CU/HS 211 VIENNA’S VICTUALS: A CULTURAL HISTORY OF FOOD AND DRINK
IES Abroad Vienna

DESCRIPTION: Have the Viennese always eaten schnitzel or wiled away the afternoon in a coffeehouse with strudel and a mélange? How has the history of the Habsburg Empire and the more recent history of the Second Republic affected what the Viennese eat and drink? What is “Viennese cuisine” anyway? With help from the recent turn to food studies in disciplines as diverse as history and hotel management, students will explore why we eat and drink what we do, how those food choices may have been different historically, and how “our” dining and drinking choices differentiate us from “others.” Field trips to Vienna’s iconic markets, historic tavern neighborhoods in Ottakring, chocolate producers, breweries, and cafes breathe life into the history and culture of Vienna’s victuals.

CREDITS: 3

CONTACT HOURS: 45

LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION: English

PREREQUISITES: None.

ADDITIONAL COSTS: Estimated total cost for optional food/beverage purchases and tour fees during course-related outings and review assignments: €40-€75

SPECIAL NOTE: Moderate alcohol consumption is an optional component of the course.

METHOD OF PRESENTATION:
• Seminar intermingling Informal lectures with discussion
• Course-related trips
• Student presentations
• Moodle

REQUIRED WORK AND FORM OF ASSESSMENT:
Assignments will focus on developing writing and presentation skills. Students will keep a journal of course-related outings along with their visits to various other food and beverage-related places. The final project will consist of a choice between a conventional research paper and a creative project (see below for possible projects).

• Course participation - 10%
• Midterm Exam (Week 6) - 20%
• Field study journal (five 200-word entries on themes during Weeks 2, 3, 5, 8, 10) - 20%
• Two 500-word reviews (Review #1 due Week 4; Review #2 due Week 9) - 10%
• In-class oral presentation pitching final project (Week 7) - 10%
• Final project - 30%

Course Participation
Active participation in all seminars and class outings is expected.
• A: Excellent participation. The student’s contributions reflect active reading of the assigned materials and a respectful engagement with the contributions of other classmates. She/he skillfully synthesizes the main ideas of the readings and raises questions about the significance and implications of the material, providing evidence and reasons for her/his assertions. Through questions and comments, the student demonstrates that he or she is capable of relating the main ideas in the readings to other topics covered during the course, and, when appropriate, to his or her own life experience.
• B: Very good participation. The student’s contributions demonstrate a familiarity with the assigned readings. He/she identifies main ideas and arguments most of the time, even if he/she does not always reflect upon the significance and
implications of the material. The student engages with the contributions of his/her classmates, but sometimes interrupts the conversation to introduce tangential information or viewpoints.

- **C: Satisfactory participation.** The student demonstrates evidence that she/he has read the assigned readings, but in a superficial way. The student attempts to engage constructively with the ideas of other classmates, but commonly provides comments that are not germane to the discussion at hand. Contributions frequently reveal a lack of both preparation and familiarity with the material.

- **F: Unsatisfactory participation.** The student consistently comes to class unprepared, and reads the materials superficially or not at all. He/she does not participate in an informed way and shows little interest in engaging constructively with others.

**Midterm Exam**
In essay form, students will be tasked with discussing a facet of Viennese cuisine in light of the theoretical readings and class outings of the first several weeks.

**Field Study Journal**
With reference to the scheduled readings, students will reflect upon and analyze what they have observed during select course-related outings listed on the syllabus. (See the syllabus itself along with the section at the end of the syllabus entitled “Course-Related Trips” for more details.) In addition, they will write a journal entry early in the semester that records their impressions of visits to food and drink establishments such as coffee houses, inns (Beisl/Wirtshäuser), patisseries, or wine gardens (Heuriger). If they choose, they may use this journal entry as a means of drafting their reviews (see immediately below). Students will write five 200-word entries in all. I will collect journal entries during midterm week in Week 6 and again at the end of classes.

**Reviews**
Two 500-word reviews that draw upon weekly readings and course-related outings to evaluate a food and drink establishment of the student’s choice for Review #1 and a wine garden (Heuriger) for Review #2. Reviews are due in Weeks 4 and 9.

**In-Class Oral Presentation of Final Project**
During Week 7, students will deliver a 10-minute in-class oral presentation pitching their final project.

**Final Project** (in lieu of a Final Exam; due during finals week)
Ideas for final projects need to be cleared by the instructor in advance. Students will then have the opportunity to pitch their ideas to their peers and receive feedback during their oral presentation in Week 7. Final project choices can include any of the following (or anything else proposed by the student and cleared by the instructor):  
- A traditional final research paper (2500 – 3750 words) on a course-related theme.
- A “New Viennese” cookbook with recipes that reflect the contemporary reality of “Viennese cuisine” together with a 1750-word critical introduction that contextualizes historical shifts in Viennese eating habits. Oral interviews encouraged.
- A photo essay that explores a particular genre of eating establishment, market, or similar. Critical analysis expected.
- A focused museum exhibition proposal on some aspect of Viennese food and drink.
- A website produced in light of course readings and outings that introduces readers to the history of Viennese cuisine OR provides a critical overview of Vienna’s markets OR provides resources for sustainable consumption in Vienna OR traces the rise of “local” consumption in Vienna, etc.
- A history of a local food or beverage institution (such as Staud’s, Julius Meinl, Café Demel, Manner, Aida, Ottakringer, or any other prominent café, Wirtshaus, or Heuriger). Where possible, work should be based on primary sources, including but not limited to oral interviews, examination of in-house documents, or research at local museums.

**LEARNING OUTCOMES:**
Over the course of the semester, students will:
- Articulate the ways in which the cultural history of food and drink is a nodal point where diverse approaches converge regarding questions of national identity, ethnicity, class, gender, material culture, and science and technology.
- Analyze the linkages between aesthetics and the history of consumer culture and evaluate how these linkages influence changing tastes and national identity.
• Acquire an appreciation of the ways in which historical processes like urbanization, industrialization, and immigration are reflected in street markets, eating establishments, neighbourhoods, and the production of beer and wine.
• Seek out and use primary and secondary sources as evidence for arguments, in large part by relating broad themes within food studies to Vienna’s local context. (In this sense, Vienna functions as a “primary text” writ large.)
• Gain confidence expressing themselves orally and in writing, not only about traditional academic topics, but also about sensations (smell and taste) that are notoriously difficult to pin down.

ATTENDANCE POLICY:
IES Vienna requires attendance at all class sessions, including field study excursions, internship meetings, scheduled rehearsals, and all tests and exams. Attendance will be taken for every class. If a student misses more than the equivalent of a week of classes without an excuse, the final grade will be reduced by one-third of a letter grade (for example, A to B+) for every additional unexcused absence.

Excused absences are permitted only when:
1) a student is ill (health issues),
2) when class is held on a recognized religious holiday traditionally observed by the particular student, or
3) in the case of a grave incident affecting family members;
4) exceptions may be made for conflicting academic commitments, but only in writing and only well in advance of missed class time.

Any other absences are unexcused.

CONTENT:

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<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Content</th>
<th>Readings/Assignments/Activities</th>
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<tr>
<td>Week 1-1</td>
<td>Course Introduction</td>
<td>Assignment: Ice breaker activities so students and instructor can get to know one another.</td>
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<td>“Traditional” Viennese cuisine in a global world</td>
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<td>Discussion of course structure, assignments, learning objectives, expectations, and the kinds of questions we’ll consider during the semester.</td>
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| Week 1-2 | A transnational history of food and beverage consumption | Readings:  
• Douglas, “Deciphering a Meal,” in Food and Culture, pp. 29-47.  
| Week 2-1 | Altwiener Küche: All hail the kebab!         | Readings:  
•                                                                 |

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The Wiener Schnitzel: is there anything more quintessentially Viennese? What about other contenders such as apple strudel and goulash? What is the influence of historical trade patterns and the related history of the multi-ethnic Habsburg Empire on Viennese cuisine? How has “gut bürgerliche Küche” shaped notions of traditional cuisine then and now? We will consider concepts such as authenticity and identity as these relate to Viennese cuisine and to the cuisine of former Habsburg lands, and, more recently to Turkish cuisine.

Week 2-2
**The gender of food and eating establishments**

Who could gather where, and for what purposes? How and why did the coffeehouse function historically as a predominantly male space? What of the Beisl (tavern), the Wirtshaus (inn), or the Heuriger (wine garden)? How has public and private space been separated historically along gendered lines? How have these spaces and places changed over time?

Readings:

Week 3-1
**A time of plenty? Consumerism and consumption in postwar Austria**

The individual and collective memory of Austria’s post-WWII recovery is tightly bound up with the scarcity or availability of food. The “success story” of the Second Republic is, at its core, a story of modest but increasing prosperity. Perhaps more than any other consumer goods, food was both a symbol and indicator of postwar recovery. From the 1970s, Vienna’s “daily bread” took on an international hue in the form of specialties from around Europe.

Readings:

Week 3-2
**The Naschmarkt**

Open-air classroom session drawing connections with the readings to date, highlighting the interdisciplinary nature of food and drink — a cultural history that is, by turns, sociological, economic, political, and aesthetic.

Readings:

Activity: walking tour (open-air classroom) of the Naschmarkt and surroundings. See below under “Course-Related Trips” for more details.

Assignment: Journal Entry #2: Naschmarkt outing.

Assign Review #1 (due in Week 4-2)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 4-1</th>
<th>Consumerism and advertising: consumption as “cultural capital”</th>
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<td>Another trend stands out as a hallmark of the decades following WWII: the increasing significance of marketing in the competition for the hearts and shillings of consumers. This week, students will explore the semiotics of advertising and consider its effects on our aspirations to consume certain kinds and brands of food and drink. Readings on the aesthetics of taste help us unpack what it means when a company or individual claims that <em>this</em> is the best Grüner Veltliner in Austria or <em>that</em> is the best café in Vienna for apple strudel.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Week 4-2</th>
<th>Food as counter-cultural movement, food as lifestyle statement</th>
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<td>The 1980s witnessed an increasing rejection of the homogenization of taste and the corporatization of food and supply chains by large multi-national conglomerates. The decade also signaled a reorientation away from mass-produced foodstuffs in the direction of health food and organic produce. This week we will explore the linkages between the organic food movement and other social phenomena of 1980s Vienna, including the environmental movement and urban revitalization activism.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Week 5-1</th>
<th>Cake and chocolate: Vienna’s sweet tooth</th>
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<td>Opulent coffeehouses that once catered to Habsburg royalty with their cakes and confections coexist with the simpler but no less beloved local chain Aida. Manner wafer bars abound, and pedestrian thoroughfares are lined with chocolate shops. This week, we will consider what the persistence of these resolutely Viennese “institutions” reveal about local attitudes to everything from the pleasure of eating to the influx of Starbucks.</td>
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<th>Week 5-2</th>
<th>Vienna’s sweet tooth</th>
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<td>Field trip to Altmann &amp; Kühne OR Café Demel.</td>
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<th>Readings/Sources:</th>
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<tr>
<td><em>Bourdieu, Distinctions</em>, pp. 1-7 and pp. 177-200.</td>
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<td>Various images from the 1950s through the 1980s posted to Moodle, including photographs, magazines, placards, and signage.</td>
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<th>Activity:</th>
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<td>Students will work in groups to critique the semiotics of the images posted to Moodle.</td>
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<td>Field trip to Altmann &amp; Kühne OR Café Demel (depending on the schedules of these places). See below under “Course-Related Trips” for more details.</td>
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<td><em>Langseth-Christensen, Gourmet’s Old Vienna Cookbook</em> (approx. 20 pp)</td>
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**Week 6-1**

**Where the Viennese eat and drink**

Coffeehouses, Heurigen (wine gardens), Wirtshäuser (inns), Beiseln (taverns), Konditoreien (pastry shops): Not only are the places where Viennese eat and drink extremely varied, but what the Viennese eat and drink there has filled volumes of cookbooks that we can read as a form of cultural history. Based on the reviews turned in last week, we will consider how we experience the different places where we eat and drink.

**Readings:**
- Tuan, “Intimate Experiences of Place,” in *Space and Place*, pp. 136-148.
- Recipes from Plachutta and Wagner, *The Culinary Heritage of Vienna*, including Viennese-Style Beef Goulash, Wiener Schnitzel, Tafelspitz with its various trimmings, and Apple Strudel (approx. 10 pp).
- Recipes from Langseth-Christensen, *Gourmet’s Old Vienna Cookbook* (approx. 10 pp).

**Assignment:** Journal Entry #3. Class outing on chocolates or pastry.

**Week 6-2**

**Midterm**

**Due:** Journal Entries #1, #2, and #3.

**Week 7-1**

**A social history of the coffee house**

Prior to this week’s class, students will be expected to visit at least two coffeehouses (ideas provided by the instructor). While there, they will observe the “semiotics” of the coffeehouse: the atmosphere, the waiters, the menu, the clientele, the rituals of service. Students will deliver informal “field reports”/journal entries in class.

**Readings:**

**Week 7-2**

**Student Presentations**

**Assignment:** student presentations to pitch final projects

**Week 8-1**

**Would you like beer or wine with your meal?**

A bottle of Grüner Veltliner or a bottle of local craft beer costing more than double the price of a can of Ottakringer: What do our beverage choices say about who we are or who we aspire to be? Heurigers, those wine gardens nestled in the wooded hills that surround Vienna, are eternally popular places of respite from the city. Then there’s beer. Founded in 1837, the Ottakringer Brewery presents an ideal case study of how powerful historical forces — industrialization, urbanization, and the rise of the working class — converged to transform Ottakring from a pastoral village into the working-class district we know today.

**Readings:**
- Trubek, “Place Matters,” in *The Taste of Place*, pp. 18-53.

**Activity:** field trip to the Ottakringer Brewery. See below under “Course-Related Trips” for more details.

**Assignment:** Journal Entry #4 on Ottakringer visit.

**Assign Review #2 (Visit and review a Heuriger in light of the class outing to Ottakringer. Due Week 9-1.)**

**Week 8-2**

**Eating locally in Vienna and beyond**

**Readings/Sources:**
What does it mean to eat and drink locally? Themes that we’ll discuss in these final weeks include: sustainability; the question of food and migrant/local labour as it intersects with farmers’ markets; and global, regional, and local food distribution chains. We will consider how the recent Viennese Beisl renaissance and the revival of “Grätzl” culture constitute a response to the industrialized food production and distribution patterns of the postwar decades. At the same time, these responses to mass-produced and mass-marketed food raise thorny issues: not everyone can be a locavore. How do class, race, ethnicity, and gender determine access to healthier forms of eating and consuming?

Images from “Forty Years of Falter: Photos from Vienna’s Alternative Weekly” (Wien Museum exhibition, 2017) posted to Moodle. We will compare these images to earlier images from Falter (Week 4) to get a sense of how this stalwart of Vienna’s critical press has both revived the notion of Grätzl culture and fostered a critique of supermarket culture while also shifting subtly toward the mainstream with its lifestyle features.

### Week 9-1

**The inn on the corner and the tavern down the street**

How have the very places where people drink their wine or beer — at a Heuriger, at a Beisl, at a Wirtshaus — functioned historically to subtly and not so subtly separate different classes from one another? What about the neighbourhoods in which these different establishments were and are located? As a quasi-public space, the Wirtshäuser of Neulerchenfeld have welcomed groups of all political and social stripes, from local functionaries to the founders of Austria’s Social Democratic Party. Notoriously cramped and raucous, the working-class Neulerchenfeld of the latter half of the nineteenth century is a paradigmatic example of a rapidly industrializing and urbanizing Vienna.

Readings/Sources:
- Historical maps and photographs of Neulerchenfeld posted to Moodle.

Activity: Neulerchenfeld walking tour/outdoor classroom, including a visit to Weinhaus Sittl. See below under “Course-Related Trips” for more details.

Due: Review #2 during class.

### Week 9-2

**Vienna’s markets: a new politics of eating?**

The corner grocer, the local baker, and the neighbourhood butcher gradually yielded to one-stop supermarkets like Spar, Billa, and Hofer over the decades since the immediate postwar years. Recent decades have witnessed a notable shift back in the direction of "quality of life" issues reflected in consumption choices. Specialty shops and farmers’ markets have returned to supply everything from artisanal cheese and free-range meat to hand-made chocolate and small-batch schnapps. This segment focuses our attention on the intersection of environmental politics with greater control over nutrition and health.

Readings:
- Patel, “Checking Out of Supermarkets,” in *Stuffed and Starved*, pp. 221-257.
### Week 10-1

**The Brunnenmarkt**

Not only are Vienna’s markets a colourful feast for the eyes and gustatory senses, they are also highly visible markers of demographic shifts. This week we will visit the Brunnenmarkt to learn about its origins and transformations since its founding in the late eighteenth century. We will also consider how successive influxes of immigrants from the Balkans, eastern Europe, Turkey, and, more recently, Africa have shaped the market and its offerings over time. The market’s location in an increasingly popular part of the city raises questions about the tension between urban revitalization and gentrification: how do new eateries, cafes, farmers’ markets, specialty food shops, and hip drinking establishments affect these processes? Further discussion topics include the sourcing, distribution, and retail. We will close by considering how the markets around Vienna seek to balance the needs of different constituencies in different parts of the city.

**Readings:**
- Gottlieb and Joshi, “Transforming the Food Experience,” in *Food Justice*, pp. 177-196.

**Activity:** Field trip/outdoor classroom: Brunnenmarkt. See below under “Course-Related Trips” for more details.

**Guest speaker:** Official from the City of Vienna’s MA 59, the division responsible for market services and food safety.

**Second possibility:** a visit to Staud’s on Yppenplatz.

**Assignment:** Journal Entry #5: Outdoor classroom sessions in Neulerchenfeld and on the Brunnenmarkt.

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### Week 10-2

**Just what is Viennese cuisine?**

Wrap-up session to discuss recent class outings/

**Study Week**

Make-up sessions. Optional check-in regarding final projects.

Due: Journal Entries #4 and #5.

**Finals Week**

Final project due by 12:00 noon on the first day of exam week.

### COURSE-RELATED TRIPS:

In all of these cases, Vienna itself, along with its particular places, culinary institutions, and neighbourhoods, functions as a “primary text” for both research and experiential learning.

- **Outdoor classroom at the Naschmarkt in Week 3.** Students will learn about the history of markets and food networks in Vienna, and about how this market in particular has evolved since the nineteenth century while shaping its surrounding neighbourhood. This session introduces students to the plethora of foods that constitute “Viennese cuisine” and presents one of the first opportunities for students to unpack and question the notion of “traditional” cuisine, both historically and in the present.

- **Visit to Altmann & Kühne OR Café Demel in Week 5.** Depending on the site visited, students will learn either about how a resolutely traditional chocolaterie thrives amid competition from chain outlets, or about the historical linkages between the patisserie at Demel and the Habsburg court. In either case, students will visit production facilities and taste the wares.

- **Visit to Ottakringer Brewery in Week 8.** Students will learn about the brewing process from the nineteenth century to the present, and will learn about cultural, social, and aesthetic forces driving the recent shift in the direction of craft beer — in other words, how and why have tastes changed over time. The Ottakringer Brewery presents an ideal case study of how powerful historical forces converged to transform Ottakring from a pastoral village into a working-class district. The history of wine in Vienna constitutes an ever-present counterpoint.
• Outdoor classroom/walk in Neulerchenfeld in Week 9. With reference to historical maps, photographs, and literature, students will get a sense of how food, drink, and forms of sociality contributed to the transformation of Neulerchenfeld since the late eighteenth century. Students will discuss how the very places where people ate their food and drank their wine or beer functioned historically to separate different classes from one another.

• Outdoor classroom at the Brunnenmarkt in Week 10. Students will learn about the market’s origins in the eighteenth century and will consider how successive influxes of immigrants have shaped the market and its offerings over time. The visit underscores how the market’s location raises questions about the tension between urban revitalization and gentrification. Students will hear from a Viennese official who deals with market services and food safety. Depending on staff availability, students may have the opportunity to visit Staud’s, a longtime Viennese producer of jams, pickles, and vinegars to learn about its role in advocating for quality foodstuffs and transforming the Brunnenmarkt.

• Visits to other eating and drinking establishments outside of class time. These trips will enable students to complete the various writing assignments and projects throughout the semester.

REQUIRED READINGS:


RECOMMENDED READINGS:


