



HOTEL BRISTOL
VIENNA

Unlocking Viennese Craft



Experience Vienna's
Masterful Artisans

The Birth of an Artisan Tradition

At the close of the 18th century, Vienna saw a cultural explosion thanks to the music of Mozart, Beethoven and Haydn, known as The First Viennese School. With its new status as the ‘Capital of classical music’, Vienna was ripe to be taken by the Biedermeier movement, which shone a spotlight on the artistic potential of household and personal objects, like Vienna’s own Bösendorfer Grand Pianos.

Throughout the following decades, a number of cultural movements emerged – such as Secession and Wiener Werkstatte – which respectively rebelled against the traditional designs of the past and industrialised mass-production of the present. Viennese entrepreneurs and craftsmen seized the opportunity to establish their own bespoke craft workshops, focusing on an appreciation of both the material itself and the objects’ overall artistic and handcrafted quality.

It’s no wonder Vienna boasts an artisan company recognised by Les Hénokiens* of which there are only 51 worldwide. Vienna is, as it has been for the last 300 years, a hub of ideas for artisan craft, and this passion and creativity remains strong in the Viennese artisan community today.



Artisan Charm at Hotel Bristol

In the heart of Vienna, and a stone's throw from many of the city's most iconic artisans, Hotel Bristol has served as a living example of Viennese charm and artisanal spirit since 1892. Fully embracing Vienna's nature, Hotel Bristol is not only fitted with of the finest furnishings, chandeliers, pianos and more, many crafted by local artisans, but has been supporting and sharing the wonders of their heritage and talent with many of their guests from near and afar.

Artisan Stories

Hotel Bristol - a product of Viennese craft and culture as much the city's thriving community of master artisans - wishes to pay homage to and champion these innovators and experts with this series, unlocking their fascinating heritage and skill.

Guests will be able to explore Vienna with Hotel Bristol's curated selection of craftsmen and bear witness to the extraordinary stories behind ; Bosendorfer Pianos, Lobmeyr Glass, Augarten Porcelain, A. E. Köchert Jewellery and Scheer Shoes, viewed through eyes of their own master craftsmen.

Discover a legacy of Viennese technical brilliance through visits by appointment and interviews with these heirs to 300 years of artisan tradition. Follow us as we unlock the skills and artistic heritage kept alive by these artisans every day.



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My artisan journey began in Vienna, my city, as an apprentice goldsmith at A. E. Köchert. Over the next four and a half years I was privileged to study under two knowledgeable master craftsmen, learning the intricacies and secrets of designing and crafting the jewellery pieces that first attracted me to this profession. Although I have now passed the “Meisterprüfung” masters’ certificate, I’m still learning.



Jewellery

A. E. Köchert

The Artisan’s View – Alexander Recnik, Jeweller and Goldsmith at A. E. Köchert

Founded in 1814, family-run jeweller A. E. Köchert has served the Austrian Royal Court for four generations and continue to flourish in Vienna today, in the very same building to which the Köcherts moved over a century ago. One of the most famous and traditional goldsmith workshops in Vienna, their team of artisans and master craftsmen have amassed a rich and magnificent design heritage, crafted in their own unconventional, timeless style.

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My source of inspiration changes frequently, at the moment it is nature and the Viennese forests. I love working with wood and red gold, their contrasting colours and the symbiosis of the materials. The gold gives the jewellery shape and provides wearability, the wood a certain naturalness. I once crafted a pair of cufflinks fashioned from gold, wood and precious stones which I often remember.

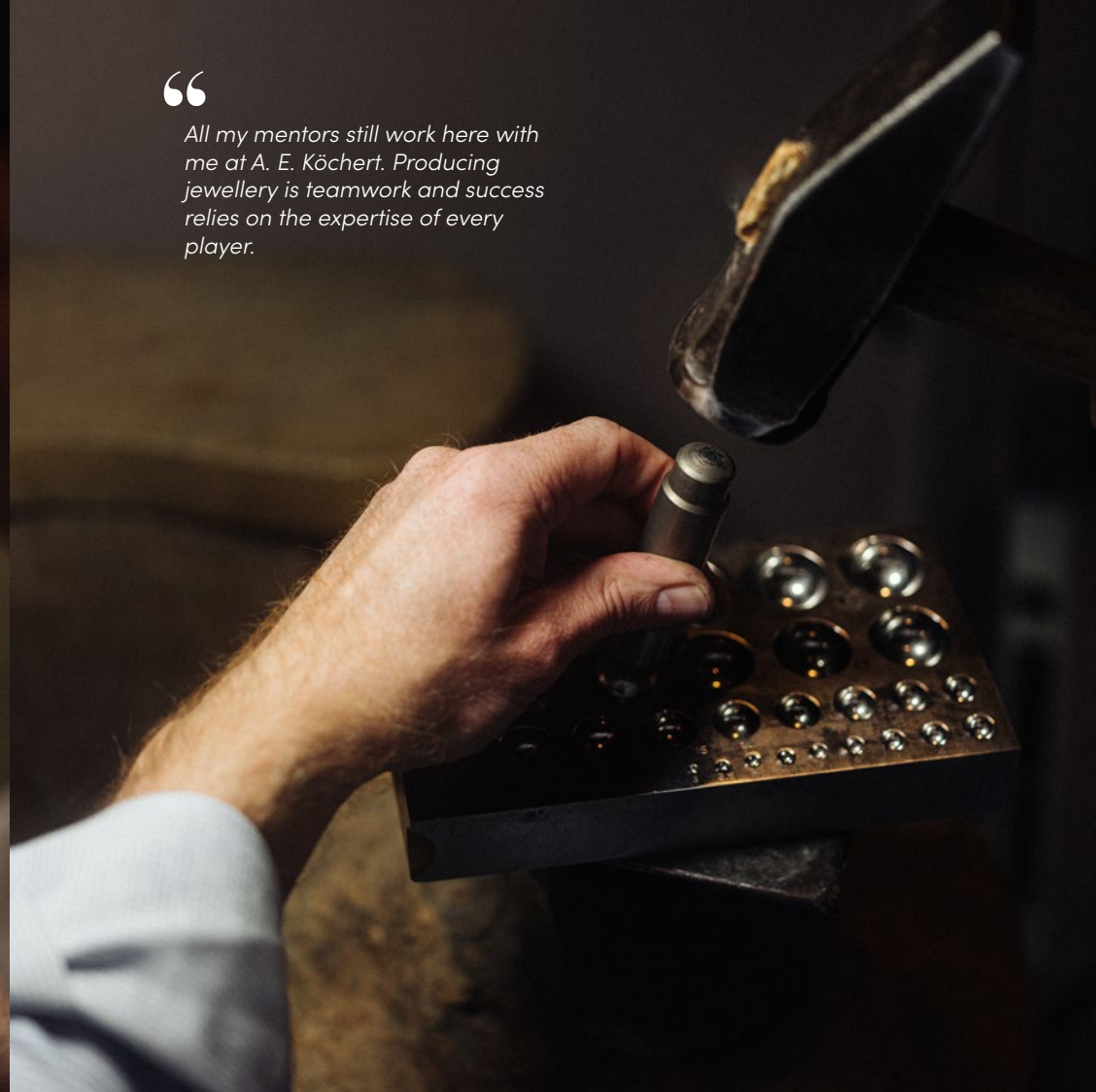


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It seems to me that every piece of jewellery presents itself differently to every owner, and only the symbiosis of jewellery and its wearer can fully complete a piece. I would say my favourite jewellery is 'half-finished' pieces, still raw, open and variable.

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All my mentors still work here with me at A. E. Köchert. Producing jewellery is teamwork and success relies on the expertise of every player.



Jewellery
A. E. Köchert



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Pianos Bösendorfer

The Artisan's View – Thomas Broukal, Piano Maker at Bösendorfer

Founded in 1828 in Vienna, the city of music, Bösendorfer has been looked upon as one of the world's great piano makers, using traditional hand made crafting techniques to create only the finest, concert-class pianos. Bösendorfer's passion for a rich sound experience is devoted to perfecting every precious detail, with up to 6 years of Viennese master craftsmanship dedicated to each and every piano.

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My experience working as a concert technician had allowed me exclusive access to musicians, professors and experts; exchanges that gave me priceless ideas and inspiration directly from the pianists themselves. My process has been directly influenced by these insightful exchanges; listening to their different approaches to music and composers, the precise sound design of the artists, and their desire for the very highest calibre of piano. These experiences shaped, and continue to shape my vision.

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Music has been part of my life from a young age – at age 12, I started going to the Vienna State Opera regularly by myself. I loved Richard Wagner's music, his complexity and many-layered motifs. Fascinated by the new, breath-taking sound universe of opera I set my sights on a craft deeply connected to music: Piano making, which I learnt from scratch.



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The brainstorming, experimentation and ultimately, implementation of new ideas and insights keeps the piano-making process exciting every time, and is only possible through the exchange with artists about their sound ideas and mechanical demands. Building an instrument that inspires and champions artists is the ultimate satisfaction for me.



Pianos
Bösendorfer

Glass Lobmeyr

The Artisan's View – Edmond Suciu, Glass Engraver at Lobmeyr

A family business in its sixth generation, Lobmeyr has been creating and innovating glassware for over 200 years; every piece still mouth blown, hand cut and polished by over 24 expert craftsmen. With its own storied history, as a purveyor to the Hasburg imperial court, and even as a collaborator with Thomas Edison in creating the world's first electric chandelier, Lobmeyr draws from its wealth of knowledge and experience to furnish prestigious venues like the New York Metropolitan Opera and Mecca with its elegant glasswork.

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I joined Lobmeyr in 2016 and moved to Vienna from London, where I had been elected to be a fellow of the guild of glass makers. In 2018 I was proud to represent Lobmeyr at the renowned Homo Faber exhibition in Venice where they receive over 60,000 visitors.



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Age 19 I visited Micu Manole's newly founded glass workshop near my home town in Romania and was transfixed by his masterpieces. I had always been skilled at drawing and making portraits, so I started a two years apprenticeship right then and there. It was tough but definitely paid off, in 2009 I was awarded a prize at the Fitzwilliam Museum in Cambridge for my glass.

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I find classical artists very inspiring. In the past it was Rubens with his hunting scenes, which captivated me, but now it is Leonardo da Vinci and Michelangelo, whom I love for their naturalistic, yet slightly exaggerated paintings, and of course their expression of movement.



Glass
Lobmeyr



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My favourite glass pieces are the engravings by Michael Powolny in the 1910s, his use of matt and polished areas give his work such sophistication, all through the unique copper wheel engraving technique which we still use today. It is fascinating to see this same technique used in the outstanding collection of glass quartz crystal vessels on display at the Vienna fine arts museum.

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Every piece of Augarten porcelain is unique. Every item embodies a little bit of myself, because every painter has his own style and signature. Working by hand, every piece is turned into a small personal piece of art.

Porcelain Augarten

The Artisan's View - Franz Pleininger, Porcelain Painter at Augarten

In the heart of Vienna since 1718, Augarten has lovingly hand-cast, shaped, glazed and painted the finest tableware and exquisite decorative objects from its porcelain, or “white gold”. The Augarten master painters combine extraordinary designs with centuries of experience and traditional techniques in their Garden Palace manufactory - the second oldest in Europe - producing porcelain perfect for individuals and royalty alike.

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All my life I have been fascinated with painting, so when I found out there was an opening at Augarten I eagerly applied! Throughout my 3 year apprenticeship, I was taught directly by the master painters and their defining style strongly influenced me. I have now been working at Augarten and living in Vienna for 26 years. One of the most important parts of the process is observing the skills of my colleagues, especially the mixing of colours, which itself is an art-form.





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Of all the porcelain we make here at Augarten, especially the new Plissée line; the white porcelain is very expressive through its surface structure alone. My favourite décoration is “Lila Blumenbouquet”, it is one of our most lavish and colourful. The flower painting is often work intensive and very detailed, but we also have entire fronts of buildings and country scenes painted on cups using strong and vibrant colours. I love being inspired by these unique pieces.



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It is a very special feeling to be part of the Augarten Porcelain Manufactory. The daily walk to work through the Augarten gardens is inspiring and working in such a historic palace, I find mesmerising.

Porcelain
Augarten

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I initially started studying history and sports, but knew that I still hadn't found my perfect fit. One day I went to an exhibition of a shoemaker presenting his craft, and I completely lost track of time, electrified by his display - this was the starting point for my life as a craftswoman. It took me nearly a year to find an apprenticeship, and I am very happy it was with Scheer.

Shoes Scheer

The Artisan's View - Anna Widni, Shoemaker at Scheer

Since 1816, the Scheer family has carefully preserved and developed the craft of bespoke shoemaking in the heart of Vienna. A company steeped in tradition as former purveyors to Austro-Hungarian royalty, Scheer have gathered a wealth of skill and passion, passed down through seven generations. Producing fewer than 300 pairs of shoes a year, Scheer are committed to highly focused, honest and intimate hand craftsmanship that truly reflects the wearer's personality.

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The upper part of the shoe, or as I see it: "the storytelling part" - is where I can be at my most imaginative. I love conveying pictures with my creations. These pictures may stem from books, films, everyday objects or even emotions. In a certain sense this approach to handcraft reflects my nature - poetic yet grounded. The last pair I crafted for myself is made of emerald suede with a golden crown on the instep. It instantly evokes the décor of a fairytale.





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I am fascinated by every kind of handwork – millinery, carpentry, pottery, whip-making – especially the crafts that are artistically demanding. That’s why I also admire sculpting.

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I really like the green spots of the city that allow me to retreat from daily routines and thoughts. Even more, I yearn for wilder nature – the environment I grew up in. The most imaginative part of my work, is nurtured by the mystery of those open spaces.



Unlocking Viennese Craft

Hotel Bristol is proud to demonstrate its Viennese craft and pay homage to these expert craftsmen, championing their fascinating heritage and skill. During your stay, the hotel Concierge would be pleased to organise two visits of your choice to these carefully selected experiences, giving you the opportunity to meet the artisans.

Hotel Bristol is delighted to propose the below Unlocking Viennese Craft ‘Offer’:

A stay for 2 guests in a Deluxe Room or Suite from €450

Daily Breakfast in the Bristol Lounge

**2 artisan guest experiences of your choice
from the following:**

A. E. Köchert Jewellery
Bösendorfer Pianos*
Lobmeyr Glass
Augarten Porcelain
Scheer Shoes

Upgrade to the next room category
upon availability at Check-In Time

Early Check-In (10am) and
Late Check-Out (4pm) subject to
availability at Check-In Time

Please contact the reservations team for further information including rates on reservations.bristolvienna@luxurycollection.com or telephone + 43 1 515 16 305

Prices correct at time of going to press. Cancellation policy: 7 days prior to the arrival date
Advance booking of artisan guest experiences is required 72 working hours prior.
Offer is subject to availability.

*Additional transport charges may apply.

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