

Treasures of
HUNGARY

An aerial photograph of a historic white church complex with two prominent black domes and a red-tiled roof, situated on a hillside overlooking a large body of water. The scene is captured during a golden sunset, with the sun low on the horizon, creating a shimmering reflection on the water and casting a warm glow over the entire scene. The church is surrounded by lush green trees and a paved courtyard.



HUNGARY



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A TREASURE IN THE HEART OF EUROPE

HUNGARY

THIS IS THE LAND OF TOKAJI ASZÚ, ONE OF THE FINEST SWEET WINES ON EARTH. RIGHT IN THE MIDDLE OF EUROPE, THIS COUNTRY HAS MORE THERMAL WATER SPRINGS THAN ANY OTHER ON THE CONTINENT. ONE THAT IS LANDLOCKED YET MAY STILL BE CALLED 'LAND OF WATERS', CONTAINING THE LARGEST BIOLOGICALLY ACTIVE THERMAL LAKE IN THE WORLD SUITABLE FOR BATHING. A LAND WHERE TRADITION, HISTORY AND A GLAMOROUS MODERN LIFESTYLE WALK HAND IN HAND. THIS COUNTRY IS HUNGARY. BE OUR GUEST AND DISCOVER OUR TREASURES!



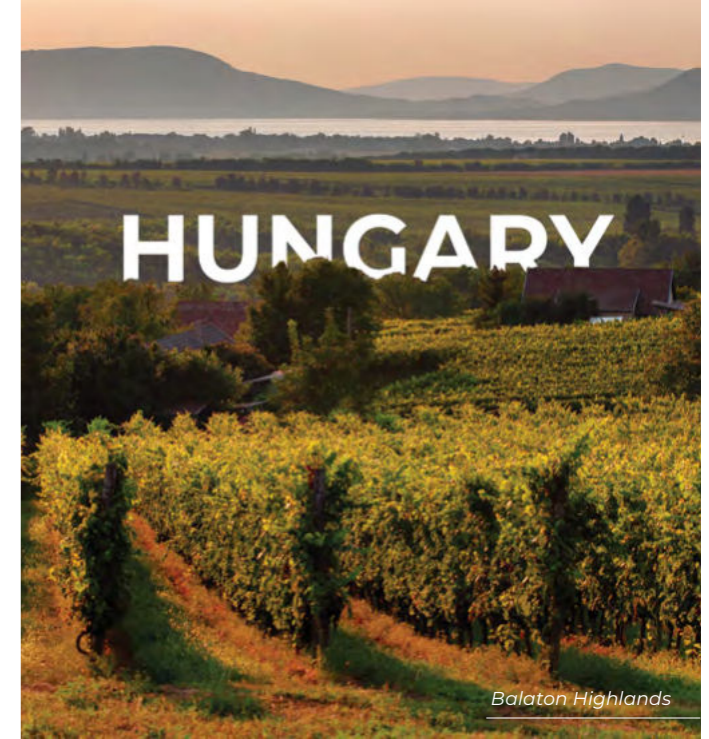
WOW Hungary - watch the video here



Tokaj wine region



Hidden in the centre of Europe is a country where water roils under the earth and erupts to the surface, hot and healing. A country where you can refresh your body and mind by relaxing in the hot waters of authentic medieval Turkish baths, in summer and winter. Where you can always find something historic or modern that touches your soul, and where the atmosphere is vibrant and relaxing at the same time. Where the *aszú* grape berries of noble rot, hand-picked during autumn, produce beautifully balanced golden wine. Where on hilltops, deep in the valleys and across endless plains, you find lively villages centuries-old, charming towns, luxurious castles and a flourishing metropolis.



Balaton Highlands



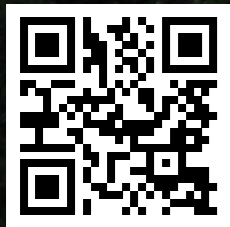
Lake Fertő

During our thousand-year history, we have attracted many visitors, some occasionally coming with unfriendly intentions. Tartars, Turks and Habsburgs have left their footprint in the Carpathian Basin and millions of people have lived together since, creating the colourful culture that exists in Hungary today.

However, Hungary offers more than just its history. Discover the attributes of a thriving modern nation, as well as its 21st century culture. Hungary is a place where the locals are rediscovering their surroundings, enabling their cities, and the country as a whole, to burst into life as it welcomes its guests.



*Hungarian is hard to understand and to speak. If you know a few keywords, however, such as **Köszönöm!** (Thank you), **Jó napot!** (Hello), the locals will be grateful.*



Budapest, the
Spice of Europe
- watch the video
here



A TREASURE IN THE HEART OF HUNGARY

BUDAPEST

THERE IS NO OTHER CAPITAL IN THE EUROPEAN UNION WHERE AUTHENTIC MEDIEVAL TURKISH BATHS ARE STILL IN OPERATION. FURTHERMORE, YOU CAN HARDLY FIND A CITY WHERE YOU MAY ENCOUNTER A UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE SITE ON ALMOST EVERY CORNER. THOUGH IT IS A CAPITAL OF 1.7 MILLION INHABITANTS, BUDAPEST SOMEHOW MANAGES TO RETAIN A WEALTH OF HIDDEN TREASURES.



Budapest view from Gellért Hill

A sparkling metropolis that is historic yet contemporary, classical yet cosmopolitan, Budapest embodies the spice of Europe. No other capital in the European Union, however, is interspersed with authentic medieval Turkish baths still in operation, just one key characteristic of this culturally and architecturally rich city.

A string of these landmark spas lines the Danube: there is no other place where the river shows its beauty to such effect. The city is defined by the river running through it, separating Buda from Pest and necessitating all the famous iconic bridges. Actually, the banks of the Danube are part of the UNESCO World Heritage listing in which they are described as “one of the world’s outstanding urban landscapes”.

Looking down from Gellért Hill, one of the highest points in the city, or from the fabled towers of Fisherman’s Bastion, often take people’s breath away with the stunning views of gold and marble, majolica-glazed rooftiles and stained glass, the luxurious buildings of Budapest. Some of the finest include the third-largest Parliament building on Earth, palatial landmarks by the Danube and Matthias Church, listed as a World Heritage Site. Visitors are amazed by the medley of Ancient Roman ruins, Neo-Gothic art, Eclecticism and Art Nouveau in Hungary’s capital. After a long day of sightseeing, you can relax at one of Hungary’s baths or day spas. Nearly 1,500 hot springs supply dozens of spas around the country.



You can also find treasures underground: quite close to the centre of Budapest are unique caves, offering very unusual experiences. Szemlő-hegyi Cave is famous for its crystal formations, Pál-völgyi Cave for its beautiful stalactites, and there is also an underground world beneath the picturesque cobbled streets of Buda Castle; here lies the largest interconnected cellar system in Hungary, covering some ten kilometres (six miles).



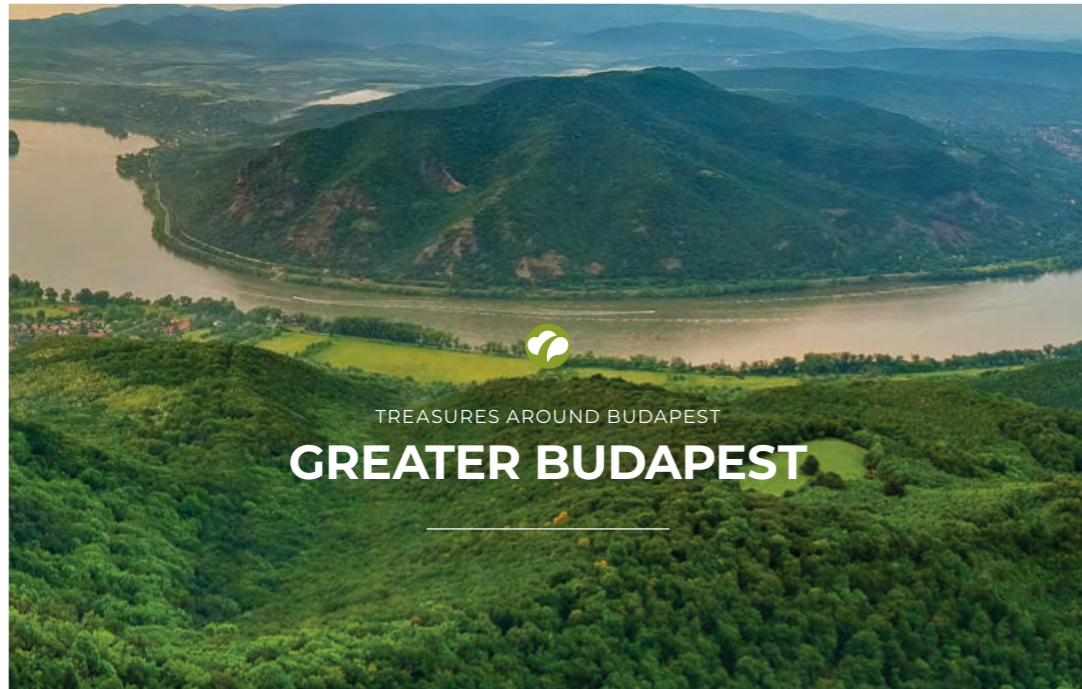
BUDA

Fisherman's Bastion



PEST

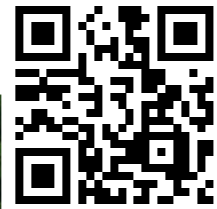
St. Stephen's Basilica



TREASURES AROUND BUDAPEST
GREATER BUDAPEST

WHILE HUNGARY'S CAPITAL IS BRIMMING WITH ATTRACTIONS, YOU ONLY NEED TO TRAVEL NORTH FOR AN HOUR OR SO TO DISCOVER MEDIEVAL CASTLES, A MAGNIFICENT BASILICA AND A HUB OF COLOURFUL GALLERIES.

Take a look - watch the video



The journey alone, best taken by boat or even speedboat, makes any day trip particularly memorable, with spectacular views as the Danube sweeps south through rolling greenery.

Danube Bend



Esztergom

Szentendre is a city of artists, whose galleries and museums hold fascinating collections and host frequent exhibitions. Above the town, the Open-Air Ethnographic Museum, or Skanzen, displays life-size illustrations of rural Hungarian life.

Visegrád had its heyday in the Middle Ages, its heritage re-enacted at the annual Palace Games. It was here that King Matthias Corvinus had his Renaissance summer palace, its atmospheric remains dotting the panoramic landscape.

Esztergom is the seat of Hungarian Catholicism. Its basilica is Hungary's largest and holds a rich trove of ecclesiastical treasures. The permanent art collection at the Christian Museum here is the finest outside Budapest. Hungary's only triumphal arch stands in Vác while the largest fortress system in Europe runs around Komárom.

Forests and a varied terrain await hikers and cyclists, along with panoramic views of the Visegrád, Pilis and Börzsöny hills. Walkers head for landmarks such as

Rám Gorge, the Vadálló Stones and lofty Dobogókő, the 'heart chakra of the world'. Those on two wheels can ride the complete route on the left bank of the Danube, including the Queen Beatrix cycle path between Nagymaros and Zebegény.

The renowned wineries of Etyek host seasonal picnics, where visitors can take walking tours, sampling the local delicacies. Etyek also features the Korda Film Park and is surrounded by nature reserves.

Many tourists flock to Gödöllő to see the sumptuous royal palace, a coronation gift to revered Habsburg Empress Elisabeth of Bavaria, Sissi to Hungarians, and Emperor Franz Joseph. Here Sissi would spend many a happy retreat, riding her horse and strolling in the extensive landscaped grounds.



Gödöllő



“PRAY FOR A SOUND MIND AND A SOUND BODY”, THE ANCIENT ROMAN POET JUVENAL SUGGESTED. THE CURATIVE POWERS OF THESE WATERS WERE WELL KNOWN IN ROMAN TIMES. NOWADAYS, HUNGARY IS A CENTRE FOR HEALTH, MEDICAL AND SPA TOURISM. THE COUNTRY IS EXTREMELY RICH IN THERMAL WATERS: IT HAS NEARLY 1,500 HOT SPRINGS AND OVER 270 DIFFERENT TYPES OF MINERAL AND MEDICINAL WATERS. 80% OF ITS TERRITORY HAS SOME KIND OF THERMAL WATER UNDERGROUND.

Gellért Thermal Bath

For visitors, experiencing a historic spa shouldn't be missed. Not only do they offer a place for recreation, relaxation and rejuvenation, but most are located in magnificent buildings that are more than a hundred years old.

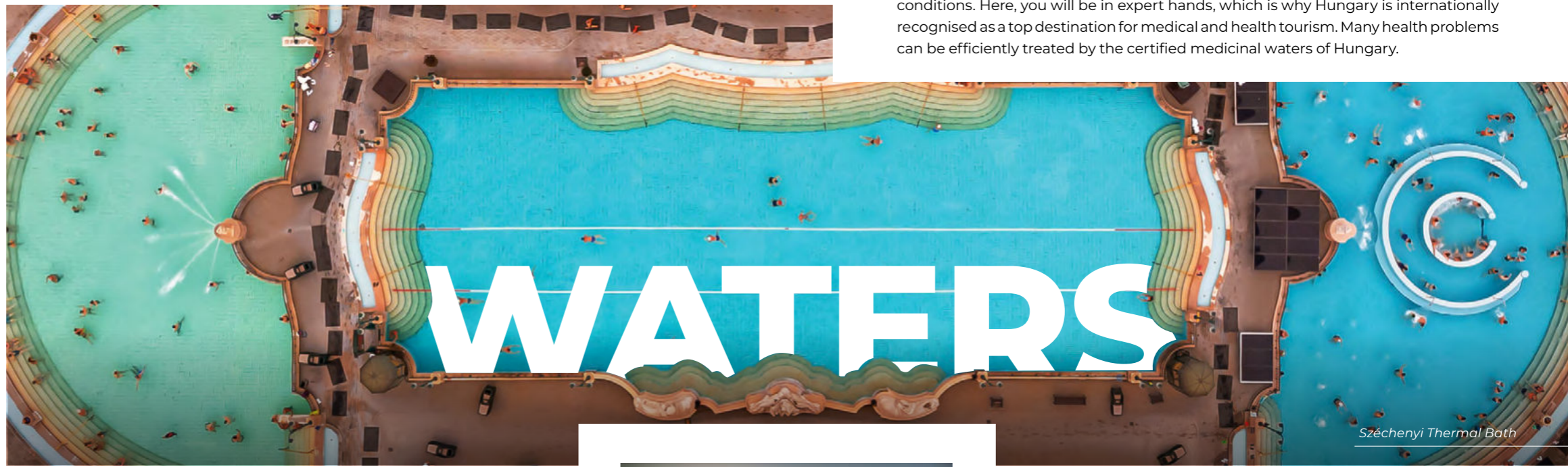


Hungary, the land of waters - watch the video

Some are architectural wonders in their own right, several following the original Ottoman layout of an octagonal pool beneath a classic cupola, through which rays of natural light play on the water within. In Budapest, where spa tourism has been a significant attraction since the 1800s, design styles such as Art Nouveau produced lavish landmarks.

Most major spas have an outdoor element, allowing them to double up as lidos in summer, imbuing the complex with a holiday atmosphere.

On a more salubrious note, many spas provide programmes of treatment for specific conditions. Here, you will be in expert hands, which is why Hungary is internationally recognised as a top destination for medical and health tourism. Many health problems can be efficiently treated by the certified medicinal waters of Hungary.



Széchenyi Thermal Bath

The history of spa culture in Hungary dates back 2,000 years with the Romans. The Turks enriched it in the late 1500s and 1600s with an expert infrastructure, some of it still functioning today. Around it, beautiful baths were mainly created in the 19th century and renovated in recent years, safeguarding their tradition.



Rudas Thermal Bath

One of the world's first wave pools was opened in Budapest in 1927.



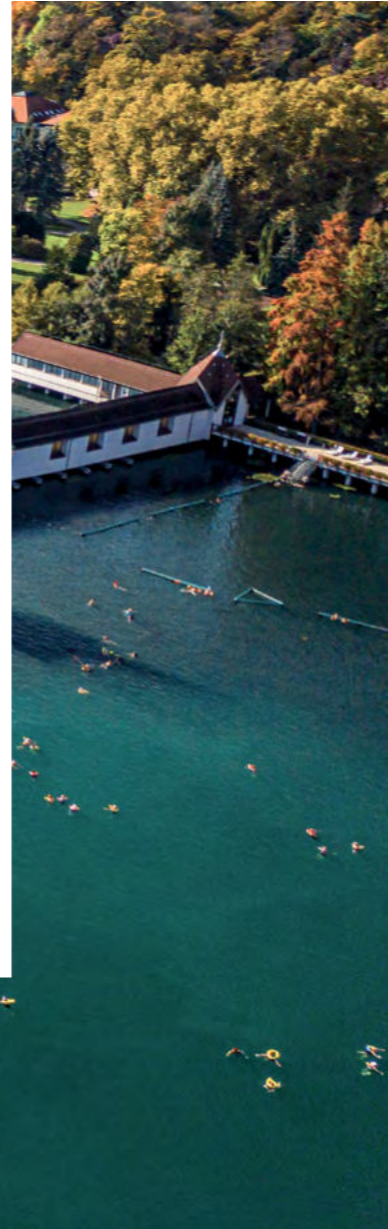
LIQUID TREASURES: WATERS

THE LAND OF SPA CULTURE

THE OTTOMAN OCCUPATION OF HUNGARY WAS NOT CONFINED TO BUDAPEST – A BATHING CULTURE WAS SPREAD ACROSS HUNGARY.



Hévíz – watch the video here



A gleaming example of Hungary’s hammam heritage is **Eger**, 140 km east of Budapest. Here bathers soak beneath a golden dome built 400 years ago and renovated over time. The traditional octagonal pool and 200,000 pieces of gilded mosaic reflect an authentic ambience, enhanced by the foam massages and apple teas also available.

Down by the Romanian border, at **Makó** you can bathe in a church-like building designed by the acclaimed Imre Makovecz. His Hagymatikum Spa hints at Hungary’s folk and pagan past, as well as Makó’s prime onions, hagyma. You can explore a tropical storm cave, play chess outdoors in winter and relax in medicinal mud from the Mures river. By the Serbian border, the century-old Anna spa in **Szeged** offers night bathing amid Neo-Renaissance architecture.

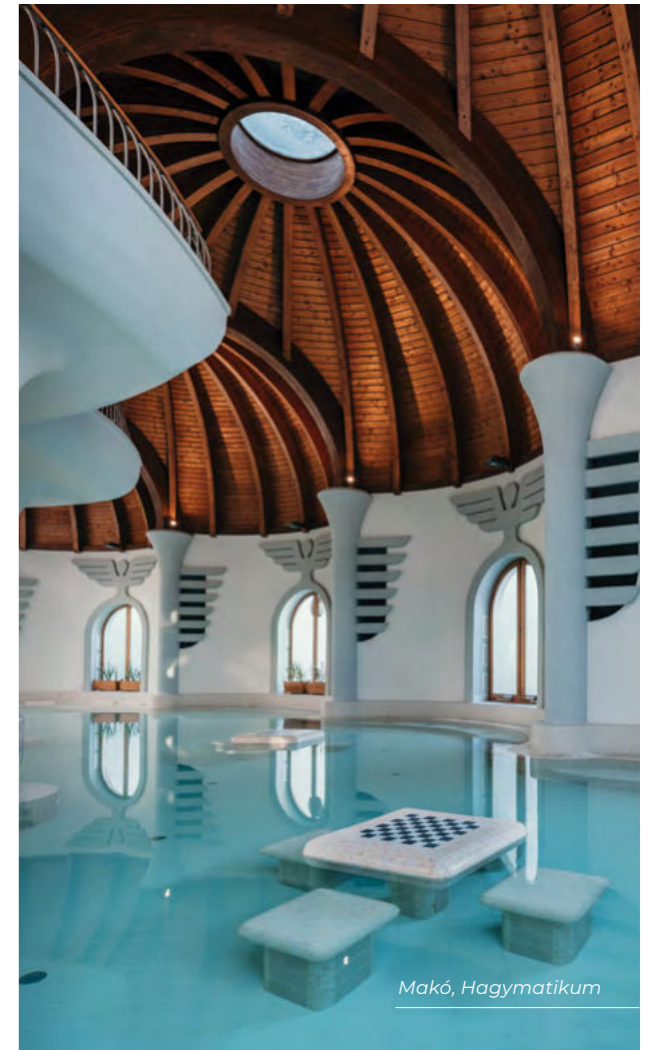
Hungarian spas can also heal. Those suffering from respiratory ailments can relax at **Tapolca cave**, on the north shore of Lake Balaton. With a high humidity of 14-16 degrees, regenerative ions and minimal dust, Tapolca has long been a healthy retreat. During World War II, the cave was used as a refuge by the hospital above. Patients saw their conditions improve, a benefit enjoyed by today’s guests at the nearby hotel, where active leisure is also encouraged.

In eastern Hungary, **Hajdúszoboszló** is one of the largest spa centres in Europe. Also notable are the baths in **Debrecen** parkland, the Cave Baths of **Miskolctapolca** and alfresco **Sóstógyógyfürdő** by **Nyíregyháza**. The salt hill of **Egerszalók** merits a special mention, a large mound, naturally formed, around which a luxury resort has been built. The waters here are particularly salubrious. In the north-west of Hungary, the medicinal waters of Sárvár spring from two sources deep in the Earth and supply an extensive spa complex.

Further south, the unique Castle Baths in **Gyula** are set around a medieval fortress, the spa converted into a recreational area in 1970, 450 years after the Turks bathed here. The vast thermal spa at **Harkány**, much of it outdoors, can help with fertility and arthritic issues.



The most famous spa near Lake Balaton is Hévíz, the world’s largest biologically active thermal lake, attracting health tourists year-round.





CULINARY TREASURES

THE CLASSICS OF HUNGARIAN CUISINE



HUNGARIAN CUISINE IS NOT ONLY ABOUT GOULASH AND PAPRIKA! BE OUR GUEST AND EXPERIENCE THE EXQUISITE GASTRONOMY OF OUR COUNTRY! HUNGARY IS A LAND OF CREATIVE RECIPES, QUALITY INGREDIENTS AND FRIENDLY SERVICE, PROVIDING A VIVID FUSION OF AUTHENTIC AND MODERN DISHES.

Dobos cake



The most iconic cakes are the classic Dobos and Esterházy, while Hungary also invented the walnut-apricot zserbó slice and the apricot-cottage-cheese Rákóczi túrós.

Spicy, meaty, hearty, colourful and delicious – Hungarian cuisine is heavenly! From starters and soup specialities to savoury mains, decadent desserts and street food, here are some Hungarian favourites for you to sample.

Starters include the noteworthy goose liver – after France, Hungary is its second-biggest producer. Many restaurants feature it on the menu, while cans of creamy foie gras pâté make a perfect souvenir. Of the many soups, stand-outs are goulash with beef cubes and vegetables, and fish soup, a sought-after speciality in Szeged and Baja. While the Baja variety is based purely on carp with much simpler preparation, Szeged's features several fish and the soup is passed through a sieve.

For mains, Hungary is proud of its stews, made from slow-cooked beef, or chicken spiced with paprika, one of the signature dishes is *csirkepaprikás*. Stuffed cabbage, cabbage rolls filled with minced pork, features in the colder months, while *lecsó*, Hungarian ratatouille, is popular in late summer.



Spicing up Hungary for 200 years – watch the video

Hungary's favourite pasta is *túrós csusza*, with curd cheese and bacon. Layered potatoes, *rakott krumppli*, come with eggs and sausage, while *paprikás krumppli* is a paprika potato stew with sausage. Uniting many dishes is the fact that Hungarians like to top almost everything with a touch of sour cream.

On the sweeter side, Hungary excels in desserts. Hearty Gundel pancakes are filled with a walnut/rum mixture smothered in dark-chocolate sauce, Somlói sponge cake is vanilla-flavoured with chocolate sauce, rum and raisins, while *túrógombóc* is sweet cottage cheese dumplings with a sweet sour cream sauce.



Lángos



As for street food, savoury lángos is a deep-fried dough topped with sour cream, garlic and cheese, sweet kürtőskalács is a chimney cake rolled in sugar, vanilla, coconut, chocolate or walnuts, and Hungarian strudel, rétes, comes in cherry, apple or poppy seed varieties



Lecsó



LIQUID TREASURES: WINES

WINES OF HUNGARY — PERSONALLY



EVERY COUNTRY HAS ITS QUALITIES AND TRADITIONS, THE VALUES WE CALL HUMAN CULTURE. WINE IS INTEGRAL TO THIS CULTURE AND HAS GIVEN PLEASURE AND WORK TO SUCCESSIVE GENERATIONS FOR THOUSANDS OF YEARS.

WINES

Here in Hungary, we have been producing wine for more than a thousand years. We have special varieties such as Furmint and Juhfark. We have unique volcanic areas such as Tokaj and Somló. We have excellent wines with distinguished pasts, such as Tokaji Aszú and the celebrated Egri Bikavér ('bull's blood').

Here, at this northern latitude of the Carpathian Basin between 45 and 49 degrees, we still place great value on deciding each year just when and how much to prune, what we should blend and with what, and where and what we should plant. This work cannot be done by the vine, nor the sun, nor the soil, none of these elements are capable of figuring these things out. For this reason in Hungary we believe our wine has the human touch, a unique personal value that also ensures constant improvement.



The most valuable element in the production of Hungarian wine, and the certainly most knowledgeable, are the winemakers, who operate in tandem with the soil, the sun and the vines. Down the ages, they have been directing and transforming nature's gifts into new ventures, year after year, generation after generation. So, blessed with this personal touch, our wines are like our winemakers, each one is different. Their inexhaustible wealth lies precisely in this diversity, without whose numerous individual varieties the world would doubtless be poorer.



LIQUID TREASURES: TOKAJI ASZÚ

ESSENCE OF EARTH AND SUN

“AND LET NECTAR’S SILVER RAIN RIPEN GRAPES OF TOKAJ SOON”* – PLEADS OUR ANTHEM. NO WONDER THE HUNGARIAN NATIONAL ANTHEM MENTIONS THIS, AS TOKAJI ASZÚ IS THE WORLD’S MOST HIGHLY PRAISED SWEET WINE. COME AND VISIT US, WE WILL SHARE OUR SECRET WITH YOU!

* Quotation: Hungarian National Anthem, translation by William N. Loew, 1881

Tokaji Aszú is one of the most unique wines in the world, almost a miracle of nature. The town of Tokaj, which lends the surrounding wine region its name, lies 230 km east of Budapest. The soil here is composed of a mixture of volcanic powder and rock. Autumn is longer and drier, the surrounding rivers and forests deep in haze every morning; this is what makes the aszú (the Hungarian for botrytised grape berries, attacked by noble rot) so special. The noble berries are individually picked, macerated in the fermenting juice of Furmint, Hárslevelű or Sárgamuskotály grapes in order to acquire an extremely rich content. This elaborated wine ferments and ages in Hungarian oak barrels for several years. The result is a fully complex sweet wine with an unbeatable taste: Tokaji Aszú.

The Tokaj wine region consists of 27 designated villages and around 6,000 hectares of vineyards. It was the world’s first wine region delineated by royal decree, in 1737. Tokaj was declared a World Heritage Site in 2002 under the name “Tokaj Wine Region Historic Cultural Landscape”.



Watch this video and you'll understand why our wine is so special



Tokaji Aszú



Tokaji Aszú comes from the Tokaj wine region in the Northern area of Hungary. It is a naturally sweet wine, which due to its very complex flavour and beautiful balance is served in the world’s most prestigious restaurants.



LIQUID TREASURES: PÁLINKA

THE TASTES AND TRADITIONS OF PÁLINKA

LIKE FRENCH CHAMPAGNE AND GORGONZOLA CHEESE, HUNGARIAN PÁLINKA HAS THE STATUS OF A PROTECTED DESIGNATION OF ORIGIN (PDO). THIS MEANS THAT IT MUST BE FERMENTED EXCLUSIVELY FROM FRUIT GROWN IN HUNGARY, NOT FROM CONCENTRATES, DISTILLED AND ALSO BOTTLED IN HUNGARY. FRUIT PULP IS PERMITTED AND DRIED FRUIT IN THE AGEING PROCESS ALSO.



Pálinka, Unicum and Soda water - watch the video here



Along with overarching regulations, within Hungary there are eight localities which specialise in a specific *pálinka*, and granted their own PDO: plum pálinka from Szatmár, apricot from Kecskemét, apple from Szabolcs, plum from Békés, apricot from Gönc, sour cherry from Újfehértó, pear from Göcsej and grape marc from Pannonhalma. At the historic abbey there, monks have been making wine and spirits for 1,000 years.

The range of fruit used and places where it is distilled, spread across Hungary from Göcsej in the west to Szatmár in the east, indicate the diverse, historic traditions of this revered spirit.

Under the Habsburgs and in the post-war régime, distillation was state-run. After 1989, a private industry developed, quality improved and *pálinka* became fashionable, with imaginative marketing campaigns and labelling. In Budapest, specialist bars sprang up. A full range of fruit brandies can be sampled at a *pálinka* museum on Király utca, where a history of the drink is also showcased.



Production techniques, though modernised, remain, in essence, traditional. First, the fruit is gathered, de-stoned, mashed and fermented over a fortnight or so. It is then distilled, twice in the case of pot stills, and aged in wooden or metal casks.

As well as by types of fruit, pálinka may be designated according to more precise methods of production – an *ágyas pálinka* has been aged together with the fruit for at least three months, a *törkölypálinka* is made from grape marc.



Pálinka should be served at room temperature, in a tulip-shaped glass, round at the bottom, narrow at the rim, so that the aromas may breathe. It is sipped and savoured, most certainly not slammed – and with a communal raising and clinking of glasses.





UNLOCKING HUNGARY'S TREASURES:
LAKE BALATON

LAKE BALATON, CENTRAL EUROPE'S LARGEST LAKE



MINGLING SHADES OF BLUE, GREEN AND TURQUOISE, DOTTED WITH WHITEWASHED SAILS IN THE DISTANCE, BALATON IS HUNGARY'S PREMIER HOLIDAY DESTINATION, A NATURAL TREASURE WHATEVER THE SEASON. CENTRAL EUROPE'S BIGGEST LAKE AWAITS VISITORS YEAR-ROUND WITH UNIQUE NATURAL AND CULTURAL ATTRACTIONS, GREAT GASTRONOMY, SPA BREAKS AND OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES.

Tihany Abbey

Balaton is busiest in summer when families spend their holiday along its 236-kilometre coastline. From sipping wine in the sunshine on the volcanic slopes of the north shore to making a splash by moonlight at a lively south-coast music festival, the lake offers pleasures a-plenty.

The most popular destinations are lively Siófok, spa-oriented Balatonfüred, historic Tihany, vineyard-lined Badacsony and healing Hévíz. Water sports include windsurfing, stand-up paddling (SUP), water-cycling, sailing and kayaking, while the many beaches provide relaxing rejuvenation. Shallower on the south shore, Balaton is perfect for families to play, swimmers to unwind, sportsmen to train and holidaymakers to bathe. Spectators may enjoy the annual Blue Ribbon sailing race, a tradition dating back to 1934, starting and finishing in Balatonfüred.

Active tourism is also booming, thanks to endless green trails to walk, hills to climb, adventure parks to explore, boats to sail, lookout towers to scale and a 204-kilometre-long bike path encircling the whole lake. Unique options include rowing around the cave lake of Tapolca integral to the Balaton Uplands National Park. lined with nature trails and dotted with monadnocks.



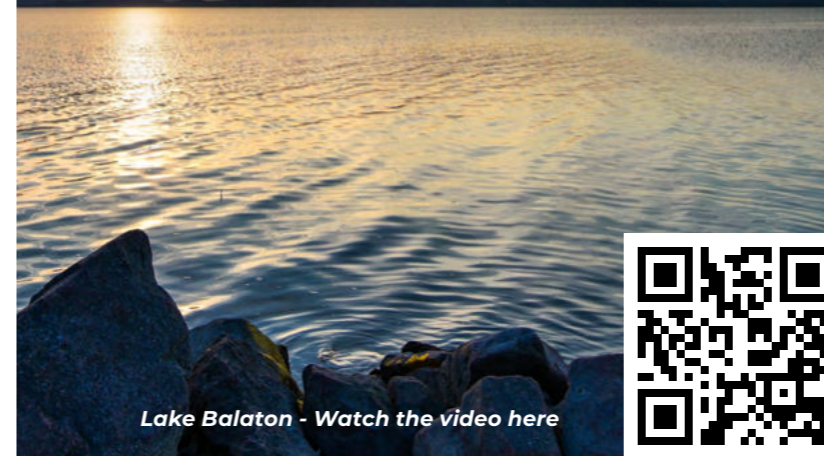
Lake Balaton does not lack cultural attractions either, with impressive sights such as the Festetics Palace, Tihany Abbey and castles in Sümeg, Veszprém and Szigliget. Festivals focus on a whole range of music, from classical to cutting-edge contemporary, from VeszprémFest in the historic centre of town to Balaton Sound at Zamárdi.

Gastronomic tourism drives a year-round industry, underscored by Lake Balaton's six wine districts: Badacsony, Balatonboglár, Balatonfüred-Csopak, the Balaton Highlands, Nagy-Somló and Zala. Alongside, specialist producers and winemakers have created a unique hub around the nearby Káli Basin. Homemade cheeses, honeys and jams, not to mention lavender in all kinds of imaginative forms, can be found every Sunday at Liliomkert market at Káptalantóti.



Festetics castle, Keszthely

BALATON



Lake Balaton - Watch the video here



In recent years Balaton has been transitioning from seasonal-only to year-round, with an ever-improving infrastructure and many new attractions. Health tourism is a big draw, thanks to an abundance of healing waters. Soakers soothe their bodies in the world's second-largest thermal lake at the renowned spa town of Hévíz, close to Balaton.



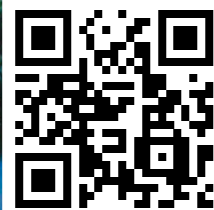
UNLOCKING HUNGARY'S TREASURES

GREAT REASONS TO VISIT EASTERN HUNGARY

EASTERN HUNGARY IS HOME TO THE WORLD-FAMOUS TOKAJ ASZÚ SWEET WINE, EGER'S OTTOMAN HERITAGE AND EMBLEMATIC EGRI BIKAVÉR RED WINE (BULL'S BLOOD), THE PLAINS, WETLANDS AND UNIQUE WILDLIFE OF THE HORTOBÁGY NATIONAL PARK, AND EUROPE'S LARGEST SPA COMPLEX AT HAJDÚSZOBOSZLÓ.



Debrecen and surroundings – watch the video

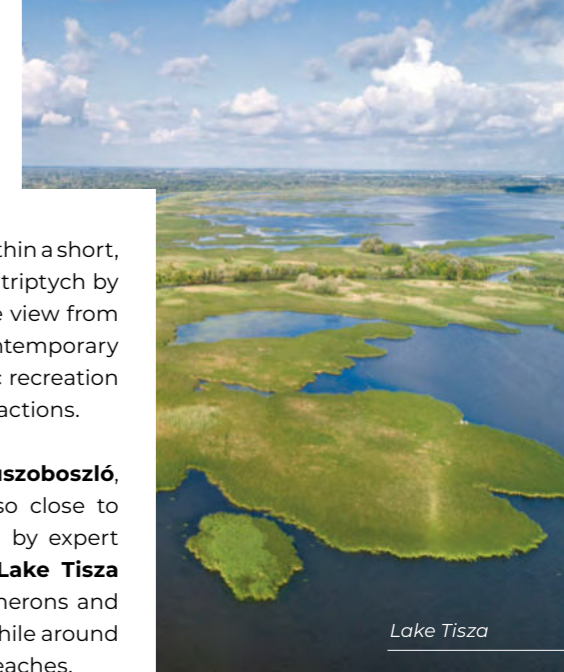


Hortobágy

DEBRECEN AND SURROUNDINGS

It is also where you find Hungary's vibrant second-largest city, **Debrecen**. Within a short, pleasant stroll around the mainly pedestrianised centre, you can admire a triptych by famed Hungarian painter Mihály Munkácsy in the Déri Museum, enjoy the view from atop the Reformed Great Church and take in challenging art at the contemporary MODEM centre. Bars and eateries line Piac utca and Hal köz, while aquatic recreation awaits at Nagyerdő park, with its zoo and other notable family-friendly attractions.

Within easy reach of Debrecen lies the extensive spa complex of **Hajdúszoboszló**, Europe's largest, with pools, saunas and slides at the Aqua-Palace. Also close to hand, the Hortobágy National Park is a UNESCO Heritage Site, typified by expert horsemanship, unique Hungarian grey cattle and rare birdlife. On the **Lake Tisza** reserve, boat tours allow visitors to observe some 30 species, including herons and cormorants. The local Ecocentre is Europe's largest freshwater aquarium, while around Lake Tisza runs a 70-kilometre cycle trail and any number of open-water beaches.



Lake Tisza



Eger region - watch the video here



EGER REGION

Eger is a great city break, its castle overlooking a Baroque centre. Remnants of the Ottoman occupation include a minaret and Turkish baths, while medieval weaponry at the castle harks back to heroic battles. The Cathedral and Archbishop's Palace hark back to a noteworthy ecclesiastical past.

Linked to historic legend, Eger's renowned Egri Bikavér red wine draws visitors to the cellars of the town including the Valley of the Beautiful Woman.

Beyond Eger stretches the hiking country of the Mátra and Bükk uplands, with Nordic walking and cross-country skiing, a narrow-gauge rail and adventure parks. Natural attractions include the Ilona Valley waterfall, Galyatető lookout point, Hungary's highest point at Kékestető and the hive stones of Bükkalja. Spa relaxation awaits at Nyíregyháza, Mezőkövesd and Demjén.

Across the Bükk, pretty **Lillafüred** near Miskolc has its own narrow-gauge rail, with rowing on Lake Hámori. **Diósgyőr** Castle hosts concerts and military shows, while swimmers will enjoy the unique cave baths of **Miskolctapolca**.



TOKAJ AND NYÍREGYHÁZA

Famed for its naturally sweet wine, the Tokaj region and its many cellars are another UNESCO Heritage Site. Other attractions include Zemplén Adventure Park, Nyíregyháza Zoo and the stalactite caves of **Aggtelek**. Visitors can explore the castles of Boldogkő, Füzér and Sárospatak, built in the early 1700s, and walk the longest route of Jewish pilgrimage in Hungary, the Csodarabbik útja, starting and finishing at Mád. The Route of Medieval Churches was created in 2009 to encompass the significant ecclesiastical landmarks around the Upper Tisza. Near Füzér Castle, the intricate porcelain produced in Hollóháza echoes an artisanal tradition dating back to the glassworks manufactory set up here in 1777.

GYULA REGION

In south-west Hungary, **Gyula** features an extensive spa in the grounds of 600-year-old Almásy Castle, where battles are re-enacted for July's Gyula Fortress Days. Year-round, an interactive exhibition reveals the daily life of the aristocracy. Nearby Békéscsaba beckons with an eclectic mix of attractions, including the largest Lutheran church in Europe, a museum and memorial house dedicated to the great Hungarian Romantic painter, Mihály Munkácsy, and, every October, the three-day Csaba Sausage Festival.

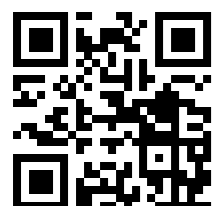
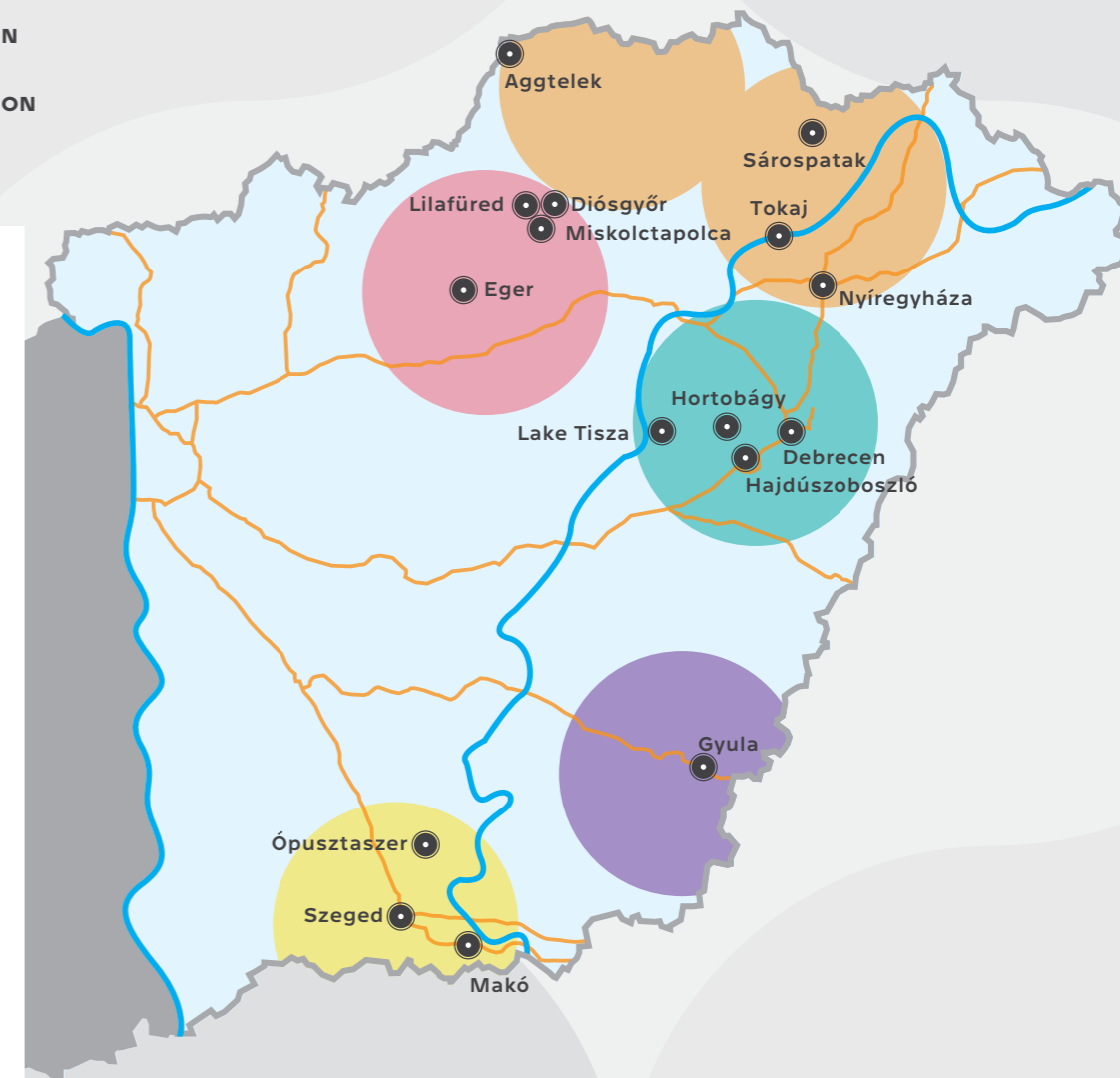
SZEGED REGION

Sunny **Szeged** on the Tisza offers Art Nouveau architecture and vibrant galleries, centre-pieced by the towering Votive Church and the main square where its annual outdoor summer festival is held. Near town, you'll find a popular aqua park, **Makó** spa designed by the famed Imre Makovecz and the **Ópusztaszer** Heritage Park, with stargazing and an exhibition themed around the historic arrival of the Hungarian tribes. The award-winning spa complex at Mórahalom features 14 indoor pools, seven outdoor, eight saunas and four types of thermal water.



Szeged downtown

- DEBRECEN AND SURROUNDINGS
- EGER REGION
- TOKAJ AND NYÍREGYHÁZA
- GYULA REGION
- SZEGED REGION



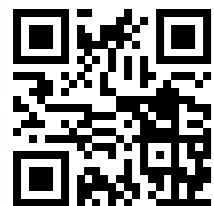
Tokaj and Nyíregyháza – watch the video



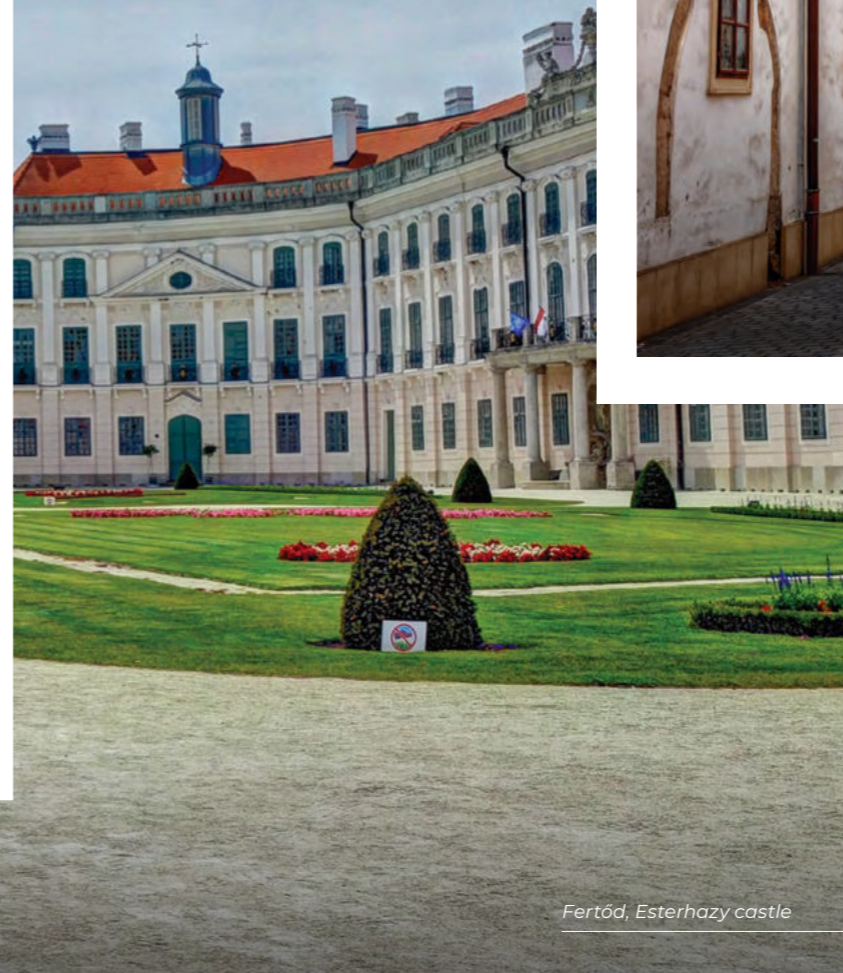
UNLOCKING HUNGARY'S TREASURES
**GREAT REASONS TO VISIT
 WESTERN HUNGARY**



UNIQUE WILDLIFE AROUND THE FERTŐ-HANSÁG NATIONAL PARK, THE PRIME HISTORIC LANDMARK OF PANNONHALMA AND THE ELEGANT PALACE OF NAGYCENK TYPIFY WESTERN HUNGARY, ONCE HOME TO FAMOUS HUNGARIAN LEADERS AND GREAT COMPOSERS.



Sopron region -
 watch the video



Fertőd, Esterhazy castle



Sopron downtown

SOPRON REGION

The gateway to the West by the Austrian border, **Sopron** is centre-pieced by its iconic Fire Tower, symbolising its revival in Baroque grandeur after the medieval city was ravaged by flames in 1676. You can still trace its Roman forum, though, and stroll around museums such as Storno House, containing medieval weaponry and Franz Liszt's piano. Kékfrankos wine, quality gastronomy and thermal waters underscore any city break here.

Nearby are the ornate Esterházy Palace at **Fertőd**, the Széchenyi Palace at **Nagycenk** and the memorial site of the Pan-European Picnic, scene of dramatic events that led to the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989. The UNESCO Heritage landscape of Fertő attracts cyclists and hikers, and ornithologists to the bird reservation in the Fertő-Hanság National Park. **Lake Fertő** itself welcomes sailors, anglers and water-sport enthusiasts.

BÜK AND SÁRVÁR

Immerse yourself in one of the premium bathing experiences in the region. **Bükfürdő** and **Sárvár** offer thousands of square metres of mainly medicinal waters, which infuse the body and wash away all the troubles of day-to-day life. The indoor and outdoor adventure pools, slides and saunas of the spa complexes also provide endless fun and every opportunity to unwind for couples, families and groups of friends of all ages.



GYŐR AND PANNONHALMA

Also in Győr-Moson-Sopron County, hilltop **Pannonhalma** Archabbey is a 1,000-year-old landmark where wine production and lavender cultivation have been a regular activity. Among the treasures in its vast library of 360,000 volumes is the oldest surviving document written in Hungarian text, dating back to 1055. Daily tours and tastings are themed around a millennium of monastic history while the on-site restaurant offers a seasonal menu. An easy drive from Budapest, Pannonhalma stands outside Győr, its Baroque centre dotted with impressive churches and mansions.

PÉCS REGION

Set in Hungary's south-western corner by the Croatian border, **Pécs** brims with culture and history. Right in town, the Cella Septichora Visitor Centre displays remains dating back to Roman Sopianae, including graves from the early Christian era, a UNESCO Heritage Site. The Ottomans left behind Pasha Qasim mosque, a minaret and Turkish baths, while works by leading artists connected with Pécs – Post-Impressionist Tivadar Csontváry and Op-Art pioneer Victor Vasarely – are displayed in their own galleries along Museum Street.

Elsewhere in town, the Zsolnay Cultural Quarter has been created around the factory where the renowned namesake ceramics were made. Today it's a museum with workshop displays, alongside the Labor interactive science exhibition, a puppet theatre and a concert venue.



*Pécs region -
watch the video*



Villány can trace its wine cultivation back to the Romans. In the 1500s, Serbs brought Kadarka grapes and know-how of red wine making. Long, hot summers did the rest – Hungary's fiery south basks in a sub-Mediterranean climate. Winemaking dynasties date back generations, producing the Villányi Franc and Portugieser for which the area is best known.

Cellars and press houses can be visited, creative gastronomy sampled and vinotherapy treatments enjoyed at high-end spas. You'll also find healing waters at nearby **Harkány**, helping cure sufferers of rheumatism for 200 years. There's more active recreation at **Orfű** lakes, an unparalleled panorama, too, and great hiking in the **Mecsek** hills.



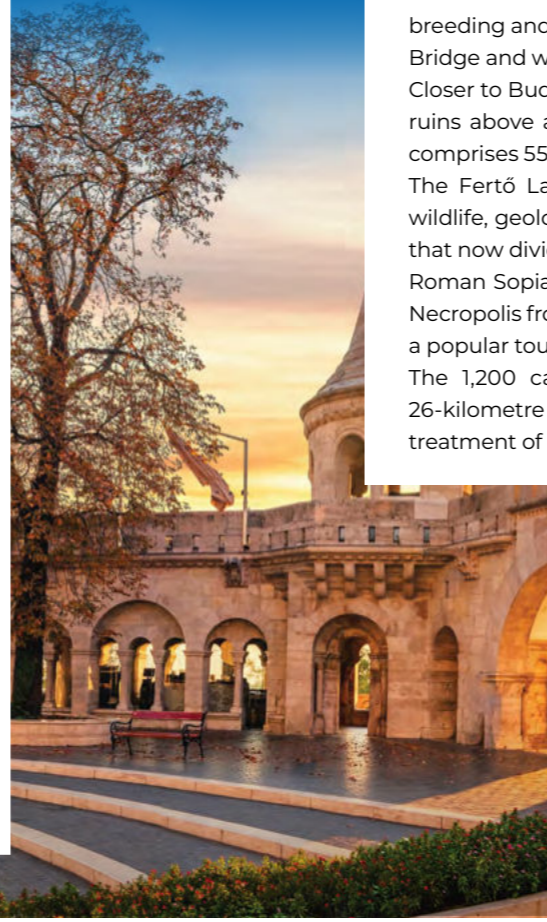
UNESCO TREASURES

UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE SITES IN HUNGARY



Fiserman's Bastion

FEATURING THE TAJ MAHAL AND THE GRAND CANYON, THE UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE LIST DIVIDES SITES INTO THOSE OF OUTSTANDING CULTURAL AND THOSE OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL VALUE.



breeding and migrating birdlife. Hortobágy is also symbolised by the Nine-hole Bridge and wildlife park.

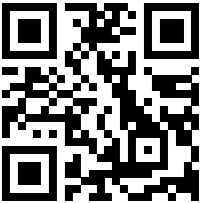
Closer to Budapest, Hollókő Ófalu refers to the Old Village, the medieval castle ruins above and the surrounding greenery. This complex of folk architecture comprises 55 buildings and a church.

The Fertő Lake area features a unique landscape of vineyards and diverse wildlife, geologically and historically uniform either side of the Austrian border that now divides it.

Roman Sopiana is today Pécs in southern Hungary, where an Early Christian Necropolis from the fourth century is part of the Cella Septichora Visitor Centre, a popular tourist attraction.

The 1,200 caverns of Aggtelek straddling the Slovak border include the 26-kilometre Baradla-Domica cave system and Rákóczi Cave No.1, used in the treatment of respiratory illnesses.

Before cowboys roamed the American West, there were Hungary's Csikós. Check out their amazing lifestyle by watching this video



UNESCO



Hollókő

Of the eight in Hungary, seven sit in the cultural category. Budapest counts as one, with three specific attractions: the Danube panorama, the Castle District and Andrassy Avenue.

The first refers to both banks, the bridges linking them and the landmarks along them. Certain attractions are cited by name, including the magnificent Neo-Gothic Parliament and Art Nouveau masterpiece, the Gresham Palace, defining the skyline of Pest, and dramatic hilltop Citadella in Buda.

A seat of power since the 1200s, Castle District exudes history, the sprawling former royal palace now housing the Hungarian National Gallery. Nearby, Matthias Church and Fisherman's Bastion were painstakingly created by architect Frigyes Schulek in the late 1800s, the former from medieval plans. Andrassy Avenue is more broadly

defined to bring in the Great Synagogue, with the ornate Opera House and magnificently restored Franz Liszt Academy of Music among the landmarks.

In western Hungary, Pannonhalma Abbey, founded in 996, still functions as a centre of church and art history, with an arboretum and herb garden, cloisters, an archabbey museum, a gallery and chapel.

In north-east Hungary, designated as a wine region since 1737, Tokaj's storied viticulture is another heritage site, 3,000 cellars stretched across an area of 27 settlements including Mád and Tokaj itself.

The nearby Hortobágy National Park shows how man and nature can interact in harmony, animal husbandry adapted to the saline pastures and wetlands. In spring and autumn, this habitat attracts



OUR CULTURAL TREASURES

FABULOUS FESTIVALS ALL YEAR ROUND

WHETHER THE FOCUS IS CLASSICAL MUSIC OR ROCK, FILM OR FINE ART, WINE OR FOOD TRUCKS, HUNGARY HAS A FESTIVAL FOR EVERY FORM OF CULTURE AND GASTRONOMY.

As the capital, Budapest hosts the lion's share of the major international happenings but there's still plenty going on around Hungary to book a trip to Balaton, Pécs or Szeged around a specific event.

Many were established long ago. First staged in 1981, the **Budapest Spring Festival** is a fortnight or more of mainly high-end culture, with classical music of the very best quality brought to the fore. Dance, theatre and the fine arts also feature. Venues range from the venerable – the Pesti Vigadó, the Erkel Színház – to the vibrant, such as the Akvárium Klub and the A38 Ship.

CAFe Budapest, an acronym for **Contemporary Arts Festival**, brightens the agenda in October. Also incorporating **Art Market Budapest** and the **Budapest Ritmo** world-music festival, this fortnight-plus cultural extravaganza is strong on visual arts, dance and non-mainstream music.

Lake Balaton's many festivals make full use of the lakeside location or take over a village such as **Paloznak**, where the many events connected with wine and gastronomy are augmented by summer's internationally prestigious Jazzpiknik. The volcanic slopes of the north shore are also the perfect setting for **Badacsony Bor7**, a showcase for wine and gastronomy over two weeks in July. Recently established events include BalatonikÖR Gasztró Piknik, Gasztróhegy Badacsony and Szent György-hegy hajnalig, when the many wine cellars of St George Hill open under a full moon until dawn.



Culinary festivals run the full gamut of Hungarian specialities, from mangalica pork to wine, chimney cake to craft beer and sausages to street food. For fine dining, don't miss the four-day Gourmet Festival in May. September's Wine Festival is a major international event backdropped by the historic sights of Buda Castle.



One of Hungary's most revered events is the **Szeged Open-Air Festival**, on the city's main square in the shadow of the cathedral, first staged in 1931. Sopron music fans count the days until each **VOLT Festival** and people in nearby Pécs look forward to seeing Hungary's best bands at **Fishing on Orfű**. In a more traditional vein, the Debrecen Flower Carnival, Hortobágy Horse Days, Hollókő Easter and the Bull's Blood Celebration add their own colour to the Hungarian calendar.



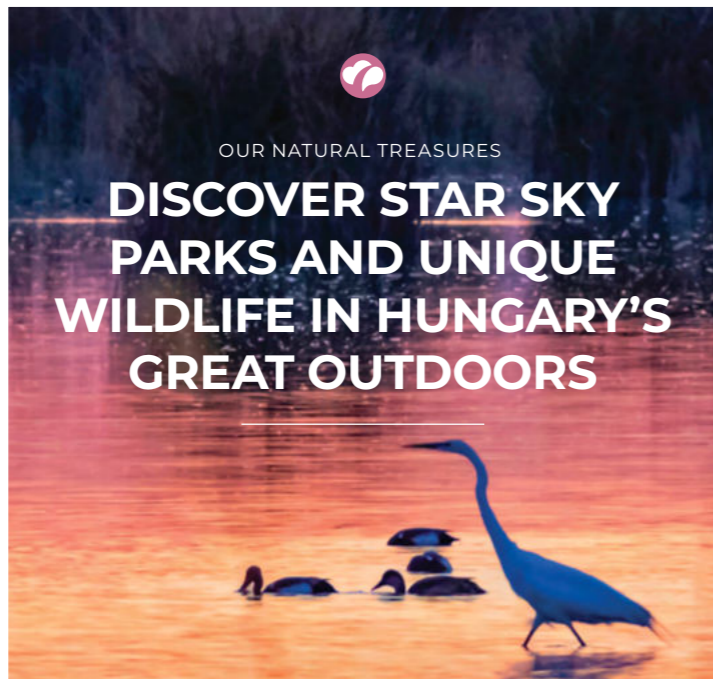
August's Sziget Festival, inaugurated back in 1993, also uses multiple stages but all takes place on an island ('Sziget') north of Budapest. Rock, pop, world and electronic music hog the limelight but you'll also find film, theatre, circus and even a funfair. In 2019, for example, this involved 60-plus locations and record crowds.



OUR NATURAL TREASURES

DISCOVER STAR SKY PARKS AND UNIQUE WILDLIFE IN HUNGARY'S GREAT OUTDOORS

MORE THAN A FIFTH OF HUNGARY IS WOODLAND, 10% OF IT PROTECTED. NATIONAL PARKS, WORLD HERITAGE SITES, NATURE PARKS, GEOPARKS, STAR SKY PARKS AND BIOSPHERE RESERVES ENSURE UNINTERRUPTED RELAXATION IN NATURE. NATURE TRAILS AND TOURS ABOUND.



Fertő-Hanság National Park

Below ground, 30 of Hungary's 4,000 caves can be visited, some for medicinal purposes. Tapolca's cave lake is best explored by boat.

Hungary's ten national parks display diversity and a heritage that is natural, man-made and ethnographic. The karst caves that form the Aggtelek National Park are a UNESCO World Heritage Site and welcome tours of varying lengths and challenges. The Balaton Uplands contain diverse birdlife in the Kis-Balaton wetlands, the stone sea of Káli Basin, the varied landscape of the Tihany Peninsula and the Kápolnapuszta Buffalo Reserve. The Bükk is Hungary's highest-lying national park, with minimal light pollution for stargazing, deep in beech forest and served by narrow-gauge rail. Prehistoric remains have been found in its extensive cave system. Kingfishers, eagles, black storks, Saker falcons and red deer frequent the floodplains of the Danube–Drava National Park. The Zselic Star Park and water tours provide an extra reason to visit. Closest to Budapest, hikers, cyclists and horse riders visit Pilis in the Danube–Ipoly National Park. Narrow-gauge railways cut through the Börzsöny uplands while beneath the capital, the Pál-völgyi cave system is Hungary's longest.



The westernmost extent of the Eurasian steppe lakes, Fertő-Hanság is a biosphere reserve and UNESCO World Heritage Site, its salt marshes drawing abundant birdlife.

Hortobágy is Hungary's first and largest national park, a UNESCO World Heritage Site and International Starry Sky Park. Safaris, boat tours and bird-watching sites bring the unique landscape and wildlife closer to visitors.

Two-thirds of the Danube–Tisza Biosphere Reserve lies within the Kiskunság National Park, where a significant bustard population occupies the salt marshes.

Bustards, otters, black storks, eagles and brown kites can be spotted in the Körös–Maros National Park on the Great Plain.

The Őrség National Park is an award-winning destination, where environmentally-friendly farming is illustrated by 'meadow orchards', fruit trees surrounded by herbs and other plants. Peasant houses here were adapted to welcome needy travellers.



OUR NATURAL TREASURES

HUNGARY, ACTIVE RECREATION AMID AMAZING NATURE

WITH TEN NATIONAL PARKS, 16 NATURE PARKS AND MANY ADVENTURE PARKS, HIKING TRAILS AND CYCLING ROUTES, HUNGARY OFFERS ALL KINDS OF SPECIAL EXPERIENCES IN THE GREAT OUTDOORS.



Danube Bend



Hiking trails stretch for 11,000 km, marked by colour-coded signposting, most notably the National Blue Tour. This cross-country network runs for more than 1,000 km, from the heights of Írott-kő on the Austrian border, through Budapest to Hollóháza in the far north-east. As along the equally popular three-trail National Blue Circle, hikers can earn badges at various points.

The thousands of kilometres of cycling routes, some integral to the international EuroVelo circuit, skirt several of Hungary's most picturesque attractions, including the left bank of the Danube, and Lakes Balaton, Tisza, Velence and Fertő. More challenging terrain best suits mountain bikers and tests riders in the annual Tour de Hongrie, such as along the River Tisza.

Hungary's many lakes and rivers attract sailors and fishermen – there's a special licence for tourist anglers. Stops line the routes for rowers, canoeists and kayakers, with water tours along the Mosoni

and Szigetköz branches of the Danube, the Upper Tisza, the Drava, the Körös, Bodrogek and the thermally heated Hévíz stream, a winter curiosity. Motorised water sports are a special attraction at Lake Tisza. Spectators can watch races such as the Blue Ribbon, National Regatta and Danube Regatta. Dotted with more than 100 docks, Lake Balaton is a major sailing destination, extremely popular with yachters, offering plenty of courses and staging numerous competitions. Windsurfing is another widespread activity around the lake.

Less conventional outdoor activities include bungee jumping, hot-air ballooning, hang gliding and extreme water sports. Hungary also has several golf courses and offers winter sports such as skiing, snowboarding, skating and cross-country skiing. Hungary's abundant plains and forests provide the perfect backdrop for narrow-gauge railways, more than 20 in all. Spectacular rides snake through the Börzsöny and Mátra uplands, Hortobágy and the Szalajka Valley.



Hungary is justifiably proud of its long equine tradition, illustrated by the number of horse-breeding farms, high-quality equestrian centres and unique landscapes for horse riding. The most colourful of the many horse shows is the annual National Gallop that transforms Heroes' Square in Budapest.



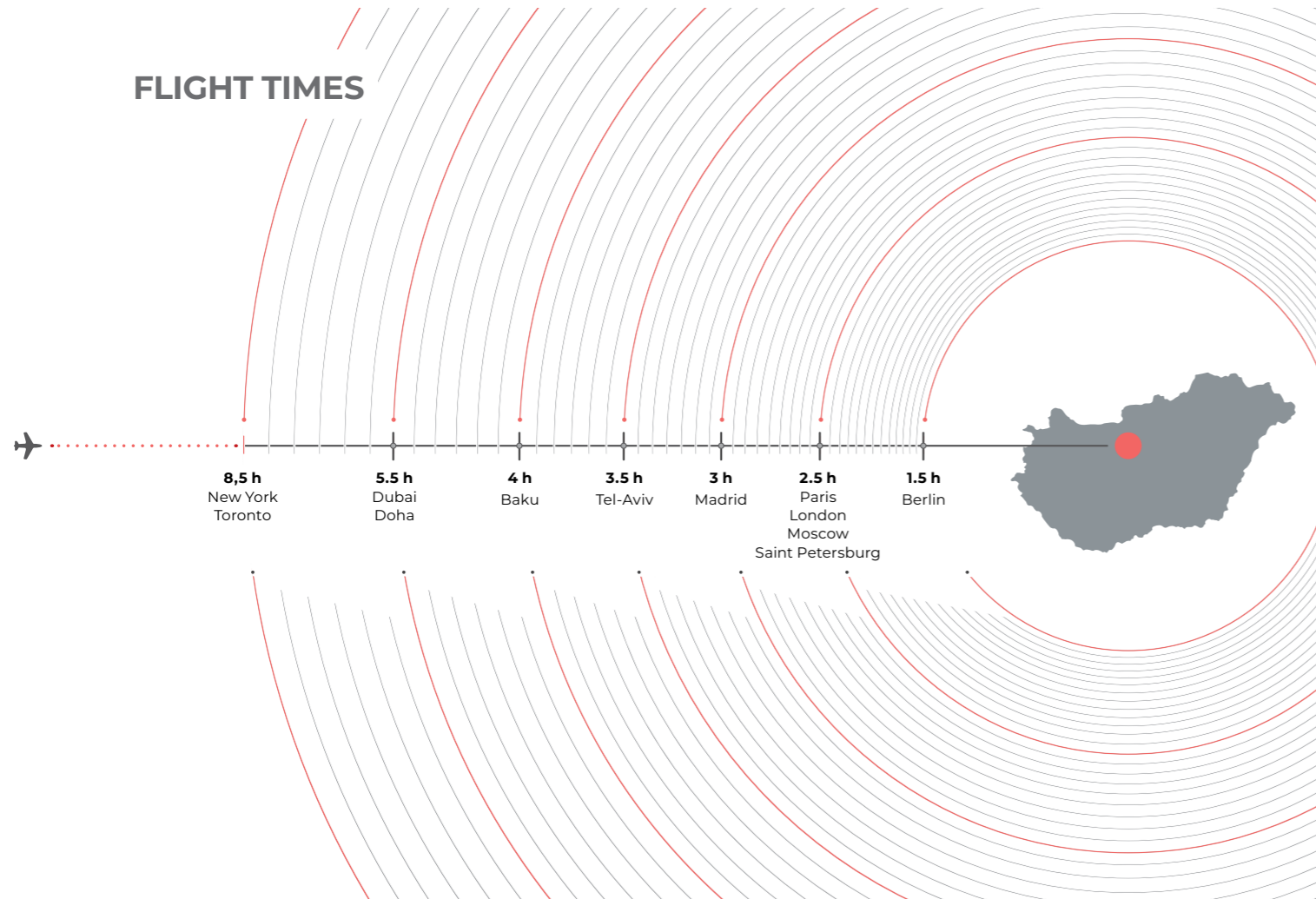
Lake Tisza

GENERAL INFORMATION

Hungary's location in the heart of Europe makes it easily accessible. Budapest airport is 20 km south-east of the capital, served by frequent bus 100E that runs directly into the city centre. Regular international train and bus services offer a scenic and environmentally friendly alternative to plane travel. Each major rail and bus terminus in Budapest has its own metro station.

In the east of Hungary, the second-largest city of the country, Debrecen also accommodates direct flights from major cities such as Barcelona, London, Milan, Tel-Aviv, Moscow and Paris.

FLIGHT TIMES



No trip to Hungary is complete without packing a few special gifts for your journey home. Certain traditional products have been defined as Hungarikums, high-quality and specific to Hungary. The dark spirit Unicum, pálinka (fruit spirit), Tokaji Aszú and Egri Bikavér (bull's blood) red wine are all popular drinks. Spicy Hungarian salami and paprika, either loose or in powdered form, are available from any market. For something that will last longer than dinner, decorative Hungarian embroidery adorns all sorts of traditional textiles, including clothes, pillowcases and tablecloths, as well as elegant porcelain. And wherever you happen to find yourself, there's bound to be a Tourinform office nearby, ready to help with all the advice and information you might need.



DRIVING TIMES



FACTS AND INFORMATION FOR VISITORS

Territory:	93,030 km²
Population:	10 million (2016)
Capital:	Budapest
Form of Government:	Unitary parliamentary republic
Official Language:	Hungarian
Time Zone:	CET (GMT + 1 hour)
Currency:	Forint (HUF)
International Airports:	Ferenc Liszt International Airport, Budapest, Debrecen International Airport, Hévíz-Balaton Airport



General Visa Information

Hungary is a member state of the Schengen area, so if you have a valid Schengen visa, i.e. you have not exceeded its validity dates, the number of days and the number of entries it allows, you can also use it to travel to Hungary. You can apply for a visa at the Embassy of the Republic of Hungary. You can always find detailed information on sights and current programmes in Hungary on the website of the Hungarian Tourism Agency at www.wowhungary.com and www.spiceofeurope.com.

Weather

Hungary has a temperate climate, similar to the rest of the continental zone. January is the coldest month (-1 °C average) and August is the warmest (21.3 °C average).

IMPRESSUM

Published by
Hungarian Tourism Agency

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Designed, produced and edited by
Hungarian Tourism Agency

Printed by
Bonex Press Ltd.





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