

HUNGARY

for you

Bucket list

Lake Balaton and Western Hungary





INTRODUCTION

Hungary is an infinite source of miracles all year around, so no matter when you set out on a trip to discover the country, you will never tire of its ever-changing colours. So, if you feel like taking a closer look at our country's myriad natural and cultural gems, combined with the promise of a great experience, just follow the road – any road – to yet another beautiful place. Take a look around you, whether you're on a boat bobbing on the waves of Lake Balaton, standing on the breathtaking peaks of the Mecsek Mountains or in the middle of the vast expanse of the Great Plain of Hungary. Discover the intriguing tales behind every sight and landmark, the centuries-old cities and buildings, stories and places – we promise it will be the experience of a lifetime.



CONTENTS

BALATON	4
Map	8
Bucket lists	10
What you won't want to miss in the region	20
The hermitage of Tihany	22
Restful healing	24
Adventures on the summits of mountains and the depths of caves	26
The Moving Stone	28
Five cycle paths with incredible panoramic views	30
Our favourite photos of the area	32
 WESTERN HUNGARY	34
Sopron region	36
Map	40
Bucket lists.....	42
The miracles of the Fertő-Hanság National Park	50
Baronial castles in the area	52
What you won't want to miss in the region ..	54
Our favourite photos of the region	56

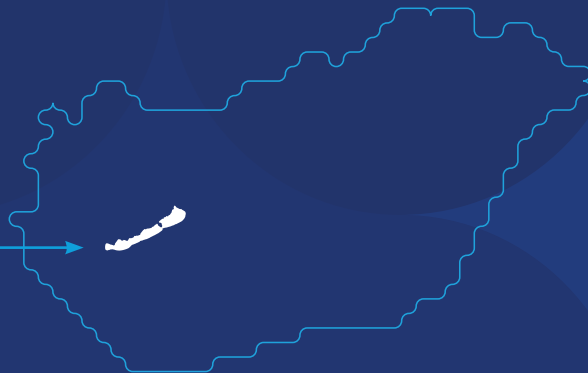


CONTENTS

Győr and Pannonhalma	58
Map	60
Bucket lists.....	62
What you won't want to miss in the region ...	70
Our favourite photos of the region	72
 Pécs region	74
Map	76
Bucket lists.....	78
The almond tree of Havihegy	86
What you won't want to miss in the region ...	88
Our favourite photos of the region	90

BA LA TON

Balaton is more than just a lake. It's a profound experience. Every day, it shows a different facet of itself: the surface of the lake glimmers with new colours, and the events and attractions on offer change all the time. Just about every Hungarian person has their own special Balaton story; the lake shows a unique side of itself to everyone. The Paloznak Jazz Picnic, the traditional Hungarian 'lángos' (a fried bread snack), the water bikes, the castle towering over Szigliget, the Folly Arboretum are just some of the attractions here... or get right out on the water, and experience the Balaton Cross Swimming, the Blue Ribbon Regatta, the harvest festivals, or the frozen lake. Lake Balaton presents a thousand faces, and all of them are well worth your time. Whether you spend a day, a week, or an entire season on its shores, boredom is out of the question. We'll show you why.





LAKE BALATON

THE LARGEST LAKE IN CENTRAL EUROPE

MINGLING SHADES OF BLUE, GREEN AND TURQUOISE, DOTTED WITH WHITEWASHED SAILS IN THE DISTANCE, BALATON IS HUNGARY'S PREMIER HOLIDAY DESTINATION, A NATURAL TREASURE PROVIDING VISITORS WITH DIFFERENT BUT EQUALLY INCREDIBLE EXPERIENCES, NO MATTER THE SEASON. THE LARGEST LAKE IN CENTRAL EUROPE AWAITS VISITORS YEAR-ROUND WITH UNIQUE NATURAL AND CULTURAL ATTRACTIONS. YOU CAN ENJOY EXCELLENT LOCAL GASTRONOMY, FIRST-CLASS WINES, SHORELINES WITH ROMANTIC REED-BEDS, AND A WIDE RANGE OF OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES.

Lake Balaton is busiest in the summer, when the entire 236 km long shoreline is packed with families, couples, and friends on holiday. However, the lake offers plenty of pleasures in every season: whether your preference is sipping wine in the sunshine on the volcanic slopes of the north shore, making a splash by moonlight at a lively south-coast music festival, or exploring the region on two wheels or in a pair of sturdy boots, you won't be disappointed.

The most popular destinations are vibrant Siófok, romantic Balatonfüred, historic Tihany, vineyard-lined Badacsony and healing Hévíz. Naturally, a multitude of water sports are also available, especially in the summer, including surfing, stand-up paddling, water biking, sailing and kayaking. And the beaches are always perfect for a spot of relaxation. Shallower on the south shore, Balaton is perfect for families to play, swimmers to unwind, sportsmen to train and holidaymakers to bathe.

In recent years, however, Balaton has been transitioning from a seasonal, summer-only to a year-round destination, with ever-improving infrastructure

and tempting visitors with its many new attractions. Its wide range of health tourism offerings, for instance, are a powerful draw to tourists all year round, thanks to the many different varieties of medicinal waters in the Balaton region. Guests can enjoy soothing relaxation in the world's second-largest thermal lake in the renowned spa town of Hévíz, close to Balaton.

Active tourism is also booming, thanks to endless green trails to walk, hills to climb, adventure parks to explore, lookout towers to scale and a 204-kilometre-long bike path encircling the whole lake. Unique options include rowing around the Tapolca Lake Cave, or sailing on the open waters of the lake.



Balaton does not lack cultural attractions either, with impressive sights such as Festetics Castle, Tihany Abbey, and fortresses and castles in Sümeg, Veszprém and Szigliget. Festivals focus on a wide range of music, from classical to cutting-edge contemporary.

Lovers of fine dining can certainly not afford to miss the six wine regions of the Balaton, while gourmands will no doubt wish to visit the Káli Basin. It is also worth visiting the farmers' market in Káptalanót, where every Sunday, local producers display their wares for your enjoyment in the restful shade of the trees.



13. Zalaszabar Adventure Park
14. Zamárdi Adventure Park
15. Balatonfűzfő Bob Track and Adventure Park
16. Balatonföldvár Naval History Visitor Centre
17. Somogyvár Kupavár National Memorial Site and Visitor Centre
18. Zalakaros Thermal Bath
19. Kis-Balaton, Kápolnapuszta Buffalo Reserve
20. Eplény, Adventure Mountain
21. Kehidakustány Thermal Bath
22. Keszthely, Balaton Museum
23. Keszthely, Amazon House Visitor Centre
24. Tihany, Lavender House Visitor Centre
25. Balatongyörök, Szépkilátó
26. Herend Porcelain Manufactory
27. Hévíz Lake Bath
28. Siófok
29. Zamárdi
30. Balaton Uplands National Park

Siófok





CHURCH AND MUSEUM
OF THE BENEDICTINE
ABBAY OF TIHANY

TIHANY LAVENDER
FIELDS

TAGORE PROMENADE,
BALATONFÜRED



BUCKET LIST

IF YOU ONLY HAVE A SINGLE DAY IN THE LAKE BALATON REGION

DISCOVER BALATONFÜRED AND TIHANY!

Start your day by visiting the **Church and Museum of the Benedictine Abbey of Tihany**, the world-famous emblematic site of the Tihany Peninsula. The Abbey – founded almost a thousand years ago – provides spectacular views of the Inner Lake and the southern shore of Lake Balaton. Next, unless you're visiting in the winter, it's time to explore the **Lavender Fields of Tihany**: the old-growth lavender situated in the gorge between Csúcs-hegy and Apáti-hegy is the perfect place for a romantic stroll. Did you know that the first lavender plants were brought to the sub-Mediterranean peninsula nearly a century ago?



Naturally, you can't leave without going for a swim in the summer: The Tihany Peninsula and Balatonfüred offer a number of **beaches** of varying styles and price levels. Whether you're looking for a public beach, a quiet, intimate stretch of shoreline, or beaches with premium bathing facilities, you are sure to find a range of sites that satisfy your needs.

After bathing, why not go for a stroll along **Tagore Promenade**, allowing the many statues and plaques to regale you with the town's history. Lake Balaton's best-known promenade is named after the famed Indian poet and Nobel laureate, Rabindranath Tagore. A number of celebrities have followed the example of the great artist by planting trees here.

Benedictine Abbey of Tihany



BUCKET LIST

IF YOU HAVE TWO DAYS TO EXPLORE
THE LAKE BALATON REGION

THE MIRACLES OF KESZTHELY AND BADACSONY

Begin your second day with a stroll through the vividly colourful park of the **Festetics Castle** in Keszthely. Construction of the Baroque-style castle began in the 18th century, reaching its current size by the 1880s. The exhibition in the Helikon Palace Museum will make you feel as though you've travelled back in time: an opulent display of contemporary baronial life, it houses the only intact baronial private library remaining in Hungary, which escaped the ravages of World War II in an astonishing turn of events worthy of the silver screen. Certain scenes of the movie *Kincsem* were also filmed in the castle.



The town of **Badacsony** lies 25 km from Keszthely, and is known as the realm of fine wines, basalt and legends, with almost every building having its own fascinating history. While climbing to the summit of the 437 m high monadnock, you should certainly rest for a while at the famous Kisfaludy House, the Róza Szegedy House, and the Rózsakő (Rose Stone). Alternatively, you could start from Badacsónytrődemic to climb the basalt Bujdosók Lépcsője (Steps of the Exiled). On your return, you can treat yourself to a drink on one of the wine terraces offering breathtaking panoramic views, and enjoy a spot of fine dining in the restaurants showcasing local delicacies all year round.

FESTETICS CASTLE



BADACSONY



Badacsony panorama

A photograph of the interior of the Tapolca Lake Cave. Several wooden rowing boats are lined up on a green mat in the foreground. In the background, a cave passage leads to a bright, turquoise-colored lake. The cave walls are rugged and illuminated by warm lights.

TAPOLCA LAKE CAVE

SZIGLIGET CASTLE

HÉVÍZ LAKE BATH



BUCKET LIST

IF YOU HAVE THREE DAYS TO EXPLORE
THE BALATON REGION

START THE DAY UNDERGROUND!

After exploring the interactive Visitor Centre of the **Tapolca Lake Cave**, discovered in 1903, it's time for a boat ride along the 180 metre crystal-clear lake inside the caverns and passages of the limestone cave complex. When you come back to the surface, take a leisurely stroll over to the Mediterranean-style Malom (Mill) Lake, and relax for a while on the terrace of one of the coffee houses there.

Next up is a tour of one of the most beautiful castles in the entire Balaton Uplands: you'll be ascending the picturesque prominence of **Szigliget Castle**, located 15 km from Tapolca, and renovated in 2020. The 750-year-old fortress resisted all attempts at invasion by the Ottoman army, and provides a truly spectacular view over Lake Balaton and the monadnocks.



Szigliget Castle

Finally, bring the day to a close at the **Hévíz Lake Bath**. This thermal bath is truly unique, drawing a multitude of tourists, as well as those hoping for healing. Its healing waters have a well-earned reputation for aiding those suffering from rheumatic and musculoskeletal diseases, as well as other ailments. Once you've had a good soak in the pleasantly warm healing waters of the lake bath, you can go for a refreshing sauna in the modern bath house on the lake.

Tapolca Lake Cave



BUCKET LIST

IF YOU HAVE FOUR DAYS TO EXPLORE
THE BALATON REGION

ENJOY THE VIEW FROM UP HIGH.

The **Kis-Balaton** region is a spectacular nature reserve and a paradise to a staggering variety of birds, with some truly extraordinary species to be seen. Why not explore the region, starting at the Kis-Balaton House? After crossing the iconic wooden bridge, you'll find yourself on Kányavár Island, which is open to visitors all year round. Here, you'll also find the cottage of Uncle Matula and Diás Island, places immortalised in the beloved works of Hungarian author István Fekete. Make sure you bring your mosquito repellent!



Kányavár Bridge, Kis-Balaton

Next, you should take a brief stroll through one of the local markets, followed by a picnic at the popular festival location, the **Sphere Lookout** (officially known as the János Xantus Lookout, or the Gömbkilátó in Hungarian). 15 metres in diameter and standing at a height of 165 metres, this aluminium sphere is a symbol of Balatonboglár. From here, the view onto the monadnocks of the northern shore is one that you will never forget.

And just like the day before, there's no better way to end the day than with a relaxing thermal bath. The **Gránit Thermal Bath** in Zalakaros includes a selection of thermal baths, adventure and spa pools and a slide park, as well as a number of wellness services. Naturally, the best way to close out a busy day like this one would be with a massage.

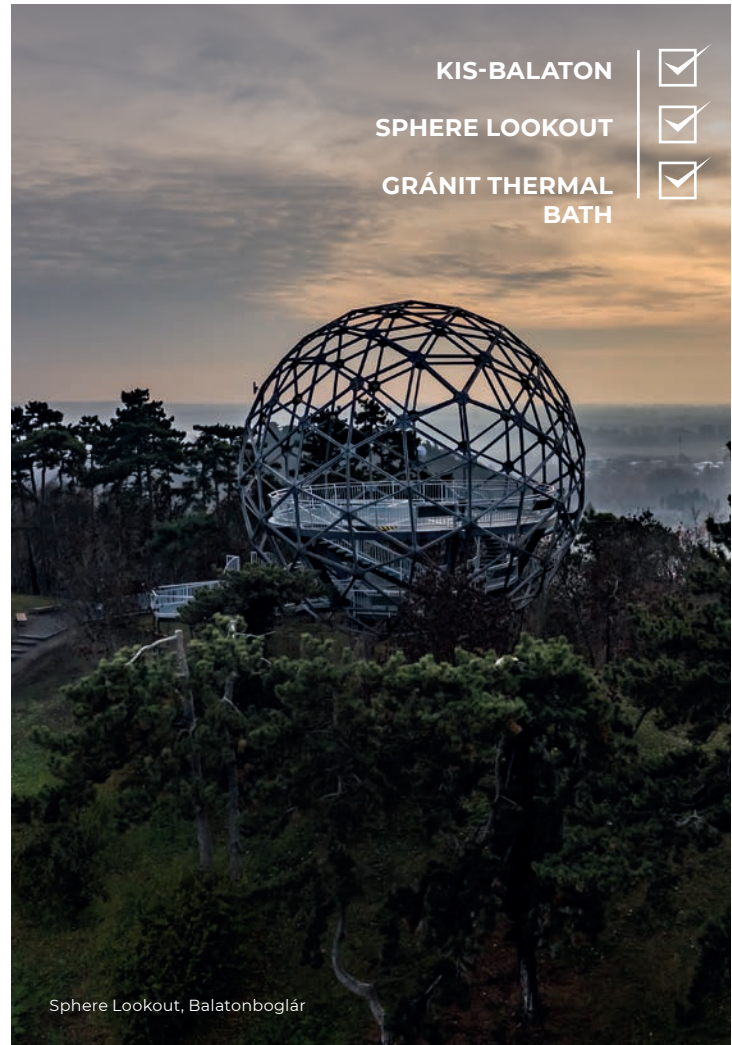
KIS-BALATON



SPHERE LOOKOUT



GRÁNIT THERMAL
BATH



Sphere Lookout, Balatonboglár



VESZPRÉM CASTLE

VESZPRÉM ZOO

CISTERCIAN ABBEY OF ZIRC



BUCKET LIST

IF YOU HAVE FIVE DAYS TO EXPLORE THE BALATON REGION

ROMANTIC LANDSCAPES

On the last day, it may be worth taking a bit of a break from the shoreline, and making your way to the romantic hills of the Bakony and the town of Veszprém, which is currently in the midst of its preparations for the European Capital of Culture events scheduled for 2023. Veszprém's Castle District towers above the town centre, with a profusion of museums, palaces, galleries and churches. Take a short walk from the Fire Tower all the way to the northern tip of **Veszprém Castle**, where statues of Saint Stephen and Gisela of Hungary stand guard over the old city.

Following the bridges and the Séd Valley promenade leading under the viaduct, you'll find yourself at the **Veszprém Zoo**, where you can enjoy the many exotic and rare animals on display. The most popular tourist attractions there are the Chimpanzee World, the African Savannah exhibit, and the Dino Park.

The **Cistercian Abbey of Zirc** is also well worth visiting, and not only because of the Basilica, the largest Baroque-style altar structure in Hungary, or the Historic Abbey Library, which houses 65 thousand volumes. Take a stroll in the 20-hectare Arboretum, and give the Abbey's special artisanal beers a try: they've had 300 years to perfect the recipe, after all!

Veszprém Castle



Badacsony panorama



WHAT YOU WON'T WANT TO MISS IN THE REGION

Olaszrizling – which translates literally as Italian Riesling – shares only its name with the famous Rhine Riesling. It is a dry white wine, found in every Hungarian wine region, but the finest examples of the variety grow in the vineyards of Csopak, and on Szent György Hill. It has a characteristic finish, reminiscent of bitter almonds. The **Somló Juhfark** (literally 'Sheep's Tail') is one of the oldest Hungarian grape varieties. A 'fiery' wine with a strong acidic bite, it got its name from the monadnock 50 km from Lake Balaton, as well as the distinctive shape of its grape clusters. It is also called the 'wine of wedding nights': it is said that drinking it increases the chance of conceiving a boy.



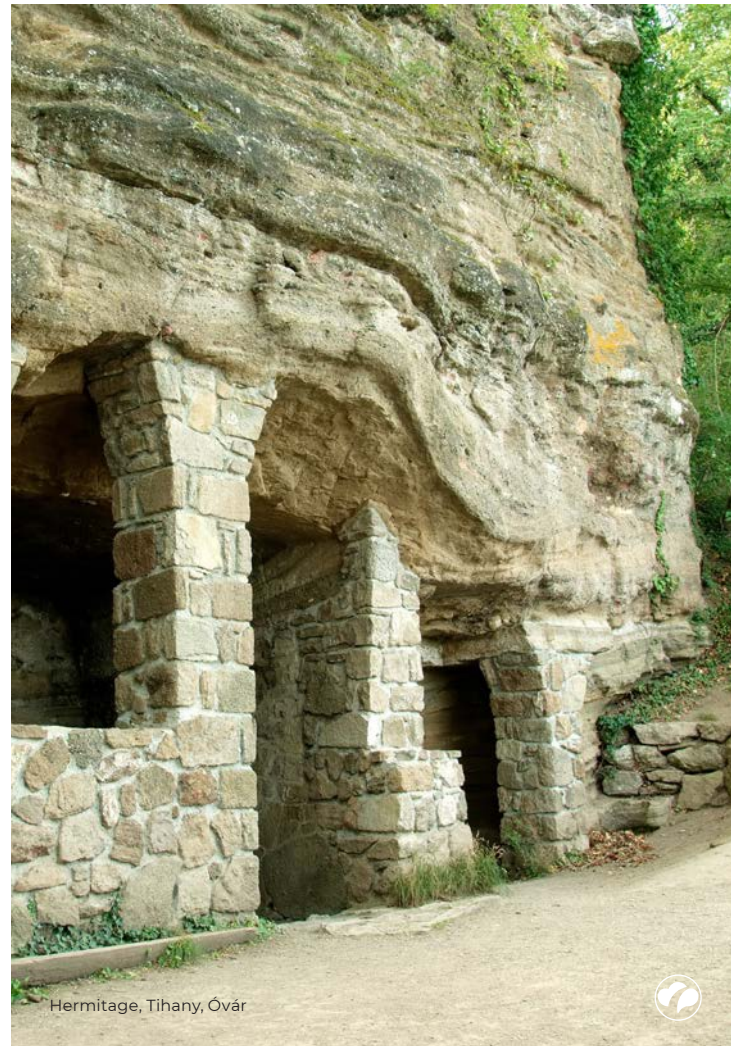
Balaton fish soup – unlike the fish soups of other regions – is made from carp, pike or catfish, with the addition of other, smaller fish: the key distinction is that overall, a third of the fish must be predators. The soup also includes potatoes, and a glass of Balaton wine. Careful, though: it can be spicy. No gastronomic exploration of the Balaton region could be considered complete without the traditional filleted **catfish paprikash**, a dish flavoured with paprika. It is traditionally best enjoyed with 'túrós csusza', a pasta dish with bacon and cottage cheese.



THE HERMITAGE OF TIHANY

The tradition of East and West meeting at Lake Balaton was established almost a thousand years before the popular Balaton-side meetings of the families of East and West Germany. The true originator of this tradition was King Andrew I, whose wife (after their marriage in 1055) brought a number of Byzantine – that is, Eastern Orthodox – monks with her from Kiev. These monks were then housed in Tihany. Some of these monks lived in the basaltic tuff caves of the Óvár mountains, under truly Spartan conditions, despite the Benedictine abbey having already been completed on the mountaintop. This abbey was also where King Andrew was laid to final rest. This coexistence lasted for several centuries, although the great schism of 1054 resulted in the separation of the Western (Catholic) and Eastern (Orthodox) Christianity as separate churches.

By the 14th century, the monks had left their cave dwellings, and many of the caves subsequently collapsed over the centuries. Today, three of the dwellings remain in a state suitable for visitors. You can find them along a signposted route winding from the port, or alternatively from the town centre. One of them also contains an elevated shrine, a stone altar, and a tomb. Finally, an interesting fact: in the old days, the hermitage was also called Orosz-kő (literally Russian Stone), or using the archaic names Vruzku and Petra (the latter being the Greek name for cave monasteries).



Hermitage, Tihany, Óvár





RESTFUL HEALING



Hévíz Lake

Rest and recover in the healing waters. Along with the largest thermal lake in Europe, the baths of the region offer a truly peaceful sanctuary, with wellness and relaxation combined in one. Hévíz is a town dedicated to healing. Visitors can enjoy high-quality wellness and medical wellness hotels, as well as health and lifestyle programmes. The thermal lake, sprawling across an area of 4.4 hectares, is fed by abundant springs containing high levels of sulphur, radium and various minerals. The water in the lake is a balmy 23-25°C in winter, and 33-36°C in summer, and the water is completely replaced every 72 hours.

Give the family sauna and bath party a try in the family spa at Zalakaros. In addition to the thermal pools feeding from 96°C hot springs, as well as the health centre, there are also plenty of wellness and fitness services to choose from. Your children can enjoy a huge variety of slides, artificial islands and water cannons in the indoor children's pools.

The three-storey, Mediterranean-style spa and adventure bath in Kehidakustány offers developmental and musculoskeletal therapies, as well as health programmes, and plenty of activities for kids.



ADVENTURES ON THE SUMMITS OF MOUNTAINS AND IN THE DEPTHS OF CAVES

The volcanic monadnocks towering above Lake Balaton provide a perfect opportunity for some scenic hiking, but the Balaton Uplands National Park can also be explored on two wheels or even horseback.

Perhaps you're looking for a more intense workout? Try a bicycle trip around the lake, or take your family out for a fun day at one of the nearby adventure parks.

The 210-kilometre Balaton Bike Path circumnavigating the lake mainly stays on a route adjacent to the shore. There aren't any noteworthy climbs or descents. If you did not bring a bicycle of your own, but feel like pedalling a bit nonetheless, you can take advantage of the pick up & drop off rental services.

Expected to join the list of World Heritage sites, the Balaton Uplands offers a wide array of fascinating geological features. Admire the gorgeous panorama from the national park lookouts, discover the multitude of basalt organs, visit the geyser fields of the Tihany Peninsula, and gather yourself a fragrant bouquet of lavender.

Tour the landscape of volcanic monadnocks, with peaks rising up from what was once the Pannonian Sea.

Have you ever rowed a boat underneath a city? If not, visit the Tapolca Lake Cave, where you can paddle across water-covered passages. Are you looking for a fascinating underground experience? Put on a pair of overalls, and descend to the Csodabogyós (literally Wonder Berry) cave in Balatonederics. A trip is the perfect time to take in the natural wonders of the Kis-Balaton.

Climb up to the Kányavár Island eyrie, then take a detour to the Kápolnapuszta Buffalo Reserve, where you will find Hungary's largest herd of water buffalo enjoying their mud bath.



Hegyesű, Balaton Uplands





Szentbékállai Sea of Stones



INGÓKŐ

The 'Sea of Stones' chain in the Káli Basin reaches all the way from Salföld to Kővágóórs. These geological formations rose to the surface from the sediments at the depths of the Pannonian Sea, and were then sculpted into bizarre shapes by the wind. At one time, they surrounded the entire area, and locals would hew millstones from them.

The most beautiful stone ridge still exists today, on the border of Szentbékállai. The Sea of Stones is unsettling to look at, with its giant rock formations and oddly shaped stones piled unnaturally on top of each other. However, its most spectacular formation has to be the Moving Stone, a giant stone slab that tilts slightly when you stand on its edge.

Moving stones are slabs of rock which, due to their superior hardness, have not been worn down by environmental forces, and now only connect to the ground through a small surface. As time passes, they are less and less able to maintain their position. This is exactly what makes the Moving Stone at Szentbékállai so special: it is completely stable.



FIVE CYCLE PATHS WITH INCREDIBLE PANORAMIC VIEWS

The high shore at Világos

If you begin the cycle tour at the tip of the lake, you will immediately find yourself at one of its most beautiful sections, as the path leads along the sheer cliff at Balatonvilágos and Akarattya. In clear weather, the entire eastern basin is visible from this vantage point.

Aszód–Örvényes

When making your way towards Keszthely, these two tiny villages are accessible through Tihany. A cycle path and a service path lead between the two, at the perfect height to provide a spectacular view of the lake from Tihany, almost all the way to Balatonudvari.

Balatonederics–Balatongyörök

This section actually crosses the Veszprém-Zala border at one point, with one breathtaking view giving way to the next. The Szépkilátó lookout point is located at the very top, but the section next to the golf course is also worth seeing, and the bicycle path is in excellent condition.

The section beneath the loess wall in Fonyód

No matter which direction you arrive from, it's great fun to cycle through the streets of the resort along the lakeside, with Badacsony on one side and the towering mountainside on the other.

The Roman road in Badacsony

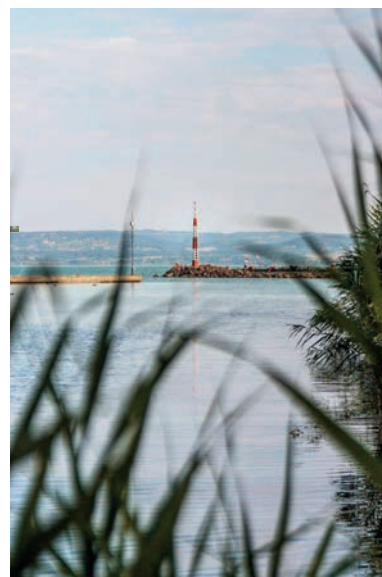
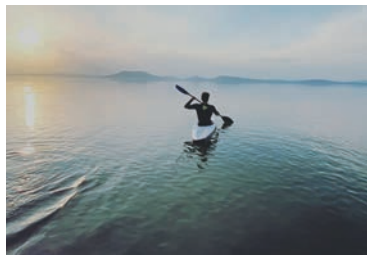
From Badacsonytomaj to Lábdihegy, you can cycle along the Roman road, which is parallel to Highway 71 but runs above it, around the skirt of the mountain. The panorama is beautiful the entire way, as you pass by grapevines for kilometres on end.





OUR FAVOURITE PHOTOS OF THE REGION

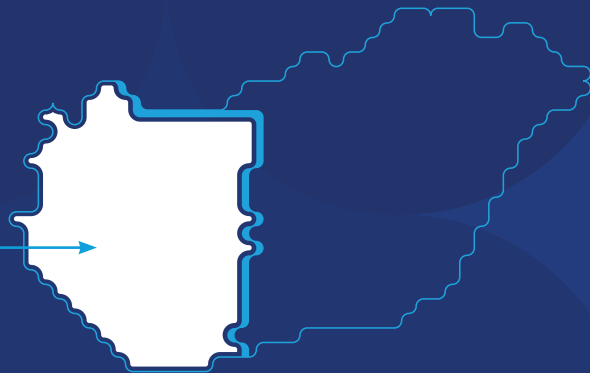
 @WOW_HUNGARY



WESTERN HUN GARY

○ —————→

The varied landscapes of Transdanubia have endless attractions to explore. There are many towns with rich architecture and histories, such as Pécs, with its Mediterranean style, or Sopron, with its numerous monuments, but the region is also an ideal destination for those just looking for peace and solitude. Its thermal spas and famous wine regions attract visitors from far and wide. Once you see all the possibilities, the only option is to sample them all. Come with us!





WESTERN HUNGARY

WESTERN HUNGARY OFFERS MANY DIVERSE AND EXCITING OPPORTUNITIES FOR TOURISM, WITH NATIONAL PARKS, HISTORICAL LANDMARKS AND ELEGANT, SPLENDID PALACES AWAITING ALL WHO COME TO VISIT.

THE MAJESTIC PANORAMA OF LAKE FERTŐ, THE HISTORIC BENEDICTINE ABBEY OF PANNONHALMA, AND THE ALMOST MEDITERRANEAN STREETS OF PÉCS, AS WELL AS THE WINES AND GASTRONOMIC WONDERS, COMPLETE THE UNFORGETTABLE EXPERIENCE OF YOUR VISIT TO THE REGION.

Sopron is located next to the Austrian border, and is well known to be our “most loyal town.” The centrepiece of the town is its iconic Fire Tower, symbolising its revival in Baroque grandeur after the medieval city was ravaged by flames in 1676. You can still make out its Roman forum and stroll around museums such as the Storno House, which contains medieval weaponry, as well as Franz Liszt’s piano. Kékfrankos wine, quality gastronomy and thermal waters underscore any city break here.

Nearby, you will find Esterházy Castle at **Fertőd** and Széchenyi Castle at **Nagycenk**, as well as the memorial site of the Pan-European Picnic, the scene of some of the 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 reserve in the Fertő-Hanság National Park. **Lake Fertő** itself naturally welcomes those seeking a bit of relaxation, be they cyclists, anglers or water-sports enthusiasts, with a relaxing spa awaiting you at **Bükfürdő**.

In Győr-Ménfőcsanak, you will find the **Benedictine Abbey of Pannonhalma**, which is also on the UNESCO World Heritage list. This is a 1,000-year-old landmark, where wine production and lavender cultivation continue to be regular activities. Among the treasures in its vast library of 360,000 volumes is the oldest surviving document written in Hungarian text, dating back to 1055.

Set in Hungary’s south-west corner by the Croatian border, the town of Pécs awaits those seeking a more Mediterranean experience. The town truly brims with culture and history. The Cella Septichora Visitor Centre displays remains dating back to Roman Sopianae, including graves from the early Christian era, and is also a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The Ottomans left behind the Pasha Qasim mosque, a minaret and Turkish baths, while works by leading artists connected with Pécs – including Post-Impressionist Tivadar Csontváry Kosztka 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.



Esterházy Castle, Fertőd

Villány can trace its wine cultivation back to the Romans. In the 1500s, Serbs brought Kadarka grapes and know-how. Long, hot summers did the rest – Hungary’s fiery south basks in a sub-Mediterranean climate. Winemaking dynasties date back generations. Why not sip a spicy cabernet franc on the sunny terrace of a winery?

Feel free to visit any and all of the cellars and press houses, and sample the creative gastronomy 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.

More active recreation awaits at the **Orfű lakes**, as well as an unparalleled panorama, and great hiking in the **Mecsek hills**.

SOPRON REGION



SOPRON AND ITS SURROUNDINGS

Located in the northwest corner of the country, Sopron represents the perfect destination for families all year round. The town is one of the premier tourist locations in Hungary, but activities for the entire family also abound in the city centre, which is rich in monuments and architectural masterpieces.

Sopron and the Fertő region provide a variety of offerings, including cycle paths and water hiking. Their unique atmosphere and the many activities on offer make them must-see locations for lovers of both active recreation and those seeking a bit of peace and quiet.

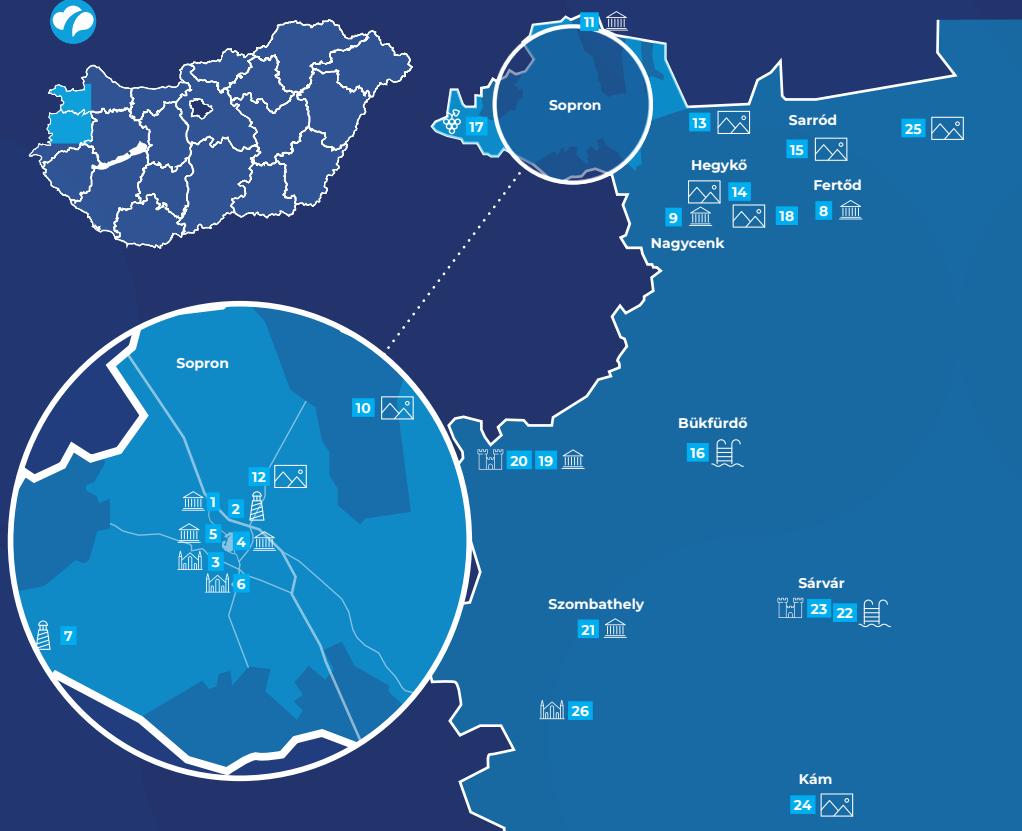
The Lővér Adventure Park and the Witches' Educational Trail are great fun for the kids, and of course you mustn't forget the Fairy Festival, truly the most magical event of the region, awaiting visitors in June every year.

The family-friendly atmosphere is only enhanced by a few days of relaxation in a Bükfürdő spa, or a spot of rest at gorgeous Hegykő. If you're up for a larger-scale family tour by bike or boat, you can learn more about the wildlife of Lake Fertő, a World Heritage Site.

When visiting Fertőd and Nagycenk, those in a nostalgic mood can learn the secrets of days gone by, returning from the ancient times of the baronial castles by way of a nostalgic narrow-gauge railway.

Recharge your batteries with your loved ones in the region's various spas, go on lengthy excursions, then have a taste of the culinary specialties of the Sopron wine region.

A view of Sopron



1. Sopron, Main Square
2. Sopron, Fire Tower
3. Sopron, Goat Church
4. Sopron, Storno House
5. Sopron, Fabricius House
6. Sopron, Ancient Synagogue
7. Sopron, Károly Lookout Tower
8. Fertőd, Esterházy Castle
9. Nagycenk, Széchenyi Castle
10. Fertőrákos Stone Quarry and Cave Theatre
11. Memorial Site of the Pan-European Picnic
12. Historic centre of Sopron
13. Fertő historic region
14. Hegykő
15. Sarród
16. Bükfürdő Thermal Spa
17. Sopron wine region
18. Fertő-Hanság National Park
19. Kőszeg old town
20. Kőszeg, Jurisics Castle
21. Szombathely, Savaria Roman artefacts
22. Sárvár Spa and Pool Complex
23. Sárvár, Nádasdy Castle
24. Kám, Jeli Arboretum
25. Öntésmajor
26. Ják Church

Sopron



Vienna 75 km
55 minutes

Bratislava 87 km
1 hour 10 minutes

Budapest 214 km
2 hours 13 minutes

Zagreb 290 km
3 hours 27 minutes

Ljubljana 356 km
3 hours 49 minutes

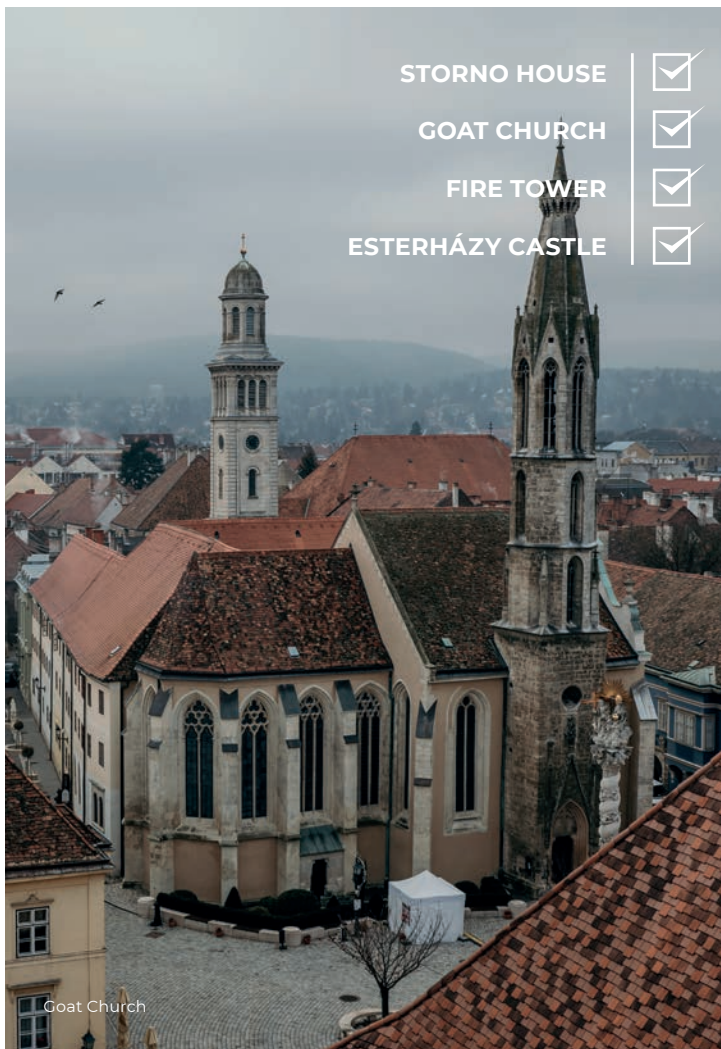
Prague 365 km
4 hours 10 minutes

Belgrade 584 km
5 hours 24 minutes

Berlin 713 km
7 hours 28 minutes

Warsaw 733 km
7 hours 39 minutes





STORNO HOUSE



GOAT CHURCH



FIRE TOWER



ESTERHÁZY CASTLE



Goat Church



BUCKET LIST

IF YOU ONLY HAVE A SINGLE DAY TO EXPLORE THE REGION

A TOUR OF SOPRON

A SINGLE STROLL IS ENOUGH TO SEE EVERYTHING IN THE OLD CITY OF SOPRON. JUST START WITH THE STORNO HOUSE AND THE GOAT CHURCH IN THE MAIN SQUARE.

The **Storno House** is one of Sopron's most beautiful buildings: a palatial corner house, built in the Baroque style, a monument to the history of the town between the 17th and 20th centuries. The **Goat Church** looks back on an ancient past: manuscripts first make mention of it in 1280. Above its entrance, you can see the coat-of-arms with the goat, alluding to the benefactor of the church.

The **Fire Tower** is a symbol of the town. After taking a look at the remains of the Roman city walls, it's time to climb up to the top of the tower and marvel at the breathtaking panorama that unfolds before you. You will see Sopron, Lake Fertő, and even the neighbouring country of Austria lying at your feet.

Of course, you mustn't forget that Sopron is home of the famed Kékfrankos (literally: Blue Franc) wine. Napoleon's soldiers knew about this wine, buying it from the local producers for their own blue francs. The Sopron Mountains and the hillsides and gentle slopes around Lake Fertő all lend the local wines their special character.

The **Esterházy Castle** in Fertőd, also known as the 'Hungarian Versailles', was a place of music and splendour. Joseph Haydn spent two decades composing his works here. There is no question about whether it is worth a visit – it definitely is!



BUCKET LIST

IF YOU HAVE TWO DAYS TO EXPLORE THE REGION

VISIT THE FERTŐ-HANSÁG NATIONAL PARK.

Start the tour from **Kócsagvár** in Sárrod. The name literally means 'Egret Castle' in Hungarian, which is most fitting, as the great egret is one of the characteristic birds you'll find here. You can also go to **Öntésmajor**, just 7 km from Kapuvár, to visit the exhibit on the fauna of the Hanság region, as well as on the preservation of the remains of the former swamp and marshland. **Sarród and Lászlómajor** used to be one of the nerve centres of the great Esterházy estates, and you can visit to catch a glimpse of contemporary village life.



The rocks of the **Fertőrákos Stone Quarry** were used for various purposes back in Roman times: many of the buildings, residences, churches and palaces of Sopron and Vienna were built out of these stones. A prehistoric animal exhibit awaits you inside the quarry caves, with life-size prehistoric whales, sharks and dolphins. It also teaches visitors about the various types of limestone.

This is also where you'll find the **Cave Theatre**, a stage with its own unique ambience. Thousand-year-old limestone formations serve as the backdrop for the various shows and events. Finally, you should take a little walk to find a beautiful view of Lake Fertő and the memorial site of the Pan-European Picnic.



KÓCSAGVÁR



ÖNTÉSMÁJOR



LÁSZLÓMAJOR



FERTŐRÁKOS STONE QUARRY



CAVE THEATRE



Fertőrákos Stone Quarry and Cave Theatre



Széchenyi Castle, Nagycenk



BUCKET LIST

IF YOU HAVE THREE DAYS TO EXPLORE THE REGION

GO HIKING AND SWIMMING AROUND THE REGION.

After visiting Sopron, Fertőd, and the Fertő-Hanság National Park, why not continue your trip to **Nagycenk**, the location of the former palace of the Széchenyi family.

Ferenc Széchenyi moved into the palace in 1783, making Nagycenk the centre of the family estates. This is also where he kept his extensive collections, numbering in the tens of thousands of items (including manuscripts, books, coins, engravings, maps, etc.) Having inherited this castle, István Széchenyi, "the Greatest Hungarian" proceeded to apply all of the technical achievements and innovations learned during his travels abroad, including the installation of a bathroom and gas lighting.



After the Nagycenk palace, it's time to visit the **Bükfürdő** Thermal Spa. The medicinal waters bubble up through four wells from a depth of 1,282 m, and have been proven to ease or prevent various musculoskeletal and gynaecological complaints.

But the medicinal waters are not the only reason you would have to visit. Those looking to enjoy some sports or other active means of relaxation will be delighted to find three storeys of both indoor and outdoor adventure and diving pools, water slides, a Kneipp pool, a jacuzzi, a sauna world, and various types of massages, all over 1,400 m² of floorspace.



BUCKET LIST

IF YOU HAVE FOUR DAYS TO EXPLORE THE REGION

DISCOVER THE MIRACLES OF THE REGION!

Make your way towards **Kőszeg**. The quiet old town holds many beautiful secrets. A typical street would be the Várkör (literally Castle Circle), which is where a system of trenches once protected the city. Jurisics Castle was the primary defence against Turkish sieges; it was even named after its most famous defender.

Visiting Szombathely is also an excellent idea. The stone archives of the **Savaria Museum** hold a collection of Roman artefacts, including Capitulum torsos and votive altars, as well as both pagan and early Christian tombstones.

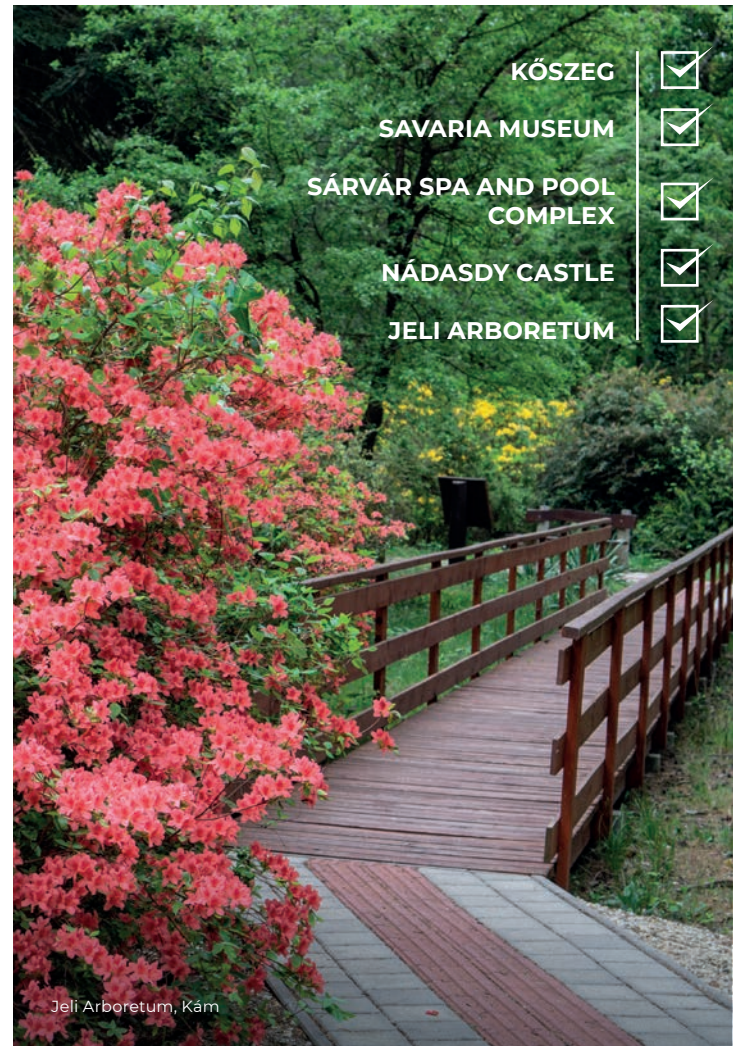
Bathing and relaxation await in the **Sárvár Spa and Pool Complex**, along with many water slides and pools along the beach section.



Sárvár Spa and Pool Complex

While you're in Sárvár, you should certainly visit **Nádasy Castle**. The ceiling frescoes depicting various battles are the grandest series of historic Baroque-style frescoes in all of Hungary.

Take a stroll in the **Jeli Arboretum**: whether you arrive just in time for the rhododendrons to bloom, or you're more interested in gazing at rare species of pine from the path 10 metres up, this is a place for rest and relaxation.



Jeli Arboretum, Kám

KŐSZEG



SAVARIA MUSEUM



SÁRVÁR SPA AND POOL
COMPLEX



NÁDASDY CASTLE



JELI ARBORETUM





Fertő-Hanság National Park



THE MIRACLES OF THE FERTŐ-HANSÁG NATIONAL PARK

The Fertő-Hanság National Park has many beautiful natural features, making it the ideal location for a short hike. You should start early, because the reeds look exceptionally lovely on the winding canals of the Fertő in the morning. It is a highly diverse environment, and you'll find many nature reserves, botanical gardens, bogs, salt marshes, tumuli and earthen forts here.

You can try venturing out at dawn with a canoe, hoping to catch a glimpse of the more reticent species of mammals and waterfowl, but if you prefer, you could also peer at the surrounding landscape and wildlife from the comfort of an electric-powered solar boat instead. Start from Kócsagvár, the centre of the Directorate of the Fertő-Hanság National Park. The name literally means "Heron Castle" in Hungarian, taking its name from the great egret, one of the characteristic birds you'll find here. Kócsagvár displays a very organic style of architecture and is perhaps one of the largest thatched-roof buildings in the entire country.



But it is time to continue your journey, and your next stop is Lászlómajor, the erstwhile economic nerve centre of the Esterházy estates. The estates were established some 150 years ago, but have now – as of 2012 – been granted new life and a number of new functionalities, such as an interactive exhibit teaching visitors about the traditional Hungarian crafts typical of this region.



BARONIAL CASTLES IN THE AREA

Also known as the 'Hungarian Versailles', Esterházy Castle in Fertőd was one of the primary cultural hubs of Hungary in the late 18th century. The residence where Joseph Haydn once served as court composer is now the stage for classical and pop concerts. Step inside the Marionette Theatre, where Maria Theresa once listened to works composed specifically for her pleasure from the comfort of the box of honour, and where Haydn himself conducted the orchestra.

The castle's massive suites are certainly an awe-inspiring sight in and of themselves, but visitors can also enrich their understanding through learning about the theatre's history. In fact, they can even take a virtual guided tour of Eszterháza in the 18th century, with the help of a special panoramic projector.

The early classicist Széchenyi Castle in Nagycenk was home to the Greatest Hungarian, István Széchenyi, and his family for generations. Following the renovation of the castle in 1973, it became the location for the largest memorial museum and family mausoleum in Hungary, honouring the history and legacy of István Széchenyi and his family. In the garden, you will find one of the most beautiful and spectacular rows of linden trees in all of Europe, stretching 2.6 kilometres. They were planted by Antal Széchenyi and his wife in 1754. After you've finished your visit to the castle, you can continue your time-travel adventures by visiting the nearby Széchenyi Museum Railway, which successfully evokes the ambience of the turn of the century.



Esterházy Castle, Fertőd





WHAT YOU WON'T WANT TO MISS IN THE REGION

If you ever find yourself in the Sopron wine region, you should certainly try the **Sopron Kékfrankos** (Bläufränkisch) or the **Sopron Zenit**. The town of Sopron has a long tradition of viticulture and winemaking, and is famous for its Kékfrankos wine. At one time, it comprised a single wine region with the city of Rust in Austria, as well as the surrounding areas. Legend has it that the local Ponzichters (local German-speaking producers) would only sell this wine to Napoleon's soldiers in exchange for their valuable 'blue francs', hence the name. It is a full-bodied wine, sharing this characteristic with the Zenit, also a local wine.

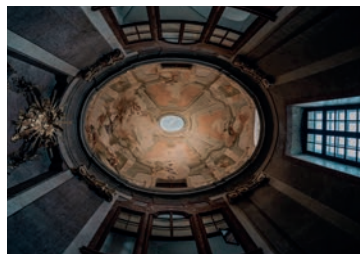
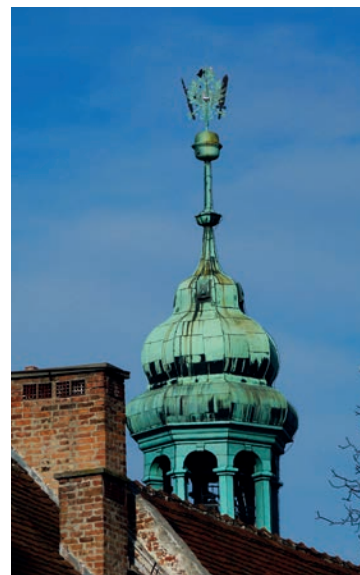


Babsterc (also known as Bohnensterz) is a dish native to Sopron. It got its name from the Ponzichters, local producers who would grow beans between the rows of grapevines. Beans were a thrifty choice, as they did not cast shade on the vines, did not disrupt the harvest, and were also not taxed. Babsterc is prepared the same way today as it always has been: made with flour, fat or oil, and salt. It is best enjoyed with pörkölt (a Hungarian beef and onion stew), but is also excellent with sour cream, cucumber salad, or even as a sweet dish with any kind of jam.



OUR FAVOURITE PHOTOS OF THE REGION

 @WOW_HUNGARY



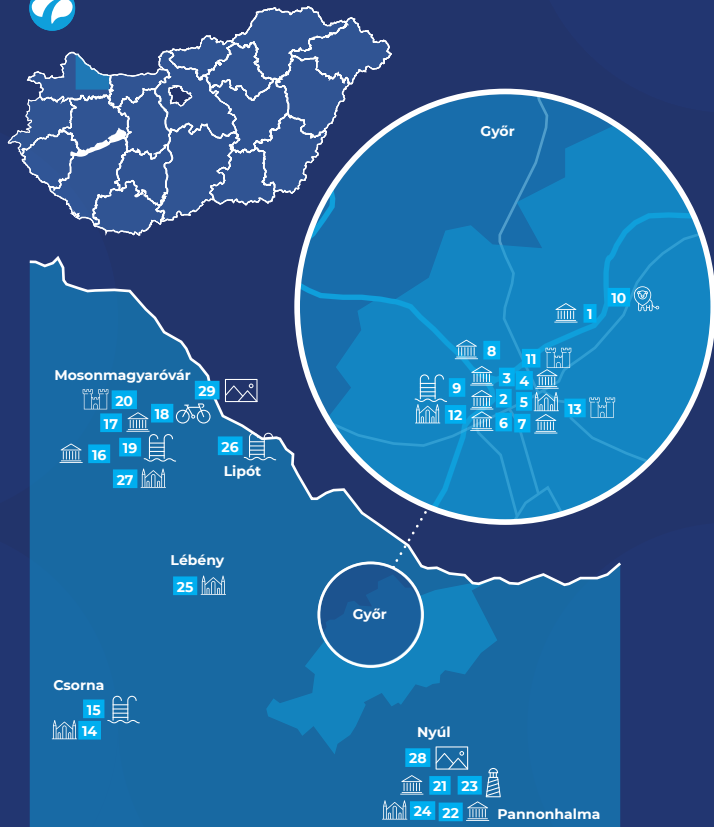
GYŐR AND PANNONHALMA



GYŐR AND PANNONHALMA

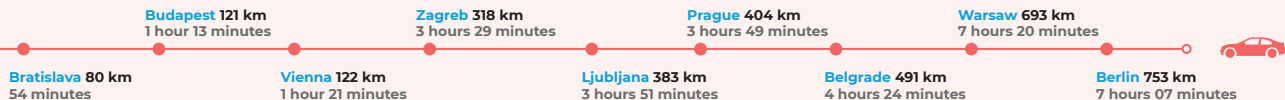
The Győr-Szigetköz-Pannonhalma triangle situated along Western Transdanubia promises some exceptional adventures for those who thirst for truly active relaxation. It is in third place in terms of the number of monuments among Hungarian towns. Located at the crossing of four rivers – the Mosoni-Duna, the Rába, the Rábca and the Marcal – it is very close to the Hungarian-Slovakian border, and offers some truly innovative experiences and cultural knowledge for the whole family. Pannonhalma awaits you with its own artefacts, telling tales of an equally rich historic and cultural legacy. Its monastery has been a World Heritage Site since 1996. The Benedictine Abbey of Pannonhalma has been standing for a thousand years, and travellers can not only feel physically and spiritually refreshed, but can also enjoy unparalleled gastronomic experiences atop the holy mountain of Pannonia. If some exercise is what you seek, then no journey would be complete without finding your way to Szigetköz, an island plain with several hundred kilometres of waterways, as well as a cycle path winding its way along the Danube shoreline.

Benedictine Abbey of Pannonhalma



1. Győr, Audi Hungaria Visitor Centre
2. Győr, Benedictine building complex, Széchenyi Pharmacy Museum
3. Győr, Blue-Dye Workshop city-centre shop
4. Győr, Margit Kovács Permanent Exhibition, Kreszta House
5. Győr, Cathedral of Our Lady of the Assumption
6. Győr, Széchenyi tér
7. Győr, St Ladislaus Visitor Centre, Káptalandomb
8. Győr, Mobilis Interactive Exhibition Centre
9. Győr, Rába Quelle Spa, Thermal Baths and Pool Complex
10. Győr, János Xantus Zoo
11. Győr, Püspökvár (Bishop's Castle)
12. Győr, Synagogue
13. Győr, Esterházy Palace
14. Csorna, Prémontre Abbey Visitor Centre
15. Csorna, Thermal Bath
16. Mosonmagyaróvár, FUTURA Interactive Natural Science Centre
17. Mosonmagyaróvár, Castle
18. Mosonmagyaróvár, Szigetköz Adventure Park
19. Mosonmagyaróvár, Flexum-Termal Spa
20. Mosonmagyaróvár, Hanság Museum
21. Pannonhalma, Hefter Glass Gallery and Studio
22. Pannonhalma, Abbey Museum and Gallery
23. Pannonhalma, St Maurus Lookout Tower and Treetop Educational Trail
24. Benedictine Abbey of Pannonhalma
25. Lébény, Church of St Jacob
26. Lipót Thermal Bath and Pool Complex, Camping
27. Máriakálnok, Chapel of the Blessed Virgin Mary
28. Nyúli Gulch
29. Szigetköz

Győr





BUCKET LIST

IF YOU ONLY HAVE A SINGLE DAY TO EXPLORE THE REGION

DISCOVER THE BAROQUE-STYLE CITY CENTRE!

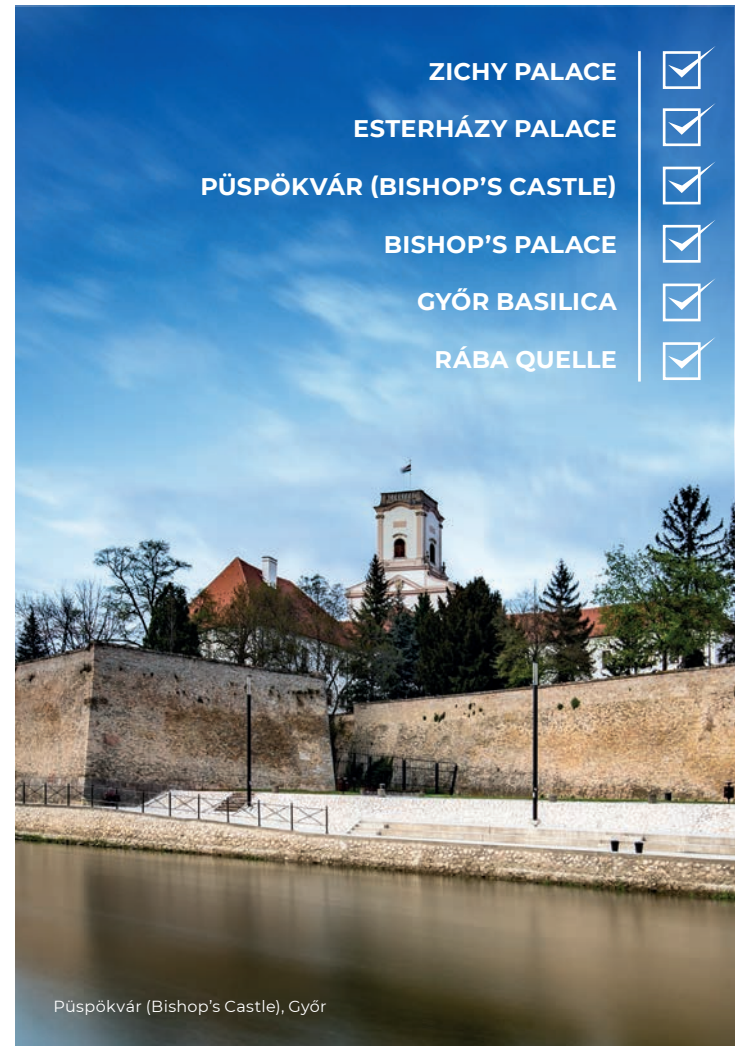
The delightful little streets and squares of Győr, the old company signs on the houses and the narrow alleys – all of these take us back in time. The buildings, the museums, the churches and the **Esterházy Palace** all house a wealth of treasures.

Keep on walking until you get to **Püspökvár (Bishop's Castle)** and the **Bishop's Palace**, which is the most perfectly preserved bishop's residence from the Middle Ages in all of Hungary. The building has always served as a bishop's residence – with the exception of the first two centuries of the modern era – and continues to serve as such to this day. The Holy Crown of Hungary had numerous stays here.

The **Győr Basilica** was founded during the reign of Saint Stephen. It holds our most important ecclesiastical relic – other than the Holy Crown – the Cloak of St Ladislaus.



Győr is the city of rivers, with the **Mosoni-Duna, the Rába, the Rábca and the Marcal rivers** all winding through the town. Take a quick stroll to the **Rába Quelle** Pool Complex on the peninsula located at the intersection of the Mosoni-Duna and Rába rivers, and you will find a plethora of water slides, leisure pools, saunas and medicinal pools, as well as a spectacular view of Győr's historic central area.



ZICHY PALACE



ESTERHÁZY PALACE



PÜSPÖKVÁR (BISHOP'S CASTLE)



BISHOP'S PALACE



GYŐR BASILICA



RÁBA QUELLE



Püspökvár (Bishop's Castle), Győr

MOBILIS INTERACTIVE
EXHIBITION CENTRE

AUDI HUNGARIA
VISITOR CENTRE



BUCKET LIST

IF YOU HAVE TWO DAYS TO EXPLORE THE REGION

INTERACTIVE EXPLORATION

**AFTER TAKING A LOOK AT THE HISTORIC ARTEFACTS,
IT'S WORTH TAKING THE TIME TO EXPLORE TWO
LOCATIONS MORE CLOSELY RELATED TO MODERN
TIMES.**

The **Mobilis Interactive Exhibition Centre** has 70 different devices to experiment with, from a wind tunnel and a mirror maze to an aerodynamic chassis. The exhibition area is dedicated to 3D printing, augmented and virtual reality, robotics, smart home tools, creating animations, and various humanoids playing important roles. The digital science centre also hosts experimental exhibits, which are designed to help us fall in love with engineering and science.

The **Audi Hungaria Visitor Centre** provides a glimpse into a vehicle assembly plant, including chassis construction, pressing and assembly, engine manufacturing, and even information on just how many components there are in a V6 TDI engine. It's a flawless interplay of precision and technology – a chassis turns into a complete, functioning car before your very eyes, with over 600 robots working together to weld the individual components together into one cohesive whole.

Mobilis Interactive Exhibition Centre, Győr



BUCKET LIST

IF YOU HAVE THREE DAYS TO EXPLORE THE REGION

THE HERITAGE OF THE GYŐR SYNAGOGUE AND PANNONHALMA

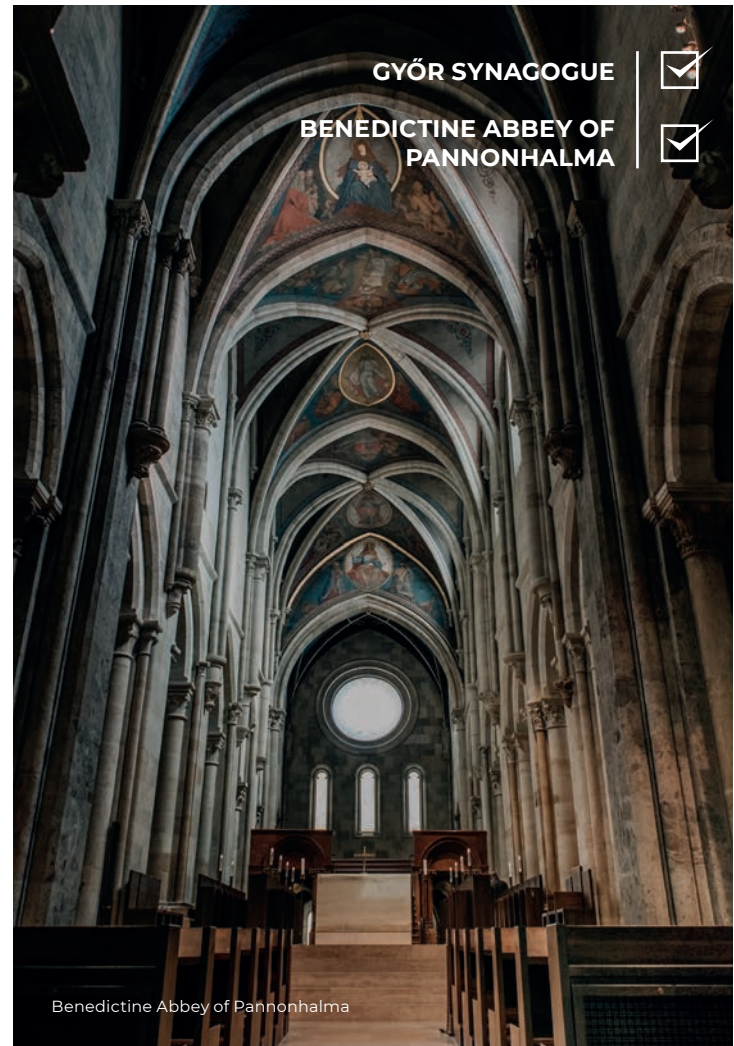
If you have more than one day to spend in town, you should certainly visit the **Synagogue** in Győr. We promise it will be quite an experience. For a long time, it served as the template for synagogues to be constructed in other cities, largely due to its high capacity and excellent integration into the metropolitan environment. Today, it is commonly used for concerts and performances.

Leaving Győr, you will arrive at **Pannonhalma** in half an hour, your path taking you into the **Benedictine Abbey of Pannonhalma**, a World Heritage site. The buildings of the thousand-year-old monastery all preserve little fragments of bygone ages. The monastic community currently living here continues to use the surviving assets in line with their original purpose.

The parts of the monastery open to visitors include the church, the crypt, the cloister, and the library – where the earliest Hungarian language artefact, the founding charter of the Abbey of Tihany, is kept. Next to the Archabbey is the **Benedictine High School of Pannonhalma**, an unmatched herb garden and arboretum, and a high-class winery and restaurant.



Benedictine Abbey of Pannonhalma



GYŐR SYNAGOGUE



BENEDICTINE ABBEY OF
PANNONHALMA



Benedictine Abbey of Pannonhalma

FUTURA INTERACTIVE
NATURAL SCIENCE CENTRE

MOSONMAGYARÓVÁR
THERMAL BATH

SZIGETKÖZ



A view of Szigetköz



BUCKET LIST

IF YOU HAVE FOUR DAYS TO EXPLORE THE REGION

HEAD FOR SZIGETKÖZ AND ITS CAPITAL, MOSONMAGYARÓVÁR.

Start the day in the **Futura Interactive Natural Science Centre**, which is located in a historic 300-year-old granary. It is the largest scientific playhouse in Hungary, where visitors can discover the secrets of the four fundamental elements – water, earth, air and fire – in addition to enjoying planetarium lectures and demonstrations of experiments.



The **Mosonmagyaróvár Thermal Bath** boasts pools with ten different temperatures: you're sure to find the one that's perfect for you. Its waters are considered one of the top five most efficacious medicinal baths in Europe. What's more, the baths are located outside in the fresh air, among lush greenery and in the vicinity of a natural flowing river.

Now you're in the middle of the Little Hungarian Plain, that is, in the **Szigetköz**. This is an island bordered by the Danube and the Mosoni-Duna River – and is, in fact, the largest island in Hungary, with an area of 375 km² – which can mean only one thing: it's time to explore the natural wilderness.

The Szigetköz, also known as the 'Gift of the Danube', has an incredibly rich and varied flora and fauna, which you can easily explore via kayaking or canoeing along its waterways.



WHAT YOU WON'T WANT TO MISS IN THE REGION

As long as you're in Pannonhalma, you most certainly ought to sample the Abbey wines. The **Rhein Riesling** is one of the traditional varieties of the wine region, 'the vineyard of Pannonia', and is predominantly cultivated in the local vineyards. Its aroma is reminiscent of fresh grape flowers, while its taste teases with a hint of citrus, making it the ideal summer drink.

If your preference leans more towards a robust red, may we recommend a nice **Pinot Noir**? Four Burgundy clones are cultivated in three vineyards, and the varied soil and unparalleled climate all contribute to its status as a true masterpiece.

Fish can swim away, rabbits can run. But not here, not in the Szigetköz. You should certainly give one of Szigetköz's specialties a taste: **pickled fish or slow-cooked rabbit**.

Pickled fish represents the ingenuity of our ancestors with regard to preserving food: when pickled, the fish can be preserved for several days on end and the more delicate bones simply dissolve after three days – and it's delicious, too.

The rabbit is marinated in vinegar along with the vegetables for approximately two days, then roasted to perfection and served with a vegetable sauce.

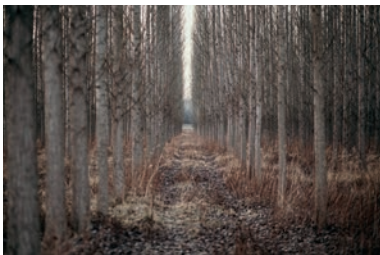




OUR FAVOURITE PHOTOS OF THE REGION



@WOW_HUNGARY



PÉCS REGION



Pécș Main Square



PÉCS-VILLÁNY

Pécș and its environs are located in the south-western part of the country, near the Croatian border. The region is highly varied in its topography, with huge, contiguous forests and plains scattered across its breadth. Its climate hints towards the Mediterranean, giving the region a welcoming aspect in winter and summer alike.

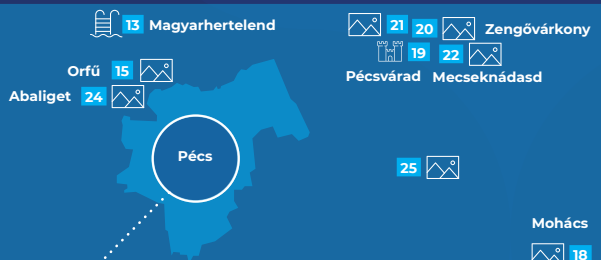
Pécș is the perfect place for long, leisurely strolls spanning entire historical eras along its enchanting little streets, allowing you to browse the many culturally significant locations listed as World Heritage sites at your leisure. Pécș was awarded the title of European Capital of Culture in 2010, partly due to its wealth of cultural treasures, and its high-quality events and activities. The region boasts plenty of other sights to see as well: in the south, wine-lovers can find the premium experiences of their dreams as the sunny regions of the Villány wine region see local producers cultivate their vines over 2,100 hectares, tirelessly working on improving the quality of Hungarian wines even further. Those more interested in restoring their health will find Harkány to be the ideal town: its medicinal spa is one of the most famous in all of Europe.



Szigetvár



16



1. Pécs, Early Christian Mausoleum
2. Pécs, Zsolnay Cultural Quarter
3. Pécs, Mosque Pasha Gazi Qasim
4. Pécs Cathedral
5. Pécs Zoo

6. Pécs, Cella Septichora Visitor Centre
7. Pécs, "Museum Street"
8. Pécs, Csontváry Museum
9. Siklós Castle
10. Siklós Thermal Bath
11. Villánykövesd Cellar Village
12. Harkány, Harkányfürdő
13. Magyarhertelend Thermal Bath
14. Villány-Siklós Wine Route
15. Lake Orfű
16. Szigetvár Castle
17. Máriagyűd Shrine
18. Mohács
19. Pécsvárad Castle
20. Zengővárkony
21. Óbánya
22. Mecseknádasd
23. Pécs, Vasarely Museum
24. Abaliget Stalactite Caves (Medicinal Caves)
25. Mecsek hiking routes
26. Nagyarsány Statue Park
27. Pécs, TV Tower
28. Pécs, Kodály Centre

Pécs



Budapest 210 km
2 hours 08 minutes

Belgrade 263 km
3 hours 13 minutes

Bratislava 412 km
3 hours 36 minutes

Prague 736 km
6 hours 31 minutes

Berlin 1084 km
9 hours 49 minutes

Zagreb 234 km
3 hours 01 minutes

Ljubljana 394 km
4 hours 09 minutes

Vienna 454 km
4 hours 03 minutes

Warsaw 951 km
10 hours 22 minutes





ZSOLNAY QUARTER
ZSOLNAY MAUSOLEUM
PÉCS MAIN SQUARE
MOSQUE PASHA GAZI
QASIM
PÉCS CATHEDRAL



BUCKET LIST

IF YOU ONLY HAVE A SINGLE DAY TO EXPLORE THE REGION

A STROLL THROUGH THE TOWN CENTRE

Start your day with a pleasant stroll in the 'miniature town' constructed in the location of what was once the Zsolnay Porcelain Manufactory, in the **Zsolnay Quarter**. We recommend the m21 Gallery for those who have a craving for art, while the kids can go check out the most super awesome physics class in the entire Quarter, called the Magic Hour. Later, you should also hop over to the **Zsolnay Mausoleum** in the vicinity. Be careful, because legend has it that the light shining in will reveal the secret recipe of Vilmos Zsolnay's world-famous eosin glaze.

Next, head for the **Pécs Main Square**. Pick one of Széchenyi tér's charming coffee shops for a bit of relaxation, and then it's time to get to know one of the most iconic buildings in the town a little better. The more observant may notice that **Mosque Pasha Gazi Qasim** is leaning a little bit. No wonder: the mosque is simply turning towards Mecca. Amble on towards the Cathedral, and make sure to place a lock on Hungary's very first lock-wall. Finally, when you arrive at the Dóm tér, take a moment to appreciate the four-towered symbol of the town of Pécs: the **Cathedral**. And you know what would be a truly worthy end to the day? If the guided tour had you climb up into the lookout tower.



Pécs Cathedral



BUCKET LIST

IF YOU HAVE TWO DAYS TO EXPLORE THE REGION

EXPLORE THE ARTISTIC TREASURES OF PÉCS.

If you surrendered to the enchantment of Pécs, and decided to spend one more day here, then all that's left to do is make every moment count. The town is not called a Cultural Capital for nothing: even just wandering around casually can be enjoyable, especially if you know what's worth looking at. Pécs is bursting with **Bauhaus-style buildings**, yet the architecture is far from the only special thing about this town. Many amazing artists were born in Pécs, such as **Tivadar Csonatváry Kosztka** for instance. Whether you enjoy painting or not, it is undeniable that anyone would be enchanted by the art of Csonatváry, one of the most popular painters in Hungary.

Once you've enjoyed The Lonely Cedar in the **Csonatváry Museum** on Janus Pannonius utca to your heart's content, you should take the plunge and leap head-first into the world of op-art and analytic geometry. That's right. Victor Vasarely (or Győző Vásárhelyi, to use his Hungarian name) was also from Pécs. The world-famous 'Zebras' are stationed in Káptalan utca, where you can find them after exploring the museum. Spend a little time with them as well. Just a courtyard away, you will find Schaár "Street", where so many happy couples say their vows and commit to spending their lives together. The nearby **Cella Septichora Visitor Centre** awaits us at the end of the day.

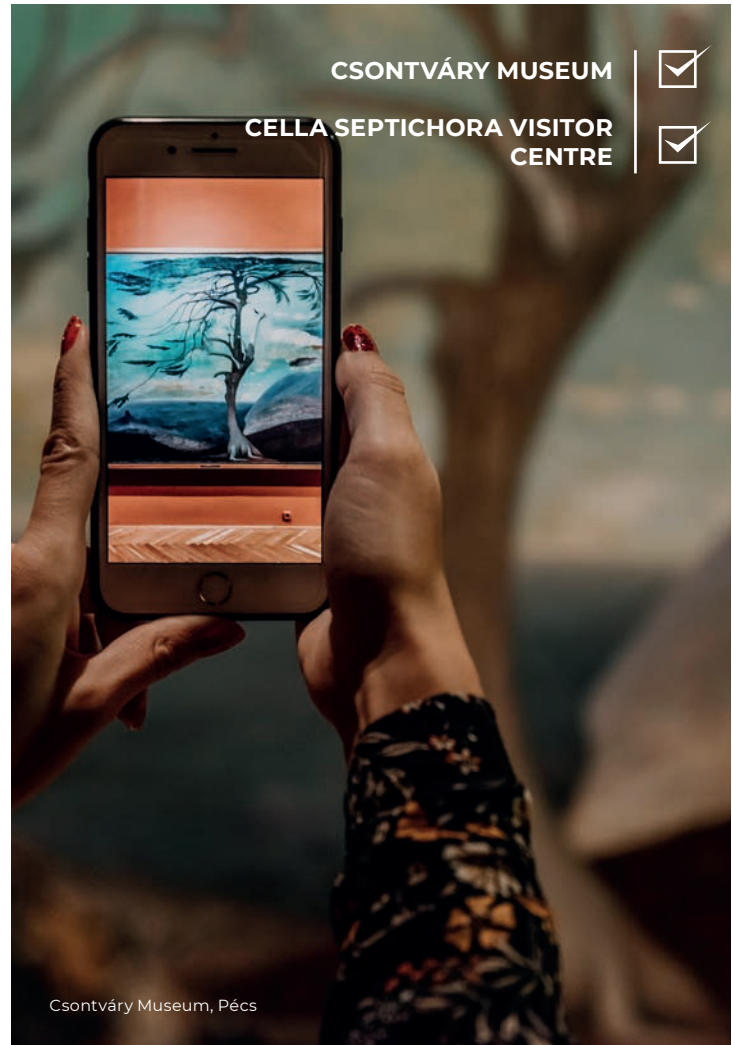


Cella Septichora Visitor Centre

CSONTVÁRY MUSEUM



CELLA SEPTICHORA VISITOR
CENTRE



Csonatváry Museum, Pécs



ABALIGET STALACTITE
CAVES

ORFŰ MILL MUSEUM

SIKLÓS CASTLE



Siklós Castle



BUCKET LIST

IF YOU HAVE THREE DAYS TO EXPLORE THE REGION

SPEND A DAY HIKING.

You've been wandering the streets of one of the most beautiful cities in Hungary for two days, but perhaps it's time to make your way outside. After all, the outskirts hide a thousand secret treasures of their own. If you packed your hiking boots, then now's the time to begin wandering the depths of the forest. The Pál Rockenbauer South Transdanubian Blue Trail cuts right through the Mecsek Hills, leading you straight to the most beautiful natural sights of the Baranya region. Whether you're on foot or on two wheels, the **Abaliget Stalactite Caves** should definitely be one of your priorities. The medicinal cave stretches on for almost half a kilometre, and is easily one of the most exciting experiences in the region.



A view of Orfű

After the dark depths of the cave, it's time to warm up a bit, and Lake Pécs is a great place to do it. In truth, the lake is related to Pécs in name only: it is actually located near **Orfű**. It is also the location of one of the most fun Hungarian festivals, Fishing on Orfű, but at all other times in the year, it is exceptionally quiet and still, a perfect place to relax and recharge your batteries. If you detect the tantalising scent of freshly baked bread, that can only be coming from the **Orfű Mill Museum**. As long as you're here, you may as well have a look at how the mills work. Continue your journey of exploration in **Siklós Castle**, then say goodnight with a quiet dinner in the vicinity of the castle.



BUCKET LIST

IF YOU HAVE FOUR DAYS TO EXPLORE THE REGION

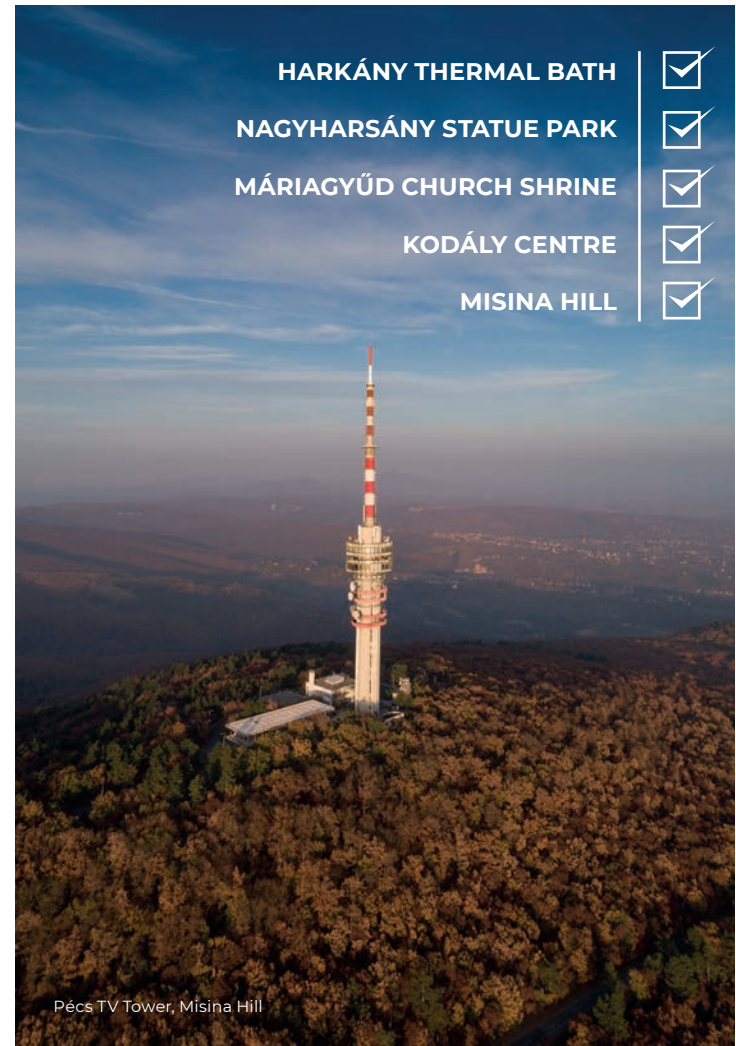
ONE EXTRA DAY TO FULLY RECHARGE

A glorious concert, a petting zoo, a whole-day wellness spa, or a bit of hiking? We're here to help. In the **Harkány Thermal Bath**, idly soaking in the beneficial waters is just one of your options. Their slide park is also sensational, and they organise monthly events for families. If your preference is hiking, the **Nagyharsány Statue Park** would be your best bet. This open-air 'studio' of young sculptors has many unique works of art, with a panoramic promenade running along the cliff wall around the park.

If you want to return to Pécs, make a short detour to **Máriagyűd** first. The reason is that the Virgin Mary Statue in the **Church Shrine** is associated with many stories of miraculous healing and divine revelations. While you're in the car, feel free to browse the music of the **Kodály Centre**, and listen to a concert with some of the clearest melodies in the region. The last stop of your four-day relaxation should be **Misina Hill**, where the 197-metre tall Pécs TV Tower looms above the town. The view is simply unforgettable.



Máriagyűd Church Shrine



HARKÁNY THERMAL BATH



NAGYHARSÁNY STATUE PARK



MÁRIAGYŰD CHURCH SHRINE



KODÁLY CENTRE



MISINA HILL



Pécs TV Tower, Misina Hill



Havihegy Chapel



THE ALMOND TREE OF HAVIHEGY

The 135-year-old, six-metre-tall almond tree located next to the Havihegy Chapel is very popular with locals. In 2019, it was entered into the European Tree of the Year competition, which it won effortlessly, defeating trees from 14 other nations. The tree, now considered a local icon, was first mentioned in early 20th century sources. "It provides shelter to passers by, and brings forth the fruit of labour in the autumn," are the words they used to describe it.

While the Romans had already been planting almond trees in what was then Sopianae, the Pécs almonds only really grew to fame during the Turkish occupation. The famous poem (one of the very first in the history of Hungarian poetry!) by Pécs bishop Janus Pannonius even made the almond trees flowering in the town a symbol of culture and erudition.

However, the Tree of the Year, with its gnarled trunk, is not the only one on the mountain summit. A number of its aged peers stand near the chapel, proving greatly popular with tourists every year.

Vilmos Zsolnay's name remains an iconic concept in itself in Pécs, as does the factory he founded. Having originally planned to become a painter, Zsolnay was the one who discovered the process of eosin glazing porcelain, with the characteristic eosin pattern likewise being a result of his research. His works of art brought him one triumphant success after another. In 1878, for example, he won the grand prize at the Paris World's Fair. In the second half of the 19th century, Pécs gained a number of outstanding craftsmen (the Littke family with their champagne, the Hamerli family with their gloves, etc.) but to this day, Vilmos Zsolnay remains the one with the strongest recognised bond to the town.



WHAT YOU WON'T WANT TO MISS IN THE REGION

WHAT TO TRY IN BARANYA – WINES AND CUISINE

People from Baranya county will claim that their land produces the best wines in the world. Though you cannot persuade them otherwise, you should definitely try the wines! For instance, the internationally recognised **Villányi Portugieser**, a variant of which is matured in new barrels and is tapped at the St. Martin's day wine festival. **Villányi Franc** is another must-taste wine. The Villány wine region seems to be the natural habitat of Cabernet franc, and a premium quality wine is produced here.

Wild garlic is a very healthy and tasty spice. Locals love the aromatic leaves and in season, they are literally used in everything. The 'wild garlic ice cream' might not be to your taste, but cream soup is a popular dish in most restaurants in the town. Swabian communities moved to the region in the 18th century, bringing some excellent recipes with them, such as '**sufnudli**' (potato dumplings with poppy seeds), and the plum jam you can try in many places in Pécs.





OUR FAVOURITE PHOTOS OF THE REGION

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WANT TO SEE AND DISCOVER EVEN MORE? LOOK FOR THE OTHER BUCKET LISTS.



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