



PALAIS
LIECHTENSTEIN

THE PRINCELY PALACES

THE PRINCELY HOUSE OF LIECHTENSTEIN

The Princes of Liechtenstein are one of Austria's most ancient families of noble lineage. Hugo von Liechtenstein is the first bearer of this name to be documented from around 1120/30. He had taken the name of the fortress of Liechtenstein which lies to the south of Vienna. At that time, the family owned land here and on the north-eastern border of Lower Austria. The acquisition of Nikolsburg (Mikulov), a demesne in southern Moravia, in 1249 was of great political importance. Until it was sold in 1560, it formed the centre of the Liechtenstein estates, and is the reason why one branch of the family occasionally styled itself "von Liechtenstein von Nikolsburg".

The rise of the dynasty began with the elevation of Karl I (1569–1627) to the rank of hereditary prince in 1608. In 1606 he and his brothers had declared a part of their fortunes as an estate held in fee, i.e., as inalienable and indivisible family property, the use of which was the right of the first-born son of each generation.

Out of regard for the rank of the dynasty, the family was concerned to acquire territory that was directly subordinate to the emperor. However, it was to take almost one hundred years until Karl I's grandson, Prince Johann Adam Andreas I (1657–1712), had the opportunity of realising this aim by purchasing the demesnes of Schellenberg and Vaduz in 1699 and 1712 respectively. During the reign of Prince Anton Florian (1656–1721) these two territories were united and created the Principality of Liechtenstein in 1719. This at last provided the legal basis for participation at the Imperial Diet.

However, this territory was otherwise of only peripheral interest to the Liechtenstein family. All the time, they resided in Vienna and at their estate at Feldsberg (Valtice), today in the Czech Republic. It was not until it had attained sovereignty in 1806 that the principality started to occupy an increasingly central role, eventually becoming the principal residence of the ruling princes in the 20th century. In 1938 Prince Franz Josef II (1906–1989) made Vaduz his permanent seat of residence. After his death Prince Hans-Adam II von und zu Liechtenstein assumed the regency.

On 15 August 2004, in preparation for the succession, he invested his son Alois as his representative with exercise of the princely rights appertaining to him. Thus the hereditary prince currently performs the duties of the head of state of the Principality of Liechtenstein on a national and international level.

THE PRINCES

1608–1627 Prince Karl I

Karl I (1569–1627) was the founder of the princely house of Liechtenstein. He was brought up a Protestant but converted to Catholicism under the influence of the Counter Reformation in 1599. Shortly afterwards Emperor Rudolf II appointed him Lord Comptroller, the highest office at the imperial court, which also entailed a leading role in government (Privy Council). In 1607 he was awarded the hereditary Great Palatinate by the emperor, allowing him the privilege of issuing patents of nobility, granting arms and minting his own coinage. In the Habsburg "Bruderzwist" (lit.: fraternal strife) Karl supported the party of Archduke Matthew, who subsequently raised him to the rank of hereditary prince in 1608. In 1622 Emperor Ferdinand II made him governor in ordinary and viceroy of Bohemia. He was the first in the family to be invested with the Order of the Golden Fleece. As a result



of inheritance, endowments and acquisition the princely estates in the Bohemian crown lands were enlarged significantly during his reign. As the outward symbol of the authority he had acquired Karl commissioned the making of the Liechtenstein ducal coronet.

1627–1684 Prince Karl Eusebius

Although Karl Eusebius (1611–1684) grew up during the Thirty Years' War he received a very thorough education and in 1628 embarked on the obligatory educational journey which took him to France and the Netherlands. For a short period he was occupied with public duties, holding the office of governor of the duchies of Upper and Lower Silesia between 1639 and 1641, but then retired from politics and withdrew to his estates. The prince's sense of family and tradition were the guiding principles that led him to write a volume on architectural theory and a work on the education of princes. A connoisseur of art and a versatile scholar, he was renowned across Europe in particular for his passion for collecting, a profound knowledge of horse breeding and a keen interest in horticulture.

1684–1712 Prince Johann Adam Andreas I

Johann Adam Andreas I (1657–1712) was the financial genius of the family, reorganising the princely administration and putting the family finances back on an even keel. In 1687 he was appointed to the Privy Council, and in 1693 was invested with the Order of the Golden Fleece. In 1699 he was entrusted with the reorganisation of the imperial financial administration. With his acquisition of the demesnes of Schellenberg (1699) and Vaduz (1712) he became in effect one of the founders of the Principality of Liechtenstein.

Prince Johann Adam Andreas I was one of the most important collectors and patrons of art of his time. He embarked on a busy programme of construction on his estates, building the palaces of Plumenu (Plumlov) and Landskron (Lanskroun) together with the stable complex at Eisgrub (Lednice), known as the Horses' Palace, as well as extending his palaces at Feldsberg (Valtice), Eisgrub, Mährisch Aussee (Úsov) and Sternberg (Sternberk). In Vienna he commissioned two magnificent palaces – the CITY PALACE of Liechtenstein on Bankgasse and the GARDEN PALACE in the Rossau quarter – in order to be able to reside in a state befitting his rank in the immediate vicinity of the imperial court.

1712–1721 Prince Anton Florian

In contrast to his predecessor, Prince Anton Florian pursued a career in imperial service. After serving as treasurer to Emperor Leopold I from 1676, he was sent to the papal court at Rome in 1689, initially as envoy extraordinary then as ambassador. His appointment as tutor and Lord Comptroller to the future emperor, Charles VI, brought the prince back to Vienna in 1695. From 1703 to 1711 during the War of the Spanish Succession he supported his ward with advice, accompanying him on his travels, including a journey to Spain. Following the death of Joseph I, Charles VI appointed his former mentor to head his new government. As the highest-ranking official in the court and state administration and the first dignitary after the emperor, Anton Florian had reached the peak of his career, retaining this position until his death. It was due to his political influence and diplomatic skill that the demesnes of Schellenberg and Vaduz were created the Imperial Principality of Liechtenstein in 1719.

1721–1732 Prince Josef Johann Adam

Josef Johann Adam (1690–1732), the only surviving son of Prince Anton Florian, served in the imperial army in his youth, seeing military action in the War of the Spanish Succession. On the occasion of the coronation in 1712 he was appointed treasurer by Emperor Charles VI, and Principal Commissioner of the Moravian Diet a year later. Shortly after his accession in 1721 the prince was invested with the Order of the Golden Fleece. From 1723 he was a privy councillor and in 1729/30 he opened the Diet of Princes in Silesia in his role as imperial Principal Commissioner. After the huge financial outgoings of his father,



Josef Johann Adam was of a more economical bent, generally keeping his distance from imperial court service and concentrating on running his estates. He attempted to settle the disputes and conflict over inheritance issues within the family by peaceful means, albeit with varying degrees of success.

1732–1748 Prince Johann Nepomuk Karl

Aged just eight on the death of his father, Johann Nepomuk Karl (1724–1748) grew up under the guardianship of his uncle, Prince Joseph Wenzel. As befitted his dynastic rank, he was carefully educated for his future role as reigning prince. However, Johann Nepomuk Karl turned out to be eccentric and weak in health, dying in 1748, just three years after assuming the reins of government, and leaving no male issue. The regency of the House of Liechtenstein then devolved upon Prince Joseph Wenzel.

1748–1772 Prince Joseph Wenzel

Joseph Wenzel possessed a wealth of talents characteristic of a Baroque aristocrat: he united the qualities of a courtier with political skill and displayed a considerable gift for military tactics and organisation. His military career was interrupted by several diplomatic missions. From 1735 to 1736 he was imperial envoy in Berlin, and from 1737 to 1740 imperial ambassador in Paris. Invested with the Order of the Golden Fleece in 1739, the prince earned himself a place in military history with the reorganisation of the Austrian artillery in terms of equipment and personnel, turning it into a powerful instrument of the imperial army. As a mark of the highest honour, Joseph Wenzel was entrusted with the task of escorting Archduke Joseph's bride, the Bourbon princess Isabella of Parma, to Vienna in 1760. Martin von Meytens recorded the festive entry of the princess to Schönbrunn in a painting which shows the Golden Carriage as the climax of the magnificent procession.

1772–1781 Prince Franz Josef I

After the death of Prince Joseph Wenzel, the regency of the House of Liechtenstein passed to Franz Josef I (1726–1781), the eldest son of his brother Emanuel. The latter had received great support from his uncle and often accompanied him, for example on the journey to Parma in 1760. In 1763 Franz Josef I was sent to Spain on an imperial diplomatic mission to present to Archduke Leopold's bride a portrait of her future husband. A privy councillor from 1767, Franz Josef was invested with the Order of the Golden Fleece in 1771. His last public role was to act as president of the Lower Austrian Nobility in 1778. The prince focused primarily on the administration of his extensive estates which had been considerably enlarged by in 1772 by the properties that fell to him as head of the family, as well as the rich legacy of his aunt, Duchess Maria Theresia of Savoy.

1781–1805 Prince Alois I

From his youth onwards, apart from brief periods spent serving in the imperial army, Alois I (1759–1805), the eldest son of Prince Franz Josef, devoted his energies to the running of the Liechtenstein estates. He utilised the knowledge he had acquired on his travels and from the study of relevant literature to modernise and rationalise the running of the princely estates. Alois introduced new methods of production and experimented with different methods of cultivation and breeding as well as importing numerous economic and ornamental plants from overseas, as much out of pure botanical interest as for economic considerations. He began to landscape the park at Eisgrub and the surrounding countryside in the English style with small-scale architectural features. A connoisseur of music and theatre, he had a permanent salaried orchestra and engaged a company of actors on a seasonal basis. A particular enthusiasm of his was the library, which he extended by acquiring entire collections. In 1792 he rehoused the holdings in the early neoclassical palace on Herrengasse.



1805–1836 Prince Johann I

The brother of his childless predecessor, Johann I (1760–1836) took part in the wars against the Turks, fought at the forefront in the Napoleonic wars, and following the defeat of Austria at Austerlitz played an instrumental role in negotiating the Peace of Pressburg in 1805. As a mark of Napoleon's appreciation of Johann I the principality of Liechtenstein was admitted by Napoleon to the Confederation of the Rhine in 1806, thus attaining its sovereignty. After he ended his military career, the prince turned to the administration of his estates, implementing important measures targeted at developing agriculture and forestry. He was also something of a pioneer of horticultural fashion, laying out Biedermeier gardens and parks in the English landscape style on his various estates. In 1815 Liechtenstein joined the German Confederation as its smallest member. On the model of other German states Liechtenstein was ruled on absolutist principles. Johann I decided to modernise the country completely. Reforms affected education, the legal system, the financial sector and economic areas, culminating in the granting of a constitution to the principality in 1818.

1836–1858 Prince Alois II

Alois II (1796–1858) was given an outstanding education – one of his tutors was the historian and philosopher Friedrich von Schlegel (1772–1829) – and continued the programme of modernisation initiated by his father and grandfather on the Liechtenstein estates. Married to Franziska, Countess Kinsky of Wchinitz and Tettau, the prince belonged to numerous humanitarian, scientific and industrial associations, and every year donated considerable sums of money to charitable causes. Influenced by English models, his artistic tastes evinced themselves in the Neogothic alterations he commissioned at Eisgrub and the building of the palm house there. Between 1837 and 1848 he also commissioned extensive renovations to the interior of the Liechtenstein CITY PALACE on Bankgasse in Rococo revival style based on designs by the British architect Peter Hubert Desvignes (1804–1883), a project in which Karl Leistler (1805–1857) and Michael Thonet (1796–1871) also participated. Alois II possessed a largely conservative political attitude. Following the year of revolutions in 1848 he granted the principality a provisory, more liberal constitution in response to a petition by the people of Liechtenstein, but repealed it three years later, returning the state to absolutist rule.

1858–1929 Prince Johann II

Following a rounded education Johann II (1840–1929) completed his studies in Germany, Brussels and Paris. He was accompanied by the social reformer Baron Karl von Vogelsang (1818–1890), who had an enduring influence on the prince's attitude towards social and humanitarian issues. In 1858 he assumed the regency of the princely house and principality, granting the latter a constitution in 1862, and in 1921 the democratic parliamentary constitution that is still in force today. The 71 years of his reign saw the abolition of all the last remaining feudal laws, the foundation of the national bank, the abolition of compulsory military service, the issuing of the first Liechtenstein postal stamps and the conclusion of a customs treaty with Switzerland. Johann II enjoyed a reputation for being an outstanding connoisseur and patron of the arts. He had the Liechtenstein paintings gallery reorganised and extended its holdings with numerous acquisitions. He also restored the former ancestral seat of the Liechtenstein dynasty near Mödling and the castle in Vaduz in the Historicist style. In addition the prince supported numerous museums in the form of generous donations, some of which came from the holdings of his own collections (early Italian art, Biedermeier). As a promoter of scientific ventures he founded among other institutions the *Höhere Obst- und Gartenbauschule* (a school of fruit-growing and horticulture) at Eisgrub and funded renowned historical and art-historical publications. The Austrian Academy of Sciences made him an honorary member. He was also noted for his devotion to charitable works, which earned him the epithet of "Johann the Good".



1929–1938 Prince Franz I

After studying law at the universities of Vienna and Prague, Franz I (1853–1938), the brother of Prince Johann II, initially pursued a military career before entering the diplomatic service. From 1894 to 1898 Franz I was imperial ambassador in St Petersburg, in which capacity he was responsible for initiatives which reinforced academic and scientific contacts between Austria and Russia. In keeping with his profound interest in history Franz I headed several specialist associations and was involved in the establishment of several historical periodicals. In 1911 he set up the Central Commission for the Preservation of Monuments. In 1914 he was made an honorary member of the Austrian Academy of Sciences in Vienna, and in 1917 he became a hereditary member of the upper legislative chamber. Distinguished with numerous national and international honours, the prince handed over the regency of the house of Liechtenstein to Franz Josef II shortly before his death in 1938.

1938–1989 Prince Franz Josef II

Franz Josef II (1906–1989) was born at Schloss Frauenthal in Styria on 16 August 1906, the first-born son of Prince Alois von Liechtenstein and Archduchess Elisabeth Amalie of Austria. His godfather was Emperor Franz Joseph I. He attended the Schottengymnasium in Vienna and subsequently studied forestry at the University of Agricultural Science in Vienna between 1925 and 1929. On 30 March 1938 he was entrusted with the regency by the ruling prince, and following the latter's death on 25 July he moved the seat of government to the Principality of Liechtenstein for the first time. With the seizure of power by the Nazis, all aristocratic estates held in fee were dissolved. This also affected the Princely Collections. Those art objects housed in the GARDEN PALACE in the Rossau quarter in 1938 were placed under a preservation order, thus preventing their export. Not until the turmoil of the last few weeks of the war was it possible to transfer the most important items to Vaduz, where the seat of the collections has been since that time. After the Second World War, the family's Czech and Moravian estates, already decimated by the land reform of 1919, were confiscated. The resulting dramatic deterioration in the financial situation of the princely house resulted in the sale of valuable paintings from the Princely Collections. Prince Franz Josef II married Countess Gina von Wilczek (b. 24 October 1921 in Graz, d. 24 October 1989 in Vaduz). They had five children: Hereditary Prince Hans-Adam (b. 14 February 1945), Prince Philipp Erasmus (b. 19 August 1946), Prince Nikolaus Ferdinand (b. 24 October 1947), Princess Nora Elisabeth (b. 31 October 1950) and Prince Franz Josef Wenzel (b. 19 November 1962, d. 28 February 1991).

1989– Prince Hans-Adam II

Born the eldest son of Prince Franz Josef II and Princess Gina in 1945, the ruling prince Johann-Adam Pius, called Hans-Adam II von und zu Liechtenstein, had Pope Pius XII as his godfather. He attended primary school Vaduz before going on to the Schottengymnasium in Vienna for his secondary school education in 1956. In 1960 he moved to the Gymnasium in Zuoz, from which he graduated in 1965, having taken both the Swiss and the German school leaving certificates. Subsequently he worked as a trainee in a London bank before studying applied and political economy at the university in St Gallen from 1965 to 1967.

In 1967 Prince Hans-Adam II married Countess Marie Kinsky of Wchinitz and Tettau (b. 14 April 1940 in Prague) with whom he has four children: Hereditary Prince Alois (b. 11 June 1968), Prince Maximilian (b. 16 May 1969), Prince Constantin (b. 15 March 1972) and Princess Tatjana (b. 10 April 1973).

After having successfully reorganised the family finances into private foundations on a new legal basis, Prince Hans-Adam was invested by his father, Prince Franz Josef II, on 26 August 1984 as his representative in the exercise of the princely rights appertaining to him.



Following the death of his father, Prince Hans-Adam II assumed the regency on 13 November 1989. During the period in which he was his father's representative he had been committed to developing an independent foreign policy for Liechtenstein. During his reign Liechtenstein became a member of the United Nations in 1990 and joined the European Economic Area in 1995.

On 15 August 2004 Prince Hans-Adam II von und zu Liechtenstein invested his son, Hereditary Prince Alois von und zu Liechtenstein, as his representative in the exercise of the princely rights appertaining to him.