The wonderful world of the Renaissance
Castle Ambras Innsbruck is one of Innsbruck's most popular attractions. The picturesque Renaissance castle, the precious art collections, and the magnificent grounds are a delightful experience for all visitors.

The provincial sovereign of Tyrol, Archduke Ferdinand II (1529 – 1595), son of Emperor Ferdinand I, ordered that the mediaeval fortress at Ambras be turned into a Renaissance castle for his wife Philippine Welser. The daughter of a wealthy Augsburg patrician, Philippine was not permitted to reside at the Hofburg palace as her morganatic marriage – while valid according to church law – was considered ‘below the Emperor’s station’. Moreover, in the 16th century, it had become fashionable to establish a magnificent summer residence. After her death in 1580 Ferdinand commissioned the construction of a unique museum complex for his world-famous art collections next to the picturesque Upper Castle with its wonderful views over Innsbruck. As a prominent precursor of our modern-day museums, it has been preserved at its original site to this day.

The collections at Castle Ambras are part of the Kunsthistorisches Museum, one of the world's foremost museums.

The imposing Renaissance castle – a gift from Ferdinand to his spouse Philippine
As they pass through the castle gate, visitors enter the idyllic castle gardens, which contain Archduke Ferdinand II’s famous Rüstkammern, or Armouries. They include rare examples of 15th century jousting armour from the collections of Emperor Maximilian I, suits of armour of famous 16th century commanders, the Archduke’s private armour, the armour of the court of Innsbruck, and weapons from the Thirty Years’ War. The armour worn by the legendary figure of Bartlmä Bon seems particularly stunning when placed alongside the children-sized suits of armour made for Ferdinand’s two sons. A particular attraction is the newly furnished ‘Turkish Chamber’ with its rare leather mosaics and Ottoman pieces of equipment, most of which were retrieved as booty from the field of battle.

As a leading patron from the House of Habsburg Ferdinand collected all manner of exhibits both precious and curious, rare and singular, in his Chamber of Arts and Curiosities. Nature and art were grouped together in one room, in keeping with the programme of encyclopaedic collections of the Renaissance.

On view here alongside a late mediaeval pear-wood sculpture known as the Tödlein, or Figurine of Death, and elaborately turned ivory works are a number of pieces that are outstanding not just artistically, but also in terms of craftsmanship, together with scientific objects, pieces from distant lands, and musical instruments. Other highlights include the oldest preserved portrait of Count Vlad III, better known as Dracula, as well as rare, exotic and exceptional exhibits from Nature herself. Not to mention the portraits of fascinating individuals thought to be miracles of nature, such as the ‘Hirsute Man’.

During the Renaissance period the Antiquarian’s Room was a place of knowledge; today, it features among others a collection of sculptures from antiquity. The Small Armoury comprises numerous decorative weapons used in courtly hunting, decorated with intricate ivory inlays and other ornate embellishments.
As you enter the Upper Castle the first aspect to catch your eye is the Inner Courtyard with its wonderful grisaille mural paintings. They reference the design elements of castles in Bohemia and tell the story of princely virtues and muses, heroes male and female, their heroic acts, and much, much more.

The fully preserved bathtub of Philippine Welser dating from the 16th century is something of a rarity in cultural-historical terms and attests to the fact that the Castle's residential quarters were once located here. Besides the bathtub itself the bathing facilities also include a sudarium and a heat room as well as a resting room. The Chapel of St. Nicolas is the showcase for the chapel's treasure trove of 14th century letters of indulgence, magnificently embroidered 16th chasubles and vestments, and precious Augsburg church silver dating from the 17th century. The Chapel is also the perfect setting for romantic weddings.

The Collection of Gothic Sculpture is located in the castle keep. A part of the mediaeval section of the Castle it served as a fortified tower and as a secure place of refuge during times of siege. One of the masterpieces on show is the Altar of St. George dating from the time of Emperor Maximilian I.

The Habsburg Portrait Gallery is laid out on three floors and features numerous members of Europe's various ruling houses from the 15th to the 19th century. On show are more than 200 likenesses, including exquisite works by famous artists such as Hans Burgkmair, Lucas Cranach the Younger, Anton Mor, Titian, van Dyck, Giuseppe Arcimboldo, Peter Paul Rubens, Diego Velázquez, and others.

The Gallery also includes three permanent exhibitions open to the public: The History of the Castle, The Strasser Collection of Glass and Portraits of the Postmasters from the Taxis-Bordogna.

Special exhibitions are also shown here every year at Easter and over the summer.
The Spanish Hall at the foot of the Upper Castle is still used to this day as a festive venue for concerts and other events. With its original frescoes and Europe's largest self-supporting wood-inlay ceiling, it is one of the most important – and beautiful – halls of the Renaissance period.

A stroll through the idyllic castle grounds is a perfect way to round off a tour. Just as it was in Emperor Ferdinand's day the park remains a popular venue for large receptions and functions with games, dancing, and fine dining. A garden of paradise growing medicinal plants and herbs has also been laid out based on Philippine Welser's pharmacopeia. The Bacchus Grotto is a man-made grotto comprised of a solid pillar and four transverse arches, and guests at the princely court of Emperor Ferdinand were welcomed there with a 'tasting'. The peacocks that roam the Ambras castle grounds are as popular today as they were back then. The Castle is set among a vast game park with rocky ridges, ravines, bridges and artificial waterfall, and it too is a popular excursion destination.

Individual sections of the Castle and its surrounding grounds can be hired for occasions and events of all sizes as well as functions and receptions. The 'secret' Peacock Garden at the Upper Castle for instance is ideally suited for cocktail receptions while the Bacchus Grotto offers the perfect setting for wine tastings. The Restaurant for its part is a popular choice for birthday parties and wedding receptions.

Art & history set against a stunning natural backdrop
CASTLE AMBRAS PLAYS HOST

Offer your groups a unique experience by combining a visit to Castle Ambras in Innsbruck with a special programme. Listed here are a number of suggested packages. We are of course more than happy to tailor our offers to our requirements.

‘HIGHLIGHTS’ GROUP PACKAGE

This tour takes you to all the highlights of the collections. They include ceremonial suits of armour in the Armouries, local and exotic treasures of nature and the arts in the Chamber of Arts and Curiosities, portraits of princes in the Spanish Hall, the bathing room of Philippine Welser, and the stunning paintings of the inner courtyard.

After the tour, join us for a glass of sparkling wine in the romantic setting of the Peacock Garden.

‘BACCHUS AT AMBRAS’ GROUP PACKAGE

On this tour discover all manner of exhibits both precious and curious, rare and singular, in the Chamber of Arts and Curiosities, as collected by Archduke Ferdinand on the theme of wine and festivities. It also includes the remarkable Fangstuhl, a chair designed to trap guests during the raucous drinking parties held at Castle Ambras.

After the tour, join us for a glass of wine in the impressive surroundings of the Bacchus Grotto, complete with entry logged in the Ambras drinking book.

‘KNIGHTS & HEROES’ GROUP PACKAGE

We begin with a tour of Archduke Ferdinand’s famous Rüstkammer, or armoury, featuring rare examples of jousting armour and the suits of armour of famous field commanders and generals. One particular rarity is the suit of armour created for the court giant Bartlmä Bon.

After the tour, why not seize the unique opportunity to try on some of these original pieces of armour for yourself. Experience why, back then, it was always the men who took longer to get dressed and the ladies who were readily dazzled by the sight of them.

CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS

AT CASTLE AMBRAS

Castle Ambras has all sorts of exciting themes in store for children and adolescents of all school ages. In addition to the regular public guided tours, choose from a wide range of private guided tours and workshops. We’re happy to advise you! Admission is free for children and adolescents up to age 19.

PRICES

EUR 17 per person, valid for groups of 10 or more; includes admission and guided tour includes a glass of sparkling wine as part of the ‘Highlights’ Group Package includes a glass of wine as part of the ‘Bacchus at Ambras’ Group Package Duration: 1 ½ hours

An unforgettable experience for your group
**GETTING THERE**

**MOTORWAY**
Exit at ‘Innsbruck Mitte’

**COACH PARKING**
Separate parking area for buses and coaches (2-minute walk)
(Possibility also of alighting and boarding the bus/coach right outside the Castle)

**BY PUBLIC TRANSPORT**
Trams No. 3 and 6 (6-minute walk)
Bus route C (10-minute walk)
Postal bus 4134 (3-minute walk)
‘The Sightseer’ shuttle bus (right outside the Castle)

**ADMISSION FEES & OPENING HOURS**

**ADMISSIONS**

April to October:
- Adults: EUR 10
- Groups of 10 or more: EUR 7 per person

December to March:
- Adults: EUR 7
- Groups of 10 or more: EUR 5 per person

Free admission for children and adolescents up to age 19

**GUIDED TOUR OF THE CASTLE**
Duration: 1 hour EUR 70

Prices subject to change. All admissions incl. VAT

**OPENING HOURS**
Daily from 10 am to 5 pm – closed in November

**ADDRESS**
Schlossstraße 20, 6020 Innsbruck

**PUBLICATION DETAILS**
KHM-Museumsverband
01 Ticket office, Shop, Entrance to the Armouries

02 16th century Armouries

03 17th century Armouries

04 Chamber of Arts and Curiosities

05 Antiquarian’s Room

06 Entrance to the Spanish Hall and Upper Castle

07 Emperors’ Room and Spanish Hall

08 Habsburg Portrait Gallery, Chapel of St. Nicholas, 16th century Bathing Room, Gothic Sculptures, History of the Castle, Portraits of the Post-masters, Strasser Collection of Glass

09 Inner Courtyard

10 Cafe Restaurant
B2B CONTACT & BOOKINGS

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