


Cultural diversity in the museum district

St.Gallen is abuzz with art and culture. The museum district is the city's very own cultural hub where no fewer than ten museums in St.Gallen have opened their doors to cultural devotees. But St.Gallen's cultural diversity is also shaped by musicals and a world-class open air festival.

St.Gallen – city of museums



Today's vast museum landscape in St.Gallen would be virtually unthinkable without the past accomplishments of the Society of Natural Sciences (*Naturwissenschaftliche Gesellschaft*) founded in 1819, the *Künstler-Verein* artists' association (now the *Kunstverein* St.Gallen) founded in 1827 and the *Historischer Verein* (Historical Association) founded in 1859. Members of the Historical Association created the first coherent public collection made up of historically significant items. Construction on the museums to house these and other collections got under way in 1873 in the *Stadtspark*, or city park. The new buildings of the *Altes* and *Neues Museum* (Old and New Museum) were completed within 50 years during St.Gallen's heyday as a textile hub. The collections of the *Kunstmuseum* (Art Museum) and the *Neues Museum* are still housed in the *Altes Museum*, along with the collection of the *Historisches* and *Völkerkundemuseum* (Museum of Ethnology).

The new *Naturmuseum* (Nature Museum), which celebrated its inauguration as the “building of the century” in 2016, is a particular highlight with its imposing and modern design. The rooms are high, bright and airy, the perfect backdrop to showcase the works of art in the very best light. True to its name, the *Naturmuseum* gives visitors of all ages the chance to discover the wonders of nature. The highlight of the collection is an original skeleton of a duckbill dinosaur, which was transported from America to St.Gallen in 1981.

In addition, the *Naturmuseum* is home to Switzerland's largest landscape relief depicting the cantons of St.Gallen and Appenzell.

Awe-inspiring world premieres and festivals

Theatre has been part of St.Gallen's cultural tradition since the Middle Ages. It was originally inspired by two monks, Tutilo and Notker – the first professional theatre opened in 1801. Since the end of the 1960s, the theatre has been based in the Paillard Building in the museum district. The St.Gallen theatre is also the oldest professional theatre on record in Switzerland and today counts over 200 performances a year. The theatre also has an incredible line-up of debut performances of musicals and special operas like the highly acclaimed world premiere of the current musical “Matterhorn”. Renowned industry giants like the well-known Indian Hollywood director Shekhar Kapur and the legendary song writer Albert Hammond turned in stellar performances for this production as the director and musical creator. In recent years, the St.Gallen theatre has made a name for itself as the most important musical stage in Switzerland.

For culture lovers, the abbey courtyard of the St.Gallen Abbey District with its magnificent Baroque cathedral is transformed into an opera backdrop in summer. The abbey courtyard with its unparalleled aura is a phenomenal and breathtaking opera setting. The extremely popular St.Gallen Festival takes place under the open sky. This year the opera "Stiffelio" by Giuseppe Verdi will be performed.

World-class music acts rock the Sittertobel

Every summer tens of thousands of music lovers from near and far make pilgrimages to the Sittertobel in St.Gallen. The legendary Open Air St.Gallen festival is one of the oldest and largest festivals in Switzerland – and one of the best in Europe. The unique line-up of performers and the special atmosphere combined with its phenomenal location are sure to thrill music fans: the venue is situated in the Sittertobel, a nature reserve not far from the city centre. Since the Open Air St.Gallen festival was founded in 1977, hundreds of international and national musicians have performed on its stages - both newcomers and well-known artists.

#lovestgallen #sginspiriert #ineedswitzerland #inlovewithswitzerland

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