

Crystal Blue Persuasion

At Rosewood Schloss Fuschl in the Austrian Alps, storybook landscapes converge with prismatic hues, enchanting history, and cheerful hosts.

**Mind Games**

Photographer Levi Mandel steps back in time at Monte Albán, a massive archaeological site in the Mexican state of Oaxaca — at least in his mind's eye and through his lens.

**Good Vibrations**

Wrensilva's artful HiFi consoles encourage you to give yourself over to the music, which might just remind you of who you are.

STAYS

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Khira Jordan



It's my fourth time in Austria but my first encounter with its kingly Alps. Built in 1461 as an imperial hunting lodge, the newly reopened (and vastly reimaged) Rosewood Schloss Fuschl, just outside Salzburg, sits atop a steep incline. And it overlooks, well, the lake of my dreams. Glacial, gem-like, a smidge milky. What hue is that, even? (I used to name colors for fashion in a past life, and I guess the habit never leaves you.) It changes shades no less than six times a day. I can't pin it down. Which I love. But I digress.

Nearly six centuries on, to me, this fabled castle still seems to serve those on the hunt — but for something much more enchanting than local game. Many seek (and excitedly find) the lingering spirit of enigmatic 19th-century Austrian empress Elisabeth, affectionately known as Sissi. Her fanciful, highly particular taste springs up everywhere throughout the estate — in magenta-tinted herbal lemonades, decadent pastel cakes, and freshly picked, very specifically purple flowers.

Others come in search of the Alpine dream etched in their memories by cinema. Or to revel in the quaint prestige of the part of the world that gave us Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart. And with one glance out the window from any of its jewel-box rooms — ornamented in lush velvet, gleaming marble, and cloud-like shearling — or on a guided jaunt into the secret nooks of the city (say, to an exquisite umbrella maker) all who are drawn to the schloss are constantly, richly rewarded.

For my part, maybe unsurprisingly, I think I'm here for the color. Of Lake Fuschl, whose glinting, blue moods never stop drawing me in. Of the castle itself, gift-wrapped in sumptuous pale pinks, yellows, and greens, and whose walls are adorned with oil paintings from the Old Masters. Of the cheerful Austrian disposition, a very, very welcome balm for this Berliner. Of the natural meadowland that envelops the castle, dotted with red clover, golden hypericum, and wild oregano. Of the sensational food — dreamt up by Julian Schwamberger, a hometown hero “from two lakes over” — which harnesses the magic of the region into dishes (such as a silky-beyond-belief beetroot, mushroom, and walnut amuse-bouche) that will, no exaggeration, live in my taste memory for a lifetime.

Whatever it is that personally lures you to this storybook schloss — irreverent royals, Austrian tradition, deep *Entschleunigung* (“slowing down”), cultural intrigue, prismatic palettes — being here is, literally and figuratively, brilliant.