



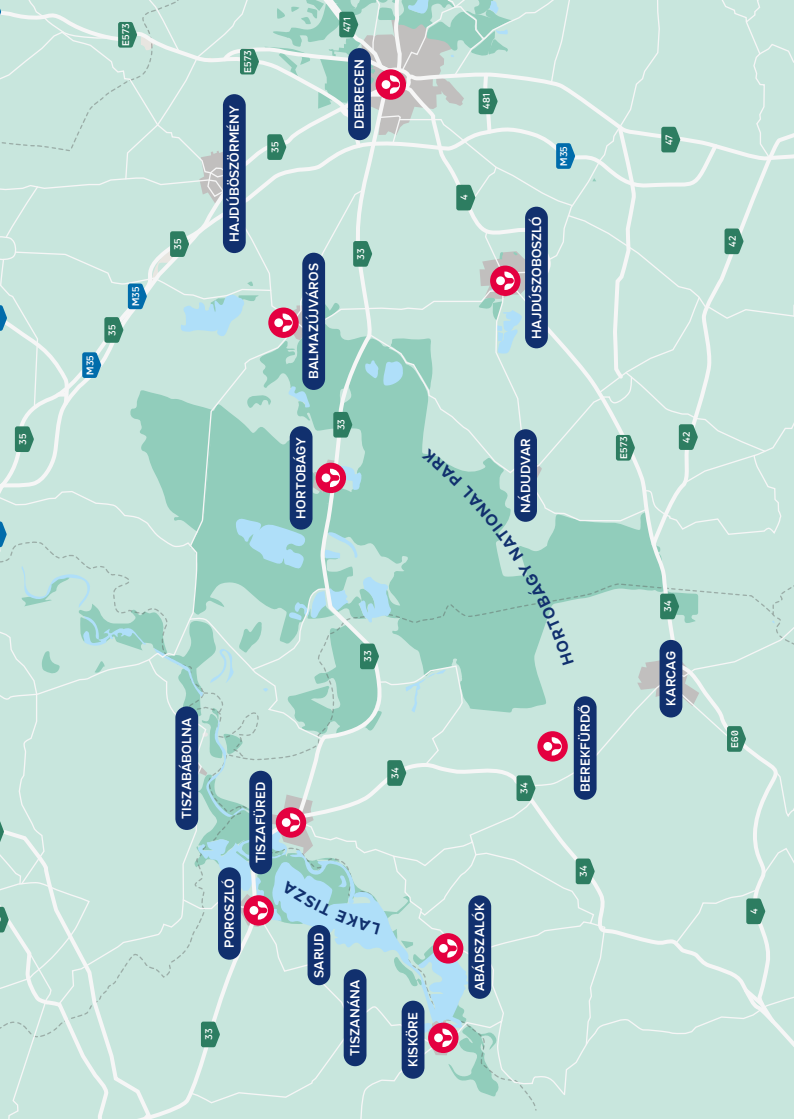
Debrecen and surroundings



HEALING AND HERITAGE



HUNGARY



Debrecen and surroundings

Key:





Hortobágy

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Healing and heritage

Experience what it feels like walking along the panoramic walkway between the towers of the country's largest Reformed church, or discover a mirage in the World Heritage Site, Hortobágy. You can also visit the popular spa complex of Hajdúszoboszló, where thermal water with a unique composition pampers those who wish to relax, and where you can also enjoy a variety of adventure pools and a water slide park. And if you prefer an active holiday, cycle around the adventurous Lake Tisza, famous for its rich wildlife, and visit the giant aquarium in Poroszló, which also presents native Hungarian fish!

Debrecen, known for its cultural, architectural, recreational and conference possibilities as well as for being the second most populous city in Hungary, also has plenty of surprises in store. The city attracts many visitors thanks to its lively cafes, bars and restaurants. The Nagyerdő, or Great Forest, is a special feature that hosts numerous festivals and events. From here, it's just a short drive to Hortobágy, where you can learn about the traditions of the area's remarkable animal herders, known as csikós.



5+1 unmissable experiences

HORSE-DRAWN CARRIAGE RIDES ACROSS THE HORTOBÁGY

While riding a horse-drawn carriage in the unique landscape of Hortobágy within the Great Plains area, you can admire the herds of grey cattle grazing in the "Pusztá", and marvel at the virtuoso stunts of the csikós.



ADVENTUROUS BIRD-WATCHING

If you take part in one of the water tours, you may have a chance to glance at the protected heron and cormorant colonies in the Lake Tisza Bird Reserve. It is a special experience to follow the water trails winding through the reeds, where you can stroll along the boardwalk and stop at the birdwatching hut or climb up the lookout tower to admire the birdlife of Lake Tisza.



REFRESH YOUR BODY AND SOUL!

The spa complex in the Nagyerdő area of Debrecen, which is a certified health resort, awaits its visitors with thermal baths, a medical treatment section, treatments based on medicinal water, an indoor adventure pool, and a spectacular beach.



BICYCLE PATH AROUND LAKE TISZA

Hungary's second largest lake, Lake Tisza, may also be explored by cycling along the 65-kilometre-long bicycle path around it. If such a distance is too long for you at first, you may spend the night in a hut floating on the water.



TAKE A VIEW OF THE CITY FROM THE PANORAMIC WALKWAY

The largest Reformed church in the country is the symbol of Debrecen. After exploring its impressive interior spaces, it's worth taking a stroll along the panoramic walkway built between the towers of the Neo-classical building, where you can admire the view of the civic city.



THERMAL WATER OF HAJDÚSZOBOSZLÓ

The thermal water with iodine, bromine and bicarbonate content rises to the surface from a depth of 1,100 metres; thanks to its unique composition, the bath offers more than forty different treatments for its visitors to choose from.



A walk around the civic city

For 300 years, Debrecen's main street was the site of the famous town fairs. Start your walk at Hotel Aranybika, built in Art Nouveau style by Alfréd Hajós, who was also the first Hungarian Olympic gold medalist. Since its construction, the hotel has been a temporary home to many Hungarian artists and celebrities.

Then head to the monumental Reformed Great Church built in Neoclassical style, where you can take a look at one of the original copies of the Vizsoly Bible, enjoy the breathtaking views from the Rákóczi bell located in the west tower dome, and listen to a classical concert played on one of the country's most beautiful organs, built in 1838.

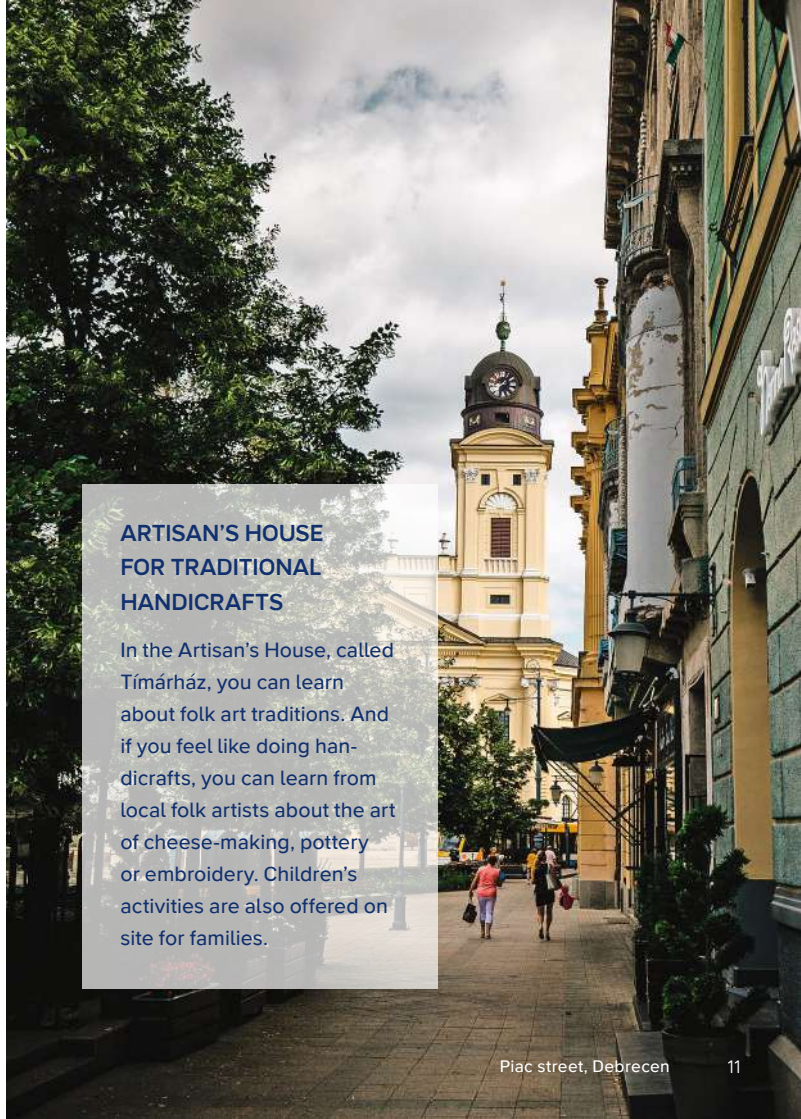




In the main square there is a huge mosaic depicting the city's coat of arms, created by placing together 180,000 pieces of Venetian glass; the Millennium Fountain; a statue of the city's famous native, Magda Szabó; and a group of statues erected to commemorate Lajos Kossuth.



The next stop is the Museum of Debrecen Reformed College, where films, interactive exhibition elements and modern technology devices present the life of the past dormitory students. And once you're there, visit the historic Great Library, which stores the manuscripts of famous Hungarian writers such as Endre Ady, Ferenc Kölcsey or Zsigmond Móricz. If you get tired, take tramline no. 1 to get around the city, because the tramway, which was first started in 1911, passes the Reformed Small Church (or Truncated Church), the Old City Hall, the Great Church, the water tower and the University.



ARTISAN'S HOUSE FOR TRADITIONAL HANDICRAFTS

In the Artisan's House, called *Timárház*, you can learn about folk art traditions. And if you feel like doing handicrafts, you can learn from local folk artists about the art of cheese-making, pottery or embroidery. Children's activities are also offered on site for families.

Culture at its highest

Debrecen is also visited for its vibrant cultural life. One of the jewels of the city known for its collections, traditional and modern museums and exhibition spaces is Déri Museum, where a unique Egyptian collection is on display as part of the archaeological exhibition. Still, the most genuine rarity of the museum is Mihály Munkácsy's Christ Trilogy, which brought worldwide recognition to our country's most famous painter, and attracts many visitors to the city to this day.



PROMINENT PERSONS INSPIRED BY THE CITY

The civic city has played a special role in the works of several writers, poets and painters, including Mihály Csokonai Vitéz, Endre Ady and János Arany. To mark the 100th anniversary of the birth of Magda Szabó, the Kossuth Prize-winning writer born and raised in Debrecen, a memorial house was opened in the former school of the writer, which commemorates the outstanding author with contemporary and personal objects and quotations.



MODEM CENTER

Debrecen is also home to the largest contemporary exhibition space in Central Europe, MODEM, which offers an opportunity for presenting the works of up-and-coming as well as well-known national and international artists.



DEBRECEN'S FIRST STONE THEATRE

The Csokonai National Theatre, which is currently under reconstruction, opened its doors in 1865, and was named after Mihály Csokonai Vitéz in 1915. It is a place where several well-known actors – such as Imre Soós, László Mensáros, László Márkus, Zoltán Latinovits and Géza Hofi – began their careers. Csokonai National Theatre has become an innovator of Hungarian theatre culture through its premieres, and in addition, by organising DESZKA Festival every year, it has become a stronghold of contemporary theatre and literature. During the renovation of the historic building, the company performs in temporary theatre spaces and innovative venues.

THE JEWEL OF PÁSTI STREET

The centre of the Jewish Quarter in Debrecen is the Orthodox synagogue on Pásti street, which not only serves sacral functions but also hosts frequent events such as exhibitions, concerts and conferences. The building is very important in the life of Debrecen, since it is home to the largest Jewish community outside the capital. In the courtyard of the synagogue, the winter prayer house is open to visitors, which is still used daily by members of the community. Under it there is the old mikveh; the slaughterhouse, which was preserved in its original state; and the local Holocaust memorial, which bears the names of more than six thousand victims.

Ideal for young visitors too

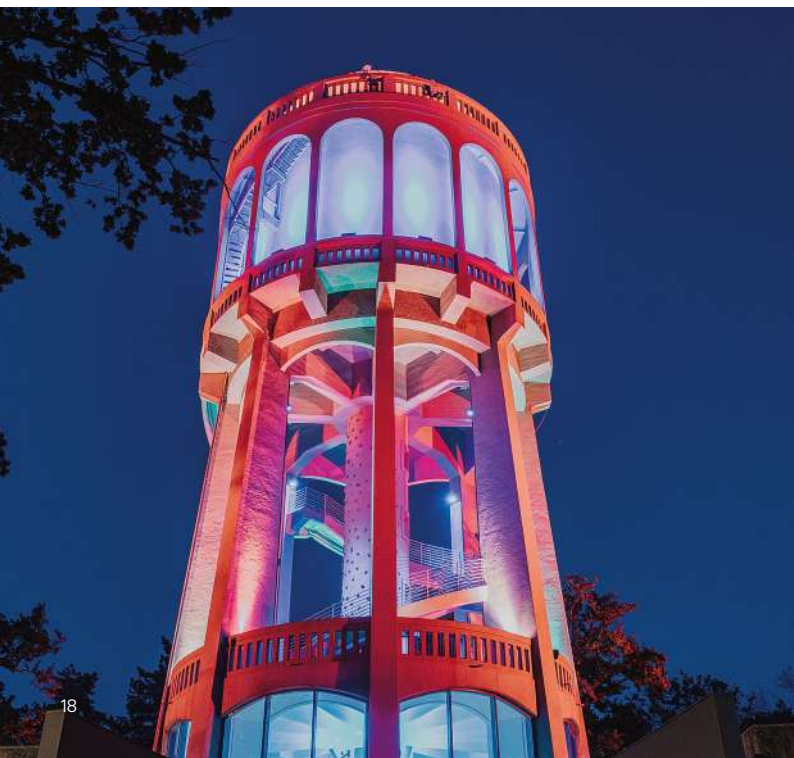
ZSUZSI NARROW-GAUGE RAILWAY

Debrecen is home to Hungary's oldest narrow-gauge railway, which transports passengers on a route of 16 km through forests and steppe landscapes. From its station at Csereerdő you may reach the Devil's Ditch from the Roman Age, or from its station at Erdészlak, even the medieval church ruins. At the terminal, at Hármashegyfalja, you can walk along the path leading to the lookout, and enjoy a barbecue.



IMMERSION IN LIGHTS

In good weather, the Nagyerdő Water Tower is well worth a visit. The site features a climbing wall, a fröccs (spritzer) terrace, evening concerts and light painting to entertain visitors. From spring to autumn, you can visit Hungary's only multimedia fountain, the 'Fog Theatre', which presents eye-catching films and laser animations in the evenings; during the day, you can take a refreshing stroll on the walkways protruding from the water.



KEREKERDŐ ADVENTURE PARK

If you've never met a talking tree before, Kerekerdő Adventure Park is the place for you! You can ride a stone-age water bike, visit the Renaissance wax museum, and immerse yourself in the vast mystery playground.

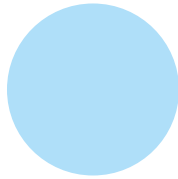
OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES

Children should not miss the zoo and amusement park of Nagyerdei Culture Park, and right next to it, the Island Blue theme park, inspired by the famous novel of Magda Szabó. After spending some time in one of the most exciting "playground cities" in the region, the interactive tools in the three-storey Agora Science Adventure Centre's modern laboratories also offer an exciting pastime. In addition, you can take your family for a walk in the Botanical Garden of the University of Debrecen, which boasts nearly 6000 species of plants.

Recreation in Hajdúszoboszló

Hajdúszoboszló is only 20 kilometres from Debrecen. Although Europe's largest spa complex is located here, the town managed to preserve its atmosphere of a small-town resort. The facility offers a relaxing environment to heal and relax with your family, as well as a wide range of accommodation to choose from; the hotels in the area offer medicinal and wellness packages.

The 30-hectare open-air spa with its leisure pools, jacuzzis and swimming pools, as well as animal-adorned children's pools, is the perfect place for a holiday. If, however, you are in search of an adrenaline rush, then you can choose from a range of various slides, including the Giant, Hydro, Kamikaze, Black Hole, Crazy River, Twister and Niagara.



MEDICINAL MUD OF HAJDÚSZOBOSZLÓ

The spa's medicinal mud is also wonderful for recreation and beauty. It relieves rheumatism and joint pain, and is also one of the best types of Hungarian mud for pelvic problems and infertility treatment.

THERMAL WATER OF HAJDÚSZOBOSZLÓ

The thermal water with iodine, bromine and bicarbonate content rises to the surface from a depth of 1,100 metres; thanks to its unique composition, the bath offers more than forty different treatments for its visitors to choose from.

Hortobágy, the infinite Puszta

A magical world of an endless horizon, nodding shadoofs, grazing flocks and herds await those who set out on a horse-drawn carriage ride in Hortobágy. The wild horses in the wildlife park, the horse show presented by the horsemen of the Máta Stud Farm and the Hortobágy Equestrian Days, guarantee unforgettable entertainment.

HORTOBÁGY NATIONAL PARK

The National Park's visitor centre features a multimedia natural history exhibition, while the Shepherds Museum presents the life of shepherds engaged in grazing stock-farming all around the Puszta at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries. You may also take the bus to the wildlife park in Hortobágy-Malomháza, where you can see pelicans and wolves up close, as well as vultures, wildcats, deer, foxes, ferrets, white-tailed eagles, graylag geese, great egrets, grey herons, common cranes, or black and white storks. During your visit to the wildlife park, you may even choose to take part in a safari after getting in an SUV, and observe the Przewalski's wild horses and reconstructed aurochs in their natural habitat.

It is also worth visiting the observatory points of the Hortobágy Dark Sky Park, where you can enjoy the sky thanks to the minimal light pollution. You can also sign up for a Shepherd's Night, where you can take a horse-drawn carriage ride through the Puszta, watch the horses gallop at dusk, and taste the traditional food of the shepherds.

UNIQUE BIRDWATCHING EXPERIENCE ON AN OLD-TIMER TRAIN

Take a trip on the only railway in Hungary that runs in the surroundings of a fishpond, enjoy the fabulous scenery and the exceptionally rich birdlife! From the bird-watching towers along the nature trails you can enjoy amazing views at any time of the day.



NINE-ARCHED BRIDGE

Visit the iconic building of Hortobágy, the 167-metre-long Nine-Arched Bridge, located at the edge of the village of Hortobágy, along Route 33; it's a must see! It was completed in 1833, replacing the wooden bridge that had previously stood here. Legend has it that the famous outlaw, Sándor Rózsa, was once surrounded by Pandurs while having drinks in the nearby inn. He jumped on his horse to cross the Hortobágy River, but since there was no bridge here at the time, nine of his mistresses joined hands closely and helped him across.

CRANE MIGRATION IN THE AUTUMN

Hortobágy provides an ideal resting place for migrating birds during their visit here: in October, this is a spectacular event for anyone to watch thousands of birds flying in regular lines in the sky over the Puszta, and settling on drained fishponds and farmlands.

HORTOBÁGY INN AND TRADITIONAL SHEPHERD'S DISHES

The justly famous Hortobágy Inn is operated in a restored 300-year-old historic building. The traditional shepherd's dishes are made from the meat of grey cattle, Racka sheep, domestic guinea fowl and local fish, served with a variety of local pálinka and wines. You shouldn't miss out on tasting the traditional shepherd's dishes, such as slambuc (pasta and potato flavoured with bacon) and stew dishes cooked in the cauldron!



Active recreation at Lake Tisza

Ecotourism experiences at Lake Tisza are not limited to boat tours and cycling around the lake: take a look at protected heron and cormorant colonies in the Bird Reserve during a bird-watching trip, complete with a photo tour.

ADVENTURES ON THE WAVES

Small boat, speedboat, kayak-canoe? Choose from the guided water tours starting from 15 different ports, and glide through wild forests, bays filled with fringed water lilies and seaweed in a wild and scenic setting. If you prefer to explore the lake and its surroundings on your own, you can also sign up for a GPS boat trip.

FROM RESERVOIR TO WILD WATER COUNTRY

On the initiative of István Széchenyi, the regulation of the River Tisza was started in the second half of the 19th century, and later, in 1973, the structure of Kisköre Water Stairs was built to control flooding and prevent drought in the plain areas. As a result, the Kisköre Reservoir was filled by the 1990s, forming today's Lake Tisza.



WATER PLAYGROUND

Visit the Lake Tisza Ecocentre, where you can learn about the natural treasures of the lake and the valley in a fun way with modern, interactive equipment, while exploring the breathtaking seven-hectare leisure park with a water playground! You can also observe giant sturgeons through the glass in the facility's underwater corridor.

RIDING A BICYCLE AROUND THE LAKE

Lake Tisza may also be explored with a pleasant bicycle tour. It is home to the safest bicycle route in the country, but the Euro-Velo 11 international bicycle route also passes through the area. During your bicycle tour, you can take a break at Lake Tisza Cycling Centre in Tiszafüred. The complex offers not only GPS-guided tours and helmet camera rental, but also a transfer service for children and parents too tired after the tour.

PUBLIC BEACHES AND WATER SPORTS

There are several renewed public beaches along the shores of Lake Tisza. While Poroszló's and Tiszafüred's slowly deepening shores are suitable for those with small children, Abádszalók is the place to go for those looking for adventure: they can try out motorised water sports or dive into the vibrant nightlife. If you prefer a more relaxed pastime, you can relax in a shady, wooded, grove-like bay in Tiszabábolna, or get on a SUP at the beach in Kisköre.



Lake Tisza Ecocentre

Relaxation at festivals in the region

FLOWER CARNIVAL

The Debrecen Flower Carnival has been organised for over 50 years, on the anniversary of the founding of the Hungarian state, 20 August (the public holiday celebrating the establishment of the state of Hungary), and the preceding week. Year after year, hundreds of thousands of flowers are used to make the flower compositions that amaze visitors to the city.

CAMPUS FESTIVAL

The Campus Festival is held every July in Nagyerdő, attracting partygoers from all over the country as well as numerous foreign performers. The Campus Olympics take place at the same time, giving young athletes the opportunity to display their talents in various sports.

HORTOBÁGY BRIDGE FAIR

Hosted on the fairgrounds next to the Nine-Arched Bridge, the famous Hortobágy Bridge Fair is held every year on 20 August, as one of the oldest fairs preserving our cultural heritage. It used to be an event for selling and buying animals, but today it is typically a fair for folk art, complete with a rich programme of activities.



OPERA OF THE NATURE

In July, classical music meets nature at the Opera of the Nature Lake Tisza Festival. You're sure to find what you're looking for here, if you want to get away from the noise of the city for a real music therapy experience.

TISZA LAKE DJ TOUR FEST

Lake Tisza is a popular destination not only for its beaches but also for its festivals. With over a dozen performers, fantastic light and sound technology and special delicacies, the event series in August aims to entertain those who wish to relax.



Delicious dishes and drinks to taste during events

DEBRECEN WINE AND JAZZ DAYS

The oldest jazz festival in Hungary has also included the Debrecen Wine Festival for the past few years. The series of events, with unrivalled quality, offers tasting of the country's finest wines, pálinka varieties and fruit wines, a fair of artisan products, as well as an opportunity to taste traditional Hungarian dishes baked in a beehive oven.

MUTTON AND SLAMBUC COOKING DAY, HAJDÚSZOBOSZLÓ

Every year in September, one of the largest gastronomic events in the region awaits visitors, where the special recipes and the culture of outdoor cooking of Hajdúszoboszló and its region is presented.

TRENDY MAIN STREET

If sightseeing has worked up your appetite, you can also indulge in the top gastronomic experiences offered along Piac street. The main street of Debrecen and the cosy downtown streets await visitors with street food stalls, vegan restaurants and welcoming cafés. Nearby Simeonffy street and Hal lane tempt you with pleasant terraces and local meeting places to indulge in culinary delights.

GENUINE FLAVOURS FROM DEBRECEN

A local speciality is the Debrecen pároskolbász, or a pair sausage, the recipe for which has taken centuries of experimentation to reach its present form. The original version is made from pork and beef bred in Debrecen, sometimes from lamb meat, with pepper, garlic and red pepper added. Don't forget to taste the goulash from the Great Plains, and accompany it with a small glass of clustered sour cherry pálinka from Újfehértó – while enjoying the beauty of the Great Plains!



Our favourite photos of the region

 [visithungary](#)



Hortobágy



Lake Tisza



Hortobágy



Hal lane



Debrecen Reformed College



Debrecen Reformed Great Church

Nearby sights

ORADEA (NAGYVÁRAD)

For an aristocratic adventure in Renaissance and Baroque style, the Oradea Castle will certainly appeal to you. Visit the town hall tower and the neolog synagogue on the banks of River Körös, and then head to Carei (Nagykároly), where – in addition to botanical rarities – you can take a look at the plane tree in the 12-hectare park of the Károlyi Castle, which was planted by Count György Károlyi when he was only seven years old!

NÁDUDVAR

In this ancient farming town on the border of Hortobágy and Sárrét, the art of making black ceramics has been handed down from father to son for centuries. In the local exhibition house, you can try your hand at using the pottery wheel and the ancient method of moulding pots.

SZOLNOK

“RepTár” in Szolnok is the only aviation history museum in Eastern Europe, with a floor area of 60,000 m² and a covered exhibition space of 4,500 m². In addition to restored aircraft, there are interactive exhibits, a theme park and a military history collection helping visitors learn about the history of aviation in Hungary – and even sit behind the joystick of one of the aircraft!

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HORTOBÁGY

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INVESTING IN YOUR FUTURE