



Budapest

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HISTORY



Budapest, the capital of Hungary, was created in 1873 by the merger of three cities: Buda, Óbuda, and Pest. It is the administrative, cultural, scientific, economic, trade and transportation center with about 2-million inhabitants. The town spreads on the banks of the river Danube and is administratively divided into 23 districts, 16 of which are located on the Pest side, 6 in Buda and 1 on Csepel Island in the Danube. Buda extends to the hills on the west bank of the Danube and Pest on the left bank of the river in the lowlands. In Buda, the 235-m high hill (Gellért-hegy) rises from the river bank and offers a remarkable view of the whole city.

In the Beginning

Traces have been found of settlements dating back as far as the Old Stone Age. People lived on both sides of the Danube, where Budapest now stands, in the second millennium BC Bronze Age urn sites have also been uncovered. In the 6th C. BC Scythians from the Black Sea region settled here, and there are signs of Celto-Illyrian tribes having been here in the 4th/3rd C BC.

A decisive factor in the town's development was the building of a Roman fort in what is now Óbuda. The Roman base of Aquincum, separated into civilian and military districts, was the capital of the province of Pannonia and flourished during the second half of the 2nd C BC.

In the 5th C A.D., the Huns swept across the country, and King Attila set up a great new kingdom in what is now Hungary. From the 6th to the 9th C the Avars settled where Budapest now stands. About 896, the Magyars led by Prince Árpád settled in the area of present-day Óbuda.

Later on, they migrated to the hills further west to take advantage of the greater protection they offered.

Ignaz Semmelweis

Countless lives were spared thanks to a simple discovery by this hapless Hungarian doctor, now regarded as a brilliant pioneer of antiseptic techniques but vehemently dismissed as crazy in his own time. Born in Buda's erstwhile Tabán district, Semmelweis became an obstetrician in Vienna, where he noticed that mothers who gave birth in a hospital where autopsies were also being performed had a much higher mortality rate than at another hospital only offering maternity services. Semmelweis realized that if doctors would wash their hands between procedures on different people (dead and alive), patients had a much greater chance of survival. Although Semmelweis's practice indeed saved lives, he couldn't explain why during this era before germs were accepted as a cause of disease, and most doctors were offended at the implication of their being unclean. Soon Semmelweis was driven out of Vienna's medical community, and though he angrily appealed to obstetricians across Europe to adopt his hand-washing regimen, he was ignored and subsequently committed to an insane asylum, where he died after a beating from the guards.

United in One City

The Chain Bridge was opened in 1849, with the aim of helping Óbuda, Buda, and Pest to merge more quickly. In 1867 Emperor Franz Joseph I and Empress Elisabeth ("Sissi") were crowned in Matthias Church. The Austro-Hungarian monarchy of the Danube came into being. In the history of Budapest the year 1872 stands out as a milestone, for it was then that the three separate settlements of Pest, Buda, and Óbuda (literally "Old" Buda) were united into one city with a population of more than 150,000. Budapest officially became the capital city of Hungary and underwent rapid growth in size and eminence. This was the city's golden age and coincided with the Hungarian millennial celebrations in 1896 when continental Europe's first underground railroad was opened.



MONEY

MONEY



Hungary's official currency is the Hungarian Forint (HUF). There are a number of places which accept Euros too, but the exchange rate merchants tend to use is significantly lower than what one can get at a normal exchange office or a bank. The HUF coins' denominations are 5, 10, 20, 50, 100 and 200, while the banknotes are HUF 500, 1000, 2000, 5000, 10000 and 20000.

Credit Cards

In Hungary, you will find a dense network of ATMs (cash machines) which will accept all major credit and debit cards (Visa, MasterCard, Plus, Maestro, Cirrus, and others). The majority of shops and restaurants also accept cards.

Debit Cards

Visa, MasterCard and American Express widely accepted in many hotels and restaurants.



Visitors From The USA

Cards which a shop or restaurant accepts are usually displayed in the window of the premises. If you don't see your card name there, ask before purchasing anything whether your card will be accepted.

ATMs

ATMs are everywhere in Budapest and widely available in other small cities, towns, and villages. Hungarian banks do not charge additional ATM usage fees, so the amount it costs to take money out from an ATM will depend on the fees from your bank. Third party ATMs are also common in Hungary and often found at gas stations and in bars, but many charge a flat rate for usage. Almost all ATMs will ask up front if you prefer English, German or Hungarian.

HELPFUL INFO

Climate

Budapest climate is characterized by warm sunny summers and short cold winters. The average temperature in summer is around 25-degrees Celsius (77° Fahrenheit). Surprisingly, Budapest average sunshine hours surpass most European capitals. Budapest has exceptionally high levels of sunshine hours from April to September that matches those of cities like Barcelona. Budapest rainfall is spread quite evenly throughout the year but is not especially high. Best time to visit is during the months of May, June, July, August, and September you are most likely to experience good weather with pleasant average temperatures.

Electricity

In Hungary, the power plugs and sockets are of type C and F. The standard voltage is 230-V and the standard frequency is 50-Hz.



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BUDAPEST

BKK BUDAPESTI KÖZLEKEDÉSI KÖZPONT

Technology & Communication

Telephone system in Hungary is modernized and capable of satisfying all requests for telecommunication service; digitized and highly automated system; trunk services are carried by fiber-optic cable and digital microwave radio relay; a program for fiber-optic subscriber connections was initiated in 1996; competition among mobile-network service providers has led to a sharp increase in the use of mobile phones since 2000 and a decrease in the number of fixed-line connections; fiber-optic cable connections with all neighboring countries; the international switch is in Budapest (2011). Enjoy unlimited internet everywhere in Hungary with 4G-LTE Pocket WiFi. Stay connected anytime and avoid data roaming charges for your next travel in Hungary.

Infrastructure & Transport

Budapest's public transportation network is both efficient and well-developed. It includes buses, boats, trams, and the excellent Metro subway system, and it's generally all tourists need to get around. Single tickets can be bought from vending machines for Ft350 (Ft750 on boats), a day pass costs Ft1,650, and a weekly ticket is Ft4,950.



DSÉG

LCS

TOJÁS

AGRO-FRUIT KFT

FELVÁGOTT SZÁRÚZLET

CSON

In Case Of An Emergency

The general public security situation in Budapest is said to be good on an international average. All the same, it is better if tourists are prepared for certain typical situations so that they do not end up feeling cheated or robbed. Calling the ambulance, the police, the fire service and the general emergency number (112) are free of charge. Should you need medical assistance Budapest, the best option is to call Falck's 24-hour English-speaking hotline; they are very helpful and informative, and they can get you a doctor that speaks your language, or at least English. (06-1-2000-100)

Language

Though Hungarian is spoken by almost everyone in Budapest, foreign languages are also spoken. English (31%), German (15.4%), French (3.3%) and Russian (3.2%) are the main languages spoken apart from Hungarian.



LGBT Travel

Budapest offers just a reasonable gay scene for its size. Most gay people are discreet in public places and displays of affection are rare. Lesbian social life remains very much underground, with lots of private parties. There have been a couple of violent right-wing demonstrations in response to the Budapest Pride celebrations in recent years. Attitudes are changing, but society generally remains conservative on this issue.

Religion

Religion in Hungary is predominantly Christian. Historically, the formation of Hungary was based on Christianity as it was declared the state religion by King St. Stephen. The other major religions practiced in Hungary are Judaism, Islam, Buddhism, and Paganism.



Getting There

Budapest's Ferenc Liszt International Airport (BUD) is 10-miles southeast of the center of town and has direct flights to Canadian destinations, so you can reach Budapest from the USA by plane with a connecting flight. Most people take the 200E bus to Kőbánya-Kispest Metro station, then use the subway to get into town. However, it's much more convenient to take a taxi. Expect to pay around Ft5,000 to 10,000 depending on the time of day and where you need to travel.

Arriving by train is a real pleasure, as Budapest Keleti is a stunning station, and the city has good rail connections with Germany, the Czech Republic, and Italy. Keleti is on the subway network, so finding your way into town is simple.

Driving

Hungary has 5 motorways and 4 main roads, eight starts from Budapest (exception: main road No. 8). If you are driving into Budapest, the most common route is from Vienna. In that case, you'll need to take the Austrian A4 to the border, then the M15 and the M1. From Prague, take the E50, then the E65 to Bratislava, and the E60 to Budapest. The E75 runs all the way from Belgrade to Budapest, another popular road route.

THE EXPERIENCE

Culture

Budapest is a vital center for dance, music, film, visual arts and theatre. Even the government funds these arts with sufficient financial resources. The city is dotted with a number of museums and galleries that have exhibitions and showcases all year round. The libraries also store unique collections of books and relics from a time before books were printed. There are a number of theatres, concert halls, and opera houses as well. Budapest hosts seven annual festivals like the Sziget Festival, Budapest Spring Festival, The Budapest Autumn Festival, Budapest Wine Festival, Budapest Pálinka Festival, and Budapest Pride

Bucket List

Bathe in thermal water

See the shoes on the Danube River

Drink away in Faust Wine Cellar

Go Island Hopping

Join a Walking Tour

Enjoy the Budapest Spring Festivals

Ride Budapest's Peculiar Vehicles

Family Travel Highlights

Spend a day at the Budapest Zoo

Go swimming at the Palatinus Strand.

Hike up the Gellért hill and enjoy panoramic views

Check out the Hungarian Railway Museum

Explore the Labyrinth of Caves

Ride the Children's Railway

Head over to Challengeland to experience zip lining and wall climbing

Be amazed at the Budapest Circus with its clowns, acrobats, and animals

Taste famous local sweet treats at the Centrál Kávéház

Make fairy tales come true at the Mesemuzeum

Meet and greet with sharks at the Tropicarium Budapest

Tourism Authority

Many travelers like to obtain information about their travel destinations from local travel agencies and tourist offices and tour centers. The Hungarian National Tourist Office has offices in several major cities to make doing this easy for travelers from all over the world.



Foods To Try

Fisherman's soup (Halászlé)

Goulash (Gulyás)

Chicken Paprikash (Csirke paprikás)

Hungarian Lecsó

Sólet

The Hungarian street food: Lángos

Sponge Cake (Somlói Galuska)

Rose-Shaped Gelato

Drinks To Try

Fröccs

Pálinka

Milk bars

Unicum

Hungarian beers



Photography Hot Spots

Buda Castle

Chain Bridge

Parliament of Hungary

Heroes' Square

Vajdahunyad Castle

Gellért Hill & Citadella

Gellért Baths

Szimpla Kert

Souvenirs To Buy

Porcelain

Ajka Crystal

Painted Eggs

Traditional Hungarian Shirts

Traditional Dolls

Tablecloths

The Hungarian Secret Box

Kurtos Kalacs

Hand Painted Hungarian Wooden Items

