

BUDAPEST

TO DO

- **BUDA CASTLE (BUDA)**
*Sitting atop one of Buda's hills, the castle is a Budapest MUST DO. The original structure was completed in 1265 but what remains today is a reconstruction completed by the Soviets during the Soviet occupation of Hungary. **Fun fact: the castle was heavily bombed during WWII because it was the Axis forces' headquarters during the war***
- **ST. MATTHIAS CHURCH (BUDA)**
Started in the 13th century, the church has seen a number of makeovers throughout its life. The rococo spire and spectacular roof tiles are among its best known features. You can pay to go inside, but even if churches aren't your thing it is definitely worth seeing from the outside!
- **FISHERMAN'S BASTION (BUDA)**
Built for purely aesthetic reasons, the impressive neo-Gothic structure lives up to the hype! Fantastic views of Pest and right next to St. Matthias Church, this is a MUST SEE.
- **CITADELLA (BUDA)**
Atop one of Buda's many hills, this look out has the best panoramic view of the city from the Buda side. Accessible by bus, you can also walk all the way up if you are feeling ambitious.
- **ST. STEPHEN'S BASILICA (PEST)**
Obviously a MUST DO. This is the 3rd largest church in Hungary and is dedicated to the 1st king of Hungary: St. Stephen. His mummified right hand is encased inside—definitely worth the 200 HUF to see it! Admission is free but it's worth paying extra to get the panoramic view of the city from Pest from the tower.
- **PARLIAMENT (PEST)**
*The 3rd largest parliament building in the world, Hungary is very proud of this building. If it looks familiar it's because it's modeled on England's Parliament. Guided tours are available during the day. **Pro tip: make sure you see the building at night. On most nights you can see bats circling around the top—very spooky!***
- **THE GREAT SYNAGOGUE (PEST)**
This is the largest synagogue in Europe and the 2nd largest in the world! Located in the city's Jewish Quarter, the synagogue served as the border of Budapest's ghetto during the Holocaust.
- **OPERA HOUSE (PEST)**
Not only can you admire the beautiful building from the outside, but you can also get a tour! Plus, seeing a performance is surprising affordable! Check out listing while you're here.

TO DO CONT.

- **HEROES' SQUARE (PEST)**
At the end of one of Budapest's major streets is this impressive statue complex. Dedicated to the "heroes who gave their lives for the freedom of [the Hungarian] people and [their] national independence", this square was built in 1896 to commemorate the thousandth year anniversary of the foundation of the Hungarian state.
- **CITY PARK (PEST)**
*Right behind Heroes' Square is the main park of the city. Inside, there is a zoo, the most famous thermal bathhouse, and a life-size castle. In the winter, the pond gets converted into the largest outdoor ice skating rink in Europe. Ice-skating is a MUST! **Fun fact: the castle was never a real castle—it was originally built for the World's Fair but the people liked it so much the government made it a permanent exhibit.***
- **THERMAL BATHS (BUDA & PEST)**
Budapest has the most natural thermal baths of all European capitals and it is very proud of this fact. There are a TON of baths around the city but the Széchenyi baths in City Park are by far the most famous. Bring a swimsuit and towel!
- **SZIMPLA KERT FARMER'S MARKET (PEST)**
*Once a week the famous ruin bar gets reconverted into a farmer's market paradise. Whether you're going to buy some artisan spreads or just to scoping out the vibe, it's definitely worth checking out! **Sundays only.***
- **GRAND CENTRAL MARKET (PEST)**
This place is listed on all the tourist guides as a must do. Personally, I wasn't terribly impressed but it does have a lot of fun souvenir stalls and various types of traditional Hungarian street food.
- **NIGHT CRUISE ON THE DANUBE**
Budapest is pretty any time of day, but it is particularly breathtaking at night. A boat cruise is the perfect way to see the city lit up at night with a great view of the bridges, parliament and castle!
- **MARGARET ISLAND**
If you are looking to enjoy a little bit of nature while visiting Hungary's foremost metropolis, Margaret Island is a perfect getaway for an afternoon stroll.

EAT

- **A LA MAISON**
OK, admittedly it's probably problematic to have a French restaurant on the top of the list for recommended places to eat in Budapest, but this place is SERIOUSLY amazing! Perfect place for brunch, they have excellent cocktails and lemonades and a KILLER lunch special every weekday for only 1000 HUF!

EAT CONT.

- **NEW YORK CAFE**
A world famous café, this has to be one of the most beautiful buildings I have ever seen. But beauty comes at a price and it is by far one of the most expensive places in town. If dinner is too much, then just go for coffee and dessert. It cannot be missed!
- **HUMMUS BAR**
*Cheap, healthy food. Perfect for vegans and vegetarians. They have a few locations but the best one by FAR is on Oktober 6 near the Basilica. **Pro tip: try the Laffa! It's AMAZING!***
- **PAPRIKA VENDÉGLO**
If you're looking for authentic Hungarian food, I would definitely recommend the goulash at this place! Plus, it's right by Heroes' Square so you can easily pop by after taking a lovely walk through the park.
- **IÑES BAGELS**
I am a bagel snob and I absolutely love this place! They have the perfect bagel sandwiches to take on the go! Vegetarian friendly.
- **BUDAPEST BAGELS**
You can never have enough bagel recommendations. Not as many options as Iñes, this place specializes more in good, simple bagel combos. Plus, this one is open on the weekends!
- **ZING BURGERS**
Surprisingly, burgers are actually quite good here in Budapest! There are a number of different places, but Zing is a local chain and it is quite tasty!
- **TACOS LOCOS**
Budapest has surprisingly good Mexican food! This restaurant isn't the typical rice & beans place, but they do have cactus tacos! Everything is very fresh and flavorful.

DESSERT

- **NEKED**
Cute vibe, extensive macaroon flavors, cake pops and traditional Hungarian desserts – what more could you want?
- **GELARTO ROSA**
If gelato is your thing, you will love this place. Fantastic flavors, cute shop, and they serve the gelato in the shape of a rose!
- **LEVENDULA KÉZMUVES FAGYALTOZÓ**
*OK, this is without a doubt this most luxurious ice cream in the WORLD. Their specialty flavor is lavender. **MUST TRY.***
- **KÜRTOSKALÁCS**
*Chimney cakes seem to be popular all throughout Eastern Europe and it is easy to see why! They are the perfect snack on the go. Pick one up from any of the carts on the street. **Pro tip: do not pay more than 600 HUF!***

COFFEE SHOPS

- **BOOKCAFÉ - LOTZ HALL**
If you enjoy being surrounded by books and beautiful architecture, look no farther than this café. You'll practically feel like royalty while enjoying a cup of coffee amongst the books.
- **ESPRESSO EMBASSY**
A classic coffee shop vibe: good coffee, variety of pastries and plenty of space to work. Perfect for grabbing a breakfast to go or taking a few hours off of tourism to do some work.

DRINK

- **GOZSDU UDVAR**
This is simultaneously the coolest and cutest bar area I have ever seen. It's an alley full of hipster restaurants & bars. It even has karaoke bars!
- **DEVINO**
If you are curious to try Hungarian wines, this place has 120 different varieties! They also have many convenient locations throughout the city.
- **ÉLESZTO**
If you are into craft beers, you'll definitely want to check this place out! Very cool vibe and great beers!

PARTY

- **SZIMPLA KERT (RUIN BAR)**
The ruin pubs are a staple of Budapest nightlife. Just as the name implies, they are bars in actual dilapidated buildings. Szimpla is by far the most famous and is best described as Grandma's house on acid.
- **INSTANT (RUIN BAR)**
Another ruin pub that somehow manages to outdo Szimpla in terms of outlandishness and can best be described as a real life version of Alice-in-Wonderland.
- **HELLO BABY (RUIN BAR)**
Yet another ruin pub, this one is less weird eclectic and more mainstream, with 2 dance floors, one of which often has R&B jams or top 40 hits. Big names have been known to come here and the icing on the cake is its castle vibes.