



## Discover Hungary

An invitation to discover the rich history and culture of Hungary, a land which combines the very essence and fragrance of East and West with the mythical River Danube flowing across the country. Hungary offers a great variety of beautiful and fascinating attractions - quaint medieval towns and villages, Baroque and Renaissance palaces, fortresses perched on rocky crags, romantic castle ruins, healing spas, stunning churches, and protected natural landscapes of forests, lakes and wetlands, not forgetting their famous food and music.



### **1st day: BUDAPEST, the "Pearl of the Danube"**

Our visit to the twin cities of Buda and Pest includes views of the Parliament, the Gellért Hill, the Royal Palace and a visit to the 13th century Church of Matthias. The entire Castle Hill area is an UNESCO World Heritage Site

### **2nd day: ESZTERGOM – VISEGRÁD – SZENTENDRE**

Full day excursion: the Danube Bend offers treasures of history, culture and architecture.

Esztergom, a former royal seat, is the queen of the Danube. A royal residence for three centuries. The country's first capital in the 11th century, the town was - and still is - the nation's ecclesiastical center. Travel back to the 13th century as you climb high atop a hill in Visegrád to one of Central Europe's largest and best preserved Romanesque castle keeps. Your efforts of climbing up to the "Castle in the Clouds" will be rewarded with a breathtaking view. Stretching along the right bank of the river, Szentendre has a romantic appeal, indeed it is not surprising that late 19C artists sought inspiration and even settled here in an "artists colony". Hungary's largest open-air folk museum, the Skanzen, is also in Szentendre.

### **3rd day: HOLLOKŐ - EGER**

Departure to the "Palóc" village of Hollókő. Thanks to his isolated geographical site, the village kept its appearance since centuries. It is not an open air museum, but composed of houses built by the inhabitants, or rather their ancestors. Classified as an UNESCO world Heritage site. On a Sunday morning you might well come across village women in traditional costume, embroidered with multicoloured flowers. Their head-dresses are always colourful.

Continuation to Eger, the most attractive baroque city of Hungary, famous for its wine and legendary resistance to the invading Turks and Habsburgs. Visit to the Old Town, the Basilica, its magnificent library, the Turkish Minaret and the Palóc Museum with masterpieces of their folk art.





**4th day: KECSKEMÉT – BUGAC PUSZTA**

Departure for Kecskemét, a town of song and music, located in the heart of the vast "puszta" between the Danube and the Tisza. Visit to the beautiful Art Nouveau style Town Hall and walking tour of the city center. Enjoy the cuisine of the region. Continuation to the Great Hungarian Plain or "Puszta" and meet the Hungarian "cowboys", the "csikós". Part of the region is a National Park protecting the land and 2/3 of the park has a Biosphere Reserve status.

**5th day: KALOCSA – HAJÓS – PÉCS**

Departure for Kalocsa, capital of the sweet paprika. Upon arrival you might think, you just arrived in New Mexico...strings of red paprika drying in strings on the eaves of traditional wooden houses. Visit to the Paprika Museum, the Regional Folk Art Center and the town center with the Episcopal Palace and the Cathedral. On the road to Pécs you may want to stop for lunch in a "csárda", a traditional country restaurant, sample some of the region's specialities, have a wine tasting and enjoy a folklore show.

**6th day: PÉCS, the cultural Mecca of Southern Hungary**

A city with Mediterranean ambience, like an Oriental perfume. This perfume undoubtedly charmed the Turks, who had taken the city in the 16th century and made it a centre of Turkish culture and education during their occupation.

Founded by Romans, Hungary's first university was founded here in 1367. The Turks occupied the city for a century and a half, and afterward a mix of Kraut Germans, Serbs and Croats filtered in. This multicultural city earned the UNESCO Peace Prize in 1998 for the harmony that comes so naturally to it. A richly textured past suffuses the city with a gentle sophistication.



**7th day: LAKE BALATON - TIHANY – HEREND – VESZPRÉM – HÉVÍZ**

Drive to Lake Balaton, the largest lake in Europe Visit the nature conservation area in the Tihany Peninsula and the beautiful 11th-century abbey. Over 100 geysers spout up on the peninsula. The porcelain of Herend has won awards at several World Fairs. One of Herend's most sought pattern was named after Queen Victoria, whose favourite tea service was produced there. Visit to the factory and museum. Visit to Veszprém, the city with nearly 200 historic monuments, where all the queens of Hungary were crowned. You are in for a well-deserved treat today! Our next stop is Hévíz, a thermal spa. A perfect place to experience nature while enjoying fresh air and relaxation.

**8th day; FERTŐD - SOPRON**

Visit to the Eszterházy Palace in Fertőd- the Hungarian "Versailles", an 18th century jewel which had an opera house, puppet theatre, music hall, Chinese pavilion, small churches, riding hall, formal gardens and its own orchestra, directed by Haydn. Today the International Haydn Festival is hosted here.

In Sopron you can see the excavated Roman Forum, Renaissance and medieval houses, including a 13th century synagogue, tiny trading houses along concentric streets, a Gothic church and Baroque town square.

**9th day: PANNONHALMA ABBEY - GYŐR – BUDAPEST**

Travel to Pannonhalma, another UNESCO World Heritage Site. Visit the 1000 years old Benedictine monastery then drive to Győr to see the old town and to Budapest. End of services.

**SERVICES:**

- 3x overnight with half board in Novotel Budapest Centrum\*\*\*\* in Budapest
- 1x overnight with half board in Hotel Panoráma\*\*\*\* in Eger
- 1x overnight with half board in Hotel Aranyhomok\*\*\* in Kecskemét
- 2x overnight with half board in Hotel Palatinus\*\*\* in Pécs
- 1x overnight with half board in Hotel Rogner & Spa Lotus Terme\*\*\*\* in Hévíz
- 1x overnight with half board in Pannonia Med Hotel\*\*\*\* in Sopron
- all tourist programs as mentioned in the above description
- 1x horse show with lunch
- 1x lunch with wine tasting in Hajós
- Coach for the whole tour
- Guide for the whole tour