



Gyula region

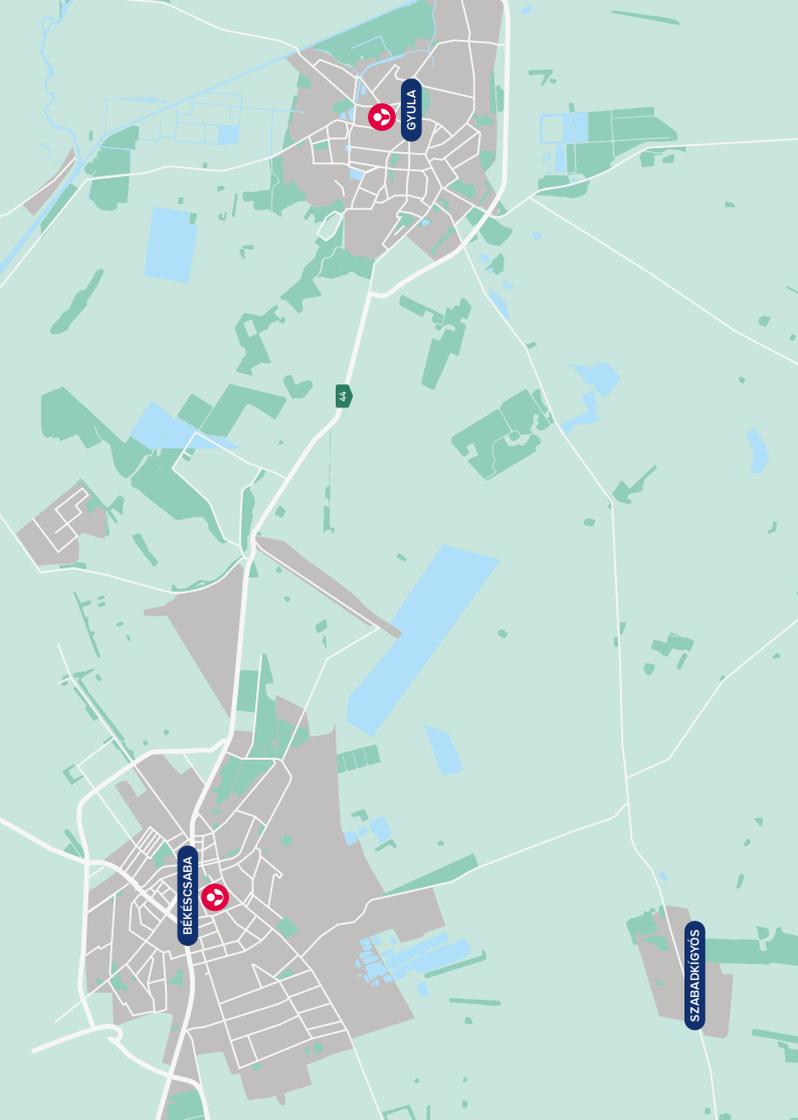
English



STEP OUTSIDE OF TIME!



HUNGARY



Key:





Wenckheim Castle, Szabadkígyós

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Step outside of time!

Bath culture in Gyula was already vibrant during the Ottoman occupation, and even today most people visit the historic capital for its thermal waters and treatments. The city is also rich in cultural sights: it is well worth it to see the city centre, to visit the museums, country houses and churches, and then join the bustle of its festivals and try the many local delicacies. It is only 17 km to Békéscsaba, where the unique heritage of Mihály Munkácsy is found, besides the other sights and events that await tourists. Strolling on the streets of the surrounding villages, one can experience a truly idyllic rural atmosphere without compare. Gyula and Békéscsaba are located in Körös Valley, in the Southern part of the Great Hungarian Plain — the special charm of which is created by its romantic riversides and forests, and its pleasant climate that is sunny almost all year round.

Our publication maps out the area of the White Körös and the Black Körös rivers, listing the most exciting sights, recommending relaxing and active programmes, revealing the difference between Gyulai and Csabai sausages, and pointing out the festivals and culinary adventures that you must not miss.

5+1 unmissable experiences

ENJOY A BATH UNDER THE CANOPY

You can enjoy the benefits of thermal waters in one of the most popular thermal baths in the country, the Gyula Castle Bath in a breathtakingly beautiful, 200-year-old park, under the shade of sycamores, oaks and rowan trees.



IMMERSE YOURSELF IN HISTORY

Learn about the luxurious daily life of Hungarian lords and Turkish beys in the over 600-year-old Gyula Castle, while the recently renovated Almásy Castle allows you to peek into the secret world of noble families and their servants.



PICK UP THE OARS FOR A RIVER ADVENTURE

For those looking for active leisure opportunities, there are numerous river touring paths alongside the dense vegetation of romantic riverbanks. You might even see turtles enjoying the sun on the stones.



ENJOY THE LOCAL FLAVOURS

If you are in the area, you must not miss the two deservedly famous Hungarikums, the Gyulai and Csabai sausages. The latter has its own festival, which is one of the biggest gastro events of Hungary — with sausage stuffing and tasting, and sausage-making competitions. For dessert, pick something from the offer of Százéves Cukrászda (The Centennial Confectionery) in Gyula recalling the times of Austro-Hungarian Empire.



EXPERIENCE 19TH-CENTURY ROMANTICISM THROUGH THE MUNKÁCSY PAINTINGS

An apprentice carpenter turned painter, Mihály Munkácsy became world famous with his genre painting and his monumental religious paintings. You can marvel at the romantic realism of the painter's masterpieces in Békéscsaba.



DISCOVER THE CASTLES OF THE REGION

There are numerous cultural heritage sights in the towns of the Southern Great Plain that rank well even in Europe. Lordly castles of bygone ages, buildings and objects of rural bourgeoisie, museums and exhibitions wait to be discovered.

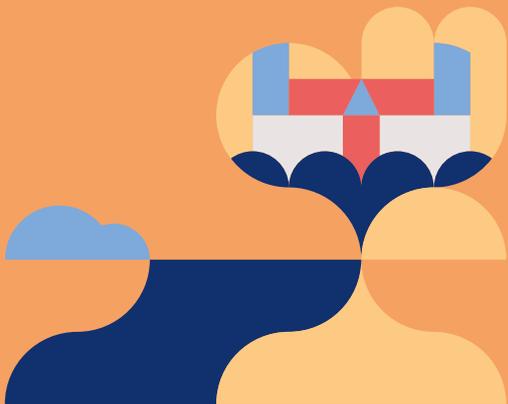


Four palaces, four styles, four histories

ALMÁSY MANSION – FROM SALONS TO SERVANTS

The Baroque Mansion in Gyula was built by the Harruckern family and for centuries was the home of the counts of Wenckheim and Almásy. Nationalised after World War II, the building was completely emptied in the 1990s; however, by 2016, the palace had been restored to its former glory, featuring special activities and a huge expanse of long established parkland for visitors to explore.

The visitor centre's interactive exhibits provide insight into the lavish lifestyles of aristocrats, the strict daily routine of the masters and the secret world of the servants waiting on their whims – discover what it was like to be a chambermaid, how they polished the silver or how the beds were warmed. Thanks to holoprojector technology, the former palace residents come to life. The Hussar Tower hosts fine art exhibitions, while the tower lookout on the other side offers stunning views of Gyula Castle and the palace park.





Wenckheim Castle, Szabadkígyós

WENCKHEIM CASTLE – EXTRAVAGANT ECLECTICISM

This Neo-Renaissance/Eclectic-style castle was built based on plans by Miklós Ybl, who rose to meet the challenges posed by Krisztina Wenckheim's extravagant demands: upon her request nothing is uniform within the palace, yet harmony is retained among the stylistic features. The palace is surrounded by French and English gardens and is one of the best-known landmarks in the Körös-Maros National Park. Before visiting the palace, it's worth checking the opening hours on its website.

VÁSÁRHELYI–BRÉDA PALACE – THE SPIRIT OF THE ITALIAN RENAISSANCE

The architect of the Lőkösház castle was inspired by Villa la Rotonda in Vicenza: the Classicist building with its four tympana recalls the masterpiece of Palladio, the most famous architect of the Italian Renaissance. Among the numerous sights of the castle and its huge park located near the border, the most special ones are the Foucault pendulum found in the rotunda, and the light painting that starts at twilight — but the exhibition showing the history of the castle and the temporary exhibitions of modern art are also exciting.



Gyulavári Palace, Gyula

GYULAVÁRI PALACE – TREASURES OF THE REGION

Built in the first half of the 19th century, the wrought-iron window grilles of this noble mansion were made by the estate's blacksmiths. The Gyulavári Palace is now home to a visitor centre, presenting a wealth of information on the folk, cultural and natural heritage of the southern Great Hungarian Plain.

Cultural diversity

GYULA CASTLE

This over 600-year-old Gothic fortification is the only flatland brick castle in Central and Eastern Europe which is still intact; it is situated in a beautifully laid out park, near a boating lake. The 24 exhibition halls of the castle museum bring the everyday life of the last seven centuries to life. You can visit the castle courtyard to watch falconers flying their birds, see blacksmiths at work, dress in costumes from the age and even try writing with a goose quill.





LADICS HOUSE

The ways of the rural bourgeoisie are brought to life in the home of the Ladics family of notaries in Gyula, built in the early 19th century. For five generations, the Ladics family preserved furniture, attire and a sprawling family library which was typical for the times.

Superbly preserved, the house provides a unique record of the times and everyday lives of the rural bourgeoisie.

GYULA CASTLE THEATRE

Since 1964, the Gyula Castle Theatre has opened its doors to the public every summer, hosting prestigious performances and festivals. Initially, only Hungarian historical dramas were performed, but the repertoire has steadily expanded over the years. The event has since become an all-arts festival, featuring dance and musical performances, film screenings and fine art exhibitions.

CONNECTING MUSIC, PEOPLE AND THE WORLD

There is a world clock in the city centre of Gyula, highlighting the unity of our world and the importance of the connection between people and music. Apart from showing the precise time, the clock displays various time zones and is a modernist creation: a shining ornament in the pedestrianised street with its greenish-bluish glow.



LUTHERAN CHURCH

The city centre of Békéscsaba is home to Central Europe's largest Lutheran church, which was built in 1824 in the Empire style typical at the time of the transition from the late Rococo to the Classicist style. The church is home to one of the largest church organs to be found in any Hungarian Lutheran church; it was built by organ-masters János Soukenik and János Rukavina of Szeged.

THE FIRST THEATRE

Vigadó, the first theatre of the Great Hungarian Plain, was built in Békéscsaba in 1879. It had a key role in the cultural life of the city: performances, concerts, balls and evenings were held in the amazing building, which dazzled the audience with its golden etched Venetian mirrors and marquetry flooring.

Since 1956, it has been known as the Jókai Mór Theatre.



A special bond: Mihály Munkácsy and Békéscsaba

The spirit of Mihály Munkácsy lingers around every nook and corner of the streets in Békéscsaba. Statues, plaques, inscriptions, and even a giant tulip chest pay tribute to the great artist. Munkácsy arrived in the city as an eight-year-old orphan; this experience inspired a number of his works, including the Yawning Apprentice.



MUNKÁCSY MIHÁLY MUSEUM

The museum has the biggest Munkácsy collection in the world, the most valuable piece of which is the Mourners at the Cross. Besides paintings, the collection has drawings and a constantly growing selection of currently 579 objects, including personal items of the painter, photos of his life, works and models, and various written documents.

Apart from the exhibition focusing on the great painter, 253,000 archaeological, 12,000 ethnographical, 12,000 art and 65,000 historic artifacts and documents, as well as 33,000 exhibition pieces of natural sciences are also displayed in the museum, which was awarded the Visitor Friendly Museum Award for its renewed exhibition spaces, technical solutions and interactive, multilingual guided tours.

WILL MUNKÁCSY PAINTINGS VANISH INTO THIN AIR?

Munkácsy used bitumen paint for the foundation of his paintings. Bitumen underpainting gives a pleasant warm tone to the picture, so the painter did not stop using it even after he noticed that his paintings started to grow dark rather soon. In order to slow it down, museums have to ensure constant temperatures and humidity for the works.



Munkácsy Memorial House, Békéscsaba

MUNKÁCSY MEMORIAL HOUSE

The memorial house was opened on the 150th anniversary of the birth of Mihály Munkácsy, in the Classicist mansion where the painter spent time as a guest in the home of his relatives, the Reök family. Four rooms of the mansion display a total of 21 Munkácsy paintings, representing the creative periods of the artist: his early works, Realist rural genre painting, Paris interiors, portraits, and his studies for religious paintings.

There is a cellar under the mansion, where you can join sausage and pálinka tasting events. There is also a confectionary in the building, where visitors with a sweet tooth can browse a wide selection of Munkácsy cakes, whilst the rear building provides the venue for educational activities focused on the art of Mihály Munkácsy and upper-middle class lifestyles of the 19th century.

Culinary adventures

WHERE THE FENCE IS MADE OF SAUSAGE

Gyulai and Csabai sausages are world famous Hungarikums, with protected designations of origin: strict requirements have to be met to attach the Csabai or Gyulai brand to a sausage. Both namesake cities have their museums dedicated to these award-winning products. CsabaPark in Békéscsaba is a gastrotourism event centre maintaining, cultivating and demonstrating the traditions of Csabai sausage-making, and the site of the Csabai Sausage Festival. The 43-hectare forest park has several themed playgrounds, a petting zoo, a marked walking path, a 4-kilometre-long running track, and a boating pond serving the active recreation of its visitors. Thanks to the ongoing developments, the area will soon have an adventure park too.

IS IT FROM GYULA OR BÉKÉSCSABA?

Although both sausages feature paprika, the Csabai sausage is more heavily spiced and is made with cumin, as opposed to the Gyulai sausage which contains pepper. The Gyulai sausage comes in pairs, whilst the Csabai is a single, slightly thicker sausage.



PLUM PÁLINKA FROM THE KÖRÖS RIVERS VALLEY

Békés County plum pálinka is also a protected product: it may only be made from red plums harvested in the Körös Rivers Valley. The Békés County Plum Pálinka Route passes through Békés, Békéscsaba and Gyula and presents the traditions of pálinka distillation, along with various methods and tricks associated with it, and the culture surrounding pálinka.

THE PERFECT ACCOMPANIMENT TO BÉKÉS COUNTY PÁLINKA: BÉKÉS COUNTY FOIE GRAS!

By the 18th century, Orosháza had become the most significant poultry breeding region of the country. That is where one of the best quality goose livers of Hungary originates, which is tastiest when roasted in its own fat. It goes excellently with Sárréti blackthorn pálinka, with its wild fruit-like flavour having a hint of almond, marzipan and chocolate aroma, which is made of blackthorn growing freely in the region.



The Centennial Confectionery, Gyula

SWEETS OF BÉKÉS IN A MILIEU OF AUSTRO-HUNGARY

Százéves Cukrászda, or the The Centennial Confectionery has operated since 1840 in the most prestigious vintage buildings of Gyula, welcoming its visitors with an authentic Austro-Hungarian atmosphere, ornamented walls and Biedermeier furniture. In place of the confectionery workshop a museum was established. The refrigerated display cabinet offers a range of classic cakes, cooked ice-cream and hand-made bonbons—it would be a shame to miss out on the hundred-year-old cake!

EAT LOCAL

Gyula has an expansive network of small producers, offering hand-made goat cheese, tomatoes of special tastes and shapes, chili pepper products, and quail eggs. Most local producers sell their healthy products made with environment-friendly methods in the Gyula Market and Market Hall every Sunday.

Festivals in every season

BÉKÉSCSABA SAUSAGE FESTIVAL

The four-day merriment is traditionally held in the last week of October. One of Hungary's most significant gastro festivals, it gives you an opportunity to get a taste of rural life. The centre stage is obviously taken by Csabai sausage and Hungarian flavours, but there are numerous music, dance, art and children's programmes organised for the visitors to enjoy too.



GYULA PALINKA FESTIVAL

Gyula turns into the palinka capital for three days in the autumn. The focus is on the producers, showcasing the fruit of their labour every year. You can try culinary specialities in the festival, join a palinka brewing competition, and listen to concerts of popular music.

GYULA HONEY AND GINGERBREAD FESTIVAL

Gyula is not left without a festival in the winter either, as the city welcomes its visitors with a true family event. The December crowd can taste special kinds of honey and delicious gingerbread, as well as look at the beekeeping exhibition and fair. Children can prepare for Christmas in Advent-themed arts and crafts activities.



SHAKESPEARE FESTIVAL

The Shakespeare Festival is held every July in the Gyula Castle Theatre. Several famous Hungarian and foreign companies bring plays by the playwright, performed in various adaptations and styles. Besides these, visitors can enjoy concerts, workshops, exhibitions and street theatre performances.

GYULA CASTLE JAZZ FESTIVAL

The Gyula Castle Jazz Festival has been held in the excellent acoustics of the Renaissance courtyard of Gyula Castle since 1991, where the cream of Hungarian jazz is represented every summer. In the past 20 years, international artists also joined the festival with numerous world-famous musicians entertaining the audience.

Refresh your health at the historic castle spa

AN ENERGIZING BATH

Bathing is one of the most effective methods to replenish one's mental and physical energies, and the most famous thermal bath of Békés County, Gyula Castle Bath, has everything that is needed for that. Apart from the pools, massage benches, hot tubs, saunas and a water bar serve the guests' recreation in a picturesque natural park. The sauna centre of the bath has three outdoor sauna facilities, hot tubs, wooden tubs, two indoor infrared saunas and a steam room, and visitors can enjoy the experience of night-time wellness bathing in the special atmosphere of a domed pool every Saturday. Those who prefer more energetic leisure activities can visit the water slide park or go for a swim in the 50-metre-long sport and 25-metre-long swimming pools.

MASTER OF RECOVERY

The thermal waters of the Gyula Bath benefit musculo-skeletal problems, nerve problems, inflammatory gynecologic diseases, and help rehabilitation after accidents. Medical thermal pools are located in the building of the former manège. Recovery is facilitated by balneologic treatments, such as thermal water bathtubs, weight bath, carbonated bath, tangenter treatment and underwater whirlpool massage, which can be complemented by physiotherapy, physical therapy, mud bath and therapeutic massage.



BATH IN THE HEART OF THE CITY

Árpád Thermal Bath and Swimming Pool is located near the city centre of Békéscsaba. The bath complex operates in a protected historic monument building, welcoming its guests with outdoor and indoor pools, slides, a sunbathing island, hot tub, and quality therapeutic treatments.

SAUNA SEANCES

The protagonist of the seances is the sauna master, mixing various essential oils and aromas in the water of the sauna bucket, while entertaining the group with exciting stories. Visitors of a more adventurous spirit can try the beautifying beer sauna or the many benefits of various citruses and honey in the hot steam.



Adventures in the Körös Rivers Valley

FLOURISHING ECOTOURISM IN THE SZANAZUG PARADISE

Körös Rivers Valley received the title of nature park in 2015, given to large areas holding significant natural value, which place emphasis on sustainable development and natural recreation, and offer programmes suitable for active leisure. Located at the confluence of the Black Körös and White Körös, Szanazug is a paradise of ecotourism. It is a popular hiking and bathing place with a long stretch of freely accessible beach, with shaded riverbanks, woods and clear water in the rivers.



You can try almost any watercraft: pedalo, water ski, kayak, canoe, boat and pleasure boat, and there is even a ferry for crossing the river. Alongside the romantic riverbanks, holiday homes, boathouses, taverns and camping sites await their guests. The Körös rivers and their backwaters are perfect for rowing trips, but it is also nice to go on hikes in the Szanazug area. Discover the remains of an ancient hill-fort, Sámson Castle, dating back to the Árpád era, while the nearby Mályvúd Oak Forest offers unique fauna and flora for visitors to explore.

An aerial photograph of a river winding through a lush green forest. The water is a deep, dark green. In the center-right of the frame, a small wooden boat with a red hull and blue interior is on the water. Two people are in the boat, one of whom is using a long wooden pole to navigate. In the lower-left corner, a person is swimming in the water, leaving a small wake. The top of the image is dominated by the dense, overhanging branches of trees, likely willows, with their leaves in shades of green and yellow. The overall scene is peaceful and scenic.

A BOAT, A BIKE OR A HORSEBACK RIDE

You can discover Körös Rivers Valley with a kayak or a canoe. Following the romantic riverside, you will have an authentic experience of the wilderness. You can choose from a number of single or group river tours, during which you can learn about the flora and fauna of the area and the history of the surrounding settlements. If you want to explore the land by bike, there are several routes you can take. You can cycle from Gyula to Békéscsaba, or swoosh along the dams running next to the rivers.

If you are interested in history, you can also learn about the life of the Wenckheim earls on your bicycle trip. You also have the option of riding a horse, as the Körös Valley offers numerous horseback tours as well—you can even practise riding with the help of a professional trainer.

ACTIVE TOURS

1. 40-kilometres-long cycle tour in the Körös region
2. The three-hour Csaba Cycle Circuit which showcases Békéscsaba and its surroundings
3. A canoe trip to Békéscsaba from the centre of Gyula

Our favourite photos of the region

 [visithungary](#)



Gyula Castle



The Centennial Confectionery



Munkácsy Memorial House



Gyula Castle Bath



Wenckheim Castle



Almásy Mansion

Nearby sights

ROAM ABOUT THE SZARVAS ARBORETUM

Discover the sights of Szarvas: its famous arboretum, including the Mini Hungary model park, the Csodaösvény (Miracle Trail) Adventure Park and the Bolza Castle.

SPLASH!

The landmark of Makó is a significant artwork of organic architecture in Hungary. The architect, Imre Makovecz said that the bath he designed is a temple of water and purity. Make a visit to Mórahalom too, where a pleasure bath welcomes those looking for some aquatic fun.

TRACK OUR ANCESTORS

Ópusztaszer is mentioned even in the stories about the Hungarian conquest of the Carpathian Basin. Discover the National Heritage Park, committed to preserving ancient Hungarian customs and traditions. You can learn about the adventurous life of our ancestors with the help of numerous monuments, traditional buildings, and the demonstration of traditional trades.

GET A BIRD'S-EYE-VIEW OF SZEGED

Walk up the 287 steps of the Votive Church, and enjoy the sight of the bustling main street with its many cafés and restaurants, the Secessionist buildings fitted into the urban scenery as mosaic pieces, and the glamorous view of the curves of the Tisza river from the church tower.

PUBLISHED BY: Hungarian Tourism Agency,
Dr. Zoltán Guller CEO
H-1027 Budapest, Kacska utca 15–23.

TELEPHONE NO: +36 1 488 8700

DESIGNED AND EDITED BY: Graphasel Design Studio

PRINTING: Grafit Pencil Nyomda Kft.



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INVESTING IN YOUR FUTURE