



The Pomp, Circumstance & Demise of the Residence City

1,300 Years of Power, Art and Church History

In the year 696, Rupert, the “Apostle of the Bavarians”, began to act in Salzburg. He was Frankish and had been the Bishop of Worms am Rhein before going to Bavaria as a missionary. In Salzburg Rupert began building a church centre for the South-East Bavarian region. In 739, Salzburg became a diocese, collected by Charlemagne into an archdiocese and metropolitan seat of the Bavarian church province. Over a millennium, this special status for the city on the Salzach was decisive.

Also founded by Rupert and considered the oldest active monastery in the German-speaking world, St. Peter’s Abbey is called the “cradle” of the city and state of Salzburg. Up to the year 987 the authority of the (arch)bishops and that of the Abbot of St. Peter’s was connected by their staff. For this reason, the early bishops and archbishops lived in the St. Peter monastery. Archbishop Konrad I first moved into an apartment in his own residence in 1120; for this purpose, he built a new bishop’s residence at the site of today’s eastern part of the Salzburg Residenz Palace. From the outside, this late-Gothic building resembled a farm more than a palace. A grain silo, bakery, farm buildings, craftsmen’s quarters and even a brewery made the bishop’s residence a self-sufficient economic operation.

After Salzburg’s release from the Bavarian “motherland” in the 13th century and the new state order from 1328, Salzburg’s archbishops became princes within the Holy Roman Empire and, from about 1350, carried the title “prince archbishop”. Since then, they also practised secular power over their subjects. As archbishops and metropolitans they continued to direct the history of the church. The Cathedral-Residenz complex with its magnificent artistic decor is an expression of their absolute plenitude of power.

Until 1800, Salzburg’s history was characterised by territorial independence and the rule of the prince archbishops. There was a solid economic base due to the deposits of salt, metals and jewels. These conditions allowed the country to enjoy an unmatched cultural and political heyday from the 8th into the 18th century. The rich heritage of Romanesque, Gothic and above all Baroque is still a part of this splendour even today.

A Superb Apartment for Our Lord...

Today, the Salzburg Cathedral is considered the spiritual centre of the city. Its first construction was consecrated by Bishop Virgil in 774 at the same location where Rupert of Salzburg built his church. After the devastating city fire in 1167 a new Roman building was built which was once again greatly damaged by fire in 1598. Archbishop Wolf Dietrich von Raitenau (1587–1612) had it torn down and commissioned Italian architect Vincenzo Scamozzi to build a huge new construction which was never actually executed.

On 14 April, 1614, Archbishop Marcus Sitticus von Hohenems (1612– 1619) laid the cornerstone of the Baroque Salzburg Cathedral which was built according to plans drawn up by another Italian architect, Santino Solari. For its consecration in 1628, Sitticus’ successor Archbishop Paris Lodron (1619–1653) arranged an ostentatious, eight-day festival. The completion of the towers and gables as well as the adjacent archways followed in 1655/1660 under Guidobald von Thun (1654–1668).



Dom Quartier Salzburg

The Cathedral did not survive the next centuries unharmed. On 15 September 1859, the roof trusses burned, the ceiling frescoes had to be restored and the cupola renovated. On 16 October 1944, a bomb hit the Cathedral causing the cupola to collapse. The reconstruction lasted 14 years. The paintings and stucco work were rebuilt back into their original form until 1959.

The Cathedral's Northern Oratory was completed in 1620. The last room is set up as a chapel and is dedicated to Rupert of Salzburg. The opulent stucco work originates from the time of building, probably from Italian plasterers who were working in the Cathedral at the time. The paintings were done by Arsenio Mascagni who also painted the ceilings and high altarpiece of the Cathedral.

In the South Cathedral Archway, Archbishop Guidobald von Thun and his successor Max Gandolf, Count von Kuenburg (1668–1687), organised a Cabinet of curiosities during the second half of the 17th century. One of only a few in Europe, the Cabinet of curiosities retains its original atmosphere thanks to marble floors, stuccoed ceilings and latticed cupboards.

The "Long Gallery" of St. Peter was erected between 1657 and 1661 by Giovanni Antonio Dario whereby both Abbot Amand Pachler, as well as Archbishop Guidobald von Thun, provided materials. Until the end of the archbishopric in 1803, the 70 metre-long hallway served as the prince archbishops' painting gallery and at the same time represented an important connection between the Residenz Palace and the Cabinet of curiosities.

The newly designed Museum of St. Peter is located in the so-called "Wallstrakt", the former "Hofbogengebäude". It is the oldest surviving part of the Baroque new building of the Salzburg Residenz Palace which was started in 1604 under Archbishop Wolf Dietrich.

A Residence for the Prince Archbishops...

Archbishop Wolf Dietrich von Raitenau had the medieval bishop's seat as well as parts of buildings around today's Residenz main courtyard demolished in order to create more room for a sprawling new construction in the Italian style. Under his rule, the wing with the Carabinieri Hall on the Residenzplatz (Residence Square) and Domplatz (Cathedral Square) was constructed. During this time, the connection between the Franciscan Church and the west arcades, as well as a quadrangle of buildings north of the Franciscan Church in present-day Sigmund-Haffner-Gasse with the "Dietrichsruh" garden, was also built. Wolf Dietrich's successors – Archbishop Marcus Sitticus, builder of the Hellbrunn Palace, and Paris Lodron – continued the renovations. The powerful portals on Domplatz and Residenzplatz are witnesses to this.

During the 17th and 18th centuries, the Residenz was adapted by the most famous Baroque architects of the time to suit the individual taste of the ruling prince archbishop. Guidobald von Thun connected the Residenz Palace and the Salzburg Cathedral with the help of the Cathedral arches. At the same time, he had the Palace heightened by nearly seven metres in order to attain a better visual effect. On the "bel étage" (principal floor) he created a gallery around the Domplatz: from the Residenz across the North Cathedral Archways into the Cathedral and the Cabinet of curiosities, onto the South Cathedral Archways into the Long Gallery of St. Peter, and across the "Hofbogengebäude" back to the Residenz Palace – the route of today's tour of the DomQuartier. Archbishop Franz Anton Harrach (1709–1727) had the main entrance enlarged, the facade facing the Residenzplatz renewed and the Residenz Palace modernised in the high-Baroque style. Under the direction of Johann Lukas von Hildebrandt, the painter and architect Antonio Beduzzi, painters Johann Michael Rottmayr and Martino Altomonte, and plasterer Alberto Comesina were put to work.

Under the last ruling prince archbishop Hieronymus Colloredo (1772–1803), the north wing – today's Tuscan wing – was completed. Colloredo also had the painting galleries built where today's Residenzgalerie is located.



And a Stage for Representation

After the fire and demolition of the Roman Cathedral, Wolf Dietrich shut down the Cathedral cemetery as well and ordered the razing of houses in order to create a large, spacious square in front of the Residenz Palace. With this, he created a representative public space which really became the stage of the court. On the Residenzplatz, the prince archbishops could draw grand attention to themselves with parades and processions. With the building of the Residenz Fountain, Guidobald von Thun added the finishing touch to the Residenzplatz.

The representative entrance to the Cathedral creates the Domplatz, which was and still is used for church festivals. Although the many different constructions were not based on an overall plan, the square was created coherently. Around 1600, Wolf Dietrich had the passage opposite the Cathedral built, later called the “Wallistrakt”, and also shortly thereafter the facade of the Residenz. The mirror-image designed facade opposite, as well as the Cathedral archways, were built under Guidobald von Thun. The Immaculate Column completed the ensemble in 1771 as the highlight and main focus of the square’s design.

The Final Chapter

Hieronymus Colloredo was the last prince archbishop of Salzburg. After his escape from the approaching French in the year 1800, countless artistic treasures from the archbishops’ collection were taken out of the country. The end of the Holy Roman Empire as a result of the French wars of conquest brought territorial reassignment to multiple parts of Europe. The former capital and residence city Salzburg lost all of its important functions. In 1803, the archdiocese was secularised, thus transformed into a secular principality.

After the Congress of Vienna, the Habsburgs took leadership of Salzburg in 1816. Subsequently, the State Rooms were used by representatives of the various branches of the House of Habsburg. In 1918, the Residenz was passed on to the Republic of Austria and in 1974, it was transferred to state ownership.