



PALAIS
LIECHTENSTEIN

THE PRINCELY PALACES

THE HISTORY OF THE LIECHTENSTEIN GARDEN PALACE

The GARDEN PALACE Liechtenstein has been deeply rooted in Vienna's history – built over 300 years ago by the Princely family of Liechtenstein. The centrally located Palace is notable for its stunning symbiosis of nature, architecture and masterpieces of art history. The impressively restored palace with the Sala Terrena, the Baroque Hercules Hall and the former Ladies' Apartments as well as the magnificent gardens are available for hire as innovative locations for elegant events. Distinctive event planning at the GARDEN PALACE ensures moments to remember. The unique atmosphere of the palace conveys an impression of aristocratic life.

The centrepiece of the GARDEN PALACE, the private art collection of the Prince von und zu Liechtenstein, contains masterpieces of art from the early Renaissance to the High Baroque era. Exclusive public and private guided tours of the Princely Collections offer guests the chance to acquaint themselves with a tradition of collecting that spans more than four centuries.

THE PRINCELY DEMESNE OF LICHTENTHAL

In 1687 Prince Johann Adam Andreas I von Liechtenstein (1657–1712) purchased from the Auersperg family a parcel of land in the Rossau quarter, then outside the city walls of Vienna, which he subsequently enlarged by the acquisition of adjoining land. The area was to be developed as a self-contained model estate, which came to be known by the name of *Lichtenthal* and is one of the rare examples of large-scale Baroque urban planning in Vienna.

The central north-south axis led from the kitchens, orangery and *cour d'honneur*, which was enclosed by stabling, via the palace as the nucleus of the complex, through the Baroque gardens to the Belvedere. Behind this was a model estate laid out on a grid around a church, the living of which was in the gift of the Liechtenstein family. The bounds of this extensive demesne were marked by a brewery.

THE LIECHTENSTEIN GARDEN PALACE

The Liechtenstein GARDEN PALACE in the Rossau quarter was commissioned around 1700 by Prince Johann Adam Andreas I von Liechtenstein, who was also responsible for a large number of major building projects in Bohemia and Moravia (including Feldsberg/Valtice and Eisgrub/Lednice) as well as the Liechtenstein CITY PALACE on Bankgasse in the centre of Vienna.

The first architect engaged by the prince to design his GARDEN PALACE was Johann Bernhard Fischer von Erlach (1656–1723). However, the prince's predilection for the work of Italian artists soon brought him into contact with Domenico Egidio Rossi (1659–1715), a Bologna-trained architect. From 1692, the latter's designs were in turn adapted by the Luccanese architect Domenico Martinelli (1650–1718), who finalised the prince's idea of a palatial urban villa in the Roman style. With the changes made by Martinelli, the building assumed an almost classicistic, cool monumentality, which was far removed from the light, airy pavilion-like architecture of Fischer's original design but in its impressive scale and unity of style had an enormous influence on the development of Viennese Baroque architecture.



THE DECORATION OF THE LIECHTENSTEIN GARDEN PALACE

Prince Johann Adam Andreas I von Liechtenstein envisioned engaging the best artists from Italy – in particular from Bologna – for the decoration and appointment of the palace, in order to realise a synthesis of the classical Italian arts on Viennese soil.

However, as the Bolognese artist Marcantonio Franceschini (1648–1729), the prince's favourite painter, could not be prevailed upon to travel to Vienna, the prince had to be satisfied with a compromise. In 1705 he commissioned the Salzburg artist Johann Michael Rottmayr (1654–1730) to paint cycles of frescos in all the ground floor rooms (Sala Terrena, Ladies' and Gentlemen's Apartments) and in both the stairways.

In the 19th century, after portions of the monumental frescos in the stairways had detached themselves or been damaged, probably because of repeated water intrusion, it was decided to cover them with stucco-framed oil paintings by Antonio Bellucci (1654–1726) and to plaster over the remaining surface area of the ceilings. Over the years, knowledge of the existence of the original fresco decoration gradually faded.

It was not until renovation work was started on the palace in 2000 that Rottmayr's frescos in the two stairways (*The Admittance of Military Genius to Olympus* in the Eastern Stairway, and *The Battle of the Gods and Giants* in the Western Stairway) were rediscovered. Following a costly programme of painstaking restoration they are now once again resplendent in all their original glory.

For the decoration of the Hercules Hall Prince Johann Adam Andreas I was able to engage the services of the great master of the Roman Baroque, Andrea Pozzo (1642–1709), who painted the ceiling fresco depicting *The Admittance of Hercules to Olympus* between 1704 and 1708, a late work of extraordinary vitality. It has been preserved in all its fresh Baroque colouration and shows Pozzo at the height of his creative powers.

Although the prince failed to bring Marcantonio Franceschini to Vienna to paint the frescos in the palace, he commissioned oil paintings from the artist with prescribed subjects and dimensions which were set into medallions on the ceilings of the other rooms on the *piano nobile*.

Uniquely, the stucco decoration throughout the GARDEN PALACE has been preserved in its entirety. It was executed by the renowned stuccateur Santino Bussi (1664–1736), and is without doubt one of the finest stuccowork decorative schemes of the High Baroque in Vienna to have been preserved without any late 19th-century Historicist additions.

The sculptures in the palace and the garden were executed by Giovanni Giuliani (1664–1744). A special exhibition dedicated to his oeuvre was held at the Liechtenstein Museum from 13 March 2005 to 2 October 2005.

THE USAGE OF THE GARDEN PALACE OVER THE CENTURIES

The establishment of the gallery & internal and external adaptations from the 18th to the 20th century
The perfect Baroque cosmos created by Prince Johann Adam Andreas I underwent drastic changes over the centuries. At the end of the 18th century the entrance portal integrated into the semicircular range of stabling was replaced by a classicistic triumphal arch designed by Joseph Hardtmuth (1758–1816). In 1814 Joseph Kornhäusel (1782–1860), Hardtmuth's successor as architect to the princes of Liechtenstein, demolished the buildings at the apex of the semicircle, adding a boundary wall with



railings and refashioning the entrance gate, all of which still remain today. The measures drastically altered the view of the architectural ensemble, which up to that point had remained in absolutist isolation from its surroundings.

During the 18th century, most of the paintings of the Liechtenstein family were hung in the galleries on the second floor of the CITY PALACE on Bankgasse, while others were displayed at the family palace on Herrengasse. Many works of art were also kept at the family estates in Bohemia and Moravia. At the beginning of the 19th century Prince Johann I von Liechtenstein (1760–1836) decided to transfer a large part of this extensive collection of art to the GARDEN PALACE in the Rossau quarter. There it was made accessible to a broad section of the public for the first time from 1807 onwards. This entailed extensive alterations to the fabric and appointments of the GARDEN PALACE.

In order to increase hanging space, some of the windows in the corner rooms of the first floor were walled up. To accommodate the monumental *Decius Mus* cycle by Rubens four of the five doors between the Grand Gallery and the Hercules Hall had to be closed off, as well as all the window apertures above them, which had originally illuminated Pozzo's ceiling fresco.

In 1819 a number of ceiling paintings executed by Bellucci for the CITY PALACE on Bankgasse were transferred to the GARDEN PALACE and set into the ceilings on the second floor. During the course of these alterations the Rottmayr frescos in the two stairways also vanished beneath Bellucci's oil paintings for almost two hundred years.

On its conversion as part of the gallery, the Hercules Hall was redecorated in classicistic style, a drastic alteration to the original Baroque fabric, which was, however, reversed during the early years of the 20th century. Neo-Baroque decoration such as stucco panels and chimney pieces were added to the shorter walls of the hall, and five paintings by Franceschini hung on the longer inner wall. The walls of the galleries were painted in a relatively uniform colour scheme of green and blue tones. A watercolour by Raimund Stillfried dating from 1902 as well as early photographs provide evidence of this, and also show that the exhibits were displayed in close proximity to one another, entirely in the style of a princely *Kunstkammer*. Towards the end of the 19th century the five arches in the Sala Terrena, which had been built in the style of an Italian palazzo as a hall open both to the courtyard and to the gardens, had to be glazed in order to protect the interior decoration from the elements. In 1897 a lift was installed for visitors to facilitate access to the upper floors.

A further substantial change was brought about when the library from the classicistic palace on Herrengasse was transferred to the GARDEN PALACE in the Rossau quarter, where it was installed in the Gentlemen's Apartments on the ground floor between 1912 and 1914.

The palace during the Second World War

The events of the Second World War and their consequences occasioned drastic changes: the princely family moved its place of residence to Vaduz in 1938, and the collections of art were also removed there towards the end of the war. With this, Vienna had been abandoned as the home of the Princely Collections and new uses had to be found for the palace.

1957–1978 Austrian Building Centre

From 1957 the Liechtenstein GARDEN PALACE and its park served as a contact and information centre for representatives of the Austrian building industry and the general public: until 1978 the *Austrian Building Centre* mounted a continuously updated exhibition presenting a cross-section of all building products and services provided by industry and trade in Austria.



1979–2000 Museum Moderner Kunst Stiftung Ludwig Wien

From April 1979 the Liechtenstein GARDEN PALACE became a department of the Museum of the 20th Century, renamed as the *Museum Moderner Kunst Stiftung Ludwig Wien* in 1991. Works from the private collection of Irene and Peter Ludwig from Aachen were exhibited in the GARDEN PALACE until December 1999. Subsequently they were transferred to the *MuseumsQuartier*, where the collection has once again been on view since 15 September 2001.

2001– 2004 The rebirth of a princely palace

Early 2001 saw the start of the complete restoration of the Liechtenstein GARDEN PALACE. The aim of the project was to reopen the building as the *Liechtenstein Museum*, in which substantial holdings from the Princely Collections were to be put on public view. Before the art treasures stored in the repositories at Schloss Vaduz could be returned to Vienna the whole palace had to be brought up to the highest standards of modern museum security, fire prevention and climate control. Of prime importance was the installation of a system for temperature and humidity control, a task of immense complexity in a historic building of this scale.

The ancillary rooms needed in a public museum (toilets, cloakroom, etc.) were accommodated in a newly-constructed basement floor beneath the Sala Terrena, while the café and restaurant were deliberately located outside the palace in the east wing of the former stables.

The entire artistic decoration of the palace, in particular the ceiling paintings by Franceschini and Bellucci, the frescos by Pozzo and Rottmayr as well as the ceiling stucco work by Bussi, were painstakingly restored according to the strictest conservation guidelines. Especial care was taken to create a harmonious overall impression while preserving the still extant original patina.

The total investment for the adaptation of the building and the revitalization of the historic garden amounted to approximately 25 million Euros and was fully financed by Prince Hand-Adam II of Liechtenstein. From 2004 to 2011 the *Liechtenstein Museum* was situated in the GARDEN PALACE.

2012: A NEW BUSINESS MODEL FOR PALAIS LIECHTENSTEIN

Since January 2012 Palais Liechtenstein has been striking out in a new direction: The museum with fixed opening hours has closed, and the focus is now on high-end events and pre-booked guided tours of the Princely Collections which are still on display at the palace. The GARDEN PALACE and the CITY PALACE are available for hire as innovative settings for events: from small-scale to large-scale events such as cocktail receptions, gala dinners, concerts, weddings, lectures, company presentations or seminars.

Since 2020 both palaces have been part of *Liechtenstein Real Estate Vienna*, which is part of the Liechtenstein Group.