# Salzburg: ‘The Rome of the North’ -

# From a Papal State to a City of Churches

***For over 1000 years Salzburg was a Papal State that united its secular and ecclesiastical power in the hands of the Prince Bishop. After the Vatican, Salzburg was the second-most important seat of the church. Baroque squares, hidden alleyways and an impressive array of churches and monasteries bear witness to the architectural, artistic and cultural legacy of the Prince-Bishops. Sacred music, pilgrim trails, special tours and church accommodation enable guests to experience Salzburg – as a State of the Church – at first hand.***

The Power and Splendour of the Archbishops

The history of Salzburg stretches back across almost a millennium of prince-bishoprical regency. Salzburg, as a State of the Church, owed its great wealth to the mining of salt, ores and precious stones. Today, Salzburg showcases this great wealth, along with the plethora of architectural achievements recorded by the Prince-Bishops. The magnificence of Rome served as a shining role model for Salzburg. A cathedral, churches, chapels, monasteries and graveyards were all built in the image of Italian precedents, the construction work often being overseen by Italian master builders. Prince-Bishop Wolf Dietrich (1587-1612) was a great admirer of the Italian way of life and made a particularly long-lasting impression upon the overall appearance of the town. He transformed medieval Salzburg into a jewel of the early baroque period. Hence, the Prince-Bishops laid the foundations for today’s city of churches. In 1997 this collection of architectural gems gained the recognition of UNESCO, becoming a world cultural heritage site.

**Church music – a musical legacy**

As a city known for its festival and as the birthplace of Mozart, Salzburg is globally recognised as a major city in the music world – and it also provides an ideal stage for sacred music. Even back then, the Prince Bishops had important musicians and composers of the age under their patronage. Their legacy was an impressive body of work still performed in the famous churches around Salzburg to this day. Sacred music often accompanies liturgical celebrations and there are also concerts and festivals featuring church music. Since 2012, the *Ouverture Spirituelle* – in the first week of the Salzburg Festival – has been dedicated to the centuries-old traditions of the Prince Bishops and highlights the music of religions from around the world. Organ music has always played a key role in Salzburg; a fact reflected in the magnificent instruments to be found in the churches of Salzburg. The city’s *Dom* cathedral is famous for its magnificent main organ and the additional four organs by the intersection pillars - on which W. A. Mozart often played. There are regular organ concerts in the cathedral and the International Mozart Foundation also stages free ‘Lunchtime Organ Concerts’. Furthermore, every Saturday the Dreifaltigkeitskirche (Holy Trinity Church) hosts a series of concerts: *Musica Sacra Trinitatis Salisburgensis*.

Experience the Papal State of Salzburg

There are also some very sophisticated guided tours of the world behind the exteriors of these houses of the Lord. Visitors leave secular Salzburg behind for a glimpse of some very exquisite sights and to discover hitherto hidden secrets – things of which most citizens of Salzburg are unaware. **‘Behind Church Doors’** toursalso take in Nonnberg convent church, where the Benedictine nuns sing their early morning Gregorian chorales. The *Dom zu Salzburg* cathedral is a veritable treasure trove for explorers: Both W. A. Mozart and Joseph Mohr, the lyricist responsible for ‘Silent Night’ were baptised in the font there; and, in the Franciscan Church, the heraldic hand of oath is surrounded by countless myths.

Although many guests choose the option of exploring the churches and their hidden treasures on their own, some great **exclusive** **insights can be gained on a guided tour**. Tours of the *Dom* cathedral, the archives of the archdiocese or the chance to view the special exhibits at DomQuartier Salzburg, show just how immense the influence of the church in Salzburg was – and is today. This significance is also reflected in the customs and traditions embedded in the religious holidays, still actively celebrated in Salzburg to this day. Processions, memorial services and all kinds of Easter, Advent and Christmas events encourage visitors to explore the cultural heritage enjoyed by the people of Salzburg.

Contemplation and church accommodation

Guests can escape the hustle and bustle of the streets and lanes of the world’s most famous old town in numerous hidden corners and peaceful courtyards. The town’s mountains – on both sides of the Salzach - are great places to slow down and enjoy a few minutes of peace and quiet. The city’s many footpaths and trails take visitors past secluded graveyards and park benches. In Salzburg there are several pilgrim trails – and the well-known pilgrimage churches in the city and surrounding villages are perfect for individual contemplation.

Visitors wishing to soak up **the** **energy radiating from Salzburg’s monasteries** can stay in one of five places of church accommodation. Most of these are located in the heart of the city, and alongside the basic comforts they offer, guests staying there appreciate the sense of peace they exude.

Fur detailed information about our city of churches go to: [www.salzburg.info/kirchenstadt](http://www.salzburg.info/kirchenstadt)

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