

## Sooner Scene

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errupted centuries of stewardship have brought together one of the most precious collections in the world.

**O**UR guide in Vienna was a wonderful little lady who, because of the hat she was wearing, kept reminding me of Chico Marx. She was proud of the fact that she had been official guide for the U. S. Army forces during the years they were in Vienna. I am not sure how much she taught them about Vienna, but they certainly taught her a great deal about all parts of this country.

She helped us catch the beauty of the Vienna woods and taught us to think of the Danube as a silvery ribbon winding through the Austrian hills and not as a muddy river.

I gained a new appreciation for one of the great ladies of history when we visited Schonbrun Castle in Vienna and saw the exquisite taste Maria Theresa had used in decorating and furnishing it more than 200 years ago. Much of the original interior is still intact. The Hapsburgs occupied this castle until after the death of Emperor Franz Joseph during World War I. Unlike so many European castles, Schonbrun still gives the impression of being very much alive, even though it stands as a symbol of the past.

In all the fast-moving walking, looking, listening, reading of a tour, there are always a few fleeting moments that are magic. One beautiful morning we flew at 30,000 feet over the Bavarian countryside and across the Bavarian Alps from Vienna to Munich. After a few minutes stop at Munich we went over the breathtaking, snowcapped peaks of the Swiss Alps past Zurich, then down into the rich Po Valley of Northern Italy, finally landing at the great modern industrial heart of Italy, Milan.

Our total flying time that trip was 110 minutes. We saw unmatched beauty from a vantage point that has been available only to our generation.

You know, I like the small world idea. Meeting all these people and learning to laugh together with them and to appreciate the good we find in one another will surely eventually lead to better understanding even on the national level. —RBG

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