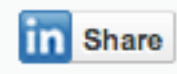




Four Symphony Orchestras to See Abroad



If you're a fan of classical music, nothing compares to hearing an orchestra play its own music live in its own venue - especially when that venue is historically and architecturally significant. "In some halls, it's like there's ghosts there," says Scott Faulkner, executive director of the Reno Chamber Orchestra in Reno, Nev. "It's magical to be in those places."

People embarking on [international travel](#) should consider a world tour of classical music, starting with the following four symphony orchestras:

1. Berlin Philharmonic - Berlin, Germany

Founded in 1882, the Berlin Philharmonic has won numerous awards, including several Classic BRIT, Grammy and Gramophone Awards. The reason to see it, however, isn't its trophy case, but rather its best-in-class ensemble, created through an infamously rigorous audition process. Musicians must be invited to audition, which entails playing a concerto solo in front of the entire orchestra, then enduring a lengthy probation period while orchestra members vote by secret ballot to accept or deny the musicians.

Even though a visit to Europe is a way to enjoy many of the world's great orchestras, Asia and South America are full of up-and-comers.

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Another distinction is the Berlin Philharmonic's critically acclaimed music director, Sir Simon Rattle. Rattle "has announced that he will be stepping down at the end of 2018," Faulkner says. "He's one of the great living conductors, so I definitely recommend seeing him before he steps down."

2. Vienna Philharmonic - Vienna, Austria

There are six- and 13-year waiting lists, respectively, for the Vienna Philharmonic's weekday and weekend subscription tickets. The orchestra's unique sound is derived from its unique structure. Unlike most European symphony orchestras, Vienna's lacks a music

director. Instead, it hosts a rotating cast of esteemed guest conductors, which has left a unique stamp on the organization since its founding in 1842.

3. Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra - Amsterdam, Netherlands

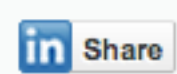
The Royal Concertgebouw - ranked by *Gramophone* as the world's best orchestra - is named for its legendary concert hall, the Concertgebouw, Dutch for "concert building." Opened in 1888, this international theater is said to have some of the best acoustics in the world - so good, in fact, that conductors can't bear to leave them. The Royal Concertgebouw has had just six principal conductors in its 120-year history, according to Faulkner, who says the Royal Concertgebouw is also known for its "luscious string sound."

4. Seoul Philharmonic - Seoul, South Korea

many of the world's great orchestras, Asia and South America are full of up-and-comers, according to David Winkler, composer and artistic director of Chamber Players International, a New York-based classical music ensemble. Winkler cites the Seoul Philharmonic as a major contender. Founded in 1948, it's notable for its unique programming - typically a blend of East with West and traditional with contemporary thanks to a notable composer-in-residence program.

"They play a fair amount of contemporary Korean music," Winkler says. "You'll likely hear a composite program of static repertoire, plus some more recently composed music that has a Korean flair to it. It's fascinating; what we used to call Western music is now becoming international music."

Hearing classical music played by any of these orchestras in their element will surely create memories for a lifetime. And if an individual is lucky enough to snag tickets to any of these international theater performances, he or she can initiate foreign payment by accessing a trusted online foreign exchange service via virtually any mobile device to help save time - which is especially important for people with active, on-the-go lifestyles.



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