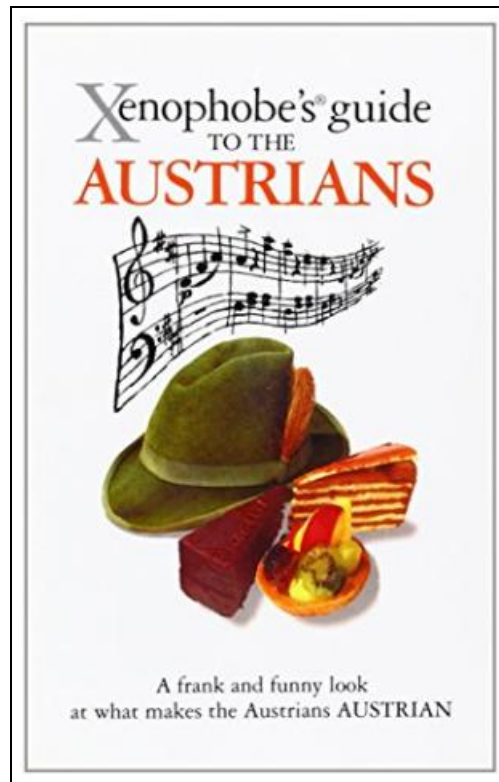


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OVAL BOOKS, United Kingdom, 2011. Paperback. Book Condition: New. 2nd Revised edition. 174 x 108 mm. Language: English . Brand New Book. A guide to understanding the Austrians that delves into the cultural curiosities and peculiar characteristics of this land-locked nation The Austrian needs lots of persuading to have his traditions tampered with in the name of modernization and efficiency. He is attached to his sausage, his insipid beer, and the young white wine that tastes so remarkably like iron filings. He prefers the familiar, tried, and tested to the novelty, the latter almost certainly being an attempt by persons unknown to make money at his expense. Home life for the Austrians is a never-ending quest for Gemutlichkeit or coziness, which is achieved by accumulating objects that run the gamut from the pleasingly aesthetic to the mind-blowingly kitsch. In Austria detonating pretension is a national pastime. It has to do with attitudes to power that date back to an absolutist form of government and with the self-irony developed by people who were (or thought they were) more talented than the authority to which they had to defer. The paradoxical character of the Austrian mingles profoundly conservative attitudes with a flair for innovation and invention. This creative tension usually takes the form of official obstructionism to good ideas, but sometimes the other way round. For example, the population were outraged by Josef II s attempt to make them adopt reusable coffins with flaps on the underside for dropping out the corpses. (The Emperor was forced to retreat, grumbling as he did so about the people s wasteful attitude.).



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