



## **Budapest and its surroundings**

Budapest is the capital of Hungary and it lies on both banks of the Danube. Its older part, Buda, is situated on the hilly west bank; Pest is on the flat east. The two parts of the city are joined by nine bridges. The city of Budapest has been officially created in 1873 by the merger of the neighboring cities of Pest, Buda and Óbuda.

### **1. Rich & bustling cultural life**

- a) **UNESCO World Heritage Center** - Hungary currently has eight places on the Heritage List, including its capital Budapest – the **Banks of the Danube, the Buda Castle Quarter and Andrásy Avenue.**



- b) **MUSEUMS** such as **HUNGARIAN NATIONAL GALLERY** where you can see a comprehensive collection of Hungarian art, **HUNGARIAN NATIONAL MUSEUM**, a huge collection of different artifacts, the **LUDWIG MUSEUM** which is a contemporary museum, **THE HOUSE OF TERROR**, memorial and exhibition of the fascist and communist regimes and the **MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS** which is going to be reopened in 2018 to represent its collection of international art.
- c) Budapest is influencing the European **music** life with its excellent institutions and festival programs: Hungarian State Opera, Palace of Arts, Vigadó Concert Hall, Liszt Ferenc Music Academy, Operetta Theatre, Organ- and cello concert at the Matthias Church, Concerts at the Basilica and in the Inner City Parish Church, Experidance Dance Production, Budapest Spring Festival.
- d) Budapest is an **architectural** paradise: Roman (Roman City of Aquincum), Gothic & Neo Gothic (Parliament, Fishermen's Bastion and the Matthias Church), Neo Renaissance (Hungarian Academy of Science, Opera House, St. Stephan Basilica), Turkish (Rudas Bath), Baroque (Széchenyi Bath, Royal Palace), Classicism (Chain Bridge, National Musuem), Romantic stlye (Vigadó Concert Hall, The Great Synagogue), Art Novueau (Gellért Bath, Museum of Applied Arts, Budepest Zoo). Can you imagine how fascinating it can be?

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2. **Budapest, the city of spas:** Budapest holds this title for decades, as it has more thermal and medicinal water springs than any other capital city. The most famous one is the Széchenyi, the Gellért and the Rudas Bath.



3. **Have a taste of Budapest!** The Hungarian gastronomy is characteristic, modern and traditional at the same time.
4. The **Great Market Hall** is a historical market where you can get fresh and typical goods: fruits, vegetables, dairy products, salamis, pickles, fresh fish, Hungarian paprika, various souvenirs, and even home style meals or Hungarian snacks like **Lángos**. If you feel to have a coffee you can do it in an aristocratic way; in one of our amazingly beautiful and famous **café or confectionery**. Speaking of a good pastry, have you ever seen a **strudel preparation**? It is not just a culinary experience, it is a real art.
5. Dinner can be served also on the Danube if you decide to take part in cruise program, everything looks even more beautiful from a boat. Last but not least when we speak of gastronomy, the **folklore dance and gypsy music** come along with the traditions. There is nothing better than enjoying the folklore night and learning some basic steps of "**csárdás**" dance after a welcome **pálinka** (Hungarian fruit brandy).
6. Do you feel young at heart? Discover the best **nightlife in Budapest**. Visit our ruin pubs or have a break in any other club, pub, roof top place, garden bar. Don't forget about our exciting festivals either; food festival, beer festival, international music festivals.
7. Choosing a **Hungarian wine** means choosing **quality**. This relatively small country is divided into 22 regions. Budapest brings the experience together: vineyards reachable from the capital, wine cellars, winetasting programs, friendly winemakers, fine dining with wine, wine bars.



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## 8. Surroundings

- a) **Etyek** – this village is located only 30 minutes from Budapest (26 km) is the centre of the Etyek-Buda wine region, the youngest wine region of Hungary. One day long trips can be easily organized to Etyek including lunch, dinner, vineyard visit, wine, cheese or ham tasting programs.
- b) **Gödöllő** – located 45-50 minutes from Budapest (33 km). Here is the former Summer-Residence of Queen Elisabeth (known as Sissi), it is the second largest baroque chateau of the world – **Grassalkovich Castle**. From here you can easily visit a great Equestrian Park, not only to see the amazing horse show but to have a traditional lunch.
- c) **Hollókő** - (100 km from Budapest) is part of the World Heritage for 15 years. It is the treasure of Palócland, representing a uniform style of architecture, and has been preserved in the most intact shape in Central Europe. Its greatest value is the Old Village of 67 protected buildings, still preserving the touches of the 17th century folk architecture.
- d) **Danube Bend (Szentendre, Visegrád, Esztergom, Vác)** - The Danube Bend to the north of Budapest is one of the most beautiful regions of the river, which flows through eight countries. The most important feature of this region as its name implies is the huge bend the Danube takes, when breaking through the Visegrád mountains. The first stop is **Esztergom**, the birthplace of the First Hungarian King Stephen I. The town was and remained the centre of the Catholic Church in Hungary. The Cathedral is considered to be one of the greatest churches of the world. After visiting Esztergom the tour leads to **Visegrád** where the ruins of a Royal Residence can be found. The next stop is the picturesque and historic town of **Szentendre**. The houses are built in baroque and rococo style which offers this place unique atmosphere. One part of this special atmosphere is given to the town by the big colony of artists whose gallery and exhibitions are open to the public. The city of **Vác** is also situated in the Danube Bend and it can be easily inserted to this program. It is known for its 18th-century arch of triumph and for its beautiful baroque center.



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## **Balaton**

Did you know Hungary has also a sea? The Lake Balaton, proudly called „Hungarian sea” is situated 100 km away from Budapest; it's 79 m of length makes it the biggest lake in Central Europe. It is divided into 2 shores that are really different: the South shore is more touristic part with high hotels and numerous beaches, while on the North one can find historical settlements, tourist attractions, sights and famous wineries. Discover the best places around the lake and keep reading!



**Keszthely** - located on the western bank of Lake Balaton. It's the largest city by the lake and one of the more important cultural city of this region. Probably the most important monument to see here is the **Festetics Palace**, functions as a museum, built in baroque style and named after one of the most significant ducal families in Hungary.

**Szigliget** - The village can be found on the northern bank of Lake Balaton in the vicinity of Badacsony and Keszthely. The best monument of the city is the **fortress** on top of Castle Hill of 242 metres.

**Badacsony** - One of the most beautiful areas around Lake Balaton is Badacsony. One of the five **Wine Regions** of Lake Balaton is Badacsony which is situated on old volcanoes. This region is excellent to have a hiking tour or getting familiar with the Hungarian wine tourism.

**Basalt organs** - One of the most spectacular part of the Lake Balaton is the Tapolca Basin with its basalt hills, the most beautiful example is the **Szent György-hill** with its columned separating basalt turrets.

**Hegystű** - it is a witness hill that can be found in the Balaton Uplands National Park, on the eastern edge of the Káli Basin. Due to the extraction of raw materials, the inner structure of the mountain was exposed, and now the basalt columns are visible in the former volcanic chimney.

**Tihany** is a village on the northern shore of Lake Balaton on the Tihany Peninsula. The center of the district is the **Benedictine Abbey**, which was founded in 1055 AD by András (Andrew) I, who is buried in the crypt.

Tihany is famous for **the echo**, existing since the 18th century. One legend concerns with "goats' nails" that were washed ashore from Balaton, which are in fact corners of prehistoric clams. According to the story, there was a princess with golden-haired goats, but she was too proud and hard of heart so she got punished (cursed by the king of the lake): so her goats were lost in Balaton, only their nails remained, and she was obliged to answer to every passers-by. A stone, remembering the Shouting Girl, is still there to be seen near the village.

**Balatonfüred** - This is where, in the 17th century, Lake Balaton's **bathing culture** was born. It is also a popular yachting destination and favorite location for fishing. Here is situated the largest **cardiac-rehabilitation center** in Hungary. The hospital is built on the lake shore and is flanked by the **Tagore promenade** which will lead you to one of the most beautiful harbours on Lake Balaton.

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**Siófok** - The city is one of Hungary's most popular holiday destinations, famous for its **beaches and nightlife**. Hungarians often call the town "the capital of Balaton", as it is the largest city on its shores.

**Herend** brand is one of the **largest manufactures of porcelain in the world**, constituting a symbol of beauty, elegance and luxury. The luxurious porcelain of unsurpassed quality that have conquered the whole world, and are known and recognized in over 60 countries, drawn from the workshops located in a small town just half an hour from Hungary's largest lake, Lake Balaton, in the romantic setting of the mountains Bakony. The assortment of Herend Porcelain Glassware is also remarkable for their magnitude: the buyer can choose between 16,000 and 4,000 forms and decorative motifs, as well as between the free and virtually limitless combination of the same. The Herend Porcelain Manufactory is part of the Heritage of Hungary and the European cultural heritage.

**Veszprém** is the Town of Queens, the heart of the Bakony, one of the oldest urban areas in Hungary, and a city with county rights. According to the legend, Veszprém was founded on seven hills. It lies approximately 15 km north of the Lake Balaton.



**Sopron** is one of the most attractive tourist destination in our country, near the Austrian border and the **Lake Fertő**. More than half the surface of the city is a historical monument. The firetower, the main square, the burgring, the Lőverek and many other sights make Sopron interesting for the tourists.

**Lake Fertő** - This resort zone, close to **Sopron**, lies on the territory of the Fertő-Hanság National Park, and the greater part of it falls on Austrian territory. The Fertő landscape is part of **UNESCO World Heritage**. The lake is the third-largest body of still water in Central Europe.

**Fertőd** is a town not far from Austria. Fertőd was formed when the towns of Eszterháza and Süttör were unified, in 1950. It is the location of one of Hungary's best known palaces, **Eszterháza** the baroque palace, the largest and most beautiful in the country, is known as the "**Hungarian Versailles**" because of its splendid Baroque-Rococo French garden. Duke Esterházy, who built it, showed off his new home to the Viennese aristocracy in 1770. **Joseph Haydn**, the world-famous composer lived and composed here for over ten years.

**Győr** is the most important city of northwest Hungary situated halfway between Budapest and Vienna. Three rivers flow through the city therefore they call it the „City of rivers“. The city center is very cozy with its **baroque style**, it is a good choice to spend a day here as a tourist.

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**Tata** is a baroque town which has local history collections and the open-air geological museum that are worth to visit. Its large lakes and popular outdoor swimming pools attract many people who love watersports and admire nature.

**Pannonhalma** - One thousand years after it was founded, the **Benedictine Abbey** at Pannonhalma and its surroundings were added to the UNESCO World Heritage list. In the Benedictine library and archive, one of the largest in the world with 360 volumes, is held the first written text in the Hungarian language. The crypt of the thirteenth-century basilica is over a thousand years old.

**Székesfehérvár** is located in central Hungary, is one of the largest cities in the country. It was the capital of Hungary in the Middle Ages. The **Basilica** (one of the largest basilicas in medieval-Europe), where the crown jewels are kept, thirty-seven kings and thirty-nine queens consort were crowned and fifteen rulers buried.

**Veszprém** is the **Town of Queens**, the heart of the Bakony, one of the oldest urban areas in Hungary and a city with county rights. According to the legend, Veszprém was founded on seven hills. It lies approximately 15 km north of the Lake Balaton.



**Kőszeg** is also known as **Hungary's jewel-box** – lies in the valley of the mountains surrounded by vineyards. Its historic buildings and monuments remained almost in their original form. You can visit the former market place with its original buildings and Town Hall. From there we can have a short walk to Jurisich castle, the symbol of Kőszeg. This castle influenced Kőszeg's and Vienna's history a lot. Jurisich Castle Cultural Centre and Open-Air Theatre and the local museum operate in this historical environment.

**Pécs, European Capital of Culture in 2010** and the fifth largest city in Hungary is a real Mediterranean beauty. The city at the foothills of the Mecsek Mountains has a mild, sub-Mediterranean climate. Its history goes back over 2,000 years to the Roman times. The downtown of Pécs is a unique mixture of the relics of Early Christianity (part of the World Cultural Heritage), the arrival of the Hungarians and the foundation of the first Hungarian state with its ecclesiastic institutions, the Ottoman-Turkish Empire and the achievements of modern architecture. Together with its museums, art galleries, libraries, cinemas and musical life, Pécs is a lively **university city** full of restaurants, cafés and bars. It has an incredibly vivid student life day and night.

**Surroundings of Pécs** – this area has a lot to show for the tourists who decide to discover the surroundings of Pécs: the **Thermal Bath** of Harkány, the **castle** in Siklós, the **wine region** of Villány, the historical memorial city; Mohács, the **Busó Festival**, Szigetvár which is

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famous for the thermal bath, the memories of the Ottoman occupation, Orfű which has more lakes to fishing, trying watersports, aqua park and the list could be continued.

**Kecskemét** is situated in the middle of Hungary, approximately 85 kms from Budapest. It gives home for numerous institutions of fine arts, unique collections, and festivals. The name of the city comes from the Hungarian word kecske, meaning "goat". The city is known for its barackpálinka, an **apricot brandy** and the **Cifrapalota** is an architecturally significant Art Nouveau complex.

**Eger** – is the paradise of preserved baroque buildings, has a history of Turkish occupation, gives a chance to climb the **Ottoman minaret**, makes you feel to be a real knight in the **Eger Castle**, provides an experience in the renovated **Turkish bath**, a taste of the celebrated Eger Bull's Blood (Egri Bikavér).

**Tokaj** – Surely everybody has already heard about the **sweet wine of Tokaj** that has been produced here since the 15<sup>th</sup> century. The picturesque little town lies on the confluence of the Tisza and Bodrog river and Tokaj is just one of numerous towns and villages of what is called the Tokaj-Hegyalja, 70-sq-km wine-growing region.

**Sárospatak** – in the historical sources it is always referred as "patak" which means creek. It is situated 70 km northeast from Miskolc. This area has been inhabited since ancient times. It was already an important place in the middle ages because of the trade route leading to Poland. Monuments are worth to see: the **Rákóczi castle**, where the history of the famous family can be discovered, the **Great Library** and the **Reformed College**, where poets, politicians and nobles studied for ages. Thanks to the river Bodrog there is also opportunity to do some water sport, walking, trekking and the wine tasting can be also a great program here.



**Miskolc** – it is well known for its heavy industry, situated in north Hungary and it had already commercial importance in the Middle Ages. It is one the biggest cities in Hungary and a vivid university town. As a touristic destination we have to mention its **National Theatre**, the **cave bath** in **Miskolctapolca** and the **castle of Diósgyőr** that can be reached from Miskolc easily.

**Debrecen** – is the second largest city of Hungary, well known for its yellow **Great Reformed Church**. It used to be Europe's largest Calvinist city (was called "The Calvinist Rome"). Debrecen was also the capital city of Hungary during the revolution in 1848–1849. It is definitely the capital of the Great Plain now and nothing is a better proof than its university and the cultural life and the several festivals (also festivals for youth and the popular **Flower Carnival**).

**Lillafüred** – it is the part of Miskolc's agglomeration, it is the highest point of this area and very significant in the tourism. Here you can find the famous **waterfall**, the **forest railway**, a **funicular**, an amazing **hanging garden**, among many **caves** the St Stephen cave which is the largest dripstone cave in the area, in some of its rooms respiratory diseases can be cured The **Szeleta cave** (Caveman cave) which is reachable only by feet on the study route and there is trout lake only a few km away.

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**Nyíregyháza** –it is a dynamically growing city in northeastern Hungary with fresh parks, squares and cozy cafés. The biggest attraction the **Zoo** which is more like a wildlife park with more than 300 species in **Sóstó** which lies only 6km from the city. In Sóstó you can get close to the nature by its lake, thermal bath, oak forest, open air museum.

**Hortobágy** – it lays just 36 km form Debrecen, a town with the biggest territory of the country, it is the part of the **Hortobágy National Park** which is a UNESCO World Heritage Site. We can visit the famous **Nine-Span-Bridge** (the longest stone highway bridge in Hungary built in the 19th century), the **Herdsmen's Museum** (which shows how people of the „puszta” lived and lives today, the ancient Hungarian animal breeds, typical clothing, crafts, pottery and also a model of a herdsman's hut) and the Mátaí Stud. We can take a horse carriage tour in the „puszta” introducing its natural treasures, herdsmen's traditions, horsemen and stud, the Hungarian **Gray Cattle** herd, other Hungarian domestic animals typical to the area in their habitat, the cartwright- and smith museum, the cart exhibition, the **black pottery** workshop of **Nádudvar** and the stock stables of the 300 years old stud.

**Szeged** – It would be hard to name just one thing about this beautiful city, it has a fantastic **Open Air Theatre**, an old town, the river **Tisza** is going through the city. Szeged is the city of sunshine, famous for the **Cathedral**, for its pedestrian street, the **Opera House**, the **Synagogue**, the **Hero's Arch**, many museum all of it can add a Mediterranean feeling and character to the city.

**Gyula** - is located in the Great Hungarian Plain and it is very famous for its **thermal bath**. If you happen to visit the city do not miss the **castle** out, admire the city hall, try a dessert in the café, enter the memorial house of our well known composer, Ferenc Erkel.

**Lake Tisza** - is the largest artificial lake in Hungary, it is situated at the eastern part of Hungary and it is a traditional holiday site, especially for ecotourism. It is on the flooded territory of the River Tisza with several islands and channels. We have to mention the **bird reservation**, the **bicycle road** and the **water sport possibilities** here such as sailing, water skiing, surfing, wake boarding.



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