

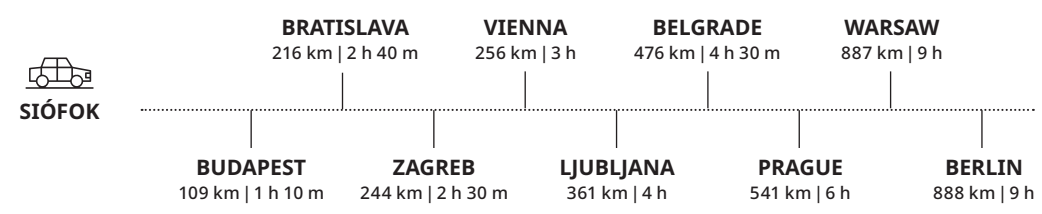
































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LAKE BALATON

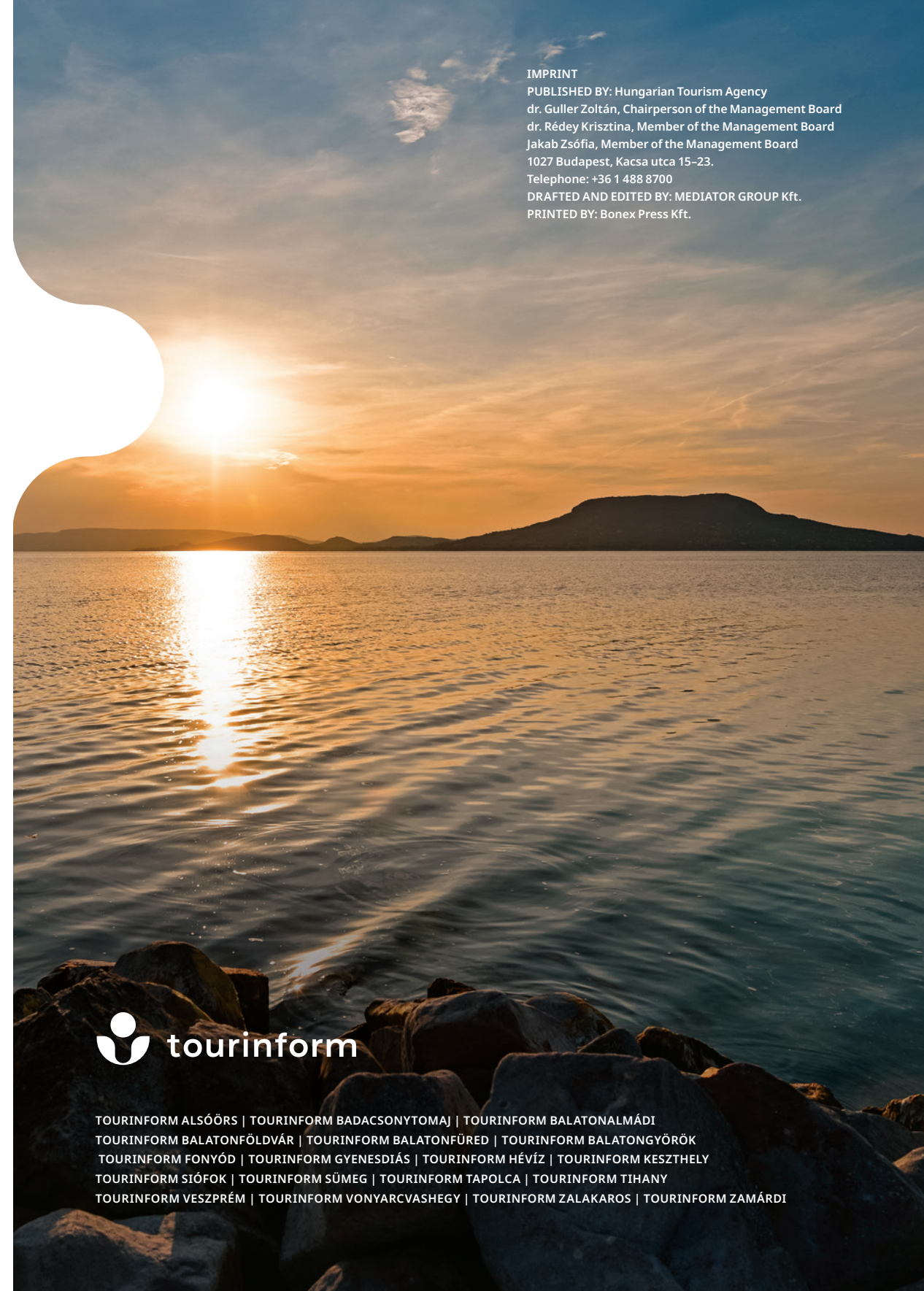
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 TOURINFORM FONYÓD | TOURINFORM GYENESDIÁS | TOURINFORM HÉVÍZ | TOURINFORM KESZTHELY
 TOURINFORM SIÓFOK | TOURINFORM SÜMEG | TOURINFORM TAPOLCA | TOURINFORM TIHANY
 TOURINFORM VESZPRÉM | TOURINFORM VONYARCVASHEGY | TOURINFORM ZALAKAROS | TOURINFORM ZAMÁRDI

LAKE BALATON

Lake Balaton, with the pleasant towns and villages around the lake and their diverse attractions have plenty of surprises in store even for those who know the region well.

The picturesque Balaton Highlands, castle ruins nestled among the rolling hills, meandering roads, charming natural stone buildings and peasant cottages surrounded by vines are sure to captivate visitors. Hiking and sports enthusiasts as well as those seeking breathtaking views will also yearn to return to the region.

Our publication aims to serve as a source of inspiration for your stay near Lake Balaton, including a list of towns and villages and attractions to seek out when exploring the well-known or more hidden away sights dotted around 'the Hungarian Sea'.

You can discover sights and sporting opportunities as well as more about festivals and recreational venues where you can unwind, whether you are visiting the region alone, with friends or even the whole family.



FIVE UNMISSABLE EXPERIENCES

DISCOVER LAKE BALATON BY BIKE!

Cycle around Lake Balaton on your own bike, or rent one – almost the entire 210-kilometre-long circuit is on cycle roads or cycle-friendly paths.



SAMPLE THE LOCAL FLAVOURS!

Head to Badacsony for culinary experiences and discover numerous panoramic wine terraces serving up delicacies from family cellars.

SLIP INTO EUROPE'S LARGEST THERMAL WATER LAKE!

Lake Hévíz's warm water awaits those wishing to bathe and recuperate even during the winter. Whereas those visiting the lake in summer can admire the beauty of the landscape along with the water lilies floating on the lake's surface.



DISCOVER THE SECRETS OF THE NOBILITY!

One of Hungary's most beautiful monuments and a masterpiece of Baroque architecture, the Festetics Palace in Keszthely awaits visitors with a palm house, hunting exhibition, historical model railways and a huge park designated as a nature reserve.



SOAK UP THE SUN ON THE HUNGARIAN RIVIERA!

It's no coincidence that Lake Balaton is known as the Hungarian Sea: its deep blue waters and stony or sandy shores boast numerous activities from bathing and water sports to pleasant boat trips on the lake.

70 minutes

from Budapest



holiday resort since the

18th century



average summer temperature of

26°C

6

wine districts



210 km

of cycle paths



64

beaches



6

nature reserves



73

harbours



500

swans living on the lake



unmissable experiences

365 days
a year

Lake Balaton all year round



HIKING THROUGH TREES IN BLOSSOM

The almond trees in blossom in early spring, heralding the new season, are part of the characteristic flora of the Balaton Highlands. Various events are associated with their blossoming, including the Almond Blossom Power Hike departing from Alsóörs.

The tour is 20 kilometres long; however, the organisers cater for all age groups, so families can also opt for a 6 km tour through the fabulous surroundings and trees in blossom.



CAPTIVATED BY LAVENDER FIELDS

Lavender is not only popular thanks to its wonderful fragrance, with its flowers being used in many ways, it is also one of the most versatile herbs in folk medicine. The plant typically flowers in June and has become a symbol of Tihany over the years, so it is associated with a range of great activities in the village and its surroundings. For example, the Tihany Lavender Festival and Lavender Weeks allow visitors to stroll through the lavender as well as take part in herb tours, distillation demonstrations, lavender chocolate-making workshops and lavender arts and crafts activities.



HARVEST AND TRADITIONS

Autumn around Lake Balaton is infused with the spirit of harvest and wine. Traditional events enable visitors to sample the region's finest wines along with delicious local specialties. The fabulous autumnal landscape of the Balaton Highlands and the deep blue waters of the lake make a picturesque backdrop to these wonderful experiences.

If you're in search of truly exuberant harvest festivities, look no further than the Harvest Festivities in Szigliget or the Harvest Festival and Parade in Zánka.



WINTER EXPERIENCES

The sensation of walking into a steamy spa or a hot sauna when coming in from the winter cold or maybe swimming out into the steaming waters of Hévíz Lake Bath when snow is falling is simply second to none. If you would like to get some exercise, you can test your mettle at the Eplény Ski Resort, while Hungary's longest two-seat ski lift can also accommodate those who simply wish to enjoy some mulled wine at the ski lodge at the top of the hill.

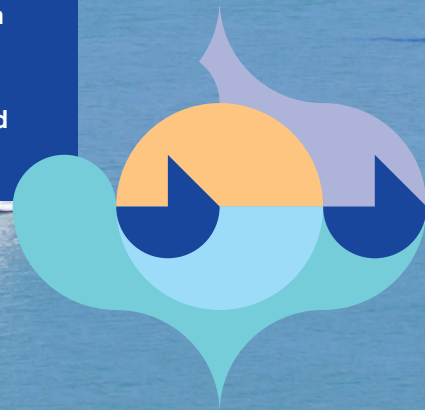
The whole family can go skating at the ice rinks in Veszprém, Szigliget or Balatonlelle, whereas skating on designated parts of Lake Balaton or the Inner Lake of Tihany is simply spectacular when they freeze over.



On the water and the shore

KÉKSZALAG (BLUE RIBBON) GRAND PRIX

Every year, competitors set out and return to the same location in Balatonfüred in Europe's longest round-the-lake race. The distance, as the crow flies, is 160 kilometres, with more than five hundred boats setting out every year.



FOR ME, LAKE BALATON...

Everyone has some kind of pleasant experience connected to Lake Balaton – and that's no coincidence. The inimitable atmosphere of the Hungarian Sea is due to the combination of its shallow southern shores, perfect for young children, and the bays of the northern shores, perfect for swimming and other water sports.

Swans, boats rocking back and forth on the water, pleasure boats cruising past, the sound of children having fun ringing out across well-equipped beaches, playgrounds, sports grounds and water parks – these are just a handful of things returning holidaymakers associate with Lake Balaton.

CROSS THE LAKE BY SAILING BOAT!

Every part of the day reveals a different face of the lake's velvety waters and each begs to be explored. Sailing across Lake Balaton is the experience of a lifetime: from spring to autumn, there are sailing classes and rentals available, with or without a captain, from the well-equipped marinas.

If you'd rather explore the lake on a motor vessel, you can choose between regular pleasure boat services, early evening sunset cruises or even treasure-hunting tours for children.

From mountaintops to the depths of caves

ON TWO WHEELS

There are countless opportunities to discover the Balaton Highlands National Park by bike. The 210-kilometre-long Balaton Bicycle Circuit consists mostly of cycle paths.

If you haven't brought your own bike, you can rent one from one of the many rent-a-bike services. You can even make use of a luggage delivery service: there are also service providers who offer luggage courier services for those cycling around the lake.

PUT YOUR COURAGE TO TEST IN THE DEPTHS OF THE EARTH

The Tapolca Lake Cave is something quite unique, even in an international context, offering a romantic boating experience beneath the town. While the truly courageous can put on special overalls and descend into the Csodabogyós Cave in Balatonederics. This thrilling adventure will oblige you to crawl on all fours or on your belly in some places!

TOURS AROUND THE LAKE

The Balaton Highlands, a candidate for World Heritage status, offers numerous exciting and spectacular hiking trails through volcanic buttes and unique geological formations. Take in the stunning views from the national park's lookouts, discover the abundance of basalt organ pipes and visit the geyser fields of the Tihany peninsula along with the Bakony-Lake Balaton UNESCO Global Geopark.

The untouched natural beauty of Kis-Balaton (Lake Balaton Minor) is also worth a visit. Climb up to Kányavár Island's bird-watching station and then take a detour to the buffalo reserve in Kápolnapuszta, where you can observe Hungary's largest buffalo herd as they wallow in the mud.

KÁLI BASIN

The real gem of the region, boasting beautiful villages, rolling hills and friendly hospitality with a touch of rural romanticism and delicious flavours.

FIVE LOOKOUTS ON THE SHORES OF LAKE BALATON, WHICH OFFER MORE THAN VIEWS

ÓVÁRI-MESSZELÁTÓ LOOKOUT TOWER

The over 100-year-old lookout tower, the symbol of Balatonalmádi, offers views over the Sió Basin and Fűzfő Bay. It's worth walking to the tower, as the Vörös Homokkő (Red Sandstone) nature trail beginning at Szent István (Saint Stephen) Park gives you the chance to discover other great sights in the town.

FESTETICS LOOKOUT

The nearly 235-metre-high tower in Gyenesdiás boasts 360-degree views across the whole of Lake Balaton and Keszthely Bay. If you climb to the top of the three-story lookout, you can also see the Keszthely Hills and the town of Keszthely.

ÓRTORONY (GUARD TOWER) LOOKOUT

This boasts the most stunning views of the interior of the Tihany Peninsula. You can admire the features of the volcanic peninsula or gaze out across the waters of Lake Balaton.

WALKÓ LOOKOUT

Fonyód's emblematic lookout has been welcoming hikers since the 1910s. It is worth visiting not just for its impressive views, but also for the nearby Kripta (Crypt) Villa. The mansion was built in memory of the original owner's bride, who died before their wedding. The Mediterranean-style building even features their marble wedding bed.

JÁNOS XANTUS GLOBE LOOKOUT

Although the Balatonboglár Globe Lookout was originally built for the 1958 Brussels World Expo, its sleek, geometric shape still looks modern – and from its inside, you can see across the whole of Lake Balaton.

Dining experiences



FISH SOUP MADE WITH LOCAL FISH FROM LAKE BALATON

Every waterside town or village has its own fish dishes and recipes – the same is true of Lake Balaton. Fish soup is made a bit differently everywhere, yet the traditional recipe has it that if you adhere to the right proportions, you'll achieve the best flavour. So, just over one-third of the fish should be carp, one-third should be predatory fish (pike-perch, catfish or sterlet) and a little under one-third should be small fish.

Lake Balaton's dining scene has undergone enormous changes in the last few years. You can find great beach snack bars, fine dining restaurants, bistros, family inns, wine terraces, pubs and eateries, artisanal confectioneries and bakeries all around the lake. Bustling farmer's markets offer local produce as well as the wares of cheesemakers and other local producers. It's worth visiting the establishments recommended by the Balaton Circle Association, most of which are open all year round and offer high-quality, imaginative dishes.

FESTIVALS

Gasztrohegy (Gastro Hill) Badacsony

Ten catering establishments, seven thematic gastro-weekends and a side of Badacsony that you can only truly discover at such times, in those months that lend themselves better to more relaxed, thorough wine-tasting. You can taste the Gasztrohegy volcanic wines and the dishes created to accompany them from October to April by using the "gastro-bus" service serving the region.

Fonyód Kulinária Festival

In April, curious guests to the town can sample novelties from local and regional confectioneries and restaurants. The latter are created by taking a new approach to traditional dishes, made with ingredients from local producers.

Balaton Fish and Wine Festival

The Tagore Promenade in Balatonfüred is the traditional venue for the festival in early June: local winemakers set up shop in booths and visitors can choose from a range of wine demonstrations, fairs and Balaton fish-tasting events every day. The aim of the festival is to draw attention to Lake Balaton fish, catering businesses, local and other Hungarian vintners – naturally, with a rich selection of programmes.

BEACH FOOD REVISITED

Every year, the Balaton Circle selects the Beach Food of the Year. Winners and runner-ups include such ingenious treats as leavened cucumber soup, brisket ciabatta, the so-called Gofcsi (waffle combined with rösti), Pulled Carp or "Catfish and Chips".

TRY IT!

Taste the delicious pike-perch, crispy bream or spoon up a plateful of Balaton fish soup! When visiting Tihany, make sure not to miss the local lavender beer and before you leave, don't forget to buy your loved ones a bottle of BalatonBor (Balaton-Wine) made from Olaszrizling.



Zamárdi Gourmet & Beer Festival

The festival that takes place on the beach in Zamárdi features the products of Hungarian craft breweries. Moreover, visitors can even taste craft beers from neighbouring countries. Naturally, the selection of food also represents the Hungarian food elite, including restaurant, street food and food truck offerings.

Wine festivals around the lake

If you want to discover the best wines from the six wine districts around Lake Balaton, make sure you visit one of their regular annual events: the Zánka Wine Days, the Badacsony Wine Weeks, the Wine Week in Balatonlelle or the Zalakaros Wine Days.

HISTORY UP CLOSE AND PERSONAL

ARISTOCRATIC LIFE IN KESZTHELY

Everyone has probably wondered at one time or another what it was like to be a lady or gentleman living in the elaborate halls and rooms of a fabulous palace.

What were their grand balls like? What did it feel like to go for a stroll in the huge, beautifully manicured grounds of the palace, which also boasts a palm house, or to select one of the dozens of elegant horse-drawn carriages to go for a ride?

Get a first-hand taste of the aristocratic lifestyle at the Festetics Palace in Keszthely – today known as the Helikon Palace Museum - walk through its enormous grounds and discover the various exhibits on display!



Festetics Palace in Keszthely

THE MIDDLE AGES BROUGHT TO LIFE

Apart from a range of exhibitions, the region's castles have exciting events that help bring history to life. Szigliget offers jousting, archery and falconry demonstrations, while Sümeg features spectacular equestrian shows, and visitors can even take part in a real medieval feast.

On one of the spurs of Veszprém's castle, you can take in spectacular views of the city next to the statues of Saint Stephen and Gisella. The so-called Szaléziánium in the castle's main square is also worth a visit, as it features a liturgical exhibition, herb garden, violin-making workshop and children's activity centre.

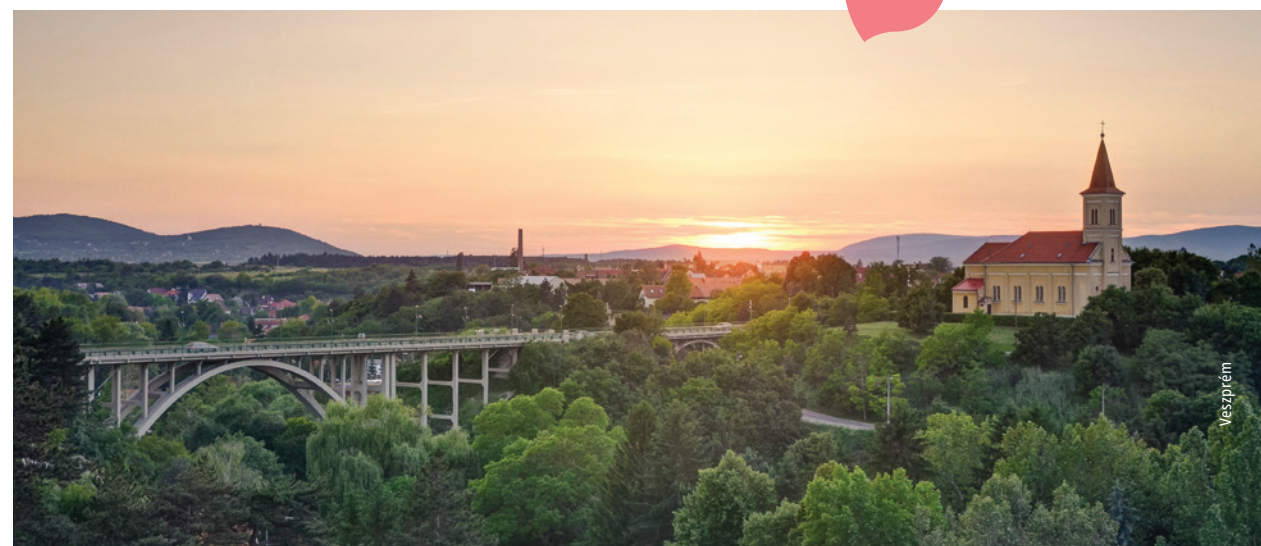
FIND YOUR INSPIRATION IN BALATONFÜRED!

By the end of the 18th century, Balatonfüred had become a fashionable summer holiday destination. If you want to get to know the region through its artists and their works, visit the Vaszary Villa in Balatonfüred, which houses nearly fifty masterpieces from the collection of the Hungarian National Gallery.

The nearby Jókai memorial house is also worth a visit. Renowned novelist Mór Jókai's first visit to Balatonfüred in 1857 made such a deep impression on him and his wife, Róza Laborfalvy, that ten years later, they bought a plot of land, where their villa, now serving as a memorial museum, still stands.

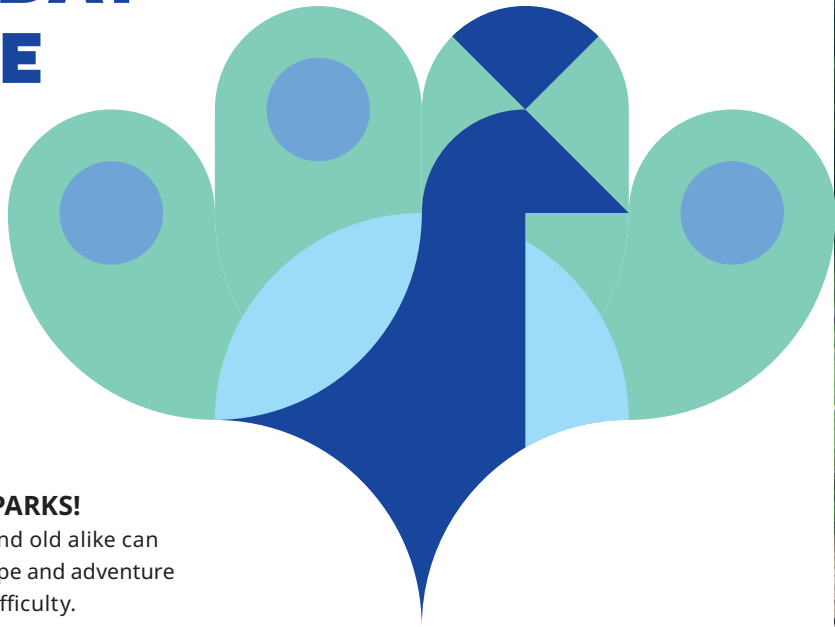
THRILLING EXHIBITION SPACES

The Balaton Museum in Keszthely preserves, displays and promotes the region's natural treasures, while an interactive exhibition known as the Amazon House Visitor Centre, which presents the journeys of the aristocracy, can also be found nearby. The Georgikon Manor Museum of Keszthely features a display of local agricultural history on over two hectares of land. Modern means of demonstration also offer insights into the details of navigation and sailing in Balatonfüred and Balatonföldvár. You can learn about the formation and wildlife of the Tihany Peninsula at the Lavender House in Tihany.



Veszprém

ON HOLIDAY WITH THE FAMILY



TIME FOR ADVENTURE PARKS!

In Zamárdi or Zánka, young and old alike can put their skills to the test on rope and adventure courses of varying levels of difficulty.

In the Csopak adventure park, you can overcome 105 obstacles up to 18 metres above ground or experience the feeling of a free-fall from a height of 16 metres!

In Balatonboglár and Balatonfűzfő, there are bobsleigh runs operating all year round, whilst Zalasabar boasts the country's largest adventure park, with a 400-metre-long roller coaster ride.

GOLF, NOT JUST FOR PROS

The family-friendly golf courses around Lake Balaton give everyone the perfect opportunity to discover their hidden golf talents. The 18-hole course in Balatonudvari, the 9-hole course in Balatongyörök and the Zalacsány golf course, outstanding even by European standards and suitable for holding international tournaments, offer truly memorable experiences even for those who have never held a golf club in their hands.



STROLLING THROUGH ONE OF THE COUNTRY'S BEST ZOOS

Hungary's oldest zoo outside Budapest can be found in Veszprém and is home to elephants, giraffes and seals, amongst others. It also boasts the country's largest savannah park and group of rhinos as well as the extremely popular, interactive Dino Park. The continuously expanding zoo is a full-day programme and is a must-see for families!

Healing relaxation

HÉVÍZ



over

2,000 years of history

4.4-hectare

lake



water temperatures of

23-25°C

in the winter

and

33-38°C

in the summer



Water replenished

in 72 hours

THOUSANDS-OF-YEAR-OLD THERMAL SPRING IN HÉVÍZ

Relax and unwind at the country's oldest, and the world's largest, thermal water lake, where you can also bathe!

Thanks to its rich mineral composition, the thermal water offers a remedy for locomotor, gynaecological and dermatological conditions as well as for accident rehabilitation. The town offers high-quality accommodation, as well as health and lifestyle programmes to boost your recreation choices.

One of the many stories associated with Hévíz dates back to the summer of 1914: an elephant named Nelly and its handler travelled to Lake Hévíz cure its painful foot. According to photographs from the period, she loved bathing in the thermal water and returned to Budapest fully healed.

Hévíz

TRACTION BATH

Traditional Hévíz therapy consists of bathing, mud packs and traction bath. Traction baths, one of the greatest discoveries in rheumatology, can be attributed to a Hévíz spa doctor, Dr Károly Moll. The purpose of the underwater treatment is to distance the vertebrae of the spine from one another, thus extending the spinal column. The stretching allows the healthy condition of the vertebrae to be restored.

ZALAKAROS SLIDE PARK

Come and visit one of the region's most popular family spas with leisure pools and a children's section with slides, water attractions and a multitude of games! A fun experience guaranteed! In addition to extensive therapeutic and wellness treatments based on decades of experience, the medicinal water rich in minerals guarantees recuperation and healing.

PHYSICAL AND SPIRITUAL REPLENISHMENT IN KEHIDAKUSTÁNY

The Mediterranean-style, three-level medical and wellness spa of Kehidakustány offers not only health and children's activities but also developmental and ambulatory therapies. The design of the spa ensures that all generations can relax and have fun together.

THERAPIES IN BALATONFÜRED

One of Hungary's oldest health resorts: in the past, the lake's mud was used to make medicinal ointments and soap. Physicians prescribed tub baths with water from Lake Balaton along with whey cures using a mixture of whey produced from the sheep stock of the Tihany abbey and natural sour water. Fresh air and sunshine have long been lauded for their well-known positive healing effects.

TAPOLCA MEDICAL CAVE

The air of the Tapolca medical cave, with its own special microclimate, boasts high humidity and is extremely clean. The breathing exercises and physiotherapy that are performed here have been proven to strengthen pulmonary muscles, reduce breathing problems and develop cardiovascular health.

Wine-tasting around the lake

10+1 WINES WORTH TASTING

Kéknyelű or Riesling
from the Badacsony
wine district

1.

2. Olaszrizling from the
Balatonfüred-Csepak
wine district

2.

Aged red blend from
the Balatonboglár
wine district

3.

4. Olaszrizling from
the Kál Basin

4.

Olaszrizling
from the Nivegy
Valley

5.

6. Tramini from
the Zala wine
district

6.

Kékfrankos
from Tihany

7.

8. Traditional method sparkling
wine from Sümeg

8.

Juhfark from the
Nagy-Somló wine
district

9.

10. Wine produced from the Vul-
canus variety on the northern
shore of Lake Balaton

10.

BalatonBor from any
local wine district

+1

ENTICING WINES ALL YEAR ROUND

Much of the reputation of the region's wines is demonstrated by the fact that many still refer to these wines by the name given by the Romans: "the nectar of the gods". However, nowadays, their complex aromatics, crisp acidity and mineral notes are more often appreciated. The nearly 10,000 hectares of the Balaton wine region offer a wide range of varieties and wine styles, and visitors can discover atmospheric cellars and wine terraces as well as memorable festivals in both summer and winter. The Badacsony wine district boasts particularly unique qualities, while the historical vineyard located on the side of Sümeg Castle Hill has been planted with a range of 15th century varieties.

BALATON SOUND

Launched in 2007, this festival now attracts international electronic music stars to Zamárdi, along with thousands of Hungarian and foreign revelers. In addition to the incredible performances, the atmosphere is enhanced by such indispensable party accessories as bungee-jumping.



Music festivals on the shores of Lake Balaton

NAGYON BALATON FERRY CONCERTS

Perhaps the most thrilling part of the MOL Nagyon Balaton series of events: two ferries set out from opposite sides of Lake Balaton, Tihany and Szántód, meeting up in the middle of the lake as the sun sets and the concerts begin.



PALOZNAK JAZZPIKNIK

One of the most charming villages on the northern shore of Lake Balaton is home to this festival which focuses on the relationship between good wine and good music. This "farmhouse jamboree" has now grown into a three-day event with 20 concerts taking place on four different stages.

VESZPRÉMFEST

Year after year, the organisers entice internationally renowned stars to the small city and attract crowds of culture and music fans from all over the country. The festival also strives to extend its cultural offerings to a growing number of squares and venues throughout the city.

VALLEY OF THE ARTS

During this series of events featuring the full range of Hungarian folk and pop music, visitors can browse through unique products from Hungarian designers, attend workshops, plays and performances as well as taste local Hungarian delicacies.



Sights to see around Lake Balaton

ZIRC ABBEY AND ARBORETUM

Hungary's highest English-style landscape garden is located 400 metres above sea level in the monumental environment of the Cistercian Abbey. Don't forget to sample the abbey's craft beer after visiting the exhibition!

PANNON OBSERVATORY, BAKONYBÉL

Take a close look at a fragment of a meteorite, admire the solar flares through the rooftop telescope and book an appointment for some night-time stargazing!

VIA FERRATA, CSESZNEK

The site offers fixed wire climbing tracks, so-called "ironed paths" (via ferrata) of varying difficulty set in the rock face for climbers, traversing a course of 370 metres.

HEREND PORCELAIN MANUFACTORY

Get a behind-the-scenes glimpse into the mysteries of porcelain manufacture, handle the porcelain mass yourself, pick up the paintbrush and unleash your imagination at the Porcelanium Visitor Centre!

PÁPA

Discover the Zopf-style Catholic grand church, the Rococo/Baroque-style Esterházy Palace designed by the star architect of the 18th century and the deservedly famous fabric painting technique, blue dyeing!



SÜMEG

The most popular attraction of this town set in the rolling hills of the Bakony is its castle, yet it's also worth visiting the birthplace of poet Sándor Kisfaludy (1772-1844), which now houses a memorial museum. The Baroque period is evoked by the row of manors running along the right-hand side of Saint Stephen's Square, along with the Bishop's Palace and the 500-year-old Palace Cellar on the other side of the square. The town is also a shrine to Mary and a place of pilgrimage.

KAPOSVÁR

Go for stroll in the town centre in the embrace of Art Nouveau and Classicist buildings, admire the wildlife in the fishing paradise of Lake Deseda and round off the day with the fabulous view of the night sky at the Zselic Park of Stars!

