medicine and the Technical University.





Shopping in Graz!

Best Down Town Shopping area is the Herrengasse - the most important shopping street in Graz. It connects the main square (Hauptplatz) with the Jakominiplatz. There are numerous lanes in the old town like the "Schmiedgasse" or the "Sporgasse". In the Herrengasse the shops and boutiques are like a wardrobe – a mixed assortment of colourful clothes. Affordable second-hand accessories can be found next to expensive jewellery, and traditional costumes. The Sackstrasse is the place to find antiques and art.

Culinary Pleasures

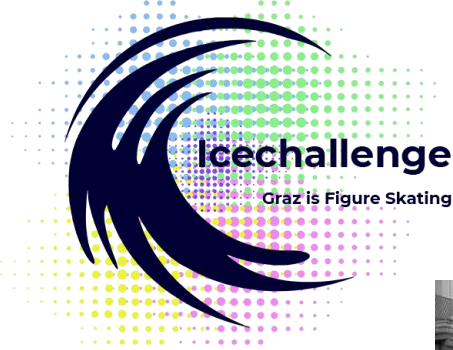
Styria is famous for ingredients like pumpkinseed oil, scarlet runner beans or indeed their great wines, such as Welschriesling, Weißburgunder, Morillon, Traminer and Schilcher, all known on the world market. Whether pumpkin in all shapes and forms, sun-ripened apples, cured ham, handmade chocolates, vinegar in barrels and elegant liqueurs: Styria is the delicatessen of Austria. Remember: a pinch of good humour and joie de vivre will make your dish an irresistible (taste) experience.

Farmer´s Markets

You can find fresh fruits and vegetables at the farmers' markets in Graz. Also the famous "Kernöl" (pumpkin seed oil) is sold there. Generally open from 6.00 AM until 1.00 PM, Monday till Saturday

- Kaiser-Josef-Platz (backside of the Opera)
- Lendplatz





Transportation

An extensive public transportation network makes Graz an easy city to navigate without a car. The city has a comprehensive bus network, complementing a tram network consisting of six lines. The people of Graz call their tram also "Bim" .

By Train

From the main train station (Hauptbahnhof), regional trains link to most of Styria. Direct trains also run to most major cities nearby as to Slovenia, Croatia, Czech Republic, Italy, Germany or Switzerland.

By Plane

Graz Airport is about 10 kilometres south of the city centre and has a railway station within walking distance.

By Car

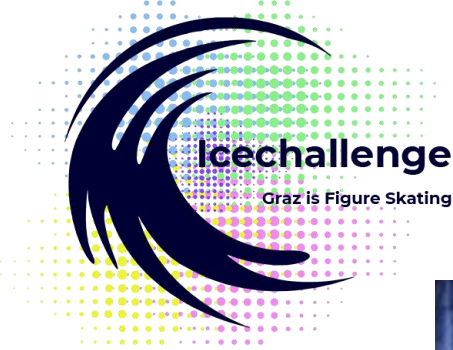
The A9, runs north-south through Graz. The A2, just south of the city, runs east-west. Vienna (Wien) is 198 km (2hrs) up the A2 to the east.

Climate

The weather in Graz is mediterranean influenced. Graz therefore has more hours of sunshine per year than Vienna or Salzburg. Graz lies in a basin that only opens to the south, causing the climate to be warmer than would be expected at that latitude. Plants are found in Graz that normally grow much further south.

- average temperatures: Graz 9.4° C
- average hours of sunshine: 1,890





Famous Persons of Graz

- *Arnold Schwarzenegger*, former bodybuilding champion, actor and current governor of California.
- *Robert Stolz*, Austrian composer and conductor.
- *Nicolaus Harnoncourt*, born in Berlin raised in Graz, a conductor known throughout the world
- *Jochen Rindt*, the first Austrian Formula 1 champion
- *Thomas Vanek*, professional hockey player, raised in Graz.
- *Thomas Muster*, French Open Winner, ATP number one in 1997
- *Karl Böhm*, an Austrian famous conductor. .
- *Otto Loewi*, Nobel prize-winning physiologist
- *Johann Nestroy* was in Graz as an actor
- *Johann Puch*, Slovenian inventor, mechanic and significant vehicle producer
- Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria

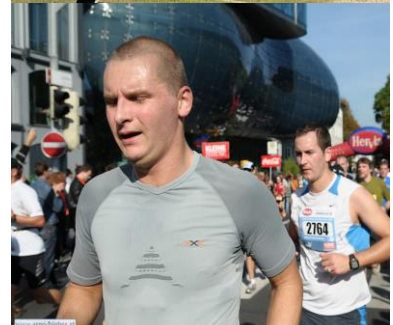
Graz - City of Sports

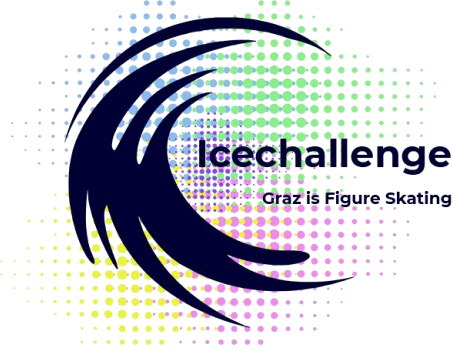
Graz is inspired of sport and big sport events.

Annually there is right after the Tour de France the "Altstadt Kriterium" Cycle Race and in autumn you can participate in the "Graz Marathon".

In April 2009 the "World Women's Icehockey Championships" were held in Graz. In January 2010 another major event was held in Graz, the European Championships in Handball.

But the greatest of all sport events: Graz is hosting the Icechallenge!!!





Useful Information

Currency

The Austrian currency unit is Euro (EUR) divided in 100 cents.

Electricity

The electricity current in Austria is 220 Volt. A two pin plug system is used.

Bank ATM´s

Banks are opened Monday to Friday from about 8:30 - 12:30 and 14:30 - 16:00. Cash counters are at nearly every bank and on public places. The next cash counter to the ice rink is located in the Stadion Office Center, which is located 5 minutes walk from the rink.

Non-Smoking

Smoking is not permitted indoors in public buildings. In restaurants you will find smoking zones.

The Venue

The competition venue Merkur Eisstadion capacity of 4000 people and was refurbished in 2016. The main arena is indoor and heated with a size of 30 meters x 60. The Icerink B arena is indoor heated and covered rink with a size of 30 meters x 60 meters. The main arena is by tram about 10 minutes to the city center and 3 minutes to a shopping mal.

Security

In Graz you can also go for a nice down town walk at night or use all public transportation any time.

