

Budapest



Budapest is the capital of Hungary and is located in Central Europe on the banks of the Danube river.
Population: 1.7 million

Brief history of Budapest

The first major settlement in the area that's now Budapest was the Roman town of **Aquincum** - a border province of the **Roman Empire** from about the 2nd Century AD. After the decline of the Roman Empire many groups would migrate through this area. It wasn't until the late 9th Century that the **Hungarians conquered** the Carpathian Basin, founding the country officially at the turn of the millennium (1000 or 1001 AD). At this stage (and still for many centuries more) there would be three separate cities here: **Buda, Pest** and **Óbuda** and neither was initially the capital of **Hungary**.

A wall built around Pest in the 12th Century didn't help against the **Mongols** who pillaged the area in the 13th Century. After the Mongols left, citizens of Pest and Óbuda were encouraged to move to the Buda Hill where the fortified Buda Castle was built. The area slowly re-established, with **Buda** made the capital in 1408 (as well as at other times), and under King Matthias Buda became a centre of **Renaissance culture in Europe**. In the 1500s a century and half of **Ottoman rule** began when the Turks invaded as part of the expanding **Ottoman Empire**. The remains of this period include many Turkish baths. Ottoman rule ended in the late 1600s but instead Hungary came under Habsburg control. A failed revolution against the **Habsburg Empire** in 1848 led to the creation of the dual monarchy (the **Austro-Hungarian Empire**) which lasted from 1867 to 1918. The 18th and 19th centuries saw great development and prosperity in the area that is now Budapest. The current style and layout of the city was created in the mid to late 1800s, including the Grand Boulevard and Andrassy Avenue. The three separate cities (Buda, Pest and Óbuda) were finally united in 1873 and the newly created **Budapest** became the second capital of **Austro-Hungarian Empire**.

Get oriented

The river that cuts through Budapest is the **Danube**, it's one of Europe's longest rivers also passing through nine other countries. **Buda** is the hilly side with the Buda Castle, Buda Hills and a vast residential area. **Pest** is the flatter side - home to the party districts, the Parliament, Andrassy Avenue, City Park, St Stephen's Basilica and many other tourist sights. Eight bridges connect Buda and Pest, including the Liberty Bridge, Elizabeth Bridge, Chain Bridge and Margaret Bridge. In Budapest there are islands in the Danube, which can be visited. The most popular is **Margaret Island**.



Liberty Square

Liberty Square (Hungarian: Szabadság tér)

The square is a mix of business and residential. The United States Embassy in Hungary and the headquarters for the Hungarian National Bank are located in the square. The Bank of Hungary building is in the historicist style of architecture. Some buildings on the square are designed in the Art Nouveau style. There are monuments for Ronald Reagan and Harry Hill Bandholtz. There is also a monument for Soviet liberation of Hungary in World War II from Nazi German occupation (Monument of Soviet Red Army (1946)). There are a Stock exchange palais and the Memoriale for victims of nazi era (2014)



A Magyarországi Zsidó Hitközségek Szövetsége (Mazsihisz) tiltakozott az emlékmű felállításá ellen, mondván hogy a koncepció azt sugallja, hogy Magyarország tétlen és vétlen áldozata volt a német megszállásnak, mintha a magyar hatóságok az ország megszállása után nem nyújtottak volna hathatós segítséget közel félmillió zsidó haláltáborba deportálásában.

A tüntetők a helyszínen „Eleven Emlékmű” néven élő kiállítást rögtönöztek az elhurcoltakra emlékeztető tárgyából, fényképek, levelek másolataiból, és ősi szokásnak megfelelően kavicsokat helyeztek el. Ez a kiállítás folyamatosan alakult, fejlődött, változott az építkezés és a tüntetések során.

St. Stephen's Basilica

St. Stephen's Basilica (Hungarian: Szent István-bazilika) is a Roman Catholic basilica. It is named in honour of Stephen, the first King of Hungary (975–1038), whose supposed right hand is housed in the reliquary. It is the third largest church building in Hungary.



Equal with the Hungarian Parliament Building, it is one of the two tallest buildings in Budapest at 96 metres. According to current regulations there cannot be taller building in Budapest than 96 metres.

The architectural style is Neo-Classical; it has a Greek cross ground plan. In the southern tower is Hungary's biggest bell, weighing over 9 tonnes. Visitors may access the dome by elevators or by climbing 364 stairs for a 360° view overlooking Budapest.

Andrássy út

Andrássy Avenue (Hungarian: *Andrássy út*) is a boulevard in Budapest, dating back to 1872. Lined with spectacular Neo-renaissance mansions and townhouses. It was recognised as a World Heritage Site in 2002. It is also one of Budapest's main shopping streets, with fine cafes, restaurants, theatres, Embassies and luxury boutiques. Among the most noticeable buildings are the State Opera House, the former Ballet School (under reconstruction since several years).



Hungarian State Opera House

The Hungarian State Opera House (Hungarian: *Magyar Állami Operaház*). Originally known as the Hungarian Royal Opera House, it was designed by Miklós Ybl, a major figure of 19th century Hungarian architecture.



It is a richly-decorated building and is considered one of the architect's masterpieces. It was built in neo-Renaissance style, with elements of Baroque. Although in size and capacity it is not among the greatest, in beauty and the quality of acoustics the Budapest Opera House is considered to be amongst the finest opera houses in the world. The auditorium holds 1,261 people.

In front of the building are statues of Ferenc Erkel and Franz Liszt. Liszt is the best known Hungarian composer. Erkel composed the Hungarian national anthem, and was the first music director of the Opera House; he was also founder of the Budapest Philharmonic Orchestra.

House of Terror

House of Terror is a museum located at Andrásy út 60. It contains exhibits related to the fascist and communist regimes in 20th-century Hungary and is also a memorial to the victims of these regimes, including those detained, interrogated, tortured or killed in the building.



Hősök tere

Hősök tere (Heroes' Square) is one of the major squares in Budapest, Hungary, noted for its iconic statue complex featuring the Seven Chieftains of the Magyars and other important national leaders, as well as the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. The square lies at the outbound end of Andrásy Avenue next to City Park (*Városliget*). It hosts the Museum of Fine Arts and the *Műcsarnok*. The square has played an important part in contemporary Hungarian history and has been a host to many political events.



The central feature of Heroes' Square, as well as a landmark of Budapest, is the Millennium Memorial (Hungarian: *Millenáris Emlékmű*). Construction began in 1896 to commemorate the thousandth anniversary of the Hungarian conquest of the Carpathian Basin. At the front of the monument is a large stone cenotaph surrounded by an ornamental iron chain. The cenotaph is dedicated "To the memory of the heroes who gave their lives for the freedom of our people and our national independence." The back of the monument consists of two matched colonnades, each with seven statues representing great figures of Hungarian history.

Hall of Art, Budapest

The Budapest Hall of Art or Palace of Art, (Hungarian – *Műcsarnok Kunsthalle*), is a contemporary art museum. The large Neoclassical style structure, was completed in 1896.^[5] It was originally built for millennium celebrations.



Museum of Fine Arts

It was built in an eclectic-neoclassical style, between 1900 and 1906. The museum's collection is made up of international art (other than Hungarian), including all periods of European art, and comprises more than 100,000 pieces. The collection is made up of older additions such as those from Buda Castle, the Esterházy and Zichy estates, as well as donations from individual collectors. The Museum's collection is made up of six departments: Egyptian, Antique, Old sculpture gallery, Old master paintings gallery, Modern collection, Graphics collection.



On February 16, 2015, the museum closed to the public for renovation. It is expected to reopen in March 2018.

City Park

The City Park was the main venue of the 1896 millennium celebrations of Hungary.

City Park includes the following sights

- Vajdahunyad Castle, opened in 1896
- Széchenyi thermal bath
- Budapest Zoo, including the Elephant House
- Municipal Circus, opened in 1891
- Gundel Restaurant, opened in 1894
- Budapest Circus Building



Budapest Keleti railway station

Budapest Keleti (eastern) railway station (Hungarian: *Budapest Keleti pályaudvar*) is the main international and inter-city railway terminal in Budapest.

Its name in 1891 originates not only for its position as the easternmost of the city's rail termini, but for its original role as a terminus of the lines from eastern Hungary including Transylvania, and the Balkans. In contrast, the Nyugati (*western*) railway station used to serve lines toward Vienna and Paris.

The building was designed in eclectic style and constructed between 1881 and 1884 as one of the most modern railway stations of Europe.



Hungarian National Museum

The Hungarian National Museum (Hungarian: *Magyar Nemzeti Múzeum*) was founded in 1802 and is the national museum for the history, art and archaeology of Hungary.

The building where the Hungarian National Museum is currently located was built from 1837-1847. The style of the main building was laid out in a neo-classical style.



Great Market Hall

The Great Market Hall or Central Market Hall (Hungarian "Nagyvásárcsarnok") is the largest and oldest indoor market in Budapest. The idea of building such large market hall arose from the first mayor of Budapest.



The market offers a huge variety of stalls on three floors. The entrance gate has a neogothic touch. A distinctive architectural feature is the roof which was restored to have colourful Zsolnay tiling from Pécs. The area size of the building is 10,000 square meters, which is covered by steel structure.

Most of the stalls on the ground floor offer produce, meats, pastries, candies, spices, and spirits such as paprika, Tokaji, Túró Rudi, and caviar. The second floor has mainly eateries and souvenirs. The basement contains butcher shops, fish market, and pickles. Not only do they have traditional cucumber pickles, but they also offer pickled cauliflower, cabbage, beets, tomatoes, and garlic.

Corvinus University of Budapest

The university admits 14,000 students, offering educational programmes in business administration, economics, and social sciences.



Ministers of finance, chairmen of the National Bank of Hungary and prime ministers studied at Corvinus.

The university's main building — now part of the UNESCO Heritage Site — is located in Pest on the left bank of the Danube, next to the Grand Market Hall and facing the Budapest University of Technology and Economics on the river's other bank. The main building was planned as the Main Customs Office in Neo-Renaissance style.

The BÁLNA

Bálna is a commercial, cultural, entertainment and leisure centre. A meeting point and a place for experiences. It has a unique way to create an intimate contact with the Danube. The building alone combines the architectural traits of different eras. The historical brick building and the concrete structures typical of the last century are embraced in a computer designed metal-glass shell.



St. Gellért Square

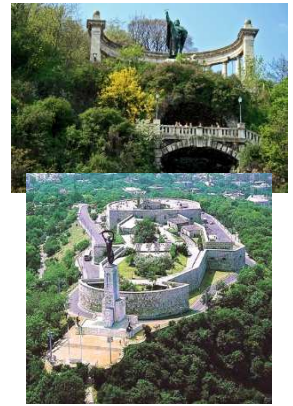
The square is dominated by the Gellért Hotel and Bath, sometimes called the "Grand Old Lady" of Budapest. Built between 1916 and 1918 in Art Nouveau style, it's an iconic four-star hotel with the most elegant thermal bathhouse of Budapest. Diagonally above the bath entrance is the Rock Chapel, home to the only Hungarian-founded Christian order, the Paulines. During the Communist regime the chapel was walled in.



Gellért Hill

The hill was named after bishop Gellért (Gerard), who was thrown to death from the hill by pagans in the fight against Christianity in 1046. His statue, which faces Elizabeth Bridge (Erzsébet hid) and holds a cross, can be seen from many parts of Pest. At the top of the hill is the Citadel (Citadella), a fortress built by the Habsburgs after defeating Hungary's War of Independence in 1849. It was a prime, strategic site for shelling both Buda and Pest in the event of a future rebellion.

Budapest's Statue of Liberty stands on top of the hill, and she can be seen from all parts of the city.



Rudas Baths

Rudas Bath or Rudas fürdő is a thermal and medicinal bath in Budapest. It was first built in 1550, during the time of Ottoman rule. To date, it retains many of the key elements of a Turkish bath, exemplified by its Turkish dome and octagonal pool. The baths were used as a location for the opening scene of the 1988 action movie Red Heat, starring Arnold Schwarzenegger and James Belushi. It re-opened at the beginning of 2006, after a comprehensive renovation of its interior.



Elisabeth Bridge

The white cable bridge was built between 1961–1964. The main spar cables of the bridge are hexagonal in cross section. Elisabeth Bridge (Hungarian: *Erzsébet híd*) is the third newest bridge of Budapest.



The Castle Garden Bazaar

Várkert Bazaar is a newly restored neo-Renaissance building complex on the side of the hill that goes from the Buda riverfront up to the Royal Palace. It was built between 1875 and 1883 according to the plans of one of Hungary's great architects Miklós Ybl. It has a magnificent flower garden with fountains, grottoes, and guard houses.



Chain Bridge

The Széchenyi Chain Bridge (Hungarian: *Széchenyi lánc híd*) is a suspension bridge. Designed by the English Engineer William Tierney Clark, it was the first permanent bridge across the Danube in Hungary, and was opened in 1849.



Zero Kilometre Stone

The Zero Kilometre Stone is a 3 m high limestone sculpture in Budapest, forming a zero sign. This stone marks the reference point from which all road distances to Budapest are measured in the country.



Margaret Bridge

Margaret Bridge or Margit híd (sometimes *Margit Bridge*) is a three-way bridge in Budapest, connecting Buda and Pest across the Danube and linking Margaret Island to the banks. It is the second-oldest public bridge in Budapest.



Margaret Island

Margaret Island is a 2.5 km long island, 500 metres wide, in the middle of the Danube. The island is mostly covered by landscape parks, and is a popular recreational area. Its medieval ruins are reminders of its importance in the Middle Ages as a religious centre. Before the 14th century the island was called *Insula leporum* (Island of Rabbits).



Deák Ferenc tér

The Deák Ferenc square (*Deák Ferenc tér*), named for Ferenc Deák, is a major intersection and transport junction in Budapest. Deák Ferenc tér is a popular gathering for young people. Alcoholic beverages are sold at the grassy area, and it is common for Deák Ferenc tér to be populated until the midnight hours.



Deák Tér is mentioned in *Ending Theme*, a song by Swedish progressive metal band Pain of Salvation.

Vörösmarty tér

Vörösmarty tér or Vörösmarty square is a public square in the Budapest city centre at the northern end of Váci utca.



Váci Street

Váci utca (Váci street) is one of the main pedestrian thoroughfares and perhaps the most famous street of central Budapest. It features a large number of restaurants and shops catering primarily to the tourist market.

Váci utca is one of the main shopping streets in Budapest.



Vigadó Concert Hall

Vigadó (usually translated as "Place for Merriment") is Budapest's second largest concert hall.



Danube Promenade

The Danube Promenade is located on the Pest side of Budapest. On the bank of the Danube, this promenade extends from the Széchenyi Chain Bridge to the Erzsébet Bridge.



Gresham Palace

The Gresham Palace (*Gresham-palota*) is an example of Art Nouveau architecture. Completed in 1906 as an office and apartment building, it is today the Four Seasons Hotel Budapest Gresham Palace.



Hungarian Academy of Sciences

The Hungarian Academy of Sciences (Hungarian: *Magyar Tudományos Akadémia* (MTA)) is the most important and prestigious learned society of Hungary. Its seat is at the bank of the Danube in Budapest. Its main responsibilities are the cultivation of science, dissemination of scientific findings, supporting research and development and representing Hungarian science domestically and around the world. Its central building was inaugurated in 1865, in Renaissance Revival architecture style.



Shoes on the Danube Bank

"The composition titled 'Shoes on the Danube Bank' gives remembrance to the 3,500 people, 800 of them Jews, who were shot into the Danube during the time of the Arrow Cross terror. The sculptor created sixty pairs of period-appropriate shoes out of iron. The shoes are attached to the stone embankment, and behind them lies a 40 meter long, 70 cm high stone bench. At three points are cast iron signs, with the following text in Hungarian, English, and Hebrew: "To the memory of the victims shot into the Danube by Arrow Cross militiamen in 1944–45. Erected 16 April 2005."



Hungarian Parliament Building

The Hungarian Parliament Building (Hungarian: *Országház*), one of Europe's oldest legislative buildings, a notable landmark of Hungary and a popular tourist destination of Budapest. It is currently the largest building in Hungary and still the tallest building in Budapest. About 100,000 people were involved in construction, during which 40 million bricks, half a million precious stones and 40 kilograms of gold were used. The Holy Crown of



Hungary, which is also depicted in the coat of arms of Hungary, has been displayed in the central hall since 2000.

Buda Castle Hill

The first citizens arrived to Castle Hill in the 13th century after the Mongolian invasion, seeking protection in the hills of Buda. The first royal castle was built around this time. The golden age of Castle Hill was in the 15th century, following the marriage of King Matthias Corvinus and Beatrix of Naples in 1476. Many Italian artists and craftsmen accompanied the new queen, and Buda became an important European city. After the Turkish occupation, Buda was in ruins. A Baroque city was built, and Castle Hill soon became the district of government. During World War II, Buda was bombed to the ground and had to be rebuilt again.



Today, Castle Hill is recognized as a World Heritage Site, and has many must-see attractions, Gothic arches, eighteenth-century Baroque houses and cobblestone streets. Practically every house has a plaque indicating the century in which it was built, and providing details of its history. A surprising number of the buildings are still private homes, as Castle Hill is also a residential area. Cars have been banned - only people who live and work here are allowed to drive; however, public transportation is available.

Buda Castle Hill is also home to a large interconnected cellar system that consists of natural caves created by thermal waters and man-made passageways. Inhabitants have used the caverns for centuries for storage and shelter.

Buda Castle

At the end of World War II, the palace was badly damaged. It was rebuilt once again, in Neo-Baroque style, using many original parts.



Today, Buda Castle is home to the Hungarian National Gallery, the Budapest History Museum and the National Library.

Matthias Church

Matthias Church is a Roman Catholic church located in front of the Fisherman's Bastion at the heart of Buda's Castle District. According to church tradition, it was originally built in Romanesque style in 1015. The current building was constructed in the florid late Gothic style in the second half of the 14th century and was extensively restored in the late 19th century. It was the second largest church of medieval Buda and the seventh largest church of the medieval Hungarian Kingdom.



The roof is covered with the famous Zsolnay ceramic tiles, making the building even more beautiful.



Fisherman's Bastion

The Halászbástya or Fisherman's Bastion is a terrace in neo-Gothic and neo-Romanesque style situated around Matthias Church. It was designed and built between 1895 and 1902. Its seven towers represent the seven Magyar tribes that settled in the Carpathian Basin in 896. From the towers and the terrace a panoramic view exists of Danube, Margaret Island, Pest to the east and the Gellért Hill.



The Buda side castle wall was protected by the fishermen's guild and this is the reason why it was called fishermen's Bastion. Other people say, it got the name from the part of the city, which lies beneath the tower. The guild of fishermen was responsible for defending this stretch of the city walls in the Middle Ages. It is a viewing terrace, with many stairs and walking paths.

A bronze statue of Stephen I of Hungary mounted on a horse, erected in 1906, can be seen between the Bastion and the Matthias Church.

