



Hungary

Hungary is a country rich in history, culture and natural beauty. It is located in **Central Europe**, sharing borders with **Austria, Slovakia, Ukraine, Romania, Serbia, Croatia and Slovenia**. The country has a unique cultural heritage influenced by various historical periods and offers breathtaking landscapes, historic cities and vibrant traditions that attract millions of visitors.

Hungary has numerous fascinating places to visit, ranging from historical landmarks to natural wonders.

Budapest – The capital city

Budapest, often called the "**Pearl of the Danube**," is one of the most beautiful capitals in Europe. It is divided into two parts, **Buda and Pest**, separated by the Danube River and connected by several magnificent bridges, such as the **Chain Bridge**. Some of the most famous attractions in Budapest include:

- **Buda Castle** – A UNESCO World Heritage Site that offers stunning views of the city.
- **Parliament Building** – One of the largest and most impressive parliamentary buildings in the world, located by the riverbank.
- **Fisherman's Bastion** – A fairy-tale-like structure with breathtaking views of the Danube and Pest.
- **St. Stephen's Basilica** – A magnificent church named after Hungary's first king, St. Stephen.
- **Heroes' Square** – A historic monument featuring statues of important Hungarian leaders.
- **Széchenyi Thermal Bath** – One of the largest and most famous thermal baths in Europe.

Lake Balaton – The Hungarian sea

Lake Balaton is the largest lake in Central Europe and a popular holiday destination. The **northern shore** is known for its historic towns, vineyards and hilly landscapes, while the **southern shore** offers sandy beaches and vibrant nightlife. Popular places around the lake include:



- **Tihany Peninsula** – Famous for its lavender fields and the historic Benedictine Abbey.
- **Siófok** – A lively town with a buzzing summer atmosphere.
- **Badacsony** – A well-known wine region with excellent vineyards and panoramic views.

Hortobágy national park

Hortobágy is Hungary's largest national park and a UNESCO World Heritage Site. It is home to the **Puszta**, the famous Hungarian steppe, where visitors can see **traditional horse shows, grey cattle and unique bird species**.

Eger – A historic town

Eger is famous for its historic **castle**, which played a key role in defending Hungary against the Ottoman Empire. The town is also known for its **thermal baths, the northernmost minaret in Europe** and the legendary "**Bull's Blood**" (**Egri Bikavér**) wine.

Pécs – The city of culture

Pécs is a cultural hub with a rich history. It is famous for its **early Christian burial sites**, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, and its Mediterranean atmosphere. Some highlights include the **Pécs Cathedral, Zsolnay Cultural Quarter and the Mosque of Pasha Qasim**.

Hollókő – A living folk village

Hollókő is a UNESCO-listed traditional village where visitors can experience **authentic Hungarian rural life**. The village is known for its **folk costumes, wooden houses and Easter traditions**, where women are playfully sprinkled with water by men.

Tokaj – The wine region

Tokaj is world-famous for its **Tokaji Aszú**, a unique sweet wine enjoyed by royalty for centuries. The region is perfect for wine tasting and exploring historic cellars.

Hungarian cultural traditions

Hungary has a rich cultural heritage with traditions that are still kept alive today.



Folk music and dance

Hungarian folk music is deeply rooted in the country's history. The **csárdás** is a traditional Hungarian dance that starts slowly and gradually becomes faster. The violin, **cimbalom** (a type of hammered dulcimer) and other string instruments are essential in Hungarian folk music. The famous composer **Béla Bartók** collected and preserved many traditional folk songs.

Hungarian cuisine

Hungarian food is rich in flavours and often includes **paprika, onions, garlic and sour cream**. Some of the most famous dishes include:

- **Gulyás (goulash)** – A hearty beef soup with paprika, potatoes and vegetables.
- **Pörkölt** – A slow-cooked meat stew with a thick sauce.
- **Lángos** – Deep-fried dough, often topped with sour cream and cheese.
- **Töltött káposzta** – Cabbage leaves stuffed with minced meat and rice.
- **Kürtőskalács (chimney cake)** – A sweet, spiral-shaped pastry covered in sugar.

Hungarian Festivals and Celebrations

Hungarians love celebrating their traditions through festivals and special events. Some of the most well-known celebrations include:

- **Busójárás in Mohács** – A unique winter festival where people dress in scary wooden masks to chase away winter.
- **Sziget Festival** – One of Europe's biggest music festivals, held in Budapest.
- **St. Stephen's Day (20th August)** – Hungary's national holiday, featuring fireworks over the Danube.
- **Easter (Húsvét)** – Includes the tradition of **locsolkodás**, where men sprinkle water or perfume on women in exchange for painted eggs.

Hungarian hospitality

Hungarians are known for their hospitality and love for long, family meals. When visiting a Hungarian home, it is polite to bring a small gift, such as **flowers, wine or chocolates**. It is also common for hosts to offer guests **palinka (fruit brandy)** before a meal as a welcome drink.



Conclusion

Hungary is a country full of cultural treasures, breathtaking landscapes and rich traditions. From the historic streets of Budapest to the peaceful villages of the countryside, visitors can experience a unique blend of history, gastronomy and folk traditions. Whether exploring a **thermal bath, tasting world-famous wines or dancing to Hungarian folk music**, Hungary offers something special for everyone.

