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Wien Museum (Edited by)

ELISABETH OF AUSTRIA'S HERMESVILLA

Refuge of a restless spirit

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The Empress' mystical hideaway – a house as a reflection of her personality

Idyllically nestled into the former imperial hunting grounds, now the Lainzer Tiergarten, lies the 'Palace of Dreams', as Empress Elisabeth once called her villa. Emperor Franz Joseph had it built as a present to her, in the hope that it would encourage his wife to travel less and spend more time in Vienna. The romantic villa was realised during a comparatively short construction period by the architect Karl von Hasenauer, famous for his numerous buildings along the Ringstrasse. In style, the building was inspired by the country houses of Austria's upper classes. A statue of Hermes, Greek god of travellers and the deceased, holds a prominent position in the garden and gave the villa its name. What relationship did the restless Empress have to her hideaway in the imperial hunting grounds? W...

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