

# CONSTANZE MOZART'S SOJOURN IN OLD BADEN BEI WIEN

H. S. Brockmeyer

Just about 36 miles outside of Vienna, is a lovely town called Baden bei Wien – Baths by Vienna. It is a small town, featuring a casino, with a working clock made of flowers; long nature walks, Beethoven's apartment between 1821 to 1823, where he worked on Symphony Nr. 9; an old ruined castle on the Helenental mountain, and the original building on Renngasse, where Constanze Mozart resided during the summer of 1791.

Constanze spent the summers in Baden bei Wien beginning in 1789, 1790, and the last summer of Mozart's life, 1791.

It appears that she missed the premiere of Mozart's opera, *The Magic Flute*, on 30 September, at the Freihaus Theater. The lush trees and verdant fields made Baden bei Wien – also known as the 'Spa Town' because of the thermal baths -- a most delightful place, especially in the sweltering summer months, when Vienna's paved streets microwaved your very flesh.

In 1789, after a very difficult pregnancy, Constanze developed a dangerous thrombosis; she also had a fall, and injured a foot. A friend of Mozart offered a stay in his residence, free of charge, where Constanze could try the tripe treatment. This involved soaking her leg and foot in water, where a tripe fish had been boiled.

The treatment, while popular, was not effective, so their family doctor, Thomas Closset, prescribed 60 baths in the healing thermal mineral waters of Baden bei Wien. The old Roman baths could, possibly, be the best solution.

On 8 April 1789, Mozart had taken off on a journey with Prince Karl Lichnowsky, to tour several cities on the way to Prague. From the Mozarts' apartment at No. 245 Judenplatz, *Zur Mutter Gottes*, they would travel via Zanim, Mährisch-Budwitz,

Iglau, to Prague. Lichnowsky needed to check on his estates in Silesia, so it was an opportune trip for both men.

The finale of the journey would be Mozart's arrival in Berlin, where he would be presented to an admirer; King Friedrich Wilhelm II, himself a talented amateur musician and composer. Perhaps, Lichnowsky and Mozart hoped that the King would offer the composer a well-paid position in the Court theater.

On the way, the composer would arrive on 12 April in Dresden, where Mozart extemporized before Elector of Saxony, Friedrich August III. The Prince and Mozart traveled on to Dresden, stopping off at smaller cities along the way: Meissen, Hubertusburg, and Wurzen, Potsdam, finally arriving in Leipzig.

On 12 May, Mozart gave a concert at the Gewandhaus, where his dear friend, Josepha Dušek, sang, and Mozart performed several compositions. The concert program featured an all-Mozart repertoire: piano concerti [K. 456, K. 503], and two arias for soprano, [K. 505, Ch'io mi scordi di te – Non temer, amato bene and K. 528, Bella mia Fiamma]. He also played the fantasy for piano solo [K. 475].

However, from his letters, the concert was not successful. Mozart's letter of 16 May 1789 to his wife reveals his disappointment: "From the point of view of applause and glory this concert was absolutely magnificent, but the profits were wretchedly meagre."

Something happened along the way, and Mozart and the Prince became separated. Mozart squarely blamed Lichnowsky for the failed concert. In his letter of 23 May, from Berlin to Constanze, Mozart gives an enigmatic clue. It's likely that he lost money in gambling with the Prince, who demanded payment. It says something about Lichnowsky's character; he, an aristocrat of immense wealth, knew that Mozart was cash-strapped on this journey, yet still demanded his money:

Secondly, Lichnowsky (as he was in a hurry) left me here. And so I have had to pay for my keep in Potsdam, which is an expensive place. Thirdly, I had to lend him a hundred gulden, as his purse was getting empty. I could not well refuse him: you will know why.

Fourthly, my concert at Leipzig was a failure, as I always said it would be, so I had a journey of sixty four miles there and back almost for nothing. Lichnowsky alone is to blame for this, for he gave me no peace but insisted on my returning to Leipzig. I shall tell you more about this when we meet.

Mozart arrives in Berlin on 19 May, and on the 26<sup>th</sup>, finally performs before King Friedrich Wilhelm II, and his wife, Frederica Louisa of Hesse-Darmstadt.

By 4 June, Mozart arrives back in Vienna, just in time to take Constanze by coach to Baden bei Wien. It will be her first visit to take the baths; she will spend the rest of her life traveling to bathing cities almost everywhere that she lived. Obviously, she was a big believer in their healing potency.

In the 1820's, her second husband, Georg Nissen, began to experience health problems, so they decided to move from Copenhagen to Salzburg, where he could take the baths. Nissen decided that it would also be an opportune time to begin work on his Mozart biography, as Nannerl, Mozart's sister, resided in the town, and she had given him permission to use the Mozart family letters in his research.



**The gateway through the old archway to Baden bei Wien. St. Stephan, the parish church, looms over the town. The Hapsburg double-headed eagle was painted over the archway. This scene would have been what Mozart and Constanze would have observed when they visited, in the summers of 1789, 1790, and 1791**

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 Artist: J. Herther  
 "Das Stadt Thor samt der Pfarr Kirche in Baden"  
 TSB 694, Rollett museum Baden, Austria

In Baden bei Wien, Constanze whiles her days bathing in the *Carolinenbad*, the bathhouse for women, located in the town centrale. The men could take baths in the *Josefsbad*, located just across the street.



Today, the buildings still exist; the women's bath edifice [the *Carolinenebad*, or *Frauenbad*], is now the Arnulf Rainer Museum, an art museum, named after Arnulf Rainer, a surrealist painter, born in Baden in 1929. The museum has retained the old marble features of the former bathhouse from 1815.

It must have been splendid, walking through the town in the 18<sup>th</sup> century; it is still glorious today. The verdant trees and foliage send cool breezes through the air, and numerous nature walks beckon from every corner. It is easy to imagine why Constanze would prefer to spend her summers in the serene spa town, away from noisy, bustling Vienna, with unavoidable mounds of fresh horse manure on the heated pavement, spreading odor in the baking heat, and little respite from the scorching temperatures, outside of open windows and a hand fan.

Due to various music activities, however, Mozart would have to visit her only when he had time.



**The former *Frauenbad*, the *Carolinenebad* for women, is on the right; the men's bath, the *Josefsbad*, is on the left. Constanze would have observed this scene while walking daily to her baths, though without the round roof on *Josefsbad*, which was not added until twelve years after Constanze's 1791 sojourn**

Das Josphs- u. Carolinenbad, 1852, Farbdruck nach einer Vorlage in der Illustrierten Zeitung, 24. April 1852  
{{PD-US-expired}}



**The former *Frauenbad*, the *Carolinenbad*; today, it is the Arnulf Rainer Museum**

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Photographer: Henry Kellner, 3 November 2019

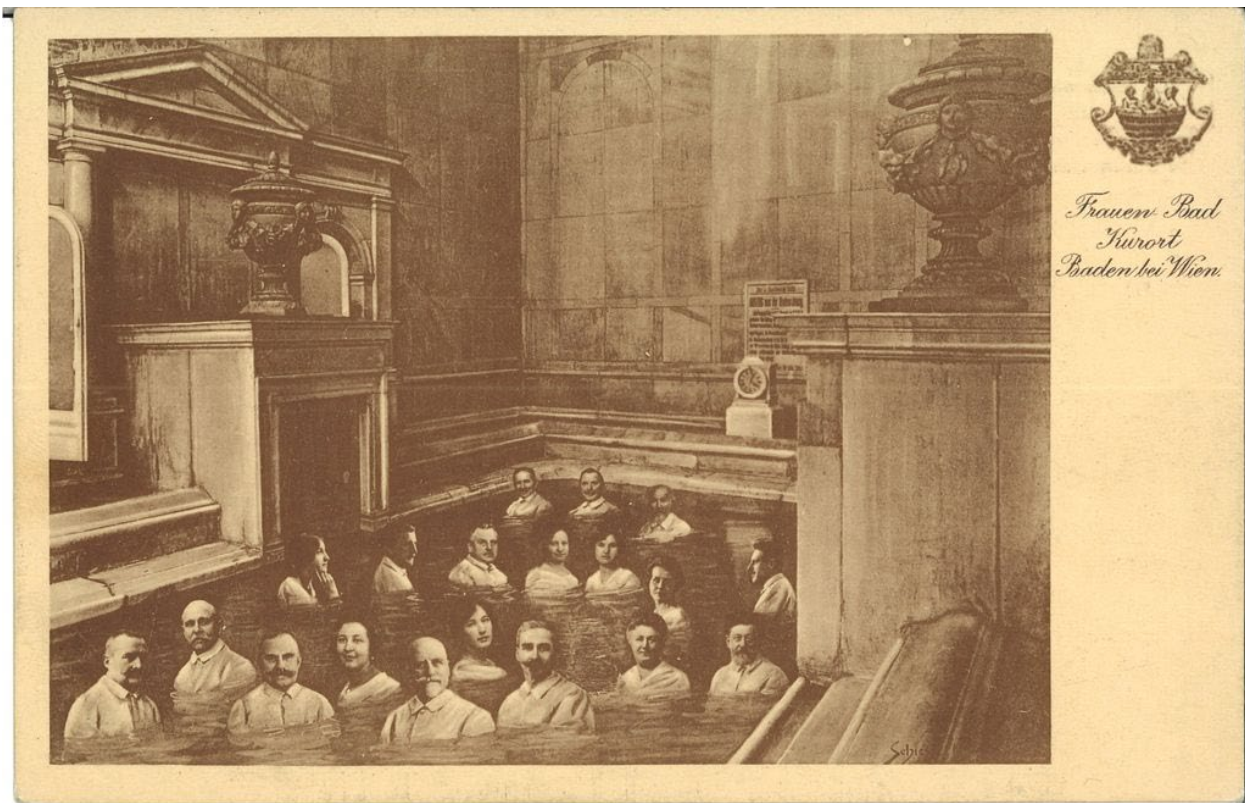
[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Frauenbad\\_Baden\\_0042.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Frauenbad_Baden_0042.jpg)



**The old *Josefsbad* at Josefsplatz, Baden bei Wien, to the left of the *Carolinenbad*. This was the bathhouse for men. The round roof and cupola were added in 1803**

Wikimapia.org  
<https://wikimapia.org/29595136/de/Ehemal-Josefsbad#/photo/7761206>





**Men and women in a later era, when they could mingle in the bathhouse**

Creator: © & Foto Stadtarchiv Baden | Credit: © & Foto Stadtarchiv Baden



**A gender mix in the bathhouse; this is a scene from the *Carolinenbad*, 1893**

Credit: © & Foto Stadtarchiv Baden

When Constanze visited Baden bei Wien in 1791, Mozart had found her lodging on the Renngasse. He writes to his friend, the choir director, Anton Stoll, who worked at St. Stephan's Church, at the beginning of June:

Dear old Stoll!  
Don't be a poll

*Primo.* I should like to know whether Stadler called on you yesterday and asked you for this mass: (then, draws a sketch of a few bars of music)

Did he.? Well then, I hope that I shall get it to-day. If not, please be so kind as to send it to me at once and, remember, with all the parts. I shall return it very soon.

*Secondo*. Will you please find a small apartment for my wife? She only needs two rooms, or one room and a dressing-room. But the main thing is that they should be on the ground floor. The rooms I should prefer are those which Goldhahn used to occupy on the ground floor at the butcher's. Please enquire there first; perhaps they are still to let. My wife is going out to Baden on Saturday, or Monday, at latest. If we cannot have these rooms, then you must look for something fairly near the baths; but the important point is that they should be on the ground floor. The ground floor at the town notary's, where Dr. Alt stayed, would do very well, but the rooms at the butcher's would be best of all.<sup>1</sup>

Stoll, good old poll that he was, found rooms for Constanze on the Renngasse, right near the town center, where she could be close to the baths, and not have to hobble too far. Whenever he could, Mozart would join her, taking an adjoined attic room in the back garden, offering quiet hours when he worked.

By 17 June 1791, Mozart has begun the *Ave verum corpus* [K. 618] a hauntingly beautiful motet, for Anton Stoll; musicologist Christoph Wolff posits that it was performed on or around 22 June for the Feast of Corpus Christi, and the motet was repeated at St. Stephen's Cathedral in Vienna.

Mozart also performed his *Missa brevis* mass in B-flat major [K. 275/272b], at St. Stephan's, on 10 July 1791. This mass is estimated to have been composed before September 1777 for Salzburg. The first performance was on 21 December 1777, with castrato Francesco Ceccarelli among the soloists.

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**In 1791, Constanze stayed in an apartment in this building, now called ‘The Mozart Hof’, located on Renngasse. A plaque on the façade reveals this information. The building still exists, and looks exactly as it did in Mozart’s last summer. In more recent photographs, it appears that six rooftop dormers have been added**

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**Memorial plaque on the front of the Mozart Hof. It reads: “In this house W. A. Mozart created, in the year 1791, the immortal “Ave Verum.” Erected by the Men’s Choir Association of Baden 1885.”**

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Photographer: FASROD 1 March 2021 CC BY-SA 4.0

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Gedenktafel\\_Mozart\\_Hof\\_in\\_Baden.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Gedenktafel_Mozart_Hof_in_Baden.jpg)

Whenever I visited Vienna, I always spent many hours in Baden bei Wien, wandering the old streets, sitting in the shaded, leafy Kurpark [Health Park], and visiting Renngasse. A tram-train, the Badner Bahn, runs constantly between Vienna and Baden. I wanted to experience Baden as Constanze Mozart might have.

The last time I was there, in 2010, I had an uncanny experience.

I sat on a curb near the Mozart Hof; it was a warm, cloudy summer day. A breeze sprang up, and it almost felt as if rain was imminent. The lush summer foliage exuded an aura of the 18th century; I could imagine the vision of Mozart, driving out in a small coach, to visit. I listened for horse hooves clip-clopping down the dirt road (though the roads are now paved).



However, as I sat for a long time, sensing the presence of a time long ago, not a soul walked by. A strange sort of sadness or despondence, settled on me, growing stronger by the minute. Finally, I had to get up and walk away, so disturbing was the sense of something inexpressible that had fallen upon me. Was it some sort of presentiment, from the past?



**The little house in the garden of Renngasse, where Mozart composed in the small attic room with the double shutters, middle building. This drawing is done from an old photograph by F. Schiller, photographer, Baden**



**A street view of Pfarrgasse, in Baden bei Wien. It is essentially unchanged since Constanze Mozart walked there, except for the modern shop fronts and streetlights of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. St. Stephan's steeple is seen to the left, rising above the town buildings**

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Photographer: Felix Hase, 7 April 2009

By Felix Hase - Own work, Public Domain, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=6451698>,  
9 April 2009

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Baden\\_bei\\_Wien\\_Pfarrgasse.JPG#/media/File:Baden\\_bei\\_Wien\\_Pfargasse.JPG](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Baden_bei_Wien_Pfarrgasse.JPG#/media/File:Baden_bei_Wien_Pfargasse.JPG)

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**Baden bei Wien, burning in the fire that nearly decimated the town in 1812. Water is being gathered from the Muhlbach – the Millstream**

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Author: Unknown

Source: Eigenscan aus Matthias Boeckl: Das Frauenbad in Baden, Badem 2009

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Baden,\\_Der\\_gro%C3%9Fe\\_Brand,\\_26071812\\_red.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Baden,_Der_gro%C3%9Fe_Brand,_26071812_red.jpg)

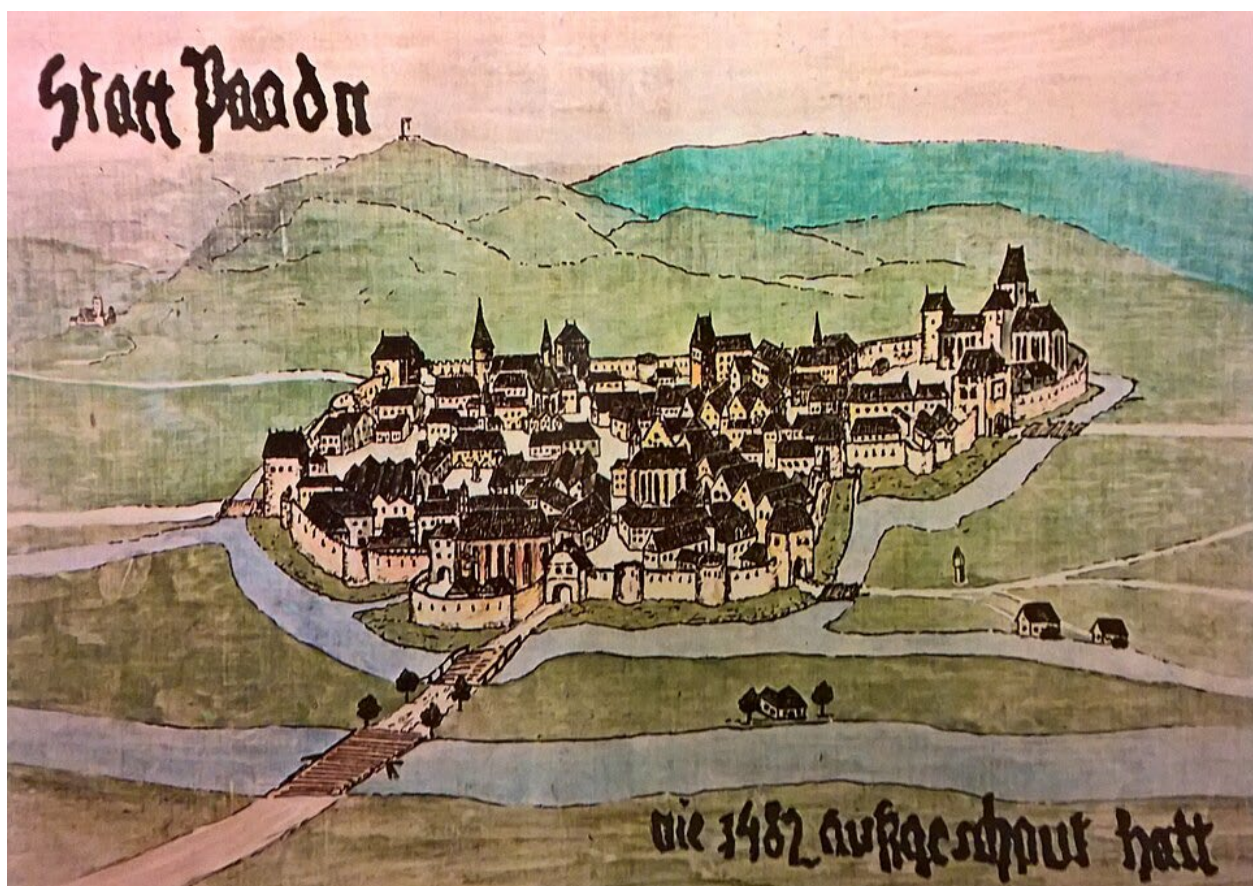
A few words on Baden bei Wien's history. This old city's genesis came alive during the days of the Romans, who called it *Aquae Cetiae* [Water City] or *Thermae Pannonicae* [Pannonian Baths].

Pannonia was a province of the old Roman Empire, bordered on the north and east by the Danube; on the south by upper Moesia and Dalmatia, and on the west by upper Italy. The lands included Hungary, eastern Austria, western Slovenia, northern Croatia, and northern Bosnia and Herzegovina.

In the early Iron Age, 1200 – 550 B.C., Illyrian tribes, called the Pannonians or Pannonii, dwelled in these lands.<sup>2</sup>

The ruins of an ancient castle, called Rauhenstein – Rough Stone, are still visible, and visitable, high atop the Helenental mountain.

Founded in prehistoric times, Baden bei Wien was a Roman watering place, or aquae, and was recorded in 869 as the hub of a Frankish imperial palace. Chartered in 1480, the Turks invaded and destroyed the town in 1529 and 1683.



**An old painting of Baden bei Wien from the year 1482, from a contemporary illustration**

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Uploaded by SAE1962 on 8 February 2016  
[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:1482\\_Statt\\_Paadn.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:1482_Statt_Paadn.jpg)



In AD 869, a settlement had formed in the area. The abbey of Heiligenkreuz church, of Romanesque style, was erected in the 11<sup>th</sup> century. Two castles, Rauhenstein and Rauheneck were built on the right bank of the river, the Schwechat, on opposite sides.



**One of two medieval castles on either sides of the Schwechat River; this one is called Rauheneck – Rough Corner**

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“Northwest view of the castle ruins of Rauheneck in Baden”

Photographer: © C.Stadler/Bwag; CC-BY-SA-4.0 22 July 2022

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Baden\\_-\\_Burgruine\\_Rauheneck\\_\(d\).JPG](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Baden_-_Burgruine_Rauheneck_(d).JPG)

The town received legal rights in 1480. It was repeatedly attacked by the Turks and Hungarians, but it sprang back, strong and vital, after each invasion. In time, Baden bei Wien became a thriving town, whose old Roman baths were visited by all who sought cures, or just to luxuriate in the warm, reviving mineral waters.

The former *Bürgerspital*, or hospital, was erected in 1542, and still stands today, although no longer as a hospital. It is owned by Stadt Baden and is a historical preservation building.



**The old Bürgerspital [city hospital] on Heiligenkreuzergasse, circa 1880-1910. The street would have looked exactly like this when Mozart and Constanze visited the town**

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Bürgerspital in Baden around 1910, from an old postcard

Uploaded by Ferry Paur on 21 July 2020

<https://itoldya420.getarchive.net/media/burgerspital-in-baden-um-1910-a2b75f>

Empress Maria Theresia took a special interest in Baden bei Wien's hospital; in 1746, she granted residence to twelve needy persons; six men and six women, to receive "housing, care, food, drink and clothing." She also gave to the hospital "a chapel dedicated to St. Anne, a mill with three gears, a brewery and a garden, all of which are subject to service to the Heiligenkreuz Monastery."<sup>3</sup>



After the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the hospital was converted into a residential building. The town hospital was moved to Neustiftgasse.

In 1812, unfortunately, the town was almost destroyed in a fire, but the town was rebuilt in a Biedermeier style; it was at time referred to as the *Biedermeierstadt*. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Baden bei Wien was connected to the railway between Vienna and Graz.



**An old statue of Johannes Nepomuk, a Christian martyr drowned in the Vltava River in the 14<sup>th</sup> century. He stands over an open, fenced portion of the Mühlbach in Baden bei Wien – the old Millstream. The Vlatava River is the Moldau, in the Czech Republic. The statue is from the first half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, and this is a scene of the Wassergasse in the town**

Wikimedia Commons.org  
Photographer: GuentherZ, 26 March 2011

[https://de.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Datei:GuentherZ\\_2011-03-26\\_0022\\_Baden\\_Wassergasse14\\_Statue\\_Johannes\\_Nepomuk.jpg](https://de.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Datei:GuentherZ_2011-03-26_0022_Baden_Wassergasse14_Statue_Johannes_Nepomuk.jpg)

The popularity of the baths effectuated the spa town's economic rise, as thousands flocked from Vienna and nearby environs, to take the old Roman baths, including members of the Imperial families, who owned residences and villas in the town. In 1920, the Sauerhof became the first independent spa hotel in all of Europe.



**Grand Hotel Sauerhof in Baden bei Wien. Originally, it was a medieval complex. Its springs feed into the thermal mineral baths in Baden**

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Photographer: Geolina163, 3 June 2018  
[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Grand\\_Hotel\\_Sauerhof\\_Baden.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Grand_Hotel_Sauerhof_Baden.jpg)

Ludwig Beethoven resided in Baden bei Wien; today, his apartment on 10 Rathausgasse is a museum, where visitors can experience the rooms that the composer lived in.





**Another street in Baden bei Wien; the end building, a bright orange color, features the *Beethoven Haus*, on Rathausgasse 10, where Beethoven stayed in the summers of 1821, 1822 and 1823, composing parts of the 9<sup>th</sup> Symphony. Today, a visitor can see the rooms where Beethoven lived and worked; it is a museum**

ID 169331666 | Baden Bei Wien © Kateryna Mashkevych | Dreamstime.com

The Mayerling Hunting Lodge, located up on a valley, was the site of Crown Prince Rudolf's tragic murder-suicide in 1889. Rudolf, 30 years old and married, had fallen in love with the beautiful 17-year-old Baroness Mary Vetsera. The doomed lovers' bodies were discovered at the hunting lodge.

The Congress Casino Baden was rebuilt from an older structure in the period from 1884 to 1886, a project of two architects, Eugen Fassbender and Maximilian Katscher. A "cultural jewel," the exquisite Art Nouveau-style ceiling painting of

“Igea” [Hygieia], created in 1886 by Professor Hans Zatzka, is located in the large party room of the Casino. (Hygieia is the Greek goddess of health; and the daughter of the god of medicine, Asclepius.) Zatzka’s artwork very closely resembles the style of Alphonse Mucha, the Czech painter and illustrator.

Other features in the Casino were added, such as fountains, some which are illuminated or have other special effects, such as the Urquell fountain in the restaurant hall, which is made from 932 pieces of glass.

In 1934, the Casino was inaugurated as the first gambling house which was open year round in Austria, which made the town a first-class resort throughout the country – and Europe.

During WWII, Baden bei Wien escaped bombings, but the Casino later housed the headquarters of Soviet forces within occupied Austria until 1955. All gaming had ceased during WWII, but after 1955, the Casino operated again, with the departure of the Russians.

In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Baden’s principal export was steel razors, renowned for their excellent quality. The Emperor Francis Joseph I visited the spa town every summer, as did Franz Schubert and Johann Strauss, the Waltz King.

Today, Baden bei Wien features 15 hot springs, from 72 to 97 degrees Fahrenheit. The waters contain mineral salts: calcium carbonate, calcium chloride, and magnesium sulphate. The springs come by run-off of the Northern Limestone Alps, and tectonic fissures in the Vienna Basin.<sup>4</sup>





**The Rathaus, 1 Hauptplatz, the government seat in Baden bei Wien. It stands in the town center, with the medieval *Pestsäule* in front of it. The former Rathaus, on this place, was burned down in the 1812 fire. This current building was erected from 1893-1895. It is done in the Classical style, and exudes an 18<sup>th</sup> century charm**

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Photographer: © C.Stadler/Bwag; CC-BY-SA-4.0, 27 June 2018

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Baden\\_bei\\_Wien\\_-\\_Rathaus\\_\(1\).JPG](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Baden_bei_Wien_-_Rathaus_(1).JPG)



**Theaterplatz in Baden, with the impressive town theater in the background**

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Photographer: Karl Gruber, 14 March 2009  
[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Stadttheater\\_Baden.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Stadttheater_Baden.jpg)





**Theaterplatz, featuring the Lyre-player statue, by Rudolf Zöllner,  
and the Erato Fountain, by Josef Kassin**

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Photographer: Txllxt TxllxT 9 October 2010

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A splendid Rosarium, which was originally part of an orangerie, still exists in Doblhof Park, dating back to the 15<sup>th</sup> century, and boasting of 30,000 rose bushes, with over 800 rose varieties. The Doblhof Park once belonged to the Schloss Doblhoff, after its last owners. Many of the roses have specific names, such as “Gold Marie” and “Empress Elisabeth.”

We can envision Constanze, walking through the Rosarium early on a summer day, glancing nervously around, before gathering a small bouquet of the prettiest roses, to take to her apartment.



**The Rosarium in Doblhof Park, featuring thousands of different varieties of roses**

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“Schlossparterre in the Rosarium Baden” CC-BY-SA-3.0

Photographer: Anna reg, 6 June 2014

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### **Leafy walkways in Doblhof Park**

De.m.wikipedia.org

Photographer: Henry Kellner, 22 August 2017      CC BY-SA-4.0

[https://de.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Datei:Doblhoffpark\\_Baden\\_DSC\\_9315.jpg](https://de.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Datei:Doblhoffpark_Baden_DSC_9315.jpg)

In this park, a large skating rink once stood, mid-19<sup>th</sup> century. The sport of curling was played, and blocks of ice were cut and stored, to be used in chilled drinks in summer. There once was a magnificent merry-go-round, with shooting galleries, a marionette theater with a Punch and Judy show, and a hippodrome with a large slide. Here, in the park, was the first open-air cinema theater in Austria.

Today, the Doblhof Park is serenely quiet, with a café along the water; many trees send shade for a cool walk. In 1966, the property changed hands to the municipality of Baden. Beautiful fountains abound, with walking paths and a playground for children.



**Verdant nature walks will take brave hikers up the Helenental mountain to this 12<sup>th</sup> century castle called Rauhenstein – Rough Stone. Another castle, Rauhenneck, stood on the other side of the Schwechat River**

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Photographer: C. Stadler Bwag, 21 April 2022

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**One of the two medieval castles that stand across from each other on the Schwechat River; this one is called Rauhenneck, or Rough Corner. It was built in the first half of the 13<sup>th</sup> century**

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# CONSTANZE MOZART'S SOJOURN IN OLD BADEN BEI WIEN

## PART II

H. S. Brockmeyer



Baden bei Wien as Constanze and Mozart would have experienced it. The *Pestsäule*, the *Dreifaltigkeitssäule* – The Holy Trinity column -- is at center – the 3-cornered, ornate column with religious figures, which was believed to protect from the plague in medieval times. Circa 1833



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Artist: Eduard Gurk, “Das Kaiserhaus in Baden bei Wien,” 1833    watercolor

Contributor: Mefusbren69, 1 May 2010

Location: The Albertina, in Vienna

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Eduard\\_Gurk\\_-\\_Das\\_Kaiserhaus\\_in\\_Baden\\_bei\\_Wien\\_-\\_1833.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Eduard_Gurk_-_Das_Kaiserhaus_in_Baden_bei_Wien_-_1833.jpg)



**Baden bei Wien today. This scene would greet Constanze on her walk to the baths**

Shutterstock.com

When Constanze and Mozart stayed in Baden bei Wien, they would saunter downtown, perhaps, for coffee, lunch, or dinner. There they would pass by the medieval *Pestsäule*, the *Dreifältigkeitsäule* – the three-cornered plague column. Many medieval cities erected these



religious-themed columns, to ward off the plague. In Vienna, on the Graben, the old *Pestsäule* can still be seen. The city keeps it immaculately clean.



**The medieval *Pestsäule* in Vienna, on the Graben. One of the Mozarts' first apartments was in the Trattnerhof; this massive building was located almost directly to the right of the column**

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Plague Column, Vienna

Photographer: Yair Haklai, 27 March 2010

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Plague\\_Column,\\_Vienna-Wiener\\_Pests%C3%A4ule-3.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Plague_Column,_Vienna-Wiener_Pests%C3%A4ule-3.jpg)



**The old *Pfarrkirche* (parish church), St. Stephan, in Baden bei Wien, where Constanze attended mass and spent time with Franz Xaver Süssmayr, Mozart's copyist. Mozart's friend, the choir director Anton Stoll, worked at this church, where Mozart's motet, the *Ave verum corpus*, was first performed on 22 June 1791**

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**Interior view of the Parish Church of St. Stephan's in Baden bei Wien. The church building was begun in 1400, with the nave added in the Gothic style, in the second half of the 15<sup>th</sup> century; the *Zwiebelturm* – the onion-shaped steeple -- was erected in 1697**

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**The exquisite Hencke Organ at St. Stephan's Church, built in 1744 by Johann Hencke, originally destined for Dorotheerkirche in Vienna. The exquisite gold angel woodwork was created by the Viennese builder Ignaz Gunst. The organ was restored in 1987 by Gerhard Hradetsky, re-using keys which Mozart and Beethoven had performed upon. The pipes stand on both sides; the organ features 28 stops, two manuals, and the pedal**

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[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Baden\\_-\\_Kirche\\_St.\\_Stephan,\\_Orgel.JPG](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Baden_-_Kirche_St._Stephan,_Orgel.JPG)



**Entrance to the old Bürgerspital. The former town's former hospital**

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Bürgerspital on 4 Heiligenkreuzergasse in Baden

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[https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/B%C3%BCrgerspital\\_Baden\\_bei\\_Wien#/media/Datei:B%C3%BCrgerspital,\\_Baden\\_bei\\_Wien\\_\(6\).jpg](https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/B%C3%BCrgerspital_Baden_bei_Wien#/media/Datei:B%C3%BCrgerspital,_Baden_bei_Wien_(6).jpg)



**The old Bürgerspital on Heiligenkreuzergasse today. The street has been beautifully preserved. This 16<sup>th</sup> century-old hospital and nursing home operated until the 19<sup>th</sup> century**

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 Photographer: Wolfgang Glock, 22 August 2010  
[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Baden\\_bei\\_Wien\\_B%C3%BCrgerspital.JPG](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Baden_bei_Wien_B%C3%BCrgerspital.JPG)

In 1791, Mozart's last year, Constanze heads back out to the spa town in June. Mozart struggled with mounting financial debts in his last year, evidenced by his begging letters to Freemason Brother and textile and wine merchant, Michael Puchberg. In all, he loaned around 1400 florins to Mozart; later, Constanze would pay him back. (Sadly Puchberg would die in poverty in 1823.)

Certainly, had Constanze received information about Puchberg's state of affairs, she could have helped him out substantially. But in or around 1823, she and Georg Nissen moved from Copenhagen to Salzburg, where she would be distanced from friends of her and Mozart's past.



In that last year of her first husband's life, Constanze was pregnant with her sixth baby. She spent much time in Baden bei Wien with Mozart's copyist, Franz Xaver Süssmayr, which has been seen by some scholars as suspicious.

After the 26 July birth of the boy, Franz Xaver Wolfgang Mozart, (who had Mozart's deformed left ear, for those questioning the boy's paternity), Constanze returned to the spa town. Mozart's sad letters, longing for her, tug at the heart:

From 11 June 1791:

I must hurry, as it is already a quarter to seven — and the coach leaves at seven. When you are bathing, do take care not to slip and never stay in alone. If I were you I should occasionally omit a day in order not to do the cure too violently. I trust that someone slept with you last night. I cannot tell you what I would not give to be with you at Baden instead of being stuck here. From sheer boredom I composed to-day an aria for my opera. I got up as early at half past four. Wonderful to relate, I have got back my watch — but — as I have no key, I have unfortunately not been able to wind it. What a nuisance! Schlumbla! That is a word to ponder on. Well, I wound our big clock instead. Adieu — my love! I am lunching to-day with Puchberg. I kiss you a thousand times and say with you in thought: 'Death and despair were his reward!' [A reference to an aria in the *Magic Flute*.]

12 June 1791:

Dearest, most beloved little Wife!

Now why did I not get a letter from you last night? So that you might keep me even longer in anxiety about your baths? This and something else spoilt the whole of yesterday for me.

25 June 1791:

P.S. — Perhaps after all it would be well to give Karl a little rhubarb. Why did you not send me that long letter? Here is a letter for him — I should like to have an answer. Catch — Catch bis — bis — bs — bs — kisses are flying about for you — bs — why, another one is staggering after the rest!

I have this moment received your second letter. Beware of the baths! And do sleep more — and not so irregularly, or I shall worry — I am a little anxious as it is.

2 July 1791:

I trust that you are very well. I have just remembered that you have very seldom been upset during pregnancy. Perhaps the baths are having a too laxative effect? I should not wait for certain

proofs, which would be too unpleasant. My advice is that you should stop them now! Then I should feel quite easy in my mind. To-day is the day when you are not supposed to take one and yet I wager that that little wife of mine has been to the baths? *Seriously* — I had much rather you would prolong your cure well into the autumn. I hope that you got my first little note.

5 July 1791

Do not be melancholy, I beg you! I hope you received the money. It is surely better for your foot that you should stay on at Baden, for there you can go out more easily. I hope to hold you in my arms on Saturday, perhaps sooner. As soon as my business here is over, I shall be with you, for I mean to take a long rest in your arms; and indeed I shall need it, for this mental worry and anxiety and all the running about connected with it is really exhausting me.

A strange picture appears on this letter. We wonder what Constanze must have thought of it. Mozart seems to believe that he is being followed or attacked:



**The actual drawing that appeared in Mozart's 5 July letter, drawn by Mozart**

This image appears in the Danish Journal *Literatur Og Kritik* [Literature and Criticism], edited by C. Riis-Knudsen, 1890. It was discovered by librarian Laura Søvsø Thomasen at the Royal Danish Library in 2024

7 July 1791

My one wish now is that my affairs should be settled, so that I can be with you again. You cannot imagine how I have been aching for you all this long while. I can't describe what I have been feeling — a kind of emptiness, which hurts me dreadfully — a kind of longing, which is never satisfied, which never ceases, and which persists, nay rather increases daily. When I think how merry we were together at Baden — like children — and what sad, weary hours I am spending here! Even my work gives me no pleasure, because I am accustomed to stop working now and then and exchange a few words with you. Alas! this pleasure is no longer possible. If I go to the piano and sing something out of my opera, I have to stop at once, for this stirs my emotions too deeply. Basta! The very hour after I finish this business I shall be off and away from here.

On 12 July, Mozart writes to Anton Stoll, asking for a mass in B-sharp, and Michael Haydn's *Graduale*, Pax vobis, as the composer needed some church music. He had applied to the city council for a position as unpaid assistant to Kapellmeister Leopold Hofmann at St. Stephen's Cathedral in Vienna, and had received a letter on 9 May that his petition would be accepted. He pens a humorous poem for Stoll:

Stoll, my dear,  
You're a little bit queer  
And an ass, I fear.  
You've been swilling some beer!  
The minor, I hear,  
Is what tickles your ear!

Clearly, Mozart misses his dear wife out in Baden, where the gentle breezes from the Helenental mountain swept coolly through the spa town, and the scent of freshly cut hay from nearby farms exuded a wholesome ambience to all corners.

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On a delightfully sunny summer morning in 1791, Constanze Mozart woke up. Stretching lazily in her comfortable bed in the Renngasse apartment, she washed her face and mouth, as usual, and walked into town. Carrying her folded white cotton bathing gown, she stopped for a quick cup of coffee, to energize her day.

Finding a café that had opened early, she sat at an outside table. Very few people milled around, and she was grateful for the quiet of the splendid morning, where the sunlight was so bright on the buildings, that it was the vivid yellow color of fresh egg yolks. In the distance, two dogs played in the dusty street, yapping at each other.

In July 1791, Constanze was nine months pregnant with her last child. He would be their sixth baby, a boy, born on 26 July. She felt her large, round belly, and suddenly wanted a cold beer. She always craved beer during her pregnancies; back home, Mozart would arrange for the wine merchant, Michael Puchberg, to deliver several bottles. Perhaps, she would stop in the town for a cold brew later.

Morning breezes teased her black curls. She began to plan her day, as she sipped on the delicious, hot coffee, sweetened by a few teaspoons of sugar. She would take the bath; then, a long walk through the fields, to investigate the old ruins of the castle high atop the Helenental.



She would gather a bouquet of pungent wildflowers to bring back to her apartment: the long-stemmed, fuchsia-petaled *Alpine Dactylorhiza*, similar to wild orchids; the bright pink *Dictamnus*, with a scent of a mixture of vanilla and lemon. The white and yellow *Waldvögelein*, nodding on long stalks, would be gathered, and perhaps some stunning Trumpet Gentian, vivid blue flowers resembling small morning glories, with a white piston, bewitching in the grass.

Constanze would nap under a tree in the woods, and walk back to town for a delicious lunch. Today, she would enjoy a cool beer at a nearby café. Then, to her apartment on Renngasse, to write to Wolfgang about her lovely day; she would add some pressed wildflowers to her letter.

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On the following day, early in the morning, walking down the dusty streets to the *Frauenbad* at the *Carolinenbad*, Constanze entered the women's bathhouse. She hoped that no other ladies would be there, as she liked to duck under the cool water, and wet her face and hair. The pungent odor of sulphur clung to the air; it would take some getting used to. She could smell it on her clothing in the apartment.

Today, a few of her new friends, women of Baden bei Wien, waved to her from the long, rectangular pool. It was a little dark in the room; high near the ceiling, long, thin glass windows allowed sparse sunlight into the room. She could glimpse dust particles floating slowly through the shafts of airy sunlight.

Constanze went to a changing room. Removing her clothing, she donned the light, white cotton bathing gown. She loved the weightlessness of the dress in the water; and sometimes she would sleep in the dry dress, on a hot summer night.

On shelves lining the walls were the piles of towels, white and freshly laundered, smelling of washing soap. They were a little rough, but it felt so good to rub her body down with them, making her complexion glow. When she was ready, she began to step down into the basin. The water was a little cool, at first; then, it became comfortable.

Soon, she was surrounded by laughing women, all gossiping about their families, husbands, and children. Some of the ladies stared at her, when they found out that

she was the wife of Mozart. But they welcomed her into their group, and they gossiped and teased each other, like a bevy of farmers' wives.

As she walked back to her apartment in the late afternoon sunlight, whose embrace had warmed the earth, the dusty streets, and every building in the town, Constanze reflected upon how lucky she was to be here – a paradise on earth.

Soon, she would meet Mozart's copyist, Franz Süssmayr, at a café in town, where they would share dinner, perhaps a beer or two, and conversation about what her husband was up to, in Vienna.

And then, walking under the summer stars, which glimmered like diamonds in the cerulean night sky, she would return to her apartment on Renngasse, wash her face and mouth, as always; and settle so contentedly between the soft, cool cotton sheets upon her little bed, falling asleep almost as soon as her head hit the pillow. The room smelled of the hay fields, and the warm blossoms from her large bouquet, in a vase nearby, exuded an ethereal floral perfume, that hovered in the air like a gossamer mist.

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**A view of Theresiengasse, circa 1907, in downtown Baden bei Wien. The street is essentially unchanged since 1791, when Constanze and Süßmayr strolled there on a summer's day. This is from an old postcard; the Austrian stamp is pasted in the middle. The electric lights on the right on the shops and frontal glass windows, would be the only change from the street appearance in the 18 century. This image is from an old postcard**

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Photo: from an old postcard of 1907





**Women in the Baden bei Wien *Carolinen Frauenbad* – the women’s bathhouse, soaking in the health-giving old Roman mineral springs. Constanze would continue to take the baths for the rest of her life, in other countries; she wrote about them in her diary. As an elderly woman, she is still taking the baths in Salzburg, her final residence**

Badeszene aus dem Frauenbad-Becken, 1940  
Illustration © & Foto Stadtarchiv Baden



**The elaborate Congress Casino in Baden bei Wien attracts thousands yearly. A flower clock that runs, made entirely of flowers, is partly visible to the right. In Mozart's time, he writes to his wife that when he comes to visit her, they will go to the Casino. Apparently, there was a former casino on this site, where the old Trinkhalle once stood**

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Photographer: C. Stadler/Bwag, © C.Stadler/Bwag; CC-BY-SA-4.0

Created: 27 June 2018



**Another view of the beautiful Casino Congress**

Wikimedia Commons.org

Photographer: C. Stadler/Bwag, © C.Stadler/Bwag; CC-BY-SA-4.0

Created: 27 June 2018





**The Mozart Temple, erected many years after Mozart no longer visited Baden bei Wien**

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Photographer: Anna Saini, 9 September 2018

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Badner\\_Kurpark,\\_Mozarttempel,\\_Bild\\_1.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Badner_Kurpark,_Mozarttempel,_Bild_1.jpg)



**The Beethoven Temple in Baden bei Wien. You can sit inside the small open room on a hot summer day. The little niche is excellent for star-gazing on a clear night**

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Photographer: Txllxt Txllxt, 9 October 2010

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Baden\\_bei\\_Wien\\_-\\_Kurpark\\_-\\_Stadtpark\\_-\\_View\\_NNW\\_on\\_Bethoven\\_Temple\\_1925-27\\_by\\_Wilhelm\\_Luksch\\_II.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Baden_bei_Wien_-_Kurpark_-_Stadtpark_-_View_NNW_on_Bethoven_Temple_1925-27_by_Wilhelm_Luksch_II.jpg)





**The exquisite inner room of the Beethoven temple. Notice the marvelous painting on the ceiling, and the tiled floor, in a Romanesque style**

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Photographer: Txllxt Txllxt, 9 October 2010

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Baden\\_bei\\_Wien\\_-\\_Kurpark\\_-\\_Stadtpark\\_-\\_View\\_West\\_into\\_the\\_Bethoven\\_Temple\\_1925-27\\_by\\_Wilhelm\\_Luksch.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Baden_bei_Wien_-_Kurpark_-_Stadtpark_-_View_West_into_the_Bethoven_Temple_1925-27_by_Wilhelm_Luksch.jpg)





**The entrance to the lush Kurpark in Baden bei Wien, with benches and lots of shade. More beautiful walkways await visitors**

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Photographer: Acp-commonswiki, 6 August 2005  
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=255973>





**Antonsgasse in Baden bei Wien, circa 1910. It would like almost exactly like this to Constanze and Mozart, except for the electric lights on the buildings, and the large glass storefront windows**

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Photographer: Unknown, from an old postcard  
[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Baden\\_bei\\_Wien,\\_Antonsgasse.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Baden_bei_Wien,_Antonsgasse.jpg)>



**The old *Trinkhalle*, where the Casino in Mozart's time was likely located. This is an earlier drawing of the Congress Casino, before renovations, in an earlier time**

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Creator: © & Foto Stadtarchiv Baden | Credit: © & Foto Stadtarchiv Baden

I could offer an idyllic ending to this article, where Constanze returns home to their apartment in Vienna, at 970 Rauhensteingasse, leaving beautiful Baden, as the autumn turns biting cold, and summer evaporates into blissful memories and dreamy reveries. She resumes her life with Mozart and the two boys.

I could end these pages with, “And they all lived happily ever after” – though, in a skewed way, they didn't, because, after all, Mozart died in early December, leaving a destitute widow, and two boys without their father.

But I am not a writer who tip-toes past the boogeyman.

Mozart's last letter on 14 October 1791 to Constanze presents an enigma. He writes an odd comment. Some scholars question whether this letter is authentic, but I believe that the letter is authentic; it mirrors Mozart's actual life events at this



time. And, his very last comment in this letter, is a key in the lock that will open a door.

Mozart was active in enrolling his son, Karl, into a Piarist school in Perchtoldsdorf, about half an hour's coach ride outside of Vienna. His brother-in-law, Franz Hofer, goes with him, as he writes to his wife in his last letter of 14 October. He drives out to pick up his son, and will then go on to Baden bei Wien, to bring his wife home -- although it sounds as if Mozart is not sure if she is coming back with him to Vienna:

So to-morrow, Saturday, I shall drive out with Karl to see you. You can keep him, or I shall take him back to Heeger's [the headmaster of the school at Perchtoldsdorf] after lunch. Think it over. A month can hardly do him much harm.

From the letter, he writes that his servant, Primus [Joseph Deiner] is fetching him meals from the nearby Bürgerspital – a hospital, which likely sold meals to the general public. Mozart remarks that he was happiest composing at home, where his fortepiano and music score paper were readily at hand.

The mystery in Mozart's letter is that his wife has stopped writing to him. We can hear his hurt:

Yesterday the whole day was taken up with that trip to Perchtoldsdorf, so I could not write to you. But that you have not written to me for two days is really unforgivable. I hope that I shall certainly have a letter from you to-day, and that tomorrow I shall talk to you and embrace you with all my heart.

Farewell. Ever your

Mozart

His next, last extant comment may be a significant clue as to why his wife has seemed to forget to write to him for two days. He concludes:

“I kiss Sophie a thousand times.” (We can almost hear Mozart choke back a sob.)

“Do what you like with N. N. Adieu.”

What a strange comment; what could it mean? N. N. is Latin for *Nomen Nescio* – Name Unknown. An investigation will provide an answer.

Later, Constanze crossed out many names in Mozart's letters. In Hildesheimer's book, *Mozart*, he informs that Ludwig Schiedermair discovered a special

photographic technique, so that he was able to expose those names crossed out in ink, with N. N. written over them. Only with the names crossed out heavily and repeatedly, Schiedermaier was not able to unveil their secrets.<sup>5</sup>

Hildesheimer comments:

N. N. *Nomen Nescio* (name unknown) or *Notetur Nomen* (let the name be noted)...this abbreviation is found strewn throughout Mozart's letters to Constanze during the last years. Besides Süßmayr, the main figure, we can also identify a creditor, a suspicious individual, and a chance acquaintance.

Now and then we find two N. N.s in one line, each a different one, as is clear from the contents. Thus, we do not know who entered into a new financial deal with Mozart when Puchberg came up with too little; we do not know whose attentions Mozart is warning his wife against, or who it was who had a "taste" for her. "N. N. (you know whom I mean) is a cad."

Who might that be? "In my opinion you are too free and easy with N.N...and it was the same with N. N. when he was still at Baden. Now please remember that N. N. is not half so familiar with other women...as they are with you." Who are these two? Could Constanze keep them straight? Did she know at once who was meant?

In any event, for both of them the name Süßmayr was taboo.<sup>6</sup>

Following the clues, it is clear that Mozart suspected that his wife and his copyist, safely away from Vienna, in Baden bei Wien, were possibly more than just friends.

Was there a crack in paradise?

The name that appeared to be crossed out the most, was that of Mozart's copyist, Franz Xaver Süßmayr, who had spent much of that last summer out in Baden bei Wien, with the composer's pregnant wife. Scholars have posited that Mozart asked his copyist to accompany his wife to the spa town, and watch over her. Daniel N. Leeson theorizes that Süßmayr was homosexual; thus, Mozart felt safe entrusting his wife to him. Facts, however, speak otherwise.

After Constanze gave birth on 26 July, she, Mozart, and Süßmayr left Vienna in mid-August, to travel together to the coronation ceremonies in Prague for Leopold II, to be crowned as King of Bohemia. (Leopold had three coronations; in 1790, in Frankfurt am Main, as Holy Roman Emperor; as King of Hungary, in Pressburg, also in 1790, and then in 1791, as King of Bohemia.)

Mozart had been commissioned to compose an opera, *Clemenza di Tito* for the prestigious event. The Prague impresario, Domenico Guardasoni, wanted Salieri as first choice, but he was busy in Vienna with various musical activities. Salieri, however, did attend the coronation ceremonies.

Guardasoni had witnessed Mozart's work on *Don Giovanni*, performed in Prague on 29 October in 1787, and assigned him the commission; he needed the libretto "to be set to music by a distinguished maestro."<sup>7</sup>

Franz Süssmayr came along, to help with the recitatives and other copying work. Constanze, now feeling light and carefree after the birth, wanted to partake in the exciting social activities: balls, concerts, fireworks, and other coronation events.

After their return home to Vienna in mid-September, Mozart had to attend rehearsals for *The Magic Flute* opera, which premiered on 30 September. Meanwhile, Constanze immediately headed back to Baden bei Wien, where she remained until 14 October, when Mozart would drive out in a coach to pick her up – if she wanted to go.

At the *Magic Flute* premiere, Süssmayr sat next to Mozart at the clavier, on his right, turning the score pages. Mozart's comment to his wife in his letter of 8-9 October, reveals that she has not bothered to come back to Vienna to watch his opera:

By the way, you have no idea how charming the music sounds when you hear it from a box close to the orchestra – it sounds much better than from the gallery. As soon as you return – you must try this for yourself.

Mozart, usually a gentle man, had been becoming more and more violent toward his copyist, Franz Süssmayr. His letter of 7-8 October spills out with unbridled animosity:

For only the desire to see you in good health made me urge you to go to Baden. I already feel lonely without you. I knew that I should...If I had had nothing to do, I should have gone off at once to spend the week with you; but I have *no facilities for working at Baden*, and I am anxious, as far as possible, to avoid all risk of *money difficulties*.

For the most pleasant thing of all is to have a mind at peace. To achieve this, however, one must work hard; and I like hard work. Give Süssmayr a few sound boxes on the ear from me, and I ask Sophie H. [Haibl], whom I kiss a thousand times, to give him a couple too. For Heaven's sake do not let him starve in this respect.



The last thing in the world I could wish would be his reproach that you had not treated or looked after him properly. Rather give him too many blows than too few. It would be a good thing if you were to leave a bump on his nose, or knock out an eye, or inflict some other visible injury, so that the fellow may never be able to deny that he has got something from you.

These are not the requests from a friend who is just jesting, as scholars posit, always teeming to keep Mozart and his affairs in a positive light. These are the comments of a man who is hurt, and wants to hurt back. His demands for violence do not reflect the real man; they emit a dour, passive-aggressive behavior. We must ask, why?

Hildesheimer warns:

...Mozart writes: "Do what you like with N. N. Adieu." Does that mean "I don't care"?

We do not want to become attorneys in a *chronique scandaleuse*. As far as Constanze is concerned, the puzzle is unimportant and trivial. But we would like to know more about Mozart's stolid tolerance of what he must at least have suspected, more about the reasons for his remaining tolerant under all circumstances. And for his suffering that which pained him.<sup>8</sup>

Constanze didn't realize that she would have only fifty-two more days from 14 October, with her husband; basically, about a month and a half, before Mozart was gone. Perhaps the saying, "hindsight is foresight" would have stood the woman in better stead.

As the cold weather crumpled and killed the once-vibrant summer foliage in Baden bei Wien, and the branches of the living trees and bushes turned dead and black, these transformations would become symbolic for the upcoming events in Constanze's life.

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Sophie Haibl wrote in her 7 April 1825 letter to Georg Nissen from her home in Đakovo, Slovenia, her memories of the Sunday of 4 December, just hours before Mozart's death; he asked her for details of that day for his biography of the composer. She had run to Constanze's apartment on 970 Rauhensteingasse on that evening, to see how Mozart was doing:

Sissmaier [Süssmayr] was there at M's [Mozart's] bedside; and the well-known Requiem lay on the coverlet, and Mozart was explaining to him how he thought he should finish it after his death.<sup>9</sup>

There is no reason to disbelieve Sophie that Franz Süssmayr was present on the last night of Mozart's life. This is a significant detail, after the composer died at five minutes to one o'clock on 5 December, with the copyist, Constanze, and Sophie Haibl in the room. Sometime on that bleak, gray morning, Süssmayr stood up, stretched, threw on his wool cloak and hat, and then abruptly departed entirely from Constanze's life.

Hildesheimer reasons:

It is possible (let us be cautious) that she was having a love affair with Süssmayr. It is also possible that she wanted to marry him after Mozart's death, and that the younger man rejected her.<sup>10</sup>

It's probably that Süssmayr, obtaining a lucrative position in early 1792 as Kapellmeister with the Imperial Court theater – likely with help from his teacher, Antonio Salieri --- the young man, with so many splendid opportunities aglitter before him, did not want to be burdened with a family, and especially, two small children.

He was on his way to a meteoric ascent in Vienna's music hub, and suddenly, he viewed Constanze, four years older than himself, as an undesirable widow. While Mozart was alive, she was an alluring prize; now, with no famous husband blowing glitter on her, she was just a woman, no longer young and nubile.

Henry M. Hausner, in his biography, *Franz Xaver Süssmayr*, comments that he found an outburst from Constanze puzzling, when Vincent and Mary Novello visited her in Salzburg in 1829:

It is known that Süssmayr stood by Constanze in her most difficult days, as no one else did. That Constanze accepted his help and also the naturalness of this help, suggests a deep friendship.

Later Constanze played this down. As Vincent and Mary Novello visited Constanze in 1829 in Salzburg, the conversation turned to Süssmayr and [Vincent] Novello characterized him as an "envious and a concealed enemy of Mozart." Constanze did not contradict him.

Constanze confirmed, "that Süssmayr had only a few lessons from Mozart and in truth was the student and friend of Salieri, who was Mozart's bitterest enemy..."<sup>11</sup>

Hausner deduces:

This strange behavior of Constanze does not point to a lack of a relationship between her and Süssmayr; but rather a break between the young people.<sup>12</sup>

This break was later evidenced, in a letter from Constanze to Leipzig music publishers, Breitkopf & Härtel, on 2 June 1802. They were digging for more information on Süßmayr's participation in the *Requiem*. She writes:

And I must tell you that Süßmayr, who apparently wanted to give me Mozart's work and felt somewhat obliged to give only this to me, also gave me the Sanctus, wherein no notes and no words are in Mozart's handwriting. Both points deserve an investigation, but I have long sought him in writing to question him about this last point but in vain, and as I only seldom see him, didn't talk about it.<sup>13</sup>

We somehow get the feeling that a certain discomfiture had settled between Constanze and her once good friend. By 1802, Süßmayr was becoming very ill from tuberculosis, which would carry him away in the autumn of the next year.

Another enigma confronts us, in a letter from Constanze to the Abbé Maximilian Stadler, on 31 May 1827, where she commented:

...that my suggestion to [Joseph] Eybler, to complete [the *Requiem*], came about, because I was just (I don't know why) angry with Süßmayr, and Mozart himself thought much of Eybler, and I thought to myself, that anyone could carry it out, as all the main parts were already set out.<sup>14</sup>

Hildesheimer scoffs at Constanze:

Constanze, then, who remembers so much, most of it unimportant, claims not to remember why, in this critical period of her life, she was angry with Süßmayr. We cannot believe it.<sup>15</sup>

In that fateful summer, so long ago, in Baden bei Wien – a veritable paradise -- she was caught up in tawdry love affair. Perhaps Süßmayr promised her a good life, as the wife of an up-and-coming Kapellmeister, free of the financial chaos she experienced with Mozart.

As the winter exhaled its icy breath, and Mozart was gone. the excitement of a new, prestigious career beckoned. Süßmayr's feelings for Constanze dissipated. He now saw only a thin, tearful widow, with no star power; and he abruptly stood up on the gray, frozen morning of 5 December, and walked out of the death room where Mozart lay, still and cold; never to return.

She realized immediately what a cad he was, as Mozart had warned her, and felt the bite of the bitter betrayal that she had wandered into, with eyes wide open. In the enchantment of the sun-caressed days and moonlit nights, in that summer so long ago, their friendship had deepened.



But as the year winded down, and winter winds swept away the chaff from the wheat, Süßmayr's feelings suddenly changed. He brushed Mozart's wife off, as brusquely as the snow on his black wool cape.

"I was angry with him," Constanze wrote, evermore in remembrance of an irreparable jilt; an inconsolable outcome to that fateful summer in Baden bei Wien; a paradise lost forever.

An aria in Mozart's opera, *Magic Flute*, which Mozart mentions in his letter of 11 June, contains a bit of advice from the composer. This appears in Act Two, the duet with the First and Second Priests:

Beware of womanly wiles:  
this is the brotherhood's first duty!  
Many a wise man has been beguiled,  
has erred and not realized it.  
He has found himself abandoned in the end,  
his faithfulness repaid with scorn!  
In vain he has wrung his hands,  
death and despair were his reward.<sup>16</sup>



**Kaiser-Franz-Ring in Baden bei Wien today; time marches on. St. Stephan's steeple rises high in the distance, a timeless memorial reminding us that the days of old are never truly forgotten**

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Photographer: Dmitry A. Mottl, 24 December 2011

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Baden\\_bei\\_Wien.JPG](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Baden_bei_Wien.JPG)

All references to Mozart's letters are from *The Letters of Mozart & His Family*, ed. Emily Anderson, Vol. III, MacMillan & Co. Ltd., 1938, excepting those from Deutsch and Bauer, *Mozart: Briefe und Aufzeichnungen*, Band IV: 1787 – 1857, cited below:

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<sup>1</sup> *The Letters of Mozart & His Family*, ed. Emily Anderson, Vol. III, Macmillan and Co., Ltd, 1938, L. 595, 1413-1414.

<sup>2</sup> En.wikipedia.org, "Pannonia," <<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pannonia>>.

<sup>3</sup> De.wikipedia.org, "Bürgerspital Baden bei Wien,"  
<[http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/B%C3%BCrgerspital\\_Baden\\_bei\\_Wien#:~:text=Das%20B%C3%BCrgerspital%20in%20Baden%20bei,steht%20unter%20Denkmalschutz%20\(Listeneintrag\)](http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/B%C3%BCrgerspital_Baden_bei_Wien#:~:text=Das%20B%C3%BCrgerspital%20in%20Baden%20bei,steht%20unter%20Denkmalschutz%20(Listeneintrag))>

<sup>4</sup> Much of the information in the history of Baden bei Wien in this chapter comes from the online website, "Baden bei Wien,"  
<[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Baden\\_bei\\_Wien](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Baden_bei_Wien)>.

<sup>5</sup> Hildesheimer, Wolfgang, *Mozart*, trans. Marion Faber, NY: Vintage Books, 1983, 255.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., 335-336.

<sup>7</sup> En.Wikipedia.org, "La clemenza di Tito,"  
<[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/La\\_clemenza\\_di\\_Tito](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/La_clemenza_di_Tito)>.

<sup>8</sup> Hildesheimer, *Mozart*, 338.

<sup>9</sup> Deutsch, Otto Erich, *Mozart: A Documentary Biography*, trans. Eric Blom, Peter Branscombe and Jeremy Noble, London: Adam & Charles Black, 1965, 525.

<sup>10</sup> Hildesheimer, *Mozart*, 337.

<sup>11</sup> Hausner, Henry M., *Franz Xaver Süssmayr*, Wien: Bergland Verlag, 1964, 111.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Deutsch, Otto Erich Deutsch und Bauer, Wilhelm A., *Mozart: Briefe und Aufzeichnungen*, Band IV: 1787 – 1857, Basel: Bärenreiter-Verlag, Kassel, 1963, No. 1350, 422.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., No. 1419, 492.

<sup>15</sup> Hildesheimer, *Mozart* 337.

<sup>16</sup> From the online website *Opernführer: The virtual opera house*, Libretto: Die Zauberflöte von Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart,  
<<https://opera-guide.ch/operas/die+zauberflote/libretto/en/>> (25 April 2025).