

Meet legends at their favourite coffee places.

HILDEGARDE KNEFF



Hildegard Neff, as she was often called abroad, was considered the German post-war actress with the greatest sex appeal. On Broadway, too, the German diva celebrated major successes and was called "the best singer without a voice" by no one else than Ella Fitzgerald. Kneff's husky voice might have been a side effect of overindulgence in coffee in the notoriously smoky "Konditorei Kranzler", the legendary meeting point and landmark of the City West, located by the famous Kurfürstendamm Boulevard. Recently renovated, the café's doors have been open to guests again since early 2000.

Café Kranzler, Kurfürstendamm 18-19, 10719 Berlin,
www.berlin-cafe-kranzler.de

GEORGE TABORI



Hungarian playwright and director George Tabori was most successful on the stages of German-speaking countries and had a special fondness for Vienna and Bremen. He had left Germany in 1935 and worked as a journalist and translator at the BBC before he moved to the US to write scripts and continue translating. A genuine cosmopolitan, Tabori nevertheless always remained faithful to the elegant Café Landtmann on the grand and beautiful Viennese Ringstrasse. Though the famous café's owners changed several times, the aim always remained the same: to be and remain Vienna's most elegant café – and given the massive competition in the coffeehouse capital of the world that is really saying something.

Café Landtmann, Dr. Karl Lueger Ring 4, 1010 Vienna,
www.landtmann.at

CHARLIE CHAPLIN



It seems hardly necessary to remind anyone in the world who English actor and director Sir Charles Spencer ("Charlie") Chaplin was. Starting out at an early age in English vaudevilles he was discovered on a tour of the United States in 1913. After decades as the world's best-loved entertainer he returned to Europe in 1952 and settled down by Lake Geneva. Letting his eyes travel over the lake and the French Alps beyond he used to enjoy his coffee most while sitting in the Beau Rivage's Belle-Époque building in Lausanne.

Beau-Rivage Palace,
 Place du Port 17-19,
 Lausanne



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Saint-Germain-Des-Prés is the charming artists' quarter near the Quartier Latin in the heart of Paris. This is where the famous Café de Flore is to be found. Opened in 1887, it had a special vogue during the 1930s when writers, painters and intellectuals frequented it regularly. Swiss-French architect, painter and sculptor Le Corbusier was one of the habitués and worked on his concepts there, often causing controversies along the way, some of which still resonate today. Even in our days, the "Flore" is still regarded as both an institution and a myth.

Café de Flore, 172, Boulevard Saint Germain, Paris
www.cafe-de-flore.com

CLAUDE CHABROL



Parisian film director and critic Claude Chabrol was one of the most important exponents of French cinema of the 60s. He enjoyed meeting with his talented collaborators at the legendary café to discuss whatever script he was working on. Ever since it was founded in 1885, the Deux-Magots and the next-door Flore have been among the city's most important cultural hotspots. Jean-Paul Sartre and Simone de Beauvoir were among the patrons and always showed up early to find a free table. Today, both cafés are mostly frequented by VIPs from the worlds of fashion and politics, with the odd artist still in residence.

Café Deux-Magots, 6, Place Saint-Germain-des-Prés, Paris,
www.lesdeuxmagots.fr

LE CLARK GABLE



During the 30s and 40s, the Trocadero was the hip meeting place for Hollywood's most glamorous stars. Because of the numerous opening nights that ended in parties at the "Troc", it was also a favourite haunt of the yellow press whose many paparazzi made sure that the stars often found themselves depicted in next day's more enterprising newspapers. Clark Gable, a star ever since he had played Rhett Butler in blockbuster "Gone With the Wind" and one of Hollywood's most sought-after actors, spent many evenings in the exclusive nightclub and "frankly didn't give a damn" about the constant harassment from photographers.

Café Trocadero, 8280 W. Sunset Boulevard, West Hollywood

HANS WEIGEL



Both formidable Viennese theatre critic and writer Hans Weigel and the ancient Café Hawelka are inextricably linked to Viennese coffeehouse culture. During the 1950s it was not unusual to find Weigel there at all times, usually sipping his mélange and animatedly discussing the latest literary sensations with the city's most influential writers. Fortunately, the Hawelka seems to be a place completely out of time that still looks virtually the same it did when it was opened in 1939 and is still run by the original owner! The excellent quality of its coffee and the famous "Buchteln" with vanilla sauce hasn't changed either, thus preserving an element of rare authenticity and constancy in today's fast-changing times.

Café Hawelka, Dorotheergasse 6, 1010 Vienna,
www.hawelka.at