

Trauttmansdorff

One Place, Two Experiences



Strolling through colorful garden landscapes, relaxing under palm trees while admiring snow-capped peaks, listening to world-famous musicians at the Water Lily Pond, or playing the world's largest tourism pinball machine – all of this makes Trauttmansdorff a place full of fascinating experiences.



© Karlheinz Sollbauer

From afar, Trauttmansdorff Castle shines in a luminous yellow with impressive majesty. It stands amidst a 12-hectare garden filled with plants from all over the world. Inside the castle, the Touriseum – the Provincial Museum of Tourism of South Tyrol – hosts a lively and entertaining exhibition that recounts 250 years of tourism history with a touch of irony.

The Gardens of Trauttmansdorff Castle

Stretching over 12 hectares with a 100-meter elevation difference, the Gardens of Trauttmansdorff Castle offer spectacular views of over 80 garden landscapes, the surrounding mountains, and the city of Merano. Winding paths lead through four distinct garden worlds featuring plants from all over the globe. Along sun-drenched terraces and bubbling streams, a unique panorama unfolds. The exotic Sun

Gardens on the southern slopes exude a Mediterranean atmosphere with olive trees, cacti, aloe, and agave. The Water and Terraced Gardens display a rich variety of geometric flower beds connected by stairways and waterways that lead to the Sensory Garden. The Water Lily Pond at the foot of the terraces is surrounded by more than 200 palm trees, camellias, and azaleas.

On the north side of the castle, the Forests of the World with miniature forests from East Asia and America invite visitors on a journey of discovery. Tropical utility plants and a terrarium can be found in the greenhouse. Finally, the cultural landscapes of South Tyrol complete the experience: orchards with historic apple and pear varieties, a traditional farmer's garden, and a vineyard provide insight into the local flora.

Beyond the spectacular botanical variety, artistic pavilions and interactive stations enrich the Gardens. Whether exploring the inside of a cactus or crossing an adventurous suspension bridge, visitors embark on an exciting journey of discovery. Animals such as alpacas, Racka sheep, and goats also roam the Gardens.

Awards

The Gardens of Trauttmansdorff Castle are among South Tyrol's top attractions. Thanks to their innovative concept, which combines botanical diversity with recreational offerings and uniquely merges nature, art, and culture, they have received multiple international awards. In 2021, they were awarded the „Ecological Gardening“ prize by the „Natur im Garten“ committee for their outstanding commitment to ecological gardening. Their „Diversity“ project surpassed 11 high-level competitors from Germany, Austria, Russia, and the Netherlands. In 2013 they were named „International Garden of the Year.“ Other accolades, such as „Italy's Most Beautiful Park 2005“ and their ranking among Europe's most beautiful parks in the „Briggs & Stratton's Best Parks“ competition, further testify to their prestige.

Touriseum – Provincial Museum of Tourism of South Tyrol

Above the Gardens stands Trauttmansdorff Castle, home to the Touriseum – the first museum in the Alpine region entirely dedicated to the history of tourism. The interactive exhibition takes visitors on a journey through 250 years of Alpine tourism. Alternating perspectives from locals and guests vividly illustrate the development of tourism in Tyrol. In a fun and engaging way, the exhibition shows how the concept of travel has changed over time.

The tour begins with a spectacular rocky gorge containing the remains of an overturned carriage – a reference to the difficult Alpine crossings of past centuries. At the end of the journey, visitors encounter the world's largest tourism pinball machine, the „South Tyrol Game,“ where they can explore the region in a playful manner.

Trauttmansdorff Castle

After visiting the museum, it is worth taking a tour through the carefully restored historic rooms of the castle. From the medieval fresco hall to the sumptuous Neo-Rococo salon, the castle tells its eventful history, shaped by its illustrious inhabitants. The permanent exhibition pays tribute to these personalities with fascinating displays.



© Karlheinz Sollbauer

Empress Sissi

The most famous guest of Trauttmansdorff Castle was undoubtedly Empress Elisabeth of Austria, better known as Sissi. During the winter months of 1870 and 1889, she stayed in the rooms on the castle's second floor. Her entourage, consisting of more than 100 people, was accommodated in various residences in the surrounding area.

When Viennese newspapers reported shortly after her arrival that her daughter Marie Valerie's health had significantly improved thanks to Merano's mild climate, the town suddenly gained fame as a spa destination.

Blooms and Scents Through the Seasons

A visit to the Gardens of Trauttmansdorff Castle is always a new experience, as the floral landscape changes from week to week. Spring be-

gins with a sea of tulips, followed by rhododendrons, peonies, and roses. In summer, fields of sunflowers and vibrant summer flowers create lively accents, while autumn colors the landscape in warm hues.

Beyond the floral spectacle, scents also enchant the senses: hyacinths and daffodils announce spring, lavender evokes a Mediterranean atmosphere in summer, and autumn is wrapped in the fragrance of Sweet Osmanthus in the Palm Forest.



© Karlheinz Sollbauer

Guided Tours of the Gardens and Castle

What do wild papaya, walking bamboo, and the chocolate flower have in common? The answers can be found on a guided tour of the Gardens at Trauttmansdorff. Expert guides share their knowledge of botanical rarities, fragrant Mediterranean plants, and artistic garden landscapes.

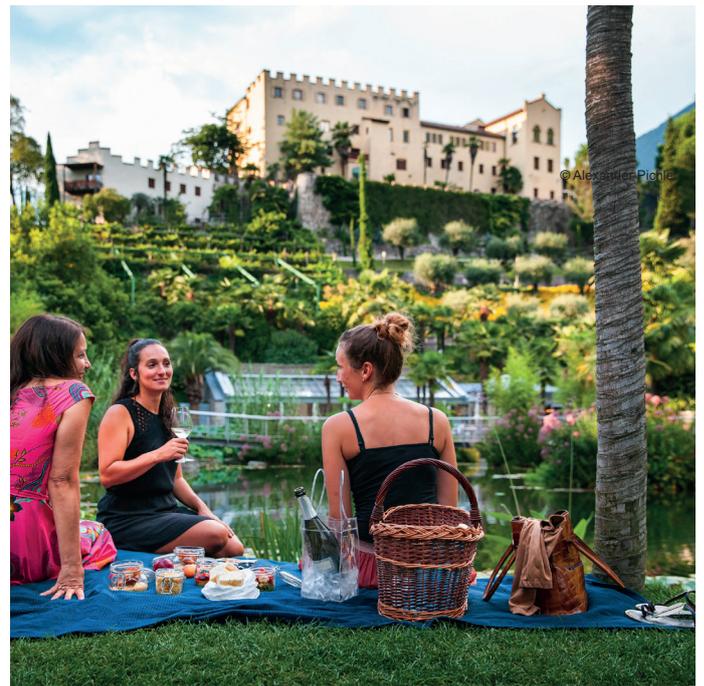
The castle and the Touriseum can be explored individually, with 20 richly designed rooms that bring the history of tourism to life through interactive elements, films, and models. Thematic group tours are available upon request.



© Marion Lafogler

Events – Experiences for All Senses

There is always something happening at Trauttmansdorff, especially in summer when evening concerts at the Water Lily Pond transform the Gardens into a magical stage. The „Trauttmansdorff After Hours“ series offers a relaxed atmosphere with live music and culinary delights. In autumn, the Touriseum’s “Vintage Market” invites visitors to search for historical treasures. Numerous seasonal initiatives and family-themed days complete the event program.



© Alexander Pichler

Sustainability – Green Trauttmansdorff

The Gardens of Trauttmansdorff Castle are not only a visual delight but also a biodiversity hot-spot. With 344 documented pollinator species, including 111 wild bee species, the Gardens actively contribute to nature conservation. Since 2019 the team relies on natural methods to strengthen soil and plants, instead of chemical pesticides. With its own composting facility, an eco-friendly woodchip heating system, and targeted resource conservation, Trauttmansdorff is doing its part for a sustainable future.

25 years of Trauttmansdorff – and still full of surprises

Since opening in 2001, the Gardens of Trauttmansdorff Castle have delighted visitors from around the world with their unique blend of nature, culture and discovery. In 2026, the Gardens celebrate their **25th anniversary** with a rich jubilee program and new perspectives on the world of gardens.

At the heart of the anniversary year is the **special exhibition “Crafted Paradises – Of People and Gardens”**, developed in collaboration with the Touriseum, South Tyrol’s Museum of Tourism. The exhibition explores how gardens have been designed, interpreted and represented over the centuries – from historic ideals to modern landscape architecture – and also highlights the green transformation of the city of Merano.



© Karlheinz Sollbauer

Another highlight will be the big **birthday celebration on 18 July**, featuring music, guided tours and a colourful program for the whole family.

To mark the occasion, the popular grotto installation will be technically upgraded: the **immersive multimedia show** on the origin of life will appear in a new light – a captivating experience for all ages.

Throughout the season, guests can look forward to popular formats such as “Trauttmansdorff after hours”, picnic evenings, botanical workshops and creative learning opportunities.

The **Touriseum** will also contribute to the jubilee year with a varied program – including the new staircase exhibition **“Architecture on Tour”**, which explores the South Tyrolean grand hotels of the Ludwig brothers.

From 19 November to 10 January, the light park **LUMAGICA Merano** will once again transform the Gardens into a magical winter landscape of light and sound.

After a quarter of a century, Trauttmansdorff shows that a garden can constantly evolve – and still surprise time and again.



Trauttmansdorff: Key numbers

- 1 castle with museum
- 12 ha of garden area
- 100 m elevation difference
- Over 80 garden landscapes
- 4 garden worlds
- 10 art pavilions
- 10 experience stations
- 7 km of paths
- 35 gardeners
- 250 years of history of tourism

Information and contact:

The Gardens of Trauttmansdorff Castle
Stefan Orian
stefan.orian@provinz.bz.it
T. +39 0473 255 607 | Mobil +39 320 189 1938
Via S. Valentino/St.-Valentin-Str. 55
I-39012 Merano/Meran