

Peterskirche – Vienna – Austria - Europe

©2021 Nicoleta Schiel

Virtual Tours Vienna



Foundation

- There is evidence that a Roman barracks was rebuilt or used as a temple on this site of the Vindobona in the third or fourth century.
- A little later a hall church was built on this spot. Unfortunately, **there is no written evidence for or against it.**
- During the triumphal march of Charlemagne.
- Re-establishment of Peterskirche (St. Peter's Church) in the middle of the 11th century.



Dedication to Saint Peter

- Emperor wanted to emphasize the similarities between St. Peter's Church in Vienna and St. Peter in Rome.
- They were both dedicated to Saint Peter, which could also only point to the **Pontifex Peter**.
- Another theory leads us to the middle of the 11th century, the time of the re-establishment of Peterskirche (St. Peter's Church), in which many relationships between Vienna and Salzburg are proven.
- These relationships could also explain the dedication of the Church to St. Peter.
- There are no documents to prove this theories.

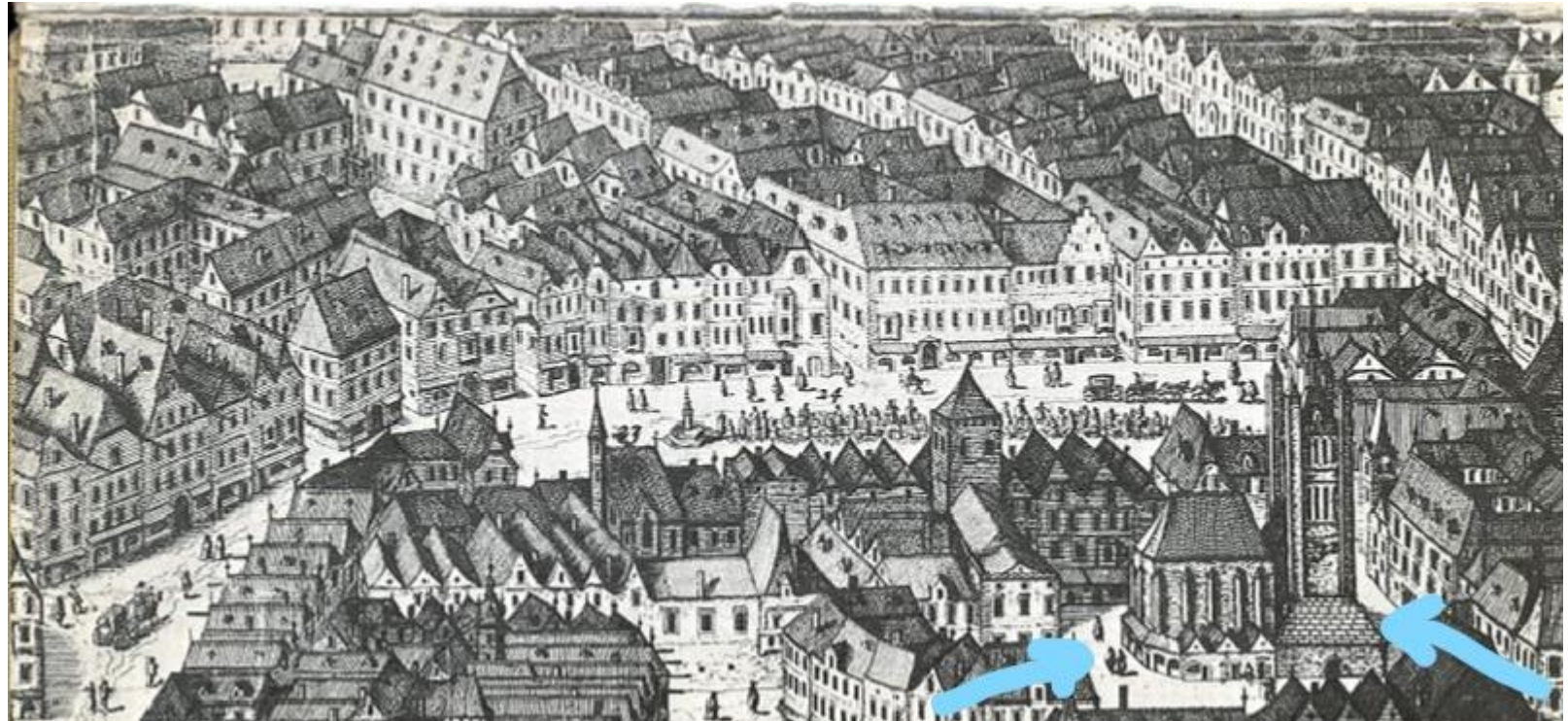
Peterskirche in the Middle Ages

- At that time the church had also three-aisles, but only half the size of the present-day one, and it was also dark and cold.
- To go to church, you even had to go down the steps under the street.
- Unfortunately, this old church burned very often.



Built in a different direction

- In the 14th century, the entrance to the church was in Tuchlauben, in a more westerly direction.
- The high altar was in today's Goldschmiedgasse,
- rotated 180 degrees than the current one.



The plague, Emperor Leopold I. and the Peterskirche



- In addition, in the 17th century many people died of the plague, the Ottomans tried to conquer Vienna.
- These were not happy times and so the Emperor Leopold I thought that a little more grace from God could only help.

Reconstructions under two emperors while the Baroque period:

Leopold I.

- Composer.
- Art patrons.
- Built Leopoldine Wing (Hofburg).
- Jews expelled in 1669.
- Ottoman Wars - Prinz Eugen.



- Music fan & composer;
- Court chapel under Josef Fuchs.
- Karlskirche named after him.
- Reconstruction of Klosterneuburg Abbey based on the Escorial model.
- Reconstruction of the Hofburg from a fortress to a palace:
- Imperial Chancellery Wing, Riding School, National Library.
- 1719-Establishment of the Oriental Company as a state-organized trading company.
- 1718-Prinz Eugen - Peace of Passarowitz against the Ottomans;
- Cabinet wars (wars no longer aimed at total annihilation).

Karl VI. - son of Leopold I. Father of Maria Theresia



Remodeled by three architects :

Gabriel Montani

- A traveling artist.
- A fortress architect,
- with no experience in building churches.
- The foundation stone was laid by the emperor in the spring of 1702.
- There were a few accidents;
- so Montani was recalled to Spain

Johann L. von Hildebrandt

- From 1703;
- He projected it in its present form.
- Five years after Hildebrandt was in charge, the church was consecrated on October 25, 1708.

Antonio Galli-Bibiena

In 1729, under Emperor Charles VI, the imperial stage architect Antonio Galli-Bibiena had to continue the planning for the new building of St. Peter's Church .

Brotherhood of the Holy Trinity financed the renovation

- Under Leopold I was sought funding for a thorough renovation or even a new building, which was finally made available by the aristocratic members of the Brotherhood of the Holy Trinity.
- The wood of the dome was damaged during construction and Emperor Charles VI, as a member of the Brotherhood of the Holy Trinity, had to donate the copper for the dome, because the wood was not really usable.

Peterskirche in Vienna



- one of the most beautiful baroque sacred buildings in Vienna;
- the only one entirely built while the Baroque period;
- also the first „tambour“ dome in Vienna:
- the design of the 56 meter high dome is reminiscent of the dome of St. Peter in the Vatican.
- was the model for other sacred buildings in the Austrian monarchy.
- **Michael Rottmayr painted the dome fresco in Peterskirche in just two years almost by himself.**
- Illusion painting

Kuppelfresko in Peterskirche

