

THE IMPERIAL VIENNA

The Hofburg is the former imperial palace in the centre of Vienna. Built in the 13th century and expanded in the centuries since, the palace has been the seat of power of the **Habsburg** dynasty rulers, and today the official residence and workplace of the **President of Austria**. It was the principal imperial winter residence, as **Schönbrunn Palace** was the summer residence.

Since 1279 the Hofburg area has been the documented seat of government.[1] The Hofburg has been expanded over the centuries to include various residences (with the Amalienburg and the **Albertina**), the imperial chapel (Hofkapelle or Burgkapelle), the **imperial library** (Hofbibliothek), the **treasury** (Schatzkammer), the **Burgtheater**, the **Spanish Riding School** (Hofreitschule), the imperial **mews** (Stallburg and Hofstallungen).

The palace faces the **Heldenplatz** (Heroes Square) ordered under the reign of Emperor **Francis Joseph I**, as part of what was planned to become the *Kaiserforum* (de) but which was never completed.

Numerous architects have executed work at the Hofburg as it expanded, notably the Italian architect-engineer *Filiberto Luchese*, **Lodovico Burnacini** and *Martino and Domenico Carlone*, the Baroque architects **Lukas von Hildebrandt** and **Joseph Emanuel Fischer von Erlach**, **Johann Fischer von Erlach**, and the architects of the Neue Burg built between 1881 and 1913.

The Imperial Treasury (*German*: Kaiserliche Schatzkammer) at the **Hofburg Palace** in Vienna, Austria contains a valuable collection of secular and ecclesiastical treasures covering over a thousand years of European history.[1] The entrance to the treasury is at the Schweizerhof (Swiss Courtyard), the oldest part of the palace, which was rebuilt in the sixteenth century in the Renaissance style under Holy Roman Emperor **Ferdinand I**. The Imperial Treasury is affiliated with the **Kunsthistorisches Museum**, and houses in 21 rooms a collection of rare treasures that were compiled by the Imperial House of Habsburg over the course of centuries, including the Imperial Crown, Orb, and Sceptre of Austria, and the **Imperial Regalia** of the Emperors and Kings of the **Holy Roman Empire**, including the **Imperial Crown of the Holy Roman Empire**.

The Imperial Treasury is divided into two collections: the secular collection and the ecclesiastical collection. The secular collection contains numerous imperial artifacts from the House of Habsburg, including jewels and precious stones that due to their unique size could not be fitted into the imperial crowns. Like all secular treasuries, it was designed to attest to the political power and geographical reach of their owners. The ecclesiastical collection contains numerous religious treasures, including relics and objects ascribed to the private ownership of saints.

The **Austrian National Library** (*German: Österreichische Nationalbibliothek*, abbreviated **ÖNB**) is the largest library in **Austria**, with 7.4 million items in its various collections. The library is located in the **Hofburg Palace** in Vienna. Since 2005, some of the collections have been relocated within the **baroque** structure of the **Palais Mollard-Clary**. Founded by the **Habsburgs**, the library was originally called the **Hof-Bibliothek** (“Court Library”); the change to the current name occurred in 1920. The library complex includes four museums, as well as multiple special collections and archives.

The **Imperial Crypt** (*German: Kaisergruft*), also called the Capuchin Crypt (*Kapuzinergruft*), is a burial chamber beneath the **Capuchin Church** and monastery in Vienna, Austria. It was founded in 1618 and dedicated in 1632, and located on the Neuer Markt square of the **Innere Stadt**, near the **Hofburg Palace**. Since 1633, the Imperial Crypt has been the principal place of entombment for members of the **House of Habsburg**. The bones of 145 Habsburg **royalty**, plus urns containing the hearts or cremated remains of four others, are here, including **12 emperors** and **18 empresses**. The visible 107 metal sarcophagi and five heart urns range in style from puritan plain to exuberant rococo. Some of the dozen resident **Capuchin friars** continue their customary role as the guardians and caretakers of the crypt, along with their other pastoral work in Vienna. The most recent entombment was in 2011.