

Treasures of

BUDAPEST





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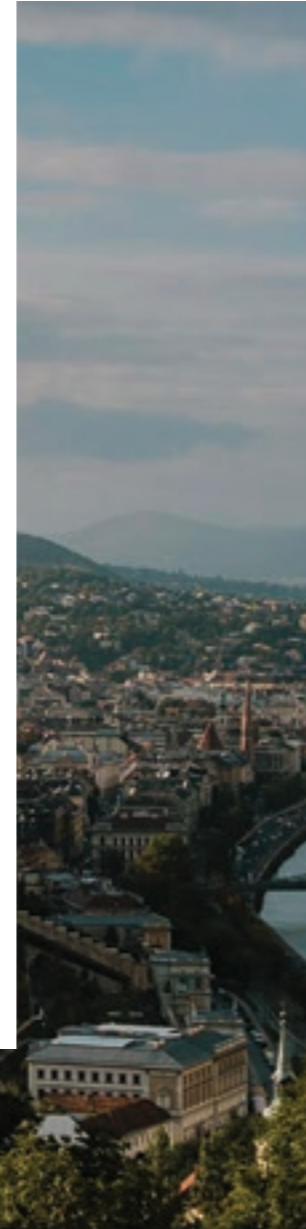
SPICE OF EUROPE

BUDAPEST – SPARKLING WITH LIFE

IN TERMS OF CULTURE, ARCHITECTURE AND NATURAL SURROUNDINGS, BUDAPEST IS ONE OF THE WORLD'S MOST BEAUTIFUL CITIES. SPARKLING WITH LIFE YET STILL AUTHENTIC, THIS IS A METROPOLIS THAT'S BOTH HISTORIC AND MODERN, AFFORDING ALL THE CLASSICAL AND COSMOPOLITAN ASPECTS OF A EUROPEAN CAPITAL, STIMULATING, LIBERATING AND FULL OF VITALITY.



Buda Castle Quarter



Budapest basks in a wonderful built and natural environment, reflected in its **UNESCO World Heritage sites** such as the **Banks of the Danube**, the **Buda Castle Quarter** and **Andrássy Avenue**. The city is famed for its breathtaking architecture and photogenic river scenery, stunning backdrops for a thriving local film industry.

A diverse and vibrant gastronomy, underscored by a rich **culinary heritage**, can be sampled at **Michelin-starred dining restaurants**, contemporary bistros, family-run eateries and upscale brunch options. **Market halls** brim with fresh, local seasonal produce. The creativity of Hungarian chefs and the unforgettable flavours of Hungary's ever-evolving cuisine should delight and captivate any guest, whether indulging in fine dining or immersed in a **historic coffeehouse**.



A capital of 1.7 million citizens, Budapest somehow manages to retain a wealth of hidden treasures. There is no other capital in the European Union where authentic medieval Turkish baths are still in everyday use.



Chain Bridge



St. Stephen's Basilica



Budapest's cultural life is colourful and vivid, showcasing world-famous orchestras in ornate concert halls, exciting exhibitions and outstanding festivals.



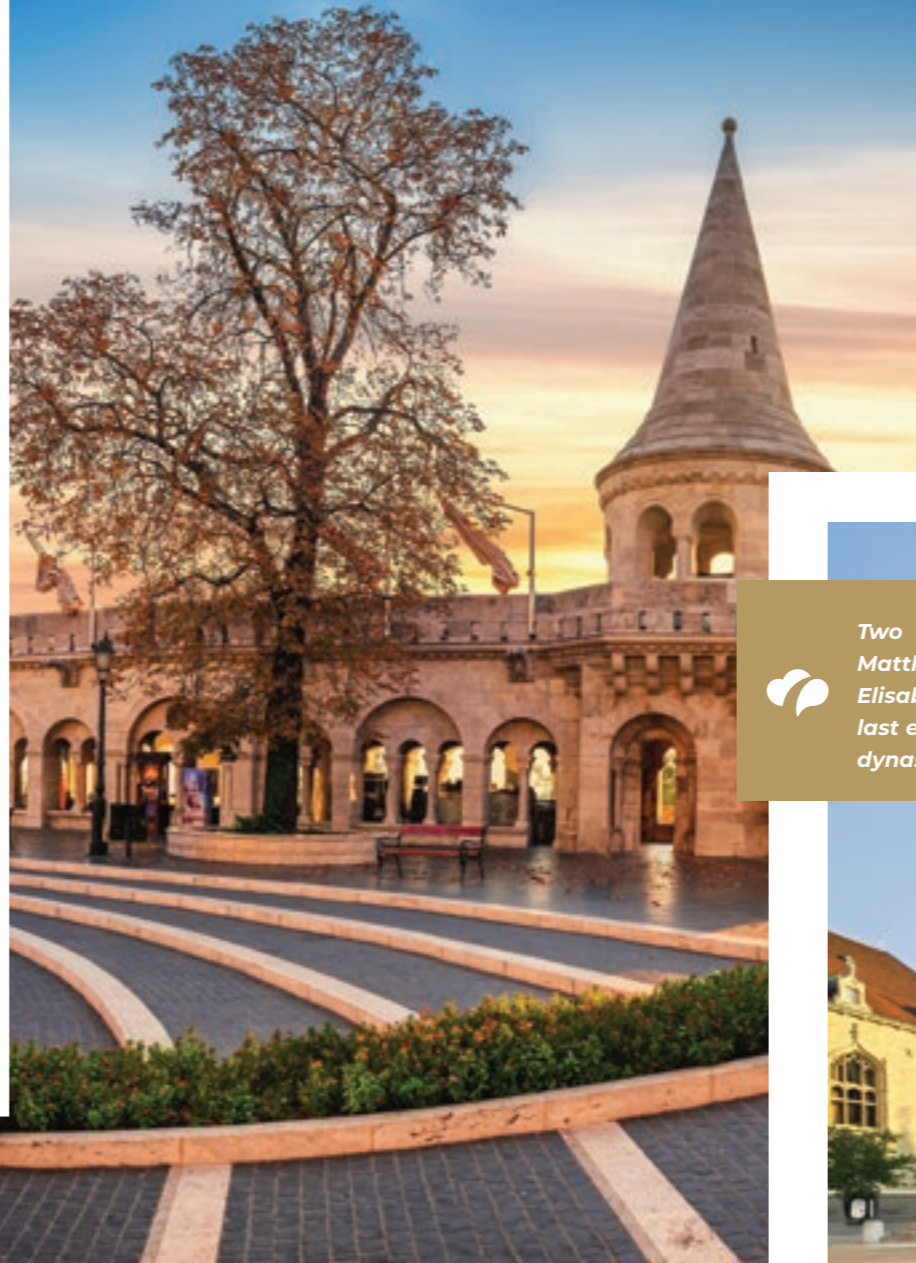
ARCHITECTURAL MASTERPIECES

BE AMAZED BY BUDAPEST



IN THE ARCHITECTURE OF BUDAPEST, ICONIC BUILDINGS DEPICT ERAS FROM ANTIQUITY TO THE PRESENT DAY. ROMAN RUINS, MEDIEVAL REMAINS, BAROQUE FAÇADES, CLASSICIST BUILDINGS, HABSBERG QUARTERS, BAUHAUS DESIGN AND POST-WAR FORMS CAN ALL BE FOUND. THAT IS WHY BUDAPEST HAS PORTRAYED ROME, PARIS, BERLIN AND MOSCOW, EVEN A SPACE STATION, IN MANY FILMS. ALIVE WITH ARCHITECTURAL DETAIL, BUDAPEST IS SIMPLY A MUST-VISIT.

Fisherman's Bastion



BUDA CASTLE QUARTER

Surrounded by architectural masterpieces echoing past centuries, the **Castle District** is not only a monument, but also a living and thriving quarter. Tall houses from medieval times line the cobbled streets of this UNESCO World Heritage Site.

FISHERMAN'S BASTION

The view over the Danube from this neo-Romanesque landmark is spectacular. **Fisherman's Bastion** was named after the quarter that once spread out below, where fishermen would bring up their catch to sell at the market by today's Matthias Church.

MATTHIAS CHURCH

The Church of Our Lady, the Coronation Church of Buda Castle, commonly known as **Matthias Church**, stands on Holy Trinity Square. Founded in 1015, it received its neo-Gothic form at the end of the 1800s after reconstruction following the original medieval plans.



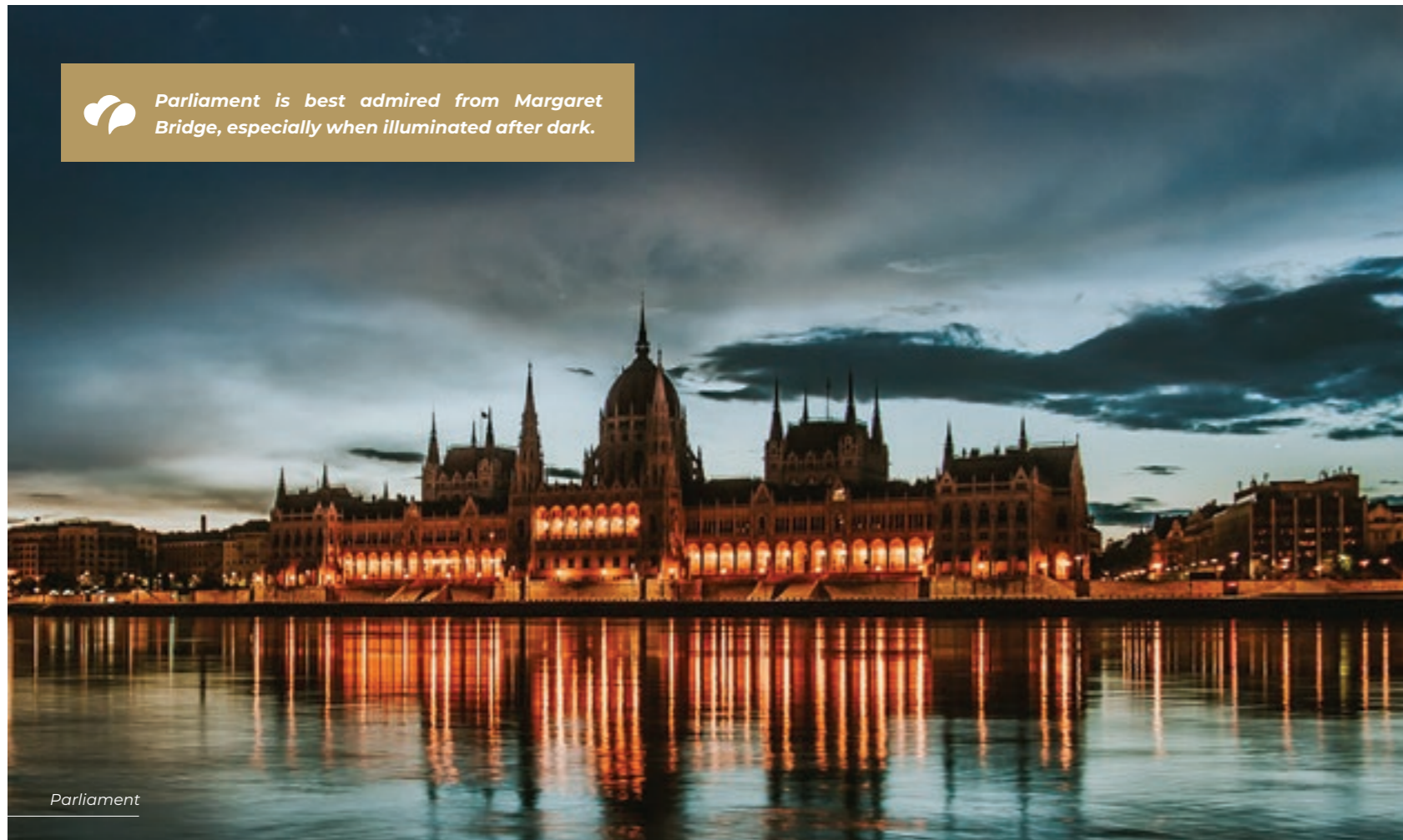
Two reigning couples were crowned at Matthias Church, Franz Joseph I and Elisabeth, as well as Charles IV and Zita, the last emperor and empress of the Habsburg dynasty.

Matthias Church





Parliament is best admired from Margaret Bridge, especially when illuminated after dark.



Parliament

PARLIAMENT

This impressive work of art built in the late 1800s is the third largest **parliament building** in the world and the largest building in Hungary. It is a blend of styles, its base Baroque, its facade neo-Gothic and its ceiling Renaissance. The architects spared nothing, using 40 kg (88 lb) of 22-23 karat gold for its ornamentation. Don't miss the **Holy Crown**, dating back to the 1100s (and perhaps even earlier), one of Europe's oldest coronation relics and symbol of the Hungarian State.

ST. STEPHEN'S BASILICA

The monumental **Basilica** is Hungary's second tallest building along with Parliament. This is where the **mummified right hand of Hungary's first king, Saint Stephen**, is kept, a holy relic found more than 900 years ago. The climb up to the dome, where the country's largest bell chimes, is rewarded with a spectacular panoramic view over the city.



In between seeing the many attractions, gazing up from the street will allow you to admire the upper levels of buildings, their artistic facades, colourful mosaic windows and charming reliefs.



St. Stephen's Basilica



Dohány Street Synagogue



The beautiful architecture and magnificent dimensions of the Dohány Street Synagogue attract hundreds of thousands of visitors each year.

DOHÁNY STREET SYNAGOGUE

Europe's largest **Synagogue** towers before the old **Jewish Quarter**, today one of the liveliest parts of the city. This is not only an important symbol for Hungarian Jews, but plays an active role in cultural life, hosting outstanding concerts and festivals. The Synagogue was constructed in Moorish style, with special stone plaiting across the façade and its dome covered with fabulous ornamental decoration.

THE BUILDINGS ALONG ANDRÁSSY AVENUE

This elegant boulevard more than two kilometres long is the Champs-Élysées of Budapest. At one end, top fashion brands run up to the **Opera House** and beyond to theatre-lined Nagymező utca. From **Oktogon** to **Heroes' Square**, by rows of trees, stand the striking **House of Terror Museum** and some of the most beautiful villas in the city, some serving as foreign embassies.



Heroes' Square

HEROES' SQUARE

Heroes' Square serves as the Hungarian national pantheon and forms the gateway to City Park, visible from **Andrássy Avenue**. Key figures from history form a colonnade around a statue of the Archangel Gabriel. On either side, the **Museum of Fine Arts** showcases great masters, the **Hall of Art**, contemporary works.



Andrássy Avenue is a UNESCO World Heritage Site, as is the Millennium Underground that runs beneath it, the oldest metro on the European continent still in operation today.

CITY PARK

Dating back to the Middle Ages, **City Park** began to take its current form in the early 1800s. This huge recreational space is not only family- and pet-friendly, but is also popular with sports enthusiasts. Dominated on one side by the ornate **Széchenyi Baths**, it is centrepieced by **Vajdahunyad Castle**, a beautiful example of eclectic architecture, each wing depicting landmarks of the former Hungarian kingdom. Alongside, a lake offers boating in summer and skating in winter. By City Park, the Art-Nouveau style of Budapest Zoo makes its architecture as attractive as its colourful wildlife.



Budapest Zoo



HEALING WATERS, HEALTHY STAYS

SPA CAPITAL OF THE WORLD

“PRAY FOR A SOUND MIND AND A SOUND BODY,” SUGGESTED THE ROMAN POET, JUVENAL. THE CURATIVE POWERS OF THESE WATERS WERE WELL KNOWN IN HIS DAY. NOWADAYS, HUNGARY IS A CENTRE FOR HEALTH, MEDICAL AND SPA TOURISM.



Gellért Thermal Bath



Hungary is extremely rich in healing waters – 80% of its territory has some kind of thermal water underground. No other capital in the world has as many hot springs as Budapest, spanning temperatures from lukewarm to 77 °C. Visiting the city is not complete without a plunge into pools of healing waters at one of its splendid thermal baths, surrounded by architectural finery.

The Turks created Budapest’s spas with an expert infrastructure in the late 1500s, 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. 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.

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, too. Some also offer late-night bathing. One of the world’s first wave pools was opened at the stylish **Hotel Gellért** in 1927. These century-old baths at the foot of the hill of the same name are another unforgettable sight, its Art Nouveau décor featuring turquoise Zsolnay porcelain tiling and stained-glass windows.



The Gellért Baths have witnessed many illustrious guests from Richard Nixon to Ryan Gosling.



Hotel Gellért

Rudas Baths



Hungary is internationally recognised as a top destination for medical and health tourism. Many spas provide treatment for specific conditions. Here, you will be in expert hands. Many disorders can be efficiently treated by these medicinal waters.



Lukács Baths



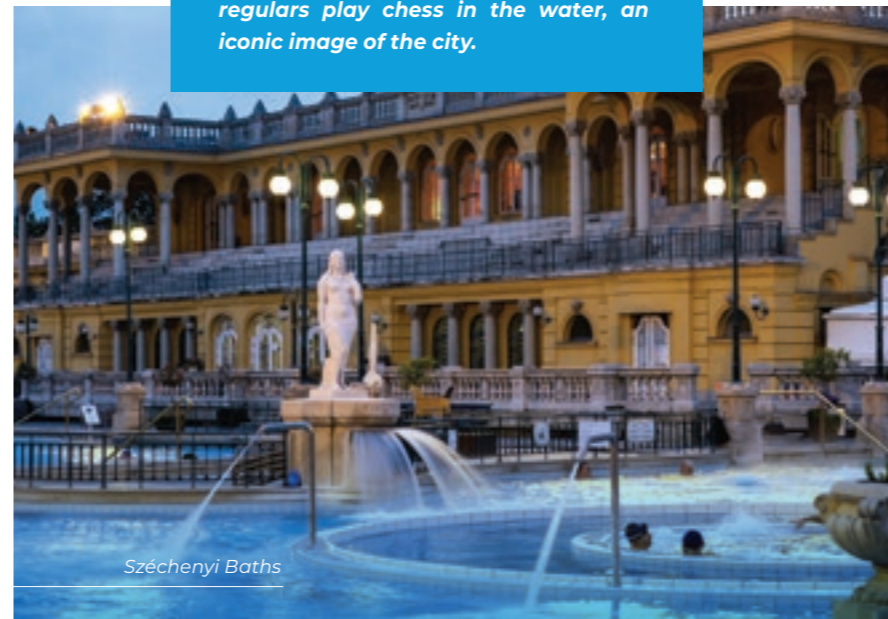
The history of spa culture in Hungary dates back 2,000 years to the Romans.

After a thorough renovation, the 16th-century **Veli Bej Baths** now shine in their original pomp, mosaics evoking its Turkish heritage. The revamping of the **Rudas Baths**, built nearly half a millennium ago, has also preserved their Ottoman provenance while providing wonderful views from a hot tub on the rooftop.

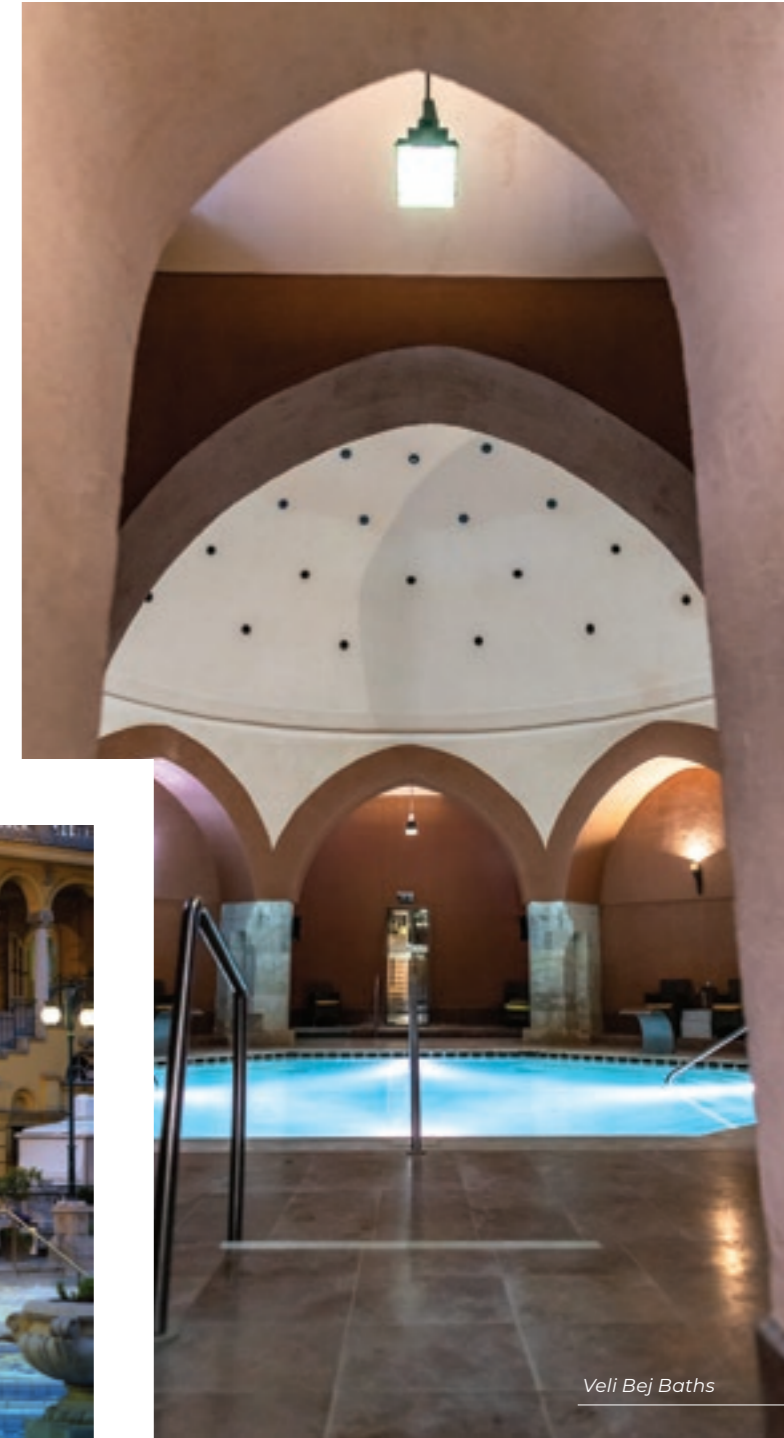
Amid the greenery of City Park, the palatial **Széchenyi Baths** shows the finery of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy. Altogether 21 pools, three of them open-air, await.



The Széchenyi Baths are where older regulars play chess in the water, an iconic image of the city.



Széchenyi Baths



Veli Bej Baths



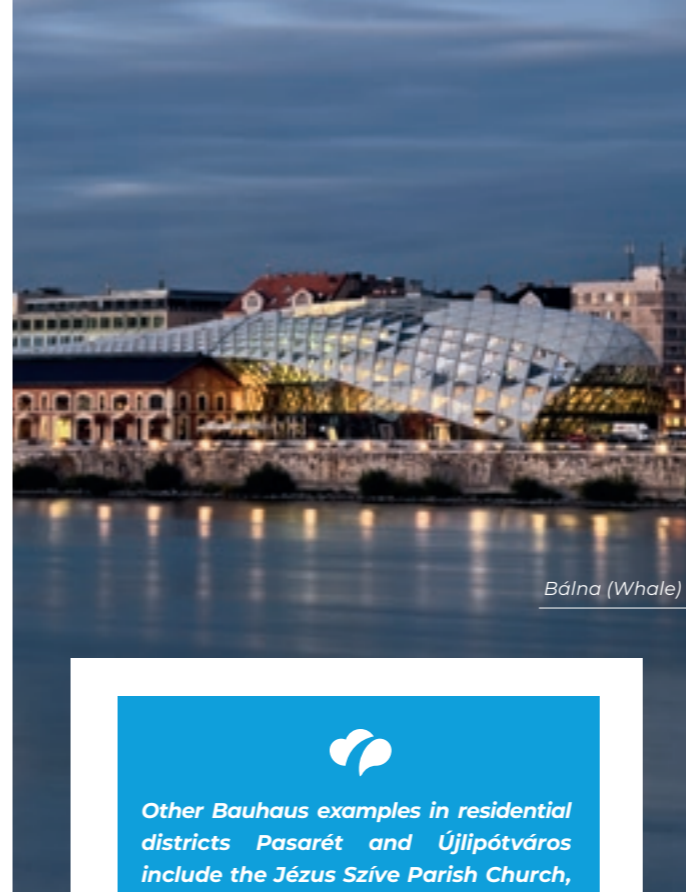
THE MODERN METROPOLIS

FROM BAUHAUS TO BÁLNA BUDAPEST

WHILE BEST KNOWN FOR ITS BELLE-ÉPOQUE BUILDINGS, BUDAPEST ALSO FEATURES LATER ARCHITECTURAL STYLES THAT SHOWCASE THIS MODERN METROPOLIS.

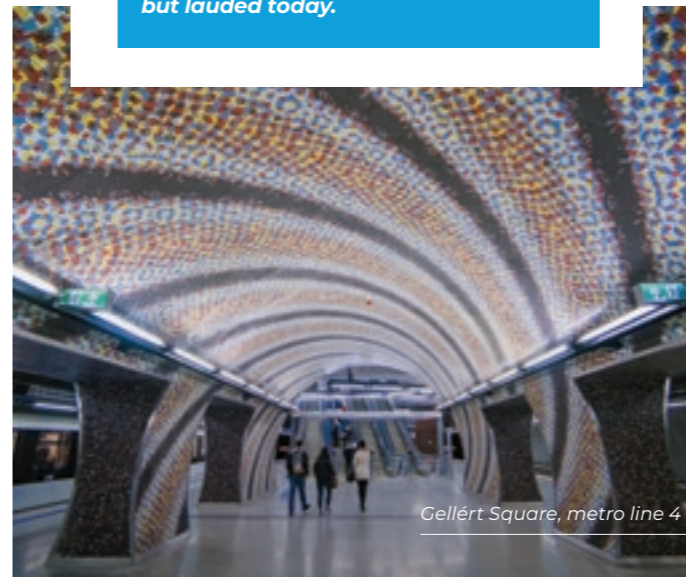


National Theatre



Bálna (Whale)

Other Bauhaus examples in residential districts Pasarét and Újlipótváros include the Jézus Szíve Parish Church, thought too modern for its time in 1933 but lauded today.



Gellért Square, metro line 4

Budapest's first Bauhaus design school was set up in 1928, training local architects who quickly got to work converting a former transformer station on **Kazinczy Street**, today the **Museum of Electrical Engineering**.

Versatile yet graceful, the millennial arts complex functions as a cultural citadel suited to today's needs.

In the city centre, integral to **Erzsébet Square** is a former Bauhaus-style bus station since refashioned to house a popular bar. Multifunctional architecture underscores the most recent creations. By the Danube, **Bálna Budapest** blends history and modernity. Comprised of two parallel century-old red brick warehouses joined by a whale-shaped glass shell, this riverfront complex hides shops and bars in its belly, while stylish pubs offer waterfront views. Its creator, Kas Oosterhuis, also designed Dubai Sports City.



Ludwig Museum

Towards Rákóczi Bridge, the **Millennial Cultural Centre** is a complex of arts venues. The **Palace of Arts (Müpa)** comprises the **Bartók Concert Hall**, the **Ludwig Museum** of contemporary art and the **National Theatre**.

Below ground at nearby **Gellért Square** is perhaps the most stunning example of the stations conceived for the **metro line 4**, Tamás Komoróczy's mosaic interior decorating the deepest of the ten stops unveiled in 2014.



CULTURE THROUGH THE CENTURIES

CITY OF LISZT AND OPERA

WITH A GILDED OPERA HOUSE AND A PEOPLE'S ONE, A MAJOR CONTEMPORARY ARTS CENTRE, A PRESTIGIOUS MUSIC ACADEMY, SYMPHONY ORCHESTRAS AND A NEW NATIONAL DANCE THEATRE, BUDAPEST ALWAYS OFFERS A HIGH-QUALITY PERFORMANCE TO ENJOY, OFTEN IN A CONCERT HALL WHOSE ARCHITECTURE MERITS ADMIRATION IN ITS OWN RIGHT.



Liszt Academy of Music



Opera House

The **Budapest Spring Festival** showcases culture of all kinds at locations as diverse as the **Trafó House of Contemporary Arts** in a converted transformer station and the **Liszt Academy of Music**, an Art Nouveau masterpiece dating back to 1907.

Budapest has had a national theatre since 1837. In 2002, a contemporary venue was opened in what would become a major cultural complex, overlooking the Danube in south Pest. Alongside, **Müpa** (Művészetek Palotája, 'Palace of Arts') consists of the **Bartók National Concert Hall**, the **Festival Theatre** and the **Ludwig Museum**. With unparalleled acoustics, the Bartók welcomes the most prestigious orchestras in the world.

The **Festival Theatre** is favoured by contemporary dance companies, who also appear at the new **National Dance Theatre**, unveiled in the Millenáris Park.



Top companies include Recirquel, an award-winning fusion of dance, contemporary circus and acrobatic movement.



The Hungarian National Ballet perform mainly at the Erkel Theatre. Founded as the People's Opera in 1911, this institution with the largest concert hall in the country has been attached to the Opera House since 1951.



FROM THE STONE AGE TO THE AVANT-GARDE

GRAND MASTERS AND MODERN HISTORY

BUDAPEST IS A CITY OF FASCINATING EXHIBITIONS, FROM CLASSICAL RELICS TO RENAISSANCE ART AND THE AVANT-GARDE, AND COVERING HISTORY FROM THE STONE AGE TO COMMUNISM AND BEYOND.



National Museum



In the scenic settings of the **Castle District** and **Heroes' Square**, the **Hungarian National Gallery** and **Museum of Fine Arts** together house Hungary's biggest art collection. Up in the **Royal Palace**, the National Gallery holds works dating from 1800 to the present day, both Hungarian – Munkácsy, Csontváry – and international, Cézanne and Monet. On Heroes' Square, you also find the Hall of Arts, with exhibitions of contemporary Hungarian art.



Renovated and reopened in 2019, the Museum of Fine Arts showcases Old Masters – Titian, Goya – as well as Hungarian art up to 1800s, and Classical Antiquities.



Items include Houdini's original handcuffs and lock keys, and the posters that promoted his appearances. Your visit culminates in a live magic show.

The neo-Classical **National Museum** covers Hungarian history from the stone-carved tools of the Palaeolithic era to the elaborate medieval coronation mantle, right up to the development of urban Budapest.

Hungary's more recent history is the subject of the **House of Terror Museum**, filling the former headquarters of the Communist Secret Police, outlining the atrocities committed here and commemorating the victims. Out in distant District XXII, the outdoor **Memento Park** is the final resting place of the giant statues that once dominated Soviet-era Budapest.

On Dísz Square in the Castle District, an enchanting exhibition honours the great Hungarian illusionist, **Harry Houdini**.



House of Terror Museum



LOCAL HISTORY WRIT LARGE AND SMALL

CUBES, QUEENS AND COLUMBO – URBAN ART IN BUDAPEST



Okudart painting

MASSIVE MURALS, POP-UP SCULPTURES AND RANDOM CHARACTERS – BUDAPEST IS BRIMMING WITH URBAN ART. STRIKING PAINTINGS BRIGHTEN THE CITY, OLD FIREWALLS SERVE AS HUGE CANVASSES, WHILE STRANGE FIGURES APPEAR AS IF FROM NOWHERE.



A painting of a Rubik's Cube reflects on the clever code created by its inventor, Hungarian Ernő Rubik.

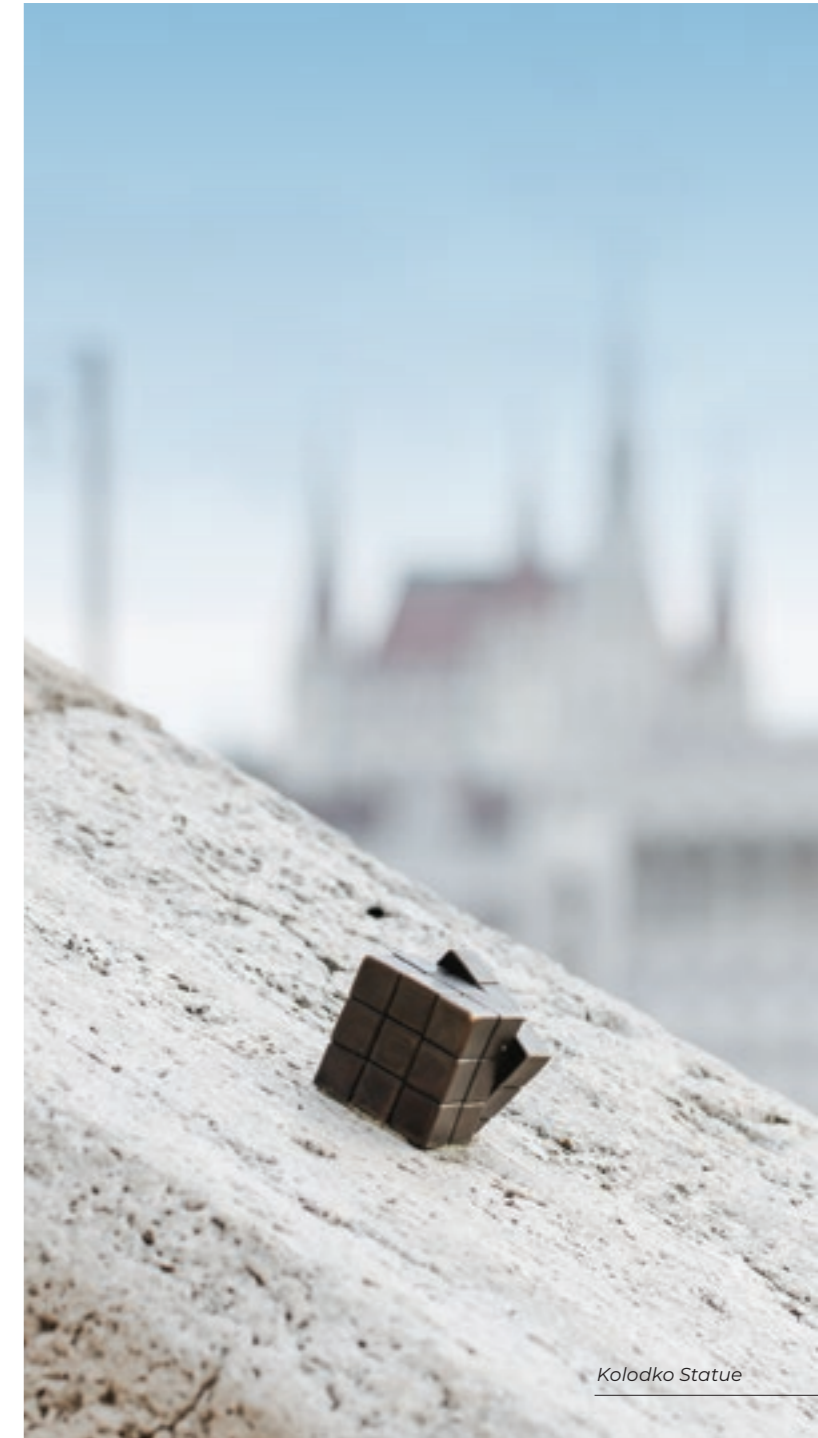
Here a vast mural celebrates the famous victory by Hungary's football team over England in 1953, the action depicted by a newspaper report of the day.

Turning into **Wesselényi Street**, a replica of Time magazine from 1956, naming a Hungarian Freedom Fighter as its 'Man of the Year', honours the young heroes of the anti-Soviet uprising.

Elsewhere, street art takes the form of sculpture. Statuettes by Ukrainian artist **Mihajlo Kolodko** combine urban history with popular culture. On **Széll Kálmán Square**, his Mekk Elek shows the revered children's character, a clumsy goat, looking where to nail his ungainly street sign. Foreign visitors will recognise TV detective Columbo on **Falk Miksa Street**, joined by a gun-toting meerkat outlined in chalk as if at a crime scene.



Kolodko also revels in the mythology of District VII with his depiction of a diver finding the key to the New York Café and of the pianist who composed evergreen hit Gloom Sunday.



Kolodko Statue



PARK LIFE AND NATURE WALKS

BUDAPEST'S GREAT GREEN OUTDOORS

FOR A BUSTLING METROPOLIS OF NEARLY TWO MILLION PEOPLE, BUDAPEST LUXURIATES IN GREAT SWATHES OF GREEN SPACE, PARKS, BOTANICAL GARDENS AND UNDISTURBED WOODS THAT MAKE THE CITY SO ATTRACTIVE AND LIVEABLE.



Margaret Island



Várkert Bazár

Budapest's most popular green getaway, Városliget or **City Park**, is currently undergoing a major overhaul, with sports courts, outdoor gyms and illuminated running tracks recently installed. With so much open space, there's still plenty of room for a stroll or a bike ride, perhaps combined with boating on the lake by **Vajdahunyad Castle** or a visit to the **Széchenyi Baths**. The **Royal Gardens** at the **Várkert Bazár** offer further outdoor relaxation, with Danube views to boot.

Equally accessible from the city centre, **Margaret Island** lies between Buda and Pest, by the bridge of the same name. Mainly car-free, it appeals to cyclists and joggers, with four-seated vehicles for hire and a rubberised running track some 5 km long. Tennis courts, the **Alfréd Hajós Pool** and **Palatinus lido** are all popular attractions but this former site of nunneries and cloisters is perhaps best visited for a peaceful stroll around its **Japanese Garden**, musical fountain and medieval ruins.



City Park

Enjoying the great outdoors needn't mean a whole day's expedition. Urban green spaces abound, from the grassy expanse of central **Szabadság Square** in the shadow of the grandiose Exchange Palace, to the recently unveiled gardens surrounding the equally stately **National Museum**. Near the river, **Szent István Park** and the **Nehru embankment** in Pest are equally popular with leisure-seeing locals and young families.

Across the river, the **Philosophers' Garden** basks in abundant greenery, dramatically offset by Citadella above and the majestic sweep of the Danube below. Further afield, sloping **Normafa** is



Along with leisurely relaxation and outdoor sport, you can learn about plant life, explore nature or just enjoy a spontaneous picnic in the sunshine.

the gateway to the Buda Hills, a far-reaching spread of unspoilt nature, much of it protected, some of it within the **Duna-Ipoly National Park** of hiking trails, stables and observation points.

Within the city, the **Füvészkert botanical garden** is home to some 8,000 varieties of plant life, some of them dating back to the age of the dinosaurs. Tours and presentations are also offered, with special events laid on such as the celebration of Japanese cherry blossom in April.

Buda Arboretum is a former vineyard, established on the lower slopes of Cella Hill as formal gardens in 1876. While it is a protected area, it also serves an educational purpose, future landscape gardeners and winemakers practising their crafts as visitors take in the abundant greenery.

Beyond Városliget in Zugló, the **Japanese Garden** has recently reopened to the public, an authentically landscaped attraction praised by the Emperor's son on honeymoon in 1931. A teahouse, lake and mandarin ducks all feature, as well as traditional ornamentation.

Flora and fauna unique to the region can be observed and a tour guide hired for further illumination at Duna-Ipoly National Park.

Erzsébet lookout



SUMPTUOUS STAYS IN OPULENT SURROUNDINGS

WHERE HISTORY MEETS LUXURY

FOR HUNGARIANS, HOSPITALITY IS A MATTER OF PRIDE – AS IS THE GRACEFUL ARCHITECTURE THAT MAKES BUDAPEST SUCH A PHOTOGENIC DESTINATION. ADD A SPA CULTURE SECOND TO NONE AND STUNNING VIEWS FROM MANY VANTAGE POINTS, AND YOU HAVE A HOTEL PORTFOLIO PERFECT FOR HONEYMOONS, CITY BREAKS AND BUSINESS TRIPS – OFTEN ALL THREE UNDER THE SAME ROOF.



Four Seasons Hotel Gresham Palace



The New York retains its ornate café, today complemented by a spa and pool.

Let's start with the **Four Seasons Hotel Gresham Palace**. Also popular with A-listers, this gorgeously renovated Art Nouveau masterpiece overlooking Chain Bridge was built for London's Gresham Life Assurance Company as luxury apartments. They also had offices here but rented out the rest of the opulent space – a louche nightspot attracted spies and diplomats before the war. Bought by the upscale Four Seasons hotel chain in the 1990s, the Gresham was painstakingly restored, the mosaic tiling, the ironwork and stained glass recreated according to original plans. A sumptuous spa and high-end restaurant complete the picture.



Hotel Gellért



The ornate Gellért Baths remain a huge draw for pleasure-seeking travellers, and stars of stage and screen.

Then there's the **Hotel Gellért**. Planned in the early 1900s when Art Nouveau was at its height, this riverside spa and lodging wasn't unveiled until after World War I. It soon became a popular stop for celebrities and aristocrats on the Grand Tour. A seaplane whisked guests away from right outside the hotel – a plaque marks the spot today – and one of the world's earliest wave pools was opened here in 1927.



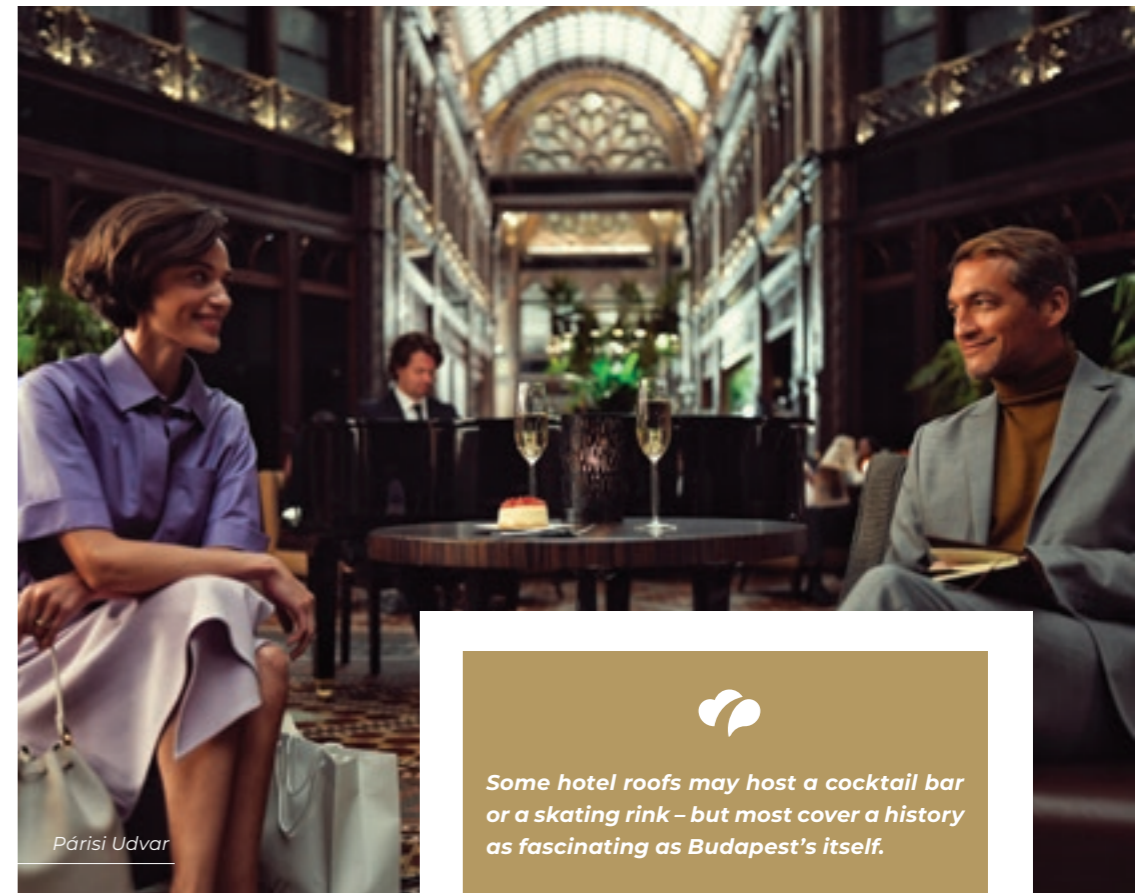
New York Palace



The Lumière brothers presented Budapest's first moving-picture film screening at the Grand Hotel Royal, and a cinema was opened here.



Four Seasons Hotel Gresham Palace



Párisi Udvar



Some hotel roofs may host a cocktail bar or a skating rink – but most cover a history as fascinating as Budapest's itself.

On the Grand Boulevard stands another legend: the **Corinthia Budapest**. Opened as the Grand Hotel Royal in 1896, it welcomed guests for the Hungarian millennial celebrations that year, and those passing through Europe for the inaugural Olympic Games. A century or so later, the five-star Corinthia group took over the Royal and carried out a massive reconstruction, installing a sunken spa and pool in Art-Deco style in the basement. Celebrities and dignitaries continue to fill the visitors' book with praise.

Further down the Grand Boulevard, **New York Palace** is another magnificent conversion of a fin-de-siècle landmark. Once the New York Palace, this was the home of the famed **New York Café**, the finest of Budapest's grand coffeehouses. Here Hungary's most famous writers and, later, filmmakers would convene. It was reconfigured into a luxury hotel in the early 2000s.

The most recent extravagant conversion is the **Párisi Udvar**, right in the city centre. A riot of Art Nouveau, Moorish and Gothic styles, this former financial centre and arcade required five years to adapt into a five-star hotel as part of the Hyatt's Unbound Collection. The top-level suites appeal to high-paying guests but the lobby, café and dazzling atrium above may be admired by all.



DIVINE DOMESTIC DISHES

HEAVENLY HUNGARIAN CUISINE FROM STARTERS TO DESSERT



SPICY, MEATY, HEARTY, COLOURFUL AND DELICIOUS – HUNGARIAN CUISINE IS HEAVENLY, FROM STARTERS AND SOUP SPECIALITIES TO SAVOURY MAINS AND DECADENT DESSERTS.

Jókai bean soup



Túrógombóc



Stuffed Peppers



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

Starters include the noteworthy **goose liver** – Hungary is its second-biggest producer and many restaurants feature it on the menu. Of the numerous soups, stand-outs are **goulash** with beef cubes and vegetables, **fishsoup** with carp, catfish or pike-perch, **Újházi chicken soup**, **bean soup** and a **cold fruit soup** variety popular in summer.

For mains, Hungary is proud of its **stews**, made from slow-cooked beef, or **chicken** spiced with **paprika**, as the signature dish csirkepaprikás. **Stuffed cabbage**, cabbage rolls filled with minced pork, features in the colder months, while lecsó, **Hungarian ratatouille**, is prepared in late summer. Traditional thick pottages can be concocted from lentils, peas or squash, served with an egg or sliced sausage.

Also look out for Hungarian specialities such as **grey-cattle beef** and **mangalica pork**, an indigenous breed successfully revived in recent times. Accompanying vegetables are fresh, seasonal and often organic.

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.



Pig-slaughtering is a ritual gathering resulting in tasty sausages, bacon, crackling and brawn.



BUDAPEST'S MARVELLOUS MARKETS

SHOPPING FOR SUCCESS – WHERE STAR CHEFS SOURCE THEIR STOCK



HUNGARIAN GASTRONOMY IS FLOURISHING, WITH SEVERAL RESTAURANTS GRANTED A MICHELIN STAR. YET, AS EACH CHEF WOULD ATTEST, ALL DEPENDS ON QUALITY LOCAL PRODUCE. THIS SAME QUALITY CAN BE FOUND AT MARKETS ACROSS THE CITY.

Not so long ago, it would have been unthinkable for a country-style, typical Hungarian dish to sneak its way on to the menu in a top class restaurant; yet nowadays, ground-breaking Hungarian chefs reinvent such traditional recipes with pride. Beside the top-class restaurants people can also get acquainted with the iconic Hungarian dishes in many excellent bistros or high quality street food places.

A showcase for top Hungarian produce, the Szimpla Háztáji market is a gastronomic destination in its own right, targeting a discerning clientele.

The historic **Great Market Hall** by the Danube attracts locals and tourists, happy to take home honey, jams and paprika as souvenirs. Over in Buda, the **Fény Street Market** specialises in seasonal produce such as fresh forest mushrooms.

Weekends farmers' markets include **Czakó Piacz** in an old peasant house in the Tabán area, and the stalls set up at the **Szimpla** ruin bar, with live music thrown in.



Recently renovated, the market hall on Klauzál Square in the Jewish Quarter also brims with fine fare and dairy goods.



Markets allow shoppers to source cheeses, meats, fruit and vegetables directly from producers. This is the best guarantee that what you're buying is locally grown and supports family farms.



Downtown Market

Great Market Hall



IN VINO VERITAS

SAVOUR FINE WINE IN BUDAPEST

BUDAPEST'S DEVELOPMENT AS A CONTEMPORARY METROPOLIS HAS RISEN IN PARALLEL WITH HUNGARY'S WINE INDUSTRY, PRODUCERS IN THE KEY REGIONS OF TOKAJ, BALATON, VILLÁNY OR EGER CULTIVATING REDS AND WHITES OF EXCEPTIONAL QUALITY.



The city was once surrounded by **vineyards**, the hills of Buda given over to grapes just as in Roman times nearly 2,000 years ago. Different soils elsewhere in Hungary then proved more beneficial to cultivation but Budapest's taste for wine remained, in restaurants and in bars designated for this specific drink.

Today, **wine bars** are trendy yet traditional, fashionable yet informal, affordable yet particular. Relaxing in both style and décor, they attract young couples, business travellers and curious visitors, offering **local delicacies** – cheeses, sausage, ham, fine spreads and tasty bread – to accompany crisp whites from Balaton or full-bodied reds from Villány.



Evenings themed around a region, wine style or grape type are especially popular.



Just as top hotels and restaurants are of genuine global standard, so wine bars have followed suit. Budapest is also well known for its history of traditional sparkling wine production. Taste the bubbles made in the surrounding of the capital!

Appealing to expert and casual drinker alike, bars provide salient details on the wines they offer, their provenance and characteristics, inviting producers to present their latest label.

September's **Budapest Wine Festival** in the sublime setting of Buda Castle is the main showcase for the industry but all summer across town you'll see locals sipping **spritzers**, Hungary's main seasonal tippie known here as *fröccs*, with varying measures of wine and soda water.





WHERE HISTORY AND COFFEE MIX

A CENTURY OF COFFEEHOUSE CULTURE

THE CAFÉS OF BUDAPEST TELL THE STORY OF A BOOMING TWIN IMPERIAL CAPITAL IN WHICH HUNGARIAN CULTURE COULD FLOURISH IN THESE ORNATE LITERARY HAUNTS.

New York Café



Plaques and statues delineate history in most cities, the cultural shifts and seminal events. Budapest has many too – but the visitor can discover more about the capital just by sitting over a cup of coffee.

As Pest developed as an urban hub, menfolk gathered at the **coffeehouse**. Here, with Hungarian the common language, writers and artists would convene for hours. The coffeehouse became a forum, where ideas could be exchanged, most notably at the **Pilvax**, where Sándor Petőfi and his peers plotted the uprising against their Habsburg masters in 1848.

The city gained theatres, a daily press and book publishers, and these actors, journalists and writers met over coffee.

The grandest of them all was the **New York Café**, opened in 1894. Embellished with a fountain, Venetian chandeliers and ceiling frescos, it took coffeehouse elegance to a new level. Legend has it that one writer said he would throw the keys into the Danube so that it would never close.

A century or so later, trendy **new-wave cafés** serve specialty coffees in up-and-coming districts such as **Újlipótváros**, with lactose-free varieties and tasty pastries.



Editorial meetings took place for the seminal *Nyugat* magazine at **Centrál**, opened in 1887.



Central Café



DESIGNED BY HUNGARIANS, WORN BY CELEBS

BUDAPEST, FASHION CAPITAL OF CENTRAL EUROPE

BUDAPEST IS HOME TO INTERNATIONALLY RENOWNED FASHION DESIGNERS, AWARD-WINNING COLLECTIONS AND WORLD-FAMOUS SUPERMODELS. EVERY APRIL AND OCTOBER, BUDAPEST CENTRAL EUROPEAN FASHION WEEK ALLOWS TOP REGIONAL COUTURIERS TO SHOWCASE THEIR SEASONAL COLLECTIONS.



Illustrious French fashion school, Mod'Art International, has been set up in Budapest since 2006.

Showcase boulevard and World Heritage site in its own right, **Andrássy Avenue** is lined with luxury stores. Budapest also has a **Fashion Street**, alongside five-star hotels, where big-name brands reside. Ateliers, studios and outlets of domestic designers also dot the downtown area.

Staged at a prestigious venue such as the **Várkert Bazár** or **Palazzo Dorottya**, the biannual extravaganza of **Budapest Fashion Week** follows the big five – New York, Paris, London, Milan and Berlin – and attracts the world's top critics and commentators. Budapest is not only aiming to bracket itself alongside the Big Five but a top Hungarian designer such as **Sandra Sandor** also regularly shows at New York and London. Her pieces for her own label **Nanushka**, whose concept store occupies a prime spot in the city centre, have been worn by celebrities such as **Gigi Hadid** and **Gwen Stefani**.

Visitors may peruse the ateliers of up-and-coming designers based in apartment workshops, happy to show people round and offer a sneak peek into the creative process.



Hungary has its own successful models, too, Barbara Palvin, Enikő Mihalik and Vanessa Axente, for example.





BUDAPEST AFTER DARK

ROOFTOP COCKTAILS AND PARTY BOATS

PANORAMIC BARS PROVIDE SPECTACULAR VIEWS OF THE CITY AND THE DRINKS MATCH THE SURROUNDINGS, WITH FRESH INGREDIENTS, IMAGINATIVE COMBINATIONS AND A HIGH STANDARD OF MIXING. SOME ALSO GO TO TOWN IN WINTER, INSTALLING COSY IGLOOS WITH THEMED FURNISHINGS AND WARMING, SEASON-SPECIFIC DRINKS.

Hungary's famed **fine wines** are complemented by **quality craft beers**. An artisanal revolution has brought local brewers to the fore, their lagers, ales and stouts served in specialist destinations.

Budapest has always been a popular stop for travel-weary stars, who perform at large-scale venues across the city. None is bigger than the **Ferenc Puskás Stadion**, rebuilt and reopened in 2019, the former **Népstadion** where the likes of Queen, Michael Jackson and Bruce Springsteen appeared.

The **A38**, a former cargo ship moored by Petőfi Bridge, hosts music of all genres, performed on stages inside and out. Waterfront views are part of the experience.

Further into Buda, the folk-focused **Fonó Budai Zeneház** stages *tánc ház* ('Dance House') nights, participatory events of lively revelry.

The city has always been big on jazz, with a superb sound system at the **Budapest Jazz Club**, set in an old cinema, and a rare Fazioli piano at the **Opus Jazz Club**.



Most bars will have a craft-beer option alongside the recognised brands.



The most unique live venue in Budapest, the A38, is also its most diverse.



WHETHER THE FOCUS IS CLASSICAL MUSIC OR FILM, FINE ART OR FASHION, WINE OR GASTRONOMY, BUDAPEST HAS A FESTIVAL FOR EVERY TYPE OF CULTURE.

Sziget Festival



Sziget Festival

First staged in 1981, the **Budapest Spring Festival** is a fortnight or more of mainly highbrow culture, with classical music of the very best quality brought to the fore. Dance, theatre and the fine arts also feature.

August's **Sziget Festival**, inaugurated 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 children's activities.

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



Venues for the Spring Festival range from the venerable – Pesti Vigadó, Erkel Színház – to the vibrant, such as the Akvárium Klub and the A38.



Culinary festivals run the gamut of Hungarian specialities, from mangalica pork to craft beer. For fine dining, May's four-day **Gourmet Festival** is the most prestigious showcase, along with September's **Budapest Wine Festival**.



Live music and superior snacks at the Budapest Wine Festival accompany the best reds and whites of the year, backdropped by the historic surroundings of Buda Castle.



Budapest Wine Festival



MICE TOURISM ON THE RISE

SCENIC SETTING FOR EVENTS, TRADE SHOWS AND CONFERENCES

BUDAPEST IS NOW A MAJOR DESTINATION FOR BUSINESS AND EVENT TOURISM. THE NUMBER OF TRADE EXHIBITIONS IS ON THE RISE, AS IS THE CITY'S PROFESSIONAL RANKING AMONG ITS EUROPEAN PEERS.



Pesti Vigadó



Easily reached within two or three hours from almost anywhere in Europe, as a major capital Budapest is easily manageable. **Swift transfers** whisk you to town from the sleek airport, where plentiful taxis, **superb public transport** and a walkable metropolis await.

Events venues range from **extensive conference centres** to boats with beautiful views over the Danube, even classical villas. Ornate museums and elegant restaurants may be leased and adapted for the occasion while the recent construction and redevelopment of world-class stadia have allowed Budapest to secure hosting of prestigious sports finals and tournaments.



Budapest is a highly attractive destination thanks to its wealth of venues and accommodation options, its affordability and the sheer beauty of the city itself.

Eighty percent of business events staged in Hungary are held in hotels, welcoming organisers and visitors with top-quality conference facilities. **MICE tourism** is a major factor whenever a new hotel is built or an older one adapted for contemporary needs. The city can offer some three dozen four- and five-star conference hotels, many with **riverside settings** and **spa complexes** for staying guests.



MÜPA Budapest



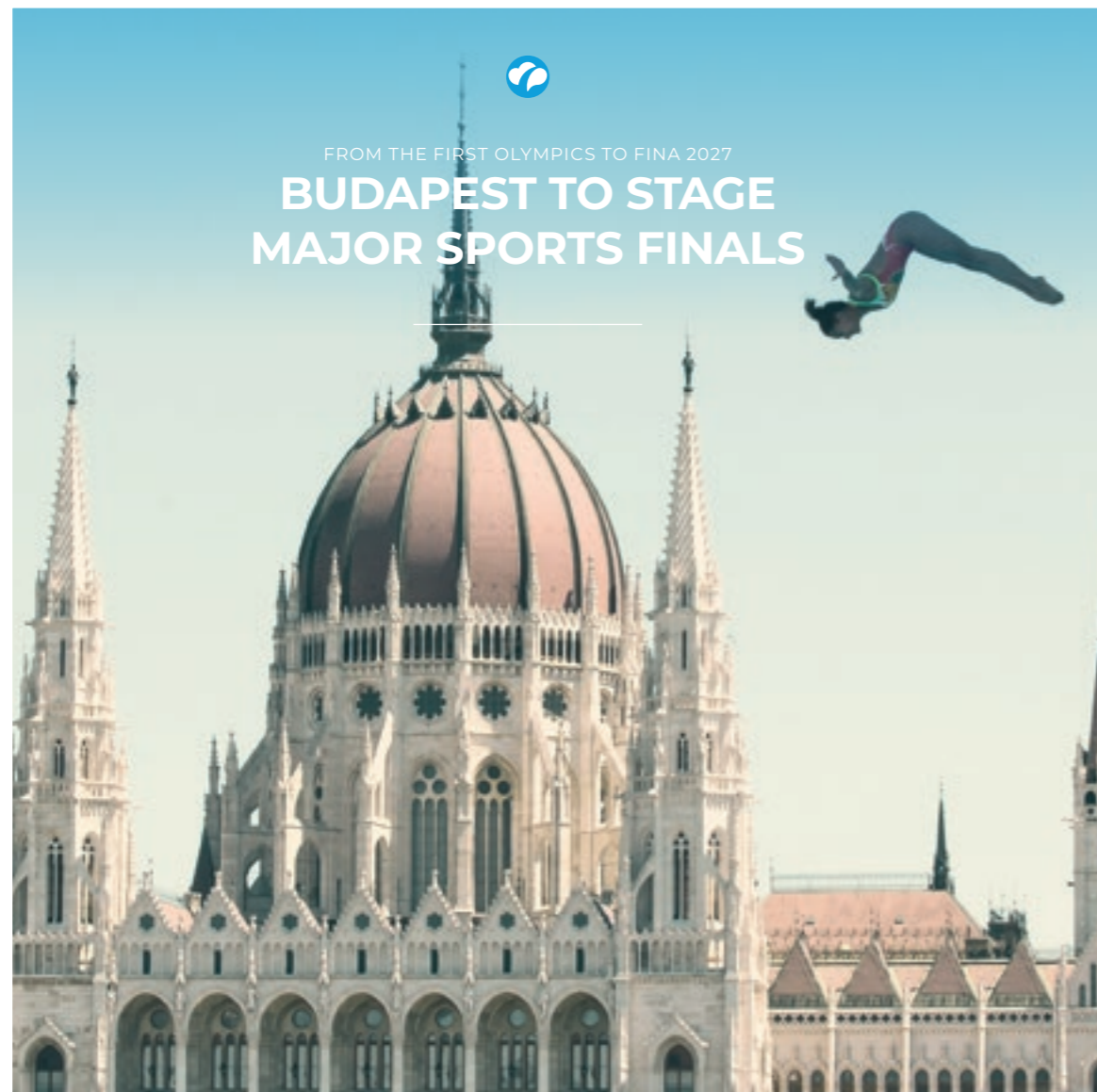
Museum of Applied Arts



Service providers specialise in unique pre- and post-tour programmes around Budapest, its wine and gastronomic destinations, thermal spas and historic retreats.



FROM THE FIRST OLYMPICS TO FINA 2027
BUDAPEST TO STAGE
MAJOR SPORTS FINALS



EUROPEAN CAPITAL OF SPORT IN 2019, BUDAPEST HAS SEEN IMPRESSIVE NEW STADIUMS BUILT AND MANY REVAMPED. AS A CONSEQUENCE, THE CITY HAS BEEN AWARDED HOSTING RIGHTS FOR PRESTIGIOUS INTERNATIONAL FINALS AND TOURNAMENTS.



Danube Arena



Alfréd Hajós was not only an Olympic champion swimmer, winning Hungary's first gold at the inaugural Games of 1896, but a stadium architect, designing the original baths that hosted the FINA championships in 2017.

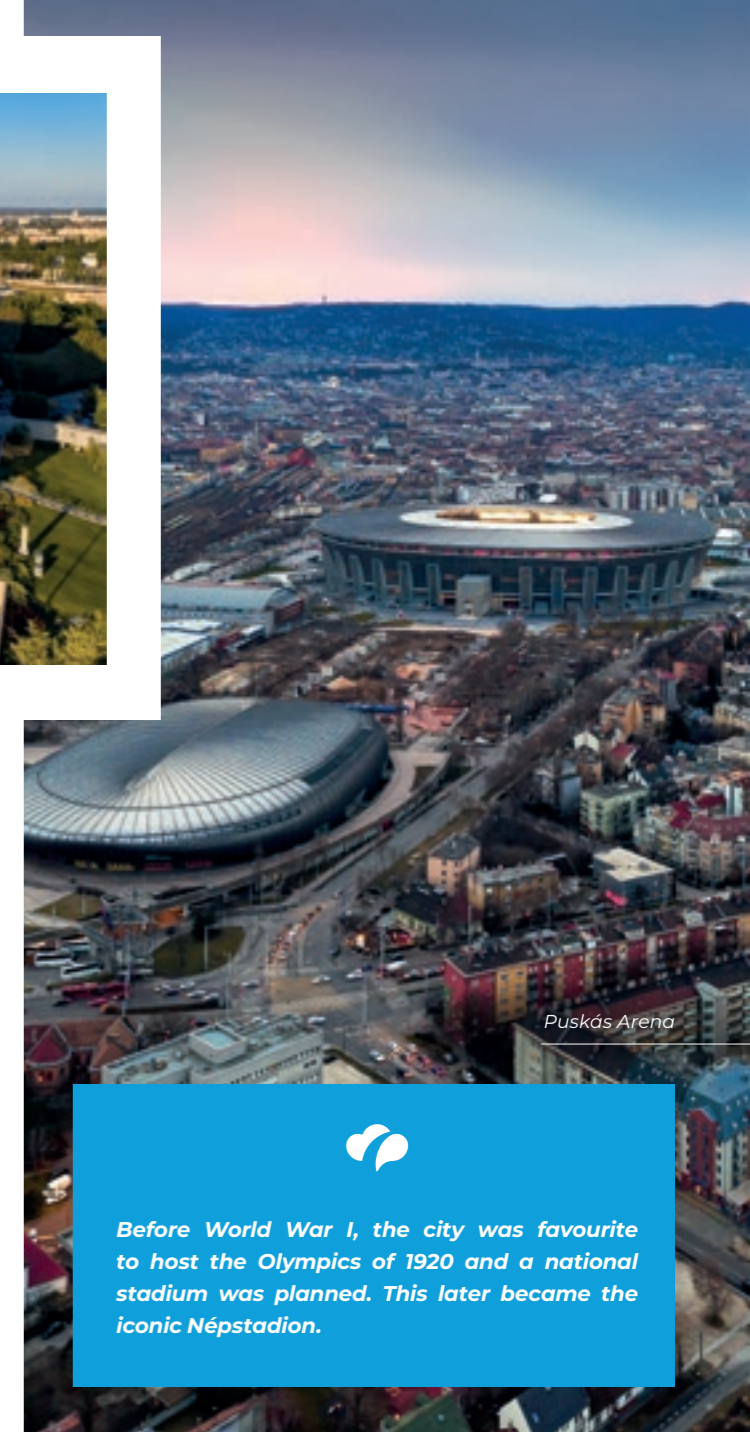
Budapest has long excelled in sports and stadium design as host of the **FINA World Aquatics Championships** in 2017 and 2022 and the **World Athletics Championships** in 2023.

The elegant **Alfréd Hajós National Swimming Arena** on Margaret Island dates back to 1930 and has recently hosted two European Aquatics Championships as well as the FINA finals. For 2017, the sleek, contemporary **Danube Arena** was also built around the **Dagály Baths**, a classic complex opened in 1948.

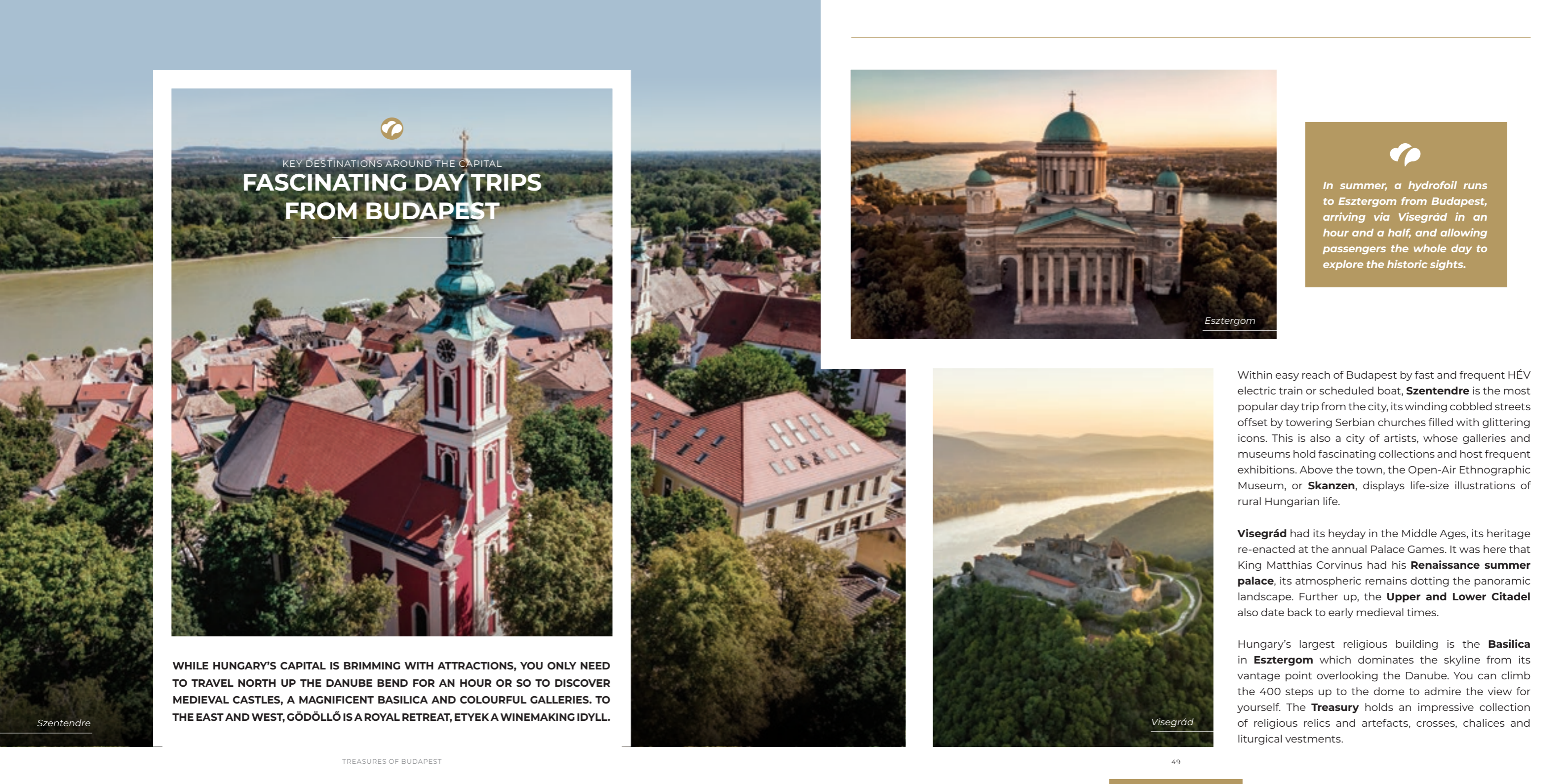
The former **Népstadion**, opened in 1953, was rebuilt in 2018-19 and named after Hungary's greatest football star who graced the original stadium.



Before World War I, the city was favourite to host the Olympics of 1920 and a national stadium was planned. This later became the iconic Népstadion.



Puskás Arena



KEY DESTINATIONS AROUND THE CAPITAL

FASCINATING DAY TRIPS FROM BUDAPEST



WHILE HUNGARY'S CAPITAL IS BRIMMING WITH ATTRACTIONS, YOU ONLY NEED TO TRAVEL NORTH UP THE DANUBE BEND FOR AN HOUR OR SO TO DISCOVER MEDIEVAL CASTLES, A MAGNIFICENT BASILICA AND COLOURFUL GALLERIES. TO THE EAST AND WEST, GÖDÖLLŐ IS A ROYAL RETREAT, ETEK A WINEMAKING IDYLL.

Szentendre



Esztergom



In summer, a hydrofoil runs to Esztergom from Budapest, arriving via Visegrád in an hour and a half, and allowing passengers the whole day to explore the historic sights.



Visegrád

Within easy reach of Budapest by fast and frequent HÉV electric train or scheduled boat, **Szentendre** is the most popular day trip from the city, its winding cobbled streets offset by towering Serbian churches filled with glittering icons. This is also a city of artists, whose galleries and museums hold fascinating collections and host frequent exhibitions. Above the town, the Open-Air Ethnographic Museum, or **Skansen**, 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. Further up, the **Upper and Lower Citadel** also date back to early medieval times.

Hungary's largest religious building is the **Basilica** in **Esztergom** which dominates the skyline from its vantage point overlooking the Danube. You can climb the 400 steps up to the dome to admire the view for yourself. The **Treasury** holds an impressive collection of religious relics and artefacts, crosses, chalices and liturgical vestments.



Gödöllő



Gödöllő also has its own botanical gardens, with many protected species among the 500 plant varieties ranged around a pretty pond.

Fast, frequent HÉV electric train runs east from Budapest to the classic destination of **Gödöllő**. Evidence of its regal past are everywhere – even the station where you arrive has a **Royal Waiting Room** where Franz Joseph and his wife Elisabeth, revered here as the Hungarophile Sisi, would have been accommodated before their train was ready. The ornate **Gödöllő Palace** was their summer residence, a gift from the Hungarian people, where Sisi would retreat from the demands of courtly life in Vienna. Its sumptuous rooms may be visited, along with the surrounding expansive **gardens** with their century-old trees, abundant flowers and benches for relaxation.

Just outside **Etyek**, the **Korda Studios**, named after the famous Hungarian-born producer, are where international movies are made. Guided tours can be laid on by appointment.



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



Rustic Etyek is rightfully renowned for its deep-rooted traditions in winemaking that date back to the Romans. Many cellars produce a variety of top-quality red, white and sparkling wines, best sampled at the picnics that take place here each season. Locally produced food and crafts are also brought to the fore.

Etyek



HIDDEN RETREATS NEAR BUDAPEST
OFF THE BEATEN TRACK

BUDAPEST IS SURROUNDED BY NATURAL ATTRACTIONS IDEAL FOR HIKING, CYCLING AND OUTDOOR RECREATION. MOST ARE BEST SUITED TO DAY TRIPS, WITH ACCOMMODATION OPTIONS ALSO AVAILABLE.



Danube Bend



Those thinking of visiting Dobogókő can check a webcam set up to check the weather conditions.

Kisoroszi is a lovely waterside destination that sits at the northern tip of unspoilt **Szentendre Island**, near historic Visegrád. A favourite getaway from Budapest, Kisoroszi offers horse riding, the longest-established 18-hole golf course in Hungary and a beautiful stretch of beach popular with campers, canoeists and families using the barbecue facilities.

Zebegény offers both natural and historic attractions. Set by the dramatic greenery of the **Börzsöny hills**, close to the Danube and alongside the extensive **Duna-Ipoly National Park** that stretches all the way to Budapest, this ancient settlement has written records dating back to early medieval times. Zebegény has always been a popular and easy day trip from the capital. This is perfect hiking country, with spectacular views of the Danube Bend just at the point before it snakes round before plunging south past Vác.



Zebegény is set on the main train line between Budapest and Bratislava, with the second-longest rail bridge in Hungary.



Zebegény



The Királyrét narrow-gauge rail, built in the 1890s to transport timber, is now a major visitor attraction.

Királyrét translates as 'King's Meadow'. Here Sigismund, Holy Roman Emperor, had his hunting lodge in the late 1300s. Set on a hilltop in the gorgeous Börzsöny hills, Királyrét is best known for the narrow-gauge forest railway that runs up from Kismaros on the Danube. Cyclists who can stop off along the way and explore the great outdoors. Away from the rail tracks, fishing and family picnics bring many here from the capital.

One of the earliest destinations for organised hiking tours, **Nagy-Hideg-hegy** stands an 864 metres high, the third highest peak in the **Börzsöny hills**. A basic tourist house was built here before the war – the mayor of Budapest attended its opening ceremony in 1936 – and was extended in peacetime. It was also in the 1950s that Hungary's first ski lift was built here, and Nagy-Hideg-hegy has attracted hikers and skiers in serious numbers ever since. The slopes are also popular with hikers, although the terrain is pretty demanding.

The first place in Hungary to open a forest retreat, **Dobogókő** translated as „Beating stone”, has been attracting hikers since the 1890s. Known by some as the „heart chakra” of the Earth, it is certainly the perfect place for rejuvenation with wonderful views from the many hiking trails over the Danube Bend, the **Börzsöny** hills and the heights of **Pilis**. One landmark is lofty **Prédikálószték**, with its own observation tower. Near Pomáz, on the HÉV train line to Szentendre, Dobogókő draws visitors all year round.



The infrastructure at Nagy-Hideg-hegy has been considerably improved in recent years, with five ski lifts and a piste more than four kilometres long.



GREAT GIFTS AND PERFECT PRESENTS

AUTHENTIC HUNGARIAN SOUVENIRS



NO TRIP TO BUDAPEST 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 THIS COUNTRY, THE PERFECTLY AUTHENTIC SOUVENIR.

TREASURES OF BUDAPEST



The twists of history saw Unicum being smuggled out of Hungary, and the secret recipe with it, before its successful revival in the 1990s.

Many visitors like something to sip and savour as a memory of their trip.

Tokaji Aszú naturally sweet wine and **Bikavér** (meaning Bull's Blood) **red wine** also provide a classic taste of Hungary, their flavours unique and unmistakable.

Look out, too, for distinctive round bottles of **Unicum**, whose history is obscure as this dark digéstif itself. Dating back to 1790 when it was served to the emperor by a Dr Zwack, this herbal liqueur has been produced by the same family ever since.

Spicy Hungarian **salami** and **paprika**, either loose or in powdered form, are available from any market, and easy to transport.

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**.



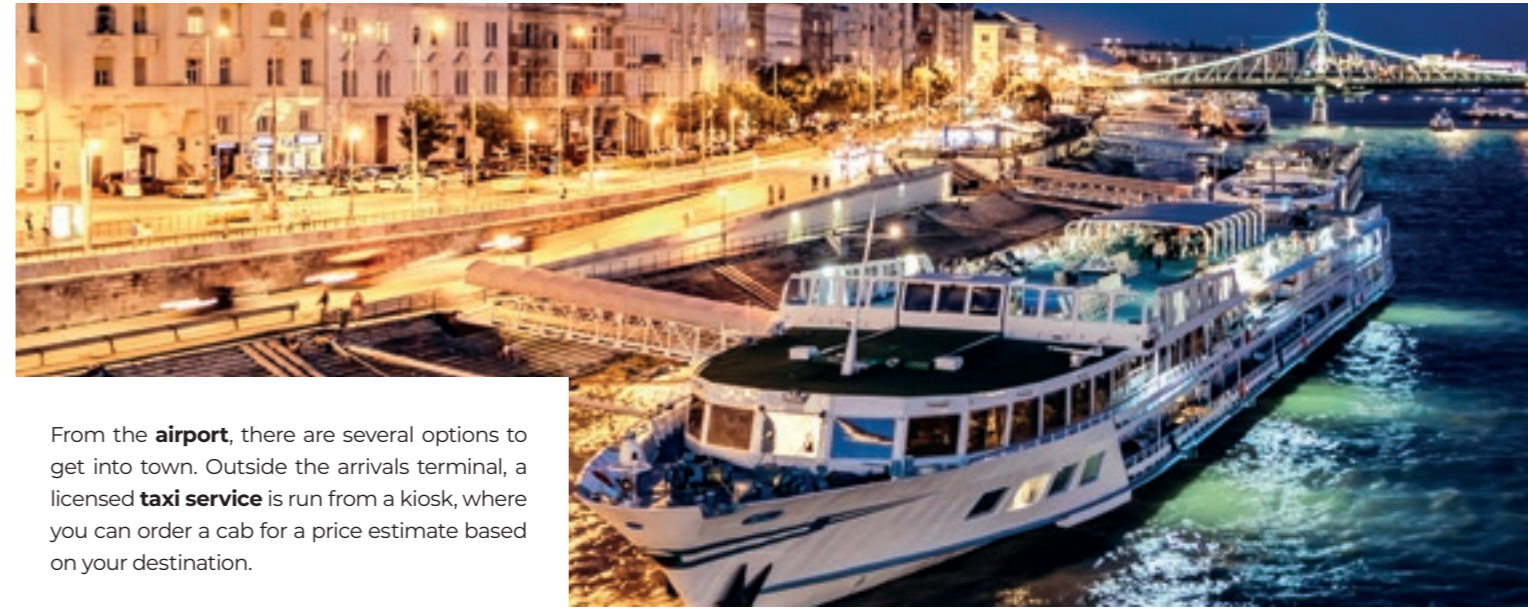
Pálinka's newly fashionable popularity has seen it produced in sleek, thin bottles and a variety of flavours.



HOW TO GET IN AND AROUND BUDAPEST

BUDAPEST TRANSPORT TIPS

VISITORS TO BUDAPEST CAN LOOK FORWARD TO SWIFT, EASY TRANSFERS FROM THE AIRPORT THEN AN EFFICIENT NETWORK OF PUBLIC TRANSPORT ONCE THEY ARRIVE IN TOWN. TAXIS ARE PLENTIFUL, AND THE CITY CENTRE ENJOYABLY WALKABLE.



From the **airport**, there are several options to get into town. Outside the arrivals terminal, a licensed **taxi service** is run from a kiosk, where you can order a cab for a price estimate based on your destination.

Near the taxi stand are two bus stops. One is for **route 200E** to the nearest metro station on blue line M3 that runs to Deák Ferenc tér, the other for the **100E** direct to the same main central hub. They require different tickets, sold from machines by the stop, with English-language menus and card payments.

Budapest has **excellent and extensive public transport** consisting of a metro network, trams, buses and trolleybuses – even boats. **Tickets and passes** are available from machines at stations and stops, and from service centres at transport hubs.

The **Budapest Card** allows unlimited use of public transport for periods ranging from 24 to 120 hours, as well as free or discounted admission to sights, spas and events, and cheaper rates in shops and restaurants. With the Budapest Card, you can experience the historic baths, enjoy Hungarian cuisine and take advantage of more than 100 services and attractions, at free or discounted rates.



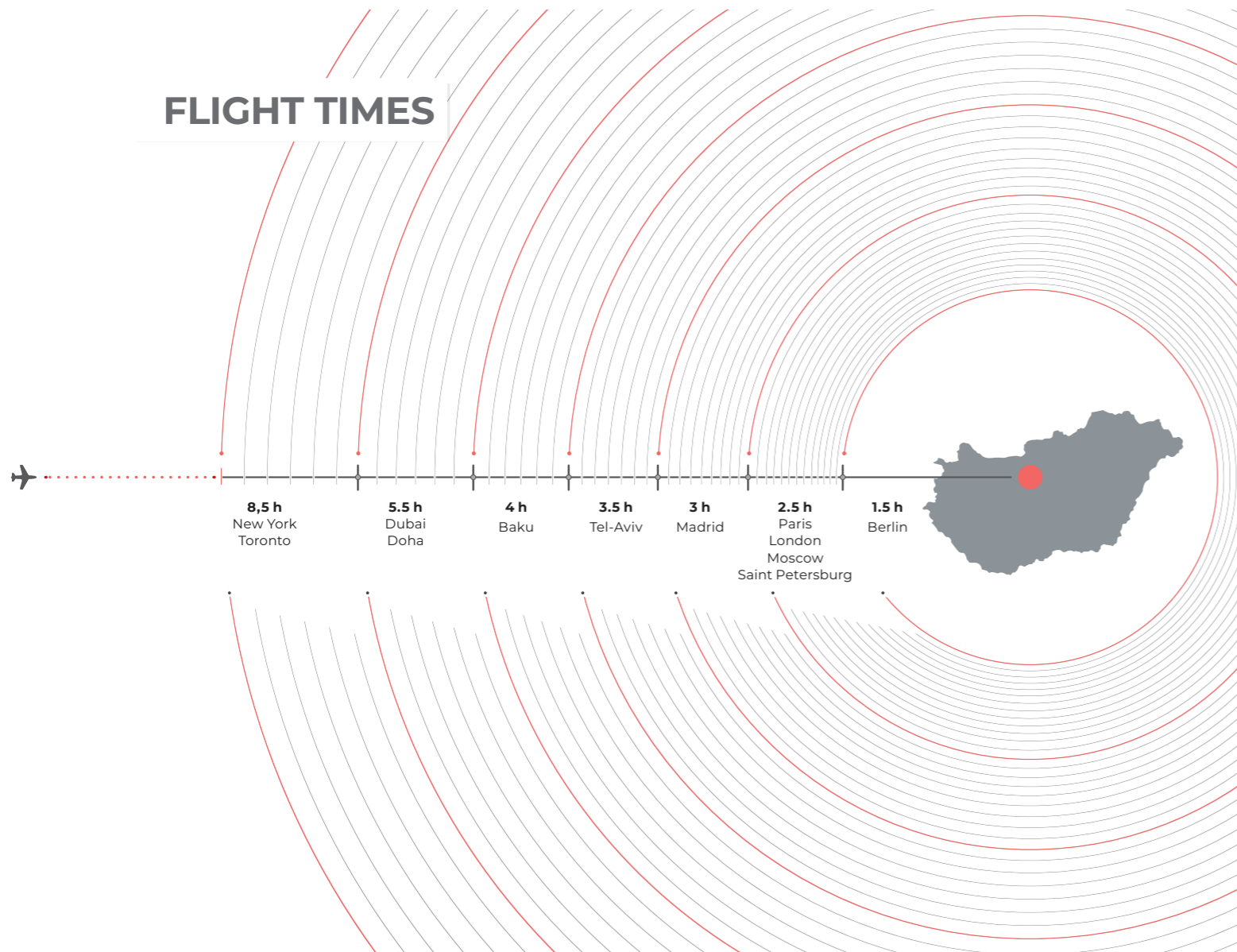
Another transport option from the airport is the minibus point-to-point service, dropping passengers off at or picking them up from a specified destination.



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



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