

General Information on Hungary

Area:	93,030 km ²
Population:	10,196,000 (as of February 1, 2001)
Population density:	109.6 per km ²
Capital:	Budapest
	area: 525 km ²
	population: 1,774,000 (as of February 1, 2001)
	density: 3,378 per km ²
Time zone:	GMT + 1 hour
Daylight savings time:	+1 hour from the last weekend in March to the last weekend in October
Official language:	Hungarian
Form of government:	republic
Administrative regions:	19 counties and Budapest

Hungary in a nutshell

Hungary is located in the Carpathian Basin in Central Europe. Its greatest distance is 268 km north to south, and 528 km east to west. Nearly half of the country's area is plains: the *Great Hungarian Plains* occupying the entire eastern half of the country, the *interstream area between the Danube and Tisza* rivers, and the *Western Hungarian Lowlands* along the north-western border. West of the Danube is the *Transdanubian Central Range* with altitudes of 400-700 meters (the Keszthely, Bakony, Vértes, Gerecse, Pilis and Visegrád ranges), and to the east of the Danube the *Northern Central Range* is to be found with altitudes of 500-1000 meters (Börzsöny, Cserhát, Mátra, Bükk, Cserehát and Zemplén ranges). The country's highest altitude is Kékestető (1014 m) in the Mátra Mountains. The country's two most important rivers are the Danube (Hungarian segment 417 km) and the Tisza (598 km). The *Transdanubian* region west of the Danube is made up of rolling hills, with the warmest lake in Central Europe, *Lake Balaton*, located in the centre of the region. Two other lakes are Lake Velence in Transdanubia, and Lake Tisza in the east.

Hungary has plenty of natural riches, and the visitor can enjoy unspoilt nature in ten national parks. The country is uniquely rich in hot springs, and medicinal baths are one of the most important attractions, together with therapeutic and thermal open-air baths, and the related therapeutic hotels. In addition, Hungary also offers excellent opportunities for enthusiasts of horse riding, cycling, hiking, fishing, hunting, water sports and golf.

In the history of Hungary, eastern and western cultural influences are welded with the traditions of a thousand-year old state. Budapest is often known as the Queen of the Danube, and its unequalled situation, its monuments, museums, theatres, concert halls and opera house, its coffee houses, pubs, and jazz clubs make it one of the most beautiful and exciting cities in the world. Hungary can justly be proud of her sparkling cultural life, of which music is one of the most important elements: the musical heritage of Bartók and Kodály, just as operetta, gypsy music and folk music. Over the year countless arts festivals are held throughout the country.

Of all the colourful folk art of Hungary, its motives and colours, the folk art of Kalocsa and Matyó is the best known. The finest examples of folk architecture are on display in the open-air museums, known as skanzen, at several locations in the country.

Hungary is famous for its gastronomy and its excellent wine, produced in twenty-two historical wine growing regions.

To date, eight locations in Hungary have been added to the UNESCO World Heritage list: Caves of Aggtelek Karst and Slovak Karst, Fertő/Neusiedlersee Cultural Landscape, Old Village of Hollókő and its surroundings, Hortobágy National Park – the Puszta, Early Christian Necropolis of Pécs (Sopiane), Millenary Benedictine Abbey of Pannonhalma and its Natural Environment Budapest, including the Banks of the Danube, the Buda Castle Quarter and Andrassy avenue and Tokaj Wine Region Historic Cultural Landscape.

Tourist Regions

In terms of tourism the country can be divided into nine tourist regions:

1. Budapest and Central Danubian Region,
2. Lake Balaton,
3. Central Transdanubia,
4. Western Transdanubia,
5. Southern Transdanubia,
6. Northern Hungary,
7. Northern Hungarian Plains,
8. Southern Hungarian Plains and
9. Lake Tisza (and environs).

CLIMATE

Hungary has a temperate continental climate. The coldest month is January (the average daily temperature is -1°C), and the hottest is August (the average daily temperature is $+21.3^{\circ}\text{C}$). The annual number of sunshine hours is 1,785.