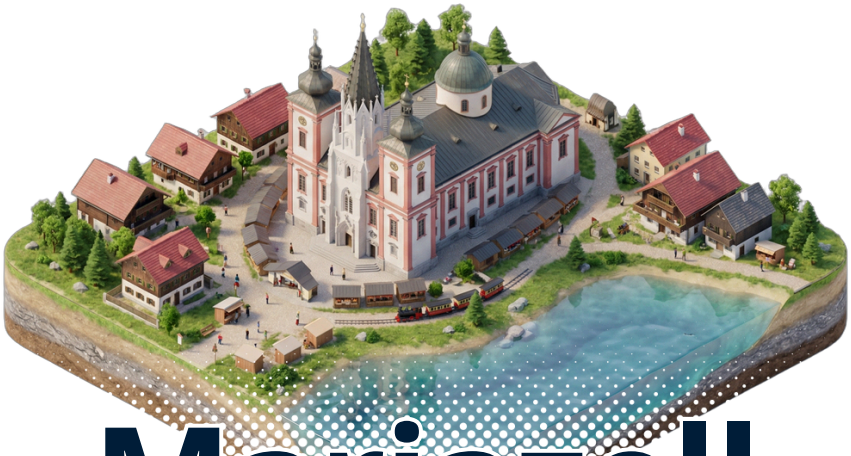
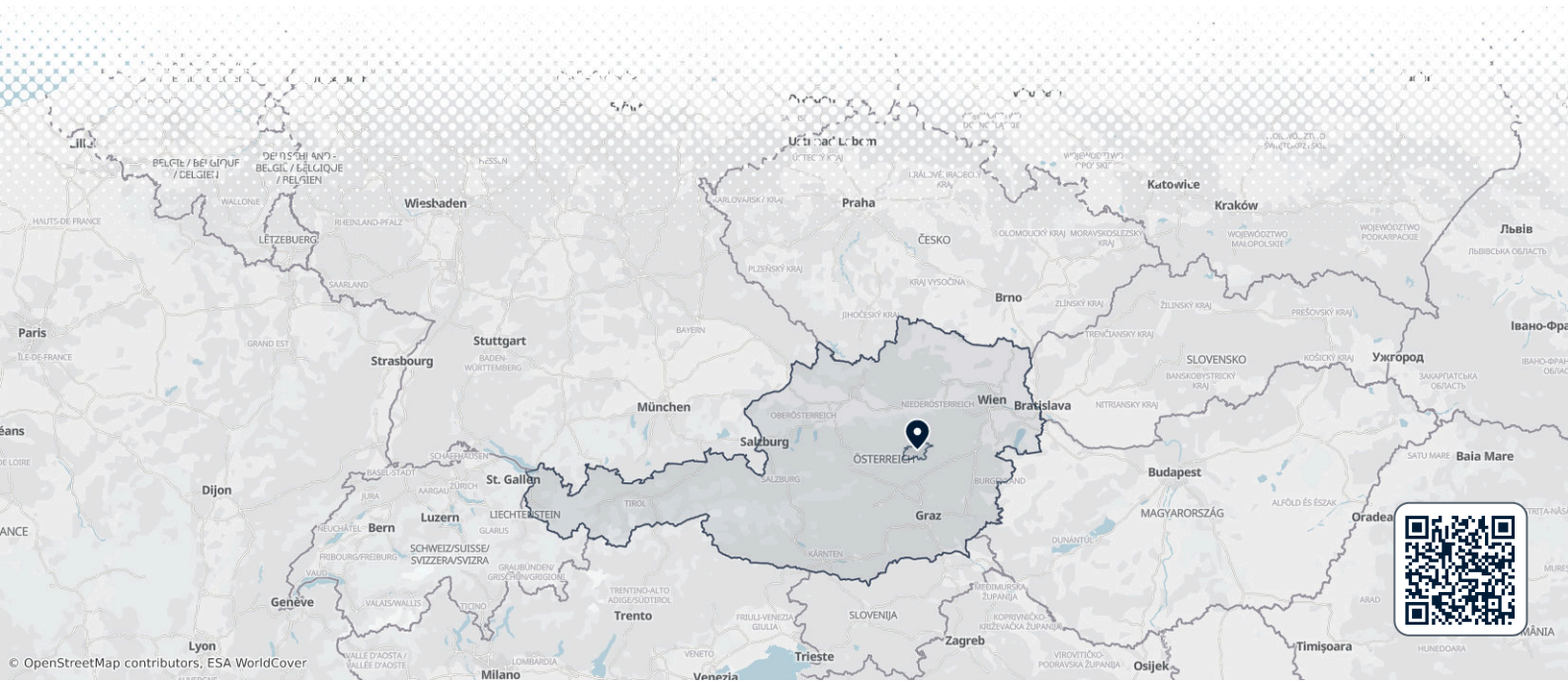


Mariazell

Styria · Austria

TRAVEL GUIDE

Tripomatic



Overview

Mariazell is a small town in the Styrian Alps and Austria's most important pilgrimage destination. Its basilica holds a small wooden statue of the Virgin Mary, which has drawn pilgrims for more than 800 years, from Austria, Hungary, Czechia, Slovakia and further afield.

Besides the pilgrimage, Mariazell is a quiet town for a mountain stay, with a lake nearby, small ski slopes and hiking in forested hills.

When to visit

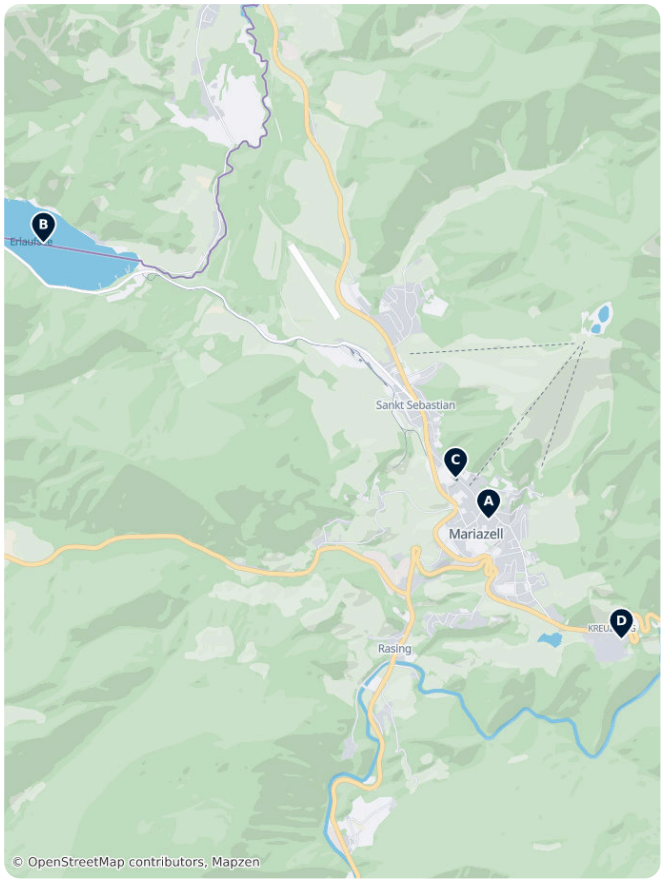
May to October is best for the basilica, the lake and hiking. Pilgrim crowds peak around 15 August and 8 September. December has a well-known Advent market. Winter has small ski slopes and cross-country trails.

MONTH	CONDITIONS	DAY °C avg / max	NIGHT °C avg / min	
January	Great Great for skiing	0° / 7° Feels like -5°	-7° / -15°	12 rainy days · Dry air · Calm winds
February	Great Great for skiing	2° / 10° Feels like -3°	-6° / -15°	12 rainy days · Dry air
March	Good Good for skiing	6° / 15° Feels like 2°	-3° / -10°	12 rainy days · Dry air · Calm winds
April	Fair Fair for hiking	12° / 20° Feels like 8°	1° / -5°	12 rainy days · Dry air · Calm winds
May	Fair Fair for hiking	16° / 23°	6° / 1°	17 rainy days · Dry air · Calm winds
June	Good Good for sightseeing	20° / 27°	10° / 4°	17 rainy days · Dry air · Calm winds
July	Good Good for sightseeing	22° / 28°	12° / 7°	18 rainy days · Dry air · Calm winds
August	Good Good for sightseeing	22° / 29°	11° / 7°	15 rainy days · Dry air · Calm winds
September	Good Good for hiking	17° / 24°	7° / 2°	13 rainy days · Dry air · Calm winds
October	Good Good for hiking	12° / 20°	3° / -4°	Dry air · Calm winds
November	Good Good for skiing	6° / 14° Feels like 2°	-1° / -8°	Dry air · Calm winds
December	Great Great for skiing	1° / 8° Feels like -4°	-5° / -13°	13 rainy days · Dry air · Calm winds

Climate data: NASA POWER (MERRA-2) · 1996–2025

Top sights

- A Basilika Mariazell is a Gothic church rebuilt in baroque style, with a silver altar around the miraculous statue.
- B Erlaufsee is a mountain lake a few kilometres away, for swimming, boating and walks.
- C Mariazeller Heimathaus presents local history and pilgrim traditions.
- The Marienwasserfall is a small waterfall on a forest walk.
- D Herz-Marien-Karmel is a convent near the town.
- The Bürgeralpe cable car climbs to a viewpoint with a summit walk and winter slopes.
- The Mariazellerbahn, a narrow-gauge railway, runs from St. Pölten through the hills.
- Local gingerbread, honey and wax craft shops line the streets near the basilica.



Mariazell – Plan Your Trip
Turn the places from this guide into a real itinerary, with smart routing, time estimates, and everything you need for a perfect trip.
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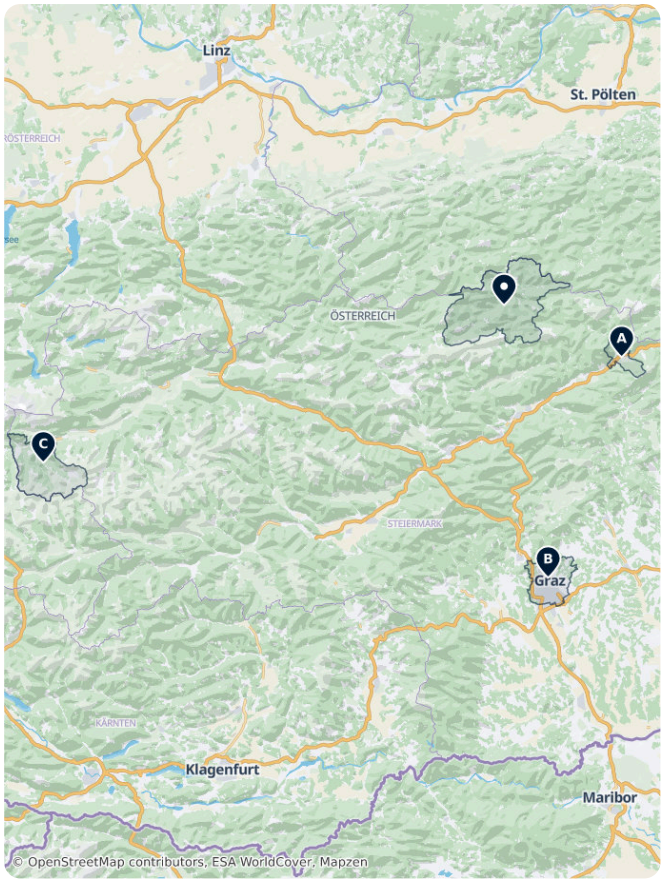
What to experience

- Visit the basilica.
- Ride the Mariazellerbahn.
- Walk or swim at the Erlaufsee.
- Ride the Bürgeralpe cable car.
- Buy gingerbread and honey.

Day trips

- A Mürzzuschlag is about 50 minutes away by car.
- B Graz is about 1 hour 45 minutes away by car.
- Vienna is about 2 hours away by car.
- Gesäuse National Park is about 1 hour 15 minutes away by car.
- C Schladming is about 1 hour 45 minutes away by car.



Where to explore

- Mürzzuschlag and Graz are the nearest preferred destinations.

Getting there

- By air: Vienna Airport is about 2 hours away by car. Graz is about 1 hour 45 minutes.
- By train: The Mariazellerbahn runs from St. Pölten and takes about 2 hours 30 minutes. A bus route also runs from Vienna, Graz and Bruck an der Mur. Check times on ÖBB.
- By car: Reach Mariazell by the B20 and B23 roads from St. Pölten, Bruck an der Mur or Kapfenberg.

Getting around

The centre is walkable, and the basilica is in the middle of it. Local buses link the lake and cable car. A car helps for the wider region.

Getting around on foot & by bike

WALKABILITY

High

The old centre is small and compact, with the basilica and shops in a few streets.

CYCLING INFRASTRUCTURE

Moderate

Lake and forest roads are pleasant, but the surrounding hills are steep.

Driving

A car helps for the lake and surrounding villages. Mountain roads are narrow and can close in heavy snow. Winter tyres or chains are required in snow. Motorways in Austria need a vignette.

Food & drink

Mariazell is known for *Lebkuchen*, gingerbread, and honey products, and for *Mariazeller Magentropfen*, a herbal liqueur. Styrian dishes include *Backhendl*, fried chicken, and *Kürbiskernöl*, pumpkin seed oil. Game is common in autumn.

What to eat & drink

DINNER

Wiener Schnitzel
A thin, breaded and pan-fried veal cutlet, traditionally served with potato salad or parsley potatoes and a wedge of lemon.

Tafelspitz
Boiled beef in broth, served with roast potatoes and a sauce of apples and horseradish — a favourite of Emperor Franz Joseph.

Viennese Goulash · Wiener Saftgulasch
A rich beef stew slow-cooked with onions and paprika, typically served with a bread dumpling or bread roll.

SNACKS & STREET FOOD

Käsekrainer
A grilled pork sausage studded with melty cheese, a classic order at Vienna's ubiquitous Würstelstand (sausage stands).

Sausage Stand Snack · Würstel vom Würstelstand
Grilled or boiled sausages (Bratwurst, Frankfurter, Bosna) served with mustard, bread and a pickle from street kiosks.

SWEETS & DESSERTS

Apfelstrudel
Thin pastry rolled around spiced apples, raisins and breadcrumbs, usually served warm with vanilla sauce or cream.

Sachertorte
A dense chocolate cake with a thin layer of apricot jam under a dark chocolate glaze, famously served with unsweetened whipped cream.

Kaiserschmarrn
A fluffy shredded pancake caramelised with sugar and dusted with icing sugar, served with plum or apple compote.

Marillenknödel
Apricot dumplings wrapped in potato or quark dough, rolled in buttery breadcrumbs — a Wachau and Viennese summer specialty.

DRINKS

Viennese Melange · Wiener Melange
The signature Viennese coffee: espresso topped with steamed milk and milk foam, the centrepiece of coffeehouse culture.

Grüner Veltliner
Austria's flagship crisp, peppery white wine, widely poured in Vienna's Heuriger (wine taverns).

Sturm
A cloudy, lightly alcoholic partially-fermented grape must, available only for a few weeks in autumn.

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Safety & health

Mariazell is very safe. Crowds peak on pilgrim days, so book rooms ahead. Tap water is clean and safe to drink. The emergency number is 112. The mountain rescue number is 140.

History

Legend says a monk named Magnus brought a wooden statue of the Virgin to this spot in 1157. A chapel grew into a pilgrimage church, and Hungarian king Louis I added a Gothic building in the 14th century. The Habsburgs supported the shrine, and it became a symbol for Catholic Central Europe. The railway opened in 1907.

Country facts

Quick practical facts for Austria at a glance:

CURRENCY
EUR €

EMERGENCY
112

ELECTRICITY

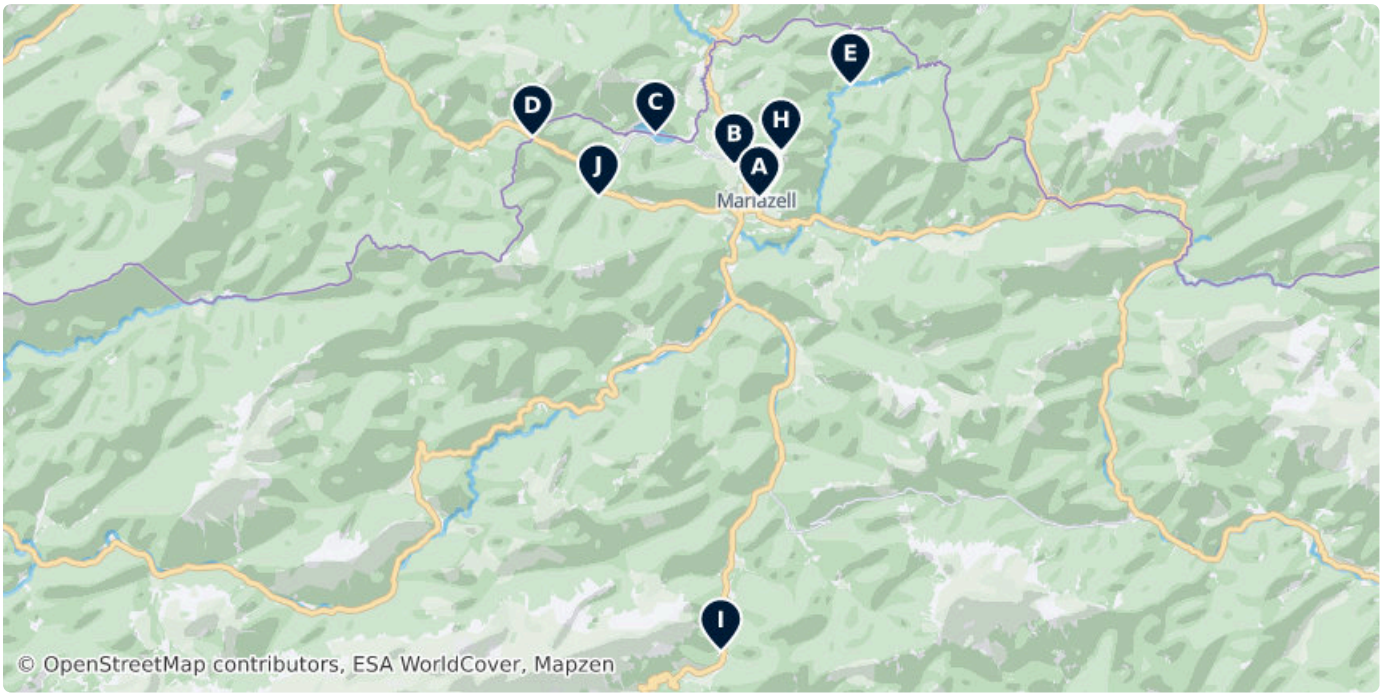
Type C / Type F
230 V · 50 Hz

LANGUAGES
German

TAP WATER
Safe to drink

Mariazell Unmissables

Mariazell centers on the Basilica Mariä Geburt, a significant Roman Catholic pilgrimage site featuring a unique blend of Gothic and Baroque architecture. The surrounding landscape includes the Erlaufsee mountain lake and the Marienwasserfall, which are accessible via the historic Museumstramway. Cultural landmarks such as Schloß Brandhof, a Biedermeier-style estate, and the Erzherzog-Johann-Aussichtswarte provide insight into the region's imperial history and offer panoramic views of the Styrian-Lower Austrian Limestone Alps.





A Mariazell Basilica

Mariazell Basilica, also known as Basilica Mariä Geburt, is a Roman Catholic church building in Mariazell, Austria.

26 Hauptplatz-Laden, Mariazell 8630, Austria (47.77280, 15.31883)

May 01-Oct 26 Mo–Fr	07:45–20:00
May 01-Oct 26 Sa	07:45–21:30
May 01-Oct 26 Su	07:45–20:00
Oct 27-Apr 30 Mo–Su	07:45–19:15

basilika-mariazell.at, +43 3882 2595



B Museumstramway Mariazell-Erlaufsee

A museum tram line featuring historic steam and electric locomotives that connects the Mariazell railway station to the Erlaufsee lake.

19 Erlaufseestraße, Sankt Sebastian 8630, Austria (47.78288, 15.30740)



C Erlaufsee

A clear mountain lake at the foot of the Gemeindealpe, situated at an elevation of 827 meters. It is a local center for boating, diving, and swimming.

Erlaufseestraße, 8630 Mariazell, Austria (47.79263, 15.27137)

D Kartäusersäule

A historic stone religious shrine and heritage monument.

1 Am Zellerrain, 3294, Austria (47.79159, 15.21512)

E St. Margareta

A religious statue and heritage artwork.

(47.80754, 15.36054)

F Pater Heinrich Abel-Denkmal

A memorial statue dedicated to the Jesuit priest Pater Heinrich Abel, a prominent figure in Austrian pilgrimage history.

2 Pater-Heinrich-Abel-Platz, Mariazell 8630, Austria (47.77305, 15.31982)

G Arthur Krupp

A memorial dedicated to the influential Austrian industrialist Arthur Krupp.

(47.80789, 15.36059)

H Erzherzog-Johann-Aussichtswarte

A stone observation tower on the Bürgeralpe, constructed in 1908, offering views of the surrounding alpine peaks.

3 Bürgeralpe, 8630, Austria (47.78715, 15.32884)



I Schloß Brandhof

A historic farmstead and hunting lodge at the foot of the Seebergsattel, famously developed in the Biedermeier style by Archduke Johann.

(47.63340, 15.30125)

J Marienwasserfall

A scenic waterfall located near Grünau, accessible via local hiking trails.

(47.77328, 15.24534)

DATA SOURCES

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