

# The ACTB in Vienna

## Austria shows its best side

>Motaz Othman/  
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The ACTB –Austrian and Central European Travel Business – with 338 exhibitors from 58 nations is a small but fancy trade fair in which the Alpine country presents its choicest tourism offers.

In fact there is no other European country in which tourism is as important an economic factor as in Austria. The country is endowed with the highest mountain in the Alps and the most beautiful ski resorts in the world. Regions like Kärnten, Salzburg and Tirol are distinguished not only for winter sports of the highest level, but Austria with its numerous lakes and forests is also an ideal summer travel destination. Every year in summer, the high mountains attract thousands of hikers into the Alps. With Vienna being the capital city of the former Habsburg Kingdom, Haydn's home and the Mozart city of Salzburg, Austria is also an excellent destination for cultural tourists.

With the expansion of the EU towards Eastern Europe, the small Alpine country moves towards the centre of Europe. The



development of the former atb Austrian travel business into a central European tourism trade fair reflects this change. The actb is also a suitable presentation platform for the tourism organisations of the bordering East European neighbours, in particular Hungary, the Czech Republic, Slovenia, and Slovakia. This year the fair focused on the 'Internationale Donau Werbergemeinschaft', an association representing the countries through which the longest European river Danube passes. The opening of borders will finally make it possible to offer cross-national tourism.

However, the opening celebration already showed that this year one event outshines everything else. Together with Switzerland, Austria is organising for the European Football Championship and is already looking forward to the challenge of hosting hundreds of thousands of visitors from all over Europe.

Dr. Petra Stolba, CEO of Österreich Werbung (Austrian Advertising) together with Trix and Flix, the mascots of European Football

Championship 2008, welcomed the attending exhibitors and journalists in Vienna city hall and led the countdown to the greatest sporting event in the history of Austria. The four Austrian host cities of Innsbruck, Salzburg, Klagenfurt and Vienna presented their offers.

Of course there are also other activities than football. At the actb opening press conference, Österreich Werbung presented the new campaign "Das muss Österreich sein" (This is what Austria has to stand for) with which the Alpine country wants to present its humorous and sassy side. Linz is the European cultural capital city 2009. The organisers showed how far the preparations for the great event have progressed. And in 2009 there is also another anniversary: The 200th year since the death of Joseph Haydn. The campaign 'Haydn 2009' is a preparation for the numerous events and celebrations in the places where the great composer lived and worked. ■

