

## DEUTSCHER LEBENSTIL UND DEUTSCHE KULTUR (Austrian Lifestyle and Culture)

### How Austrians learned to stop worrying and love “The Sound of Music”

## Die Trapp Familie

The real-life aspiring nun/teacher Maria was an enterprising woman. Following her marriage to the former naval captain von Trapp (and the birth of three more von Trapps), she worked hard to create a public image for the Trapp Family Singers. The family, struggling financially, had begun touring through Europe as a singing group in 1935. They eventually emigrated to the United States and settled in Vermont.

Maria went on to publish five books chronicling her life and the family's music tours. She sold the rights to her autobiography, which first inspired a West German film, [Die Trapp Familie](#), and its sequel, [Die Trapp Familie in Amerika](#). The Broadway team of songwriters Richard Rodgers and Oscar Hammerstein II, with librettists Howard Lindsay and Russel Crouse, then adapted Maria's memoirs as a vehicle for Broadway's sweetheart Mary Martin, who starred as Maria opposite Austrian-American folk singer Theodore Bikel as Georg von Trapp.

Critics in 1959 found the musical to be a somewhat old-fashioned operetta, but it was the Broadway production that introduced the now-beloved songs such as [My Favourite Things](#), [So Long Farewell](#), and [Climb Ev'ry Mountain](#). It enjoyed a run of [1443 performances](#).

As the Broadway run ended, the film adaptation was well under way. On the basis of her work in the as yet unreleased *Mary Poppins*, Julie Andrews was cast as Maria, opposite Christopher Plummer as Captain von Trapp. Though the cast and crew spent a relatively short period of time filming in Salzburg, their work ensured that the town would forever after be filled with the sound of tourists – especially from Asia and the US – though to very mixed reactions from locals.