

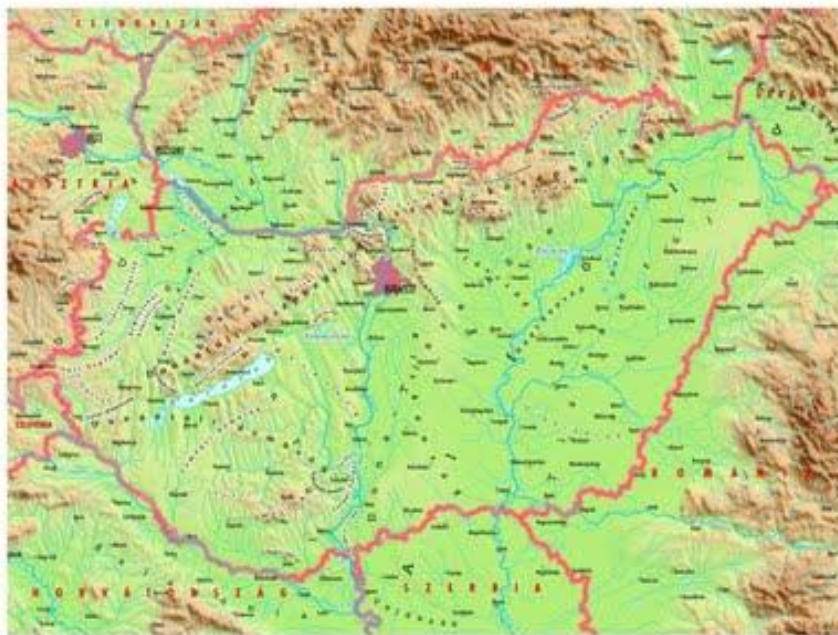
## About Hungary



*Hungary in Europe*



*Motorways in Hungary*



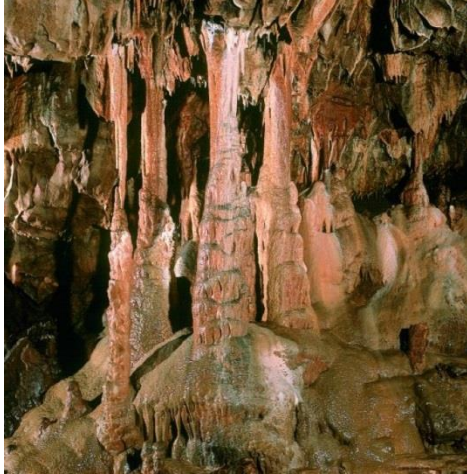
*Map of Hungary*

Hungary occupies the low-lying areas of the Carpathian basin. Two-thirds of the territory consist of plains below 200 metres.

Some data

Area:	93,030 square km, 1% of the area of Europe
Government:	Parliamentary democracy
Population:	9,9 million
Capitol:	Budapest, inh. 1,74 million
Language:	Hungarian
Ethnic groups 2011:	83.7% Hungarians, 3.1% Romani, 1.3% Germans
State border length:	2,242 km
Highest peak:	Kekes 1014m (in the Matra mountains)
Longest rivers:	Danube - Hungarian stretch 417 km (full length 2,860 km)

Largest lakes: Tisza - Hungarian stretch 598 km (full length 962 km)  
Balaton 598 square km surface area  
Velence lake 26 square km surface area  
Ferto lake 322 square km surface area (Hungarian part 82 square km)



*Pálvölgyi cave in Budapest*



*Diving in the Molnár János cave*

## **History of Hungary**

Hungary's more than 1000-year long history shaped the country: its culture, language traditions, the cuisine, and the Hungarians' way of thinking.

### **Before the Magyars Arrived**

Traces of prehistoric man living in the the Carpathian Basin around 500 000 years ago were found in Vértesszőlős or in the caves of the Bükk Hills in Northern Hungary.



*Roman ruins in Budapest*

The Romans had a great impact on the development of the settlements west of the Danube which they conquered in the 1st century and transformed into a Roman province called Pannonia (the area is called Transdanubia today).

The 400 year long Roman era brought about thriving towns and prosperity the evidence of which you can see in Budapest (called Aquincum in the Roman times) and in towns like Szombathely and Sopron in Western Transdanubia, or in Pécs, in Southern Transdanubia.

The Romans realised Pannonia's main treasure, the abundance of thermal springs and medicinal waters and they built the first baths.

In the 5th century the Romans were forced to give up Pannonia to the Huns led by their legendary leader Attila. After the fall of the Hun Empire a few other tribes followed each other in the Carpathian Basin during the era called the great migration: Goths, Lombards and Avars.

## **History of Hungary - the Beginnings**

### **Conquering the Carpathian Basin**

After years of wandering 7 Magyar Tribes led by Árpád (great-grandfather of Géza, father of King St Stephen) conquered the Carpathian Basin in 895.



*Scythian Golden Deer*

Scythian Golden Deer from 5th century BC, the best known relic from the era of the ancient Hungarians, found during in Tápíószentmárton

The nomad Magyars finally found a permanent home after years of roaming in the steppe however they have to give up their former lifestyle in order to settle down and be accepted by Christian Western Europe.

The ancient Hungarian were excellent fighters. They excelled in archery on a horse's back. Hungarians raided Europe until Otto and his army stopped them in the battle of Augsburg in 955.

## Foundation of the Hungarian State

Duke Géza (947-997) realised that Hungarians' had two choices in order to survive and found a state: either become the ally of the two main empires ruling Europe at that time: the Holy Roman Empire and the Byzantine Empire, or be crushed by these two dominant forces.



*Holy Crown of Hungary*

Géza wisely decided to convert Hungarians into Christianity: to set an example he and his son Vajk were baptised Géza had also requested a crown for his son from Pope Sylvester II.

Vajk chose the Christian name István (Stephen) when he was crowned as Hungary's first king in 1000. You can see the Holy Crown of Hungary, one of the country's most precious relics, in the Parliament in Budapest.

King Stephen (975-1038) consolidated the country and Christendom though he had to fight with those who were against the new religion and Stephen's provisions.

King Stephen were canonized in 1083 and he became the patron of Hungary. We celebrate the work of St Stephen and the foundation of the Hungarian State on 20th August.

King Stepen founded bishoprics, one primateship in Esztergom, several abbeys and built churches throughout the country the remains of some are the cathedral in Székesfehérvár, the monasterys in Pécsvárad and in Zalavár. Esztergom and Visegrád, the two royal towns in the Danube Bend also have many monuments from King Stepen's era and from the early middle ages.

## Hungary in the Early Middle Ages

Following the turmoils after King Stephen's death in 1038, kings from the House of Árpád reigned in Hungary, ruling a strong and large state in the heart of Europe.

During the realm of Saint Ladislaus (1077-1095) and Coloman (Könyves Kálmán 1095-1116) increased country's territory by annexing regions in Croatia, Dalmatia and Bosnia to Hungary. In the early Middle Ages Hungary became one of the most powerful countries of Europe.

The Mongol Invasion (1241-42) however put an end to Hungary's flourishing who devastated the settlements and decimated the country's population during their raids.

The Mongols had to go back to Central Asia due to their leader's, Genghis Khan's unexpected death. King Béla IV (1235-1270) rebuilt the country. He realised that in order to protect the country from attacks similar to the Mongolians strong stone fortresses needed to be built.

He built a castle on the Buda Hills that latter many kings added to and rebuild creating the Royal Place in Budapest's Castle District. To offset the loss of people, he invited Germans to Buda and the nomadic Cumians to settle down in the area of today's Southern Great Plain and Northern Great Plain.

The House of Árpád died out with the death of Andrew III (1290-1301).

Under the rule of Anjou kings (1308-1387) then kings from the Luxemburg dynasty (1387-1437) Hungary expanded its territory, while grand buildings were established and cultural life and arts were thriving throughout the country. King Charles Robert from the Anjou House moved the court from Visegrád to Buda. His son Louis the Great built a new Palace in Buda's Castle District.

Since Louis the Great died without a male heir his son-in-law, Sigismund of Luxemburg followed him on the throne who also became the Holy Roman Emperor in 1433.

Despite some stormy events during his reign, Sigismund built several great castles like the Gothic Friss (New) Palace in Buda, and castles of Visegrád or Tata.

After Sigismund's and his army of crusaders disastrous defeat by the Turks at Nicopolis in 1396, the Turks launched frequent attacks against the southern part of Hungary.

### **Renaissance Hungary - King Matthias 15th Century**

Under the rule of King Matthias (1458-1490) from the Hunyadi family Hungary, especially Buda became one of the great cultural centres of Europe. Many stories and legend retell the great deeds of Matthias who were the defenders of the poor against the unfairness caused by their lords. Hence his name Matthias the Righteous.



*Royal Palace in Buda*

He implemented several reforms in jurisdiction, public security, he also facilitated the development of industry and trade.

He expanded his royal residence in Buda by adding a Renaissance style wing to the former palace, the beauty of which was renowned in whole Europe.

The Royal Palace today in Buda's Castle District

As a Renaissance king, Matthias supported culture and arts. His famous library the Bibliotheca Corviniana consisting of at least 500 volumes was the largest collection of historical, scientific and philosophic works in 15th-century Europe, second in size to the Vatican's library.

Artists from Italy and from other countries came to work in the court of King Matthias. Apart from Buda Palace architectural masterpieces from the era include the castle of Visegrád and the fortress of Diósgyőr in North Hungary.



*Royal palace in Visegrád Hungary*

With his effective army of mercenaries, equipped with modern weapons, Matthias managed to suppress the Turkish army for several decades. He conquered Moravia and Silesia and even occupied Vienna where he died in 1490.

## **Hungary under the Turkish Rule 16th-17th Centuries**

In the summer of 1526 the Sultan Suleiman II (1496-1566) launched an well-organised attack against Hungary and made a destructive victory over the much smaller and less equipped Hungarian army at Mohács, a town now in Southern Transdanubia.

In 1541 the Turks took over Buda as well and the country lost its independence. Hungary was divided into 3 parts:

- the central Part under Ottoman rule,
- Ferdinand of the Habsburg dynasty governed northern part of the country as the Kingdom of Hungary, and
- the Principedom of Transylvania.



*Turkish bath „King’s bath”*

The 150-year long Turkish occupation threw back Hungary's development and the flourishing induced by King Matthias.

Despite the devastation the Turks built some monuments that still can be seen today: the magnificent Turkish baths of Budapest, the minaret in Eger, or the dzsamis in Pécs.

## **The Habsburg Era - 17-19th centuries**

A Christian army facilitated by the Roman Emperor and Pope Innocent XI freed Buda and Pest in 1686. Many buildings were destroyed during the siege.

By the end of the 17th century the Turks were chased away from the country, that lost a considerable part of its population, whole areas became deserted.

In the coming decades Germans, Croatians, Slovaks and Romanians settled down in Hungary to counterbalance the loss in Hungarian population.

You might think that after the departure of the Turks Hungary became an independent country and started to reconstruct what were destroyed. Unfortunately instead of national freedom Hungary became a province of the Habsburg Empire.



*The Rákóczi castle in Sáropatak*

Ferenc Rákóczi whose castle stands in Sáropatak, Northern Hungary led the unsuccessful Kuruc war of independence against the Habsburgs in 1703-11.

Some other anti-Habsburg movements were attempted to gain back Hungary's independence or at least some of it. In the first half of the 19th century a reform activity started for preserving national identity the Hungarian language and culture.

One of the most eminent personalities of this era was Count István Széchenyi often referred to as the "Greatest Hungarian", the other outstanding politician was Lajos Kossuth. He facilitated the construction of the first permanent bridge between Buda and Pest over the Danube, the Chain Bridge.



*Chain Bridge in Budapest*

In the spring of 1848 the revolutions sweeping through Europe caused an uprising in Budapest on 15th March led by poet Sándor Petőfi. The uprising evolved into War of Independence that the Habsburgs managed to break down only in 1849 with help of the Russian army. The Habsburgs began retaliation by executing 14 Hungarian generals in Arad (now in Transylvania) on 6th October 1849.

The years of terror were ended in 1867 when Hungarians made a Compromise with the Habsburgs that resulted in an Hungary's independent governance and legislation and only foreign affairs,



defense and financial issues were managed jointly. Francis Joseph was crowned King of Hungary in the summer of 1867.

Although feudalism and all its drawbacks were still present, industry started to develop in Hungary. Railway lines were constructed that connecting areas through Budapest.

Buda, Pest and Óbuda were unified in 1873 establishing Hungary's capital, Budapest. The unification put the city on the track of fast development which made the Hungarian capital one of the most prominent capitals of Europe. Grandiose building projects were launched to celebrate the Millennium in 1896 (the 1000th anniversary that Hungarians settled down in the Carpathian Basin)



*Heroes' Square Budapest*

Heroes' Square in Budapest one of the great monuments created for the Millennial celebrations of 1896. Behind the facade of flourishing some serious problems existed: small land owners go bankrupt due to lack of money which caused thousands of land workers to leave Hungary and find work and home in foreign countries. Meanwhile the growing working-class demanded more rights by going on strikes.



*The parliament*

## **Hungary During the First World War**

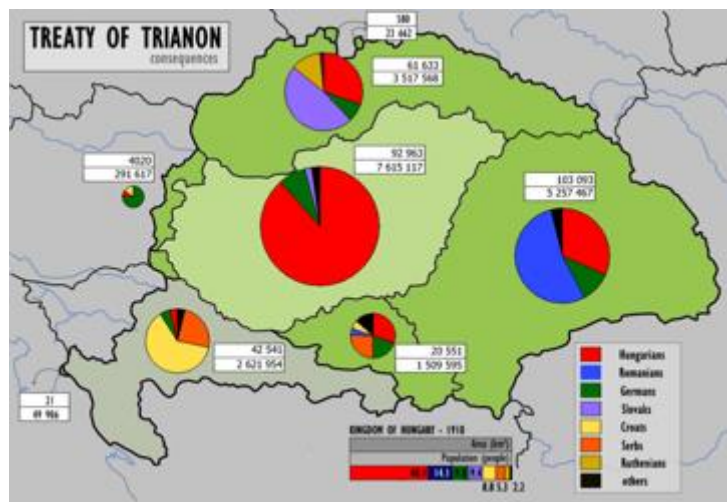
Hungary lost around 1 million men fighting on the side of the Habsburgs as part of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy in the 1st world war. The defeat at the end of the world meant the breaking up of the Monarchy.

The revolution in Russia in February 1917 had a significant impact on Hungary. Left-wing forces became more influential on the political scene. Strikes and demonstrations broke out all over the country.

In 1918, before the capitulation of the Habsburg Monarchy a National council came into power in Hungary led by Count Mihály Károlyi. Károlyi demanded separate peacemaking and the independence of Hungary. On 16th November, 1918 Hungary was declared a republic with Mihály Károlyi as prime minister.

On 21st March communists lead by Béla Kun took over the republic but their regime last only until August 1919.

In 1920 the parliament elected Miklós Horthy regent. In the Trianon Treaty Hungary was forced to give up cc. 68% percent of her territory to the neighbouring countries. It was a devastating blow to the country that took her decades to get over.



*Consequences of Trianon Treaty*

## **Hungary During the 2nd World War**

The urge to regain the territories taken away in the Trianon Treaty made Hungary enter the 2nd world war on the side of the Germans.

In October 1944 Miklós Horthy tried to withdraw from the war by making a separate peace with the Allies but with the help of the Germans the fascist Arrow Cross Party seized the power.

The fascists deported hundreds of thousands Hungarian Jews to Auschwitz and other camps where around 0,6 million of the deported died. The Red Army laid siege to Budapest on Christmas 1944. The fights and bombing destructed most of the Hungarain capital.

By 4th April, 1945 the Russians liberated whole Hungary. In 1946 Hungary became Republic and the government signed the Paris Treaty in 1947 that restored the borders established by the Trianon Treaty. More than 0,2 million deported people die in the Soviet Union.



*The Elisabeth bridge after WW2*

## **Under the Communist Regime**

In 1947 the Communist party won the elections and a one-party communist dictatorship was established ruled by Mátyás Rákosi (1949-1956) and a henchman country of the communist Soviet Union. The party leaders and the farms assimilated privately owned lands taken away from people into collective farms. The economy was managed according to centralised, 5-year plans following the Soviet example. The KGB-trained secret police the ÁVH brought about terror, arrests, and tortures.

The former headquarters of the ÁVH on 60. Andrásy út was transformed into a museum called House of Terror. The name tells you everything what exhibits you can see there.



*House of Terror (Terror Háza) Museum on Andrásy Avenue in Budapest*

Everyone was suspicious; people reported even their neighbours to the police. Thousands were deported to Siberia. The forced industrial production according to the Stalinist model ruined

Hungary's economy in a few years. The reign of terror and the deteriorating standard of living lead to the revolution of 1956

On 23rd October in 1956 university students marched onto the streets of Budapest and demanded the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Hungary and the fall of the communist dictatorship. The Soviet army intervened: tanks appeared in Budapest and many were shot during the fights. On some apartments you can still see the bullet holes from 1956.

Demonstrators pulled down the 20 m high statue of Stalin on Heroes' Square the symbol of terror and dictatorship. After the fall of the communist regime these statues were removed to a park in the outskirts of Budapest.

Imre Nagy was proclaimed prime minister. Nagy promised to dissolve the AV, political prisoners were released and given amnesty.

Despite Imre Nagy's activity fightings continued. On 1st November Imre Nagy announced the Hungary would leave the Warsaw Pact that cause a large scale offensive from the Soviet side. Nagy asked help from the UN to protect establish an independent and neutral Hungary, however Western nations decided not to intervene. The Soviets crushed the uprising within days. Around 3000 died and 200 000 people left Hungary. Imre Nagy was executed.

## **Important dates of Hungarian history<sup>1</sup>**

5th century

The Hungarian tribes left the area of the Urals. They passed along the Volga and the Caspian Sea. After several hundred years of wandering, they reached the Carpathian Basin.

896

Under the leadership of Árpád, the Hungarian tribes settled in the Carpathian Basin. They drove out part of the residents and absorbed the other part.

997-1038

King Stephen of the Árpád dynasty ruled the country.

1000

Stephen was converted to Christianity. After his death, he was canonized.

1055

An abbey was set up at Tihany. The foundation charter was drawn up on the northern shore of Lake Balaton. This is the earliest written record extant in the Hungarian language.

1241

The Mongolian Tatars devastated the country. Their presence, which lasted a year, halted development for at least a century. After the warfare with the Hungarians, the Tatars did not continue towards the west.

1458-1490

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.fsz.bme.hu/hungary/history.html>

The rule of King Matthias. Cultural life of a European standard flourished in his palaces at Buda and Visegrád. For a few decades, Hungary lived on a West European standard.

1526

At Mohács, the present southern frontier of the country, the Turks defeated the Hungarian army. 150 years of Turkish occupation started.

1541

The Turks occupied Buda. Hungary was split into three parts. The Habsburg governed the western part of the country, the central area was ruled by the Turks, and the south-east Transylvanian principality (today part of Roumania) for a long time was the citadel of Hungarian culture.

1686

Buda was recaptured from the Turks. (The Turks - similarly to the Tartars - could only advance in Europe to the territory of Hungary. Here they were faced by obstacles, after which no strength was left for the siege of Vienna.)

1703-1711

A freedom war under the leadership of Ferenc Rákóczi II, Prince of Transylvania, against the Habsburgs. The rebels defeated the Imperial army in several battles, but did not receive the promised French support and failed.

First half of the 19th century

A national reform movement was launched for the political and economic transformation of the country, for Hungarian language and culture. This was when the National Anthem was born, and the Hungarian Academy of Sciences was set up. The building of the Chain Bridge started. The initiator of these was Count István Széchenyi, an eminent figure of the Reform Age.

1848-1849

A revolution broke out in Pest, which extended over the entire country. The Habsburg Emperor was dethroned after the Hungarian army won several significant battles. Lajos Kossuth was elected Governor. The longest European national revolution could only be oppressed in the summer of 1849 by the Habsburgs with the help of the Russian army.

1867

The Hungarians concluded a compromise with the Habsburgs. A double-centred monarchy was set up with seats in Vienna and Pest-Buda. A spectacular industrial upswing started.

1873

Pest, Buda and Obuda were unified: Budapest became a European metropolis. The buildings of that time - the Opera House, the National Gallery and Parliament - still determine the skyline of the city. The first subsurface underground railway on continental Europe was put into operation.

1918

Germany and its allies, including the Austro-Hungarian monarchy, lost the world war. The monarchy disintegrated.

1920

The Trianon Treaty reduced Hungary's area by two thirds and the population by one third. Since then, considerable Hungarian minorities lived in the neighbouring countries.

1938-1940

Germany concluded treaties in Munich and Vienna, according to which Southern Slovakia and Northern Transylvania were returned to Hungary.

1944

The Nazis occupied Hungary, as they did not consider it a reliable ally. During the Second World War, the Hungarians suffered grave losses on the Soviet front. At the end of the war, Fascists took over the governing of the country.

1945

The Soviet Army liberated, then occupied Hungary. At the hastily held elections, the Communists gained only 17 percent of the votes.

1947

The last, relatively free election was followed by the years of Communist control: show trials, executions, forced settlement of hundreds of thousands, imprisonment, harassment, forced industrial development, a drop in living standards, and Stalinist dictatorship.

1956

A revolution against Stalinism. The uprising was defeated by Soviet troops. János Kádár, who acquired power with their assistance, promised democratic socialism; in the meantime, retaliation and executions started.

1965

The new system became consolidated, and cautious economic reforms were launched. Living standards were rising and the iron curtain became penetrable.

1988

The Hungarian transition period began.

1990

The Communist party voluntarily gave up its autocracy. A multi-party parliamentary democracy came into being in the country. The Soviet army left Hungary.

1999

Hungary became full member of NATO.

After the revolution János Kádár (1912-1989) came into power as leader of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party. After a few years of retaliation Kádár introduced a soft-dictatorship, the so-called "goulash communism": the standard of living improved, everyone had a workplace with reasonable salary. Later, travel to capitalist, western countries was allowed though within strict limits.

During the coming decades Hungary accumulated a huge amount of foreign debt. Inflation grew, standard of living started to decrease, the economy was in poor shape. The opposition wing became stronger and stronger and János Kádár had no other choice but to retire.

Hungary managed to accomplish a peaceful transition from centralised, communist administration to a democratic, multi-party political system that accelerated the fall of communism in every Central and Eastern European country.

In May 1989 Hungary dismantled the barbed wire along its border with Austria an act symbolising the demolition of the imaginary Iron Curtain separating West and East Europe for decades. In 1989 Miklós Németh and his reform-communist party.

In 1990 were held free elections.

## **The brief history of Budapest<sup>2</sup>**

### **The youngest capital**

Budapest is one of the “youngest” European capital, though it has a history of more than thousand years. How is this possible? It was not always a capital and even the unified Budapest (the city as well as the name) developed by the end of the 19th century.

### **The beginnings – Celts and Romans**

One of the most beautifully situated cities was shaped not accidentally. The Danube, dividing Budapest – especially at the Gellért Hill – gave excellent crossing, and the territory of the surrounding hills was suitable for settling and defence. This fact was already discovered by the Celts (Eraviscs) around the 4th century B.C., and established a mint atelier on this place – at that time - called Ak-Ink (Rich-Water).

Hungary’s western part was Pannonia, province of the Roman Empire. The Empire founded its city, Aquincum on the area of today’s Old Buda, garrisoned its legion and defended its long fort-line, the limes all along the Danube.



*Aquincum - museum on the ruins of the ancient roman city*

### **The first Hungarians**

The conquering Hungarian (7 tribes) also considered it an important strategic point, maintaining centres here. Interestingly, at that time the settlement was called Pest at both sides of the Danube, which according to some researcher, has Slavic origin, meaning “oven” and relates to the thermal

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<sup>2</sup> <http://info.budapest.travel/cityhistory/>

springs under the Gellért Hill. The era of great migrations began after the Romans. Attila came with the Huns, and – as the legend says – the city was named Buda after Attila's brother. However this name spread only after the Tatar invasion, when Bela IV commanded to build forts all over the country and the king himself – setting a good example – built his own castle on the New-Hill. Since that time this place is called Castle Hill.

## **Middle Ages – Renaissance and Turks**

In the Middle-Ages during the rein of Zsigmond, Buda became the permanent royal residence of the Hungarian kings. The continuously increasing palace was accomplished by the time of King Mathias. The other side of the Danube, Pest, also became wealthy, growing into trade centre, so King Mathias declared it equal to Buda. His rein meant the Golden Age, but, unfortunately, the Turkish invasion began soon. In 1541 Buda had fallen into the hands of Turks and it was liberated only in 1686 from the Turkish regime, thus giving way to the development.

18th Century – On the road of development

Thanks to the Habsburg Empire, families from the German principalities were recruited to the Old Buda area, settling them with considerable advantages.

Being Buda and Pest the centre of the country, by the 18th Century Buda became the administrative centre by the provisions of Marie-Therese and Joseph II. The Queen ordered the Nagyszombat University into the renovated royal palace and Joseph II. moved the Governorate and the Hungarian Chamber to the city.

As for the architecture, this century gave the classicist style of Pest while in Buda the Baroque buildings dominated the landscape. By the end of this century Palatine Joseph ordered important city-planning and issued the Improving Certification, some passages of it are still in effect.



*19th Century – Renaissance of Budapest*



The existence of the receptive public made it possible that in spite of the then still official German language the Hungarian literature could develop and later on the Hungarian Theatre of Pest was founded. The role of the Hungarian Academy of Science and the National Theatre was outstanding in the life of the middle class. Then came the moment, when on the natural dividend of Pest and Buda, on the Danube, the first crossing, the Chain Bridge was built. The effect of it brought together the two cities along with Old Buda and by melting them in 1872 Budapest was born. At that time was built the still functioning waterworks of Káposztásmegyér and began the canalisation. The tramway succeeded the horse-tramway.

### **Budapest in 19th century**

In the 19th Century Budapest is getting its shapes. After the Compromise of 1867 the city developed and industrialised. The milling industry, the food industry as well as the agricultural machinery were all settled here and the engineering industry began to flourish. The railways and main roads all assembled here.

In 1896 with the Millennium Exhibition was celebrated the country's thousand years economic and cultural development but, in reality this enormous progress began in the previous twenty years. From all over the historical Hungary millions visited the grandiose exhibition and admired the improving Budapest, the Avenue (now Andrásy Avenue), the continent's first underground, the new Franz-Joseph Bridge (now Liberty Bridge), the Art Gallery, the construction of the Fishermen's Bastion and the almost ready Parliament building.



*Nyugati railway station of Eiffel*

### **20th Century – development and destruction**

By the turn of the century Budapest was put on the map by its bustling cultural life, its cafés, medical baths, its places of amusement and its nightlife.

In the first part of the century the progress –still from the impulsion of the Compromise – continued. In 1909-10 for example the electric street-lighting was installed. However, the WW I. and the

following events, the Soviet republic and the Trianon Treaty strained to a standstill the till then progress of the city. The population nevertheless increased with the refugees from the detached regions of Hungary and by the years of 1930 exceeded the one million. Because of the mass shortage, the first housing estates appeared at this time in Budapest (for example the Wekerle-colony). Still, masses of needy lived in slums (like the Maria-Valeria colony).



*The famous Chain Bridge after World War 2*

WWII caused enormous damages, both in the destruction of the built legacy – for example, all the bridges of the Danube were blown up by the retreating German troops – and in human loss as well. The Buda Castle, the public buildings and most of the houses had been totally destroyed. In the inner districts there were no streets without buildings that were in such poor condition, that they could not be renovated. During the following four years, the population succeeded with the reconstruction and new districts became part of the capital (With the separation of two districts in the recent past, the capital consists of 23 administrative districts.)

In the 1956 revolution, during the battles, several buildings and the traffic system incurred losses. After the renovation in the 60-s, began the construction of the housing estates and in the 70-s, the development of the second, later on the third underground lines. In the 60-s the new Elisabeth-Bridge was also opened to the public.



*Revolution against the communist dictatorship in October 1956, ruined by the Soviet army in 4 November.*

## **Budapest chronology<sup>3</sup>**

### **Pre-Magyar Times:**

Archaeological finds indicate that the first settlement in the location of present-day Budapest was built by Celts. The Romans occupied this town in the first century BC.

1st century BC to 5th century AD – Western Hungary is part of the Roman Empire. Aquincum is founded and quickly becomes the largest town and one of the capitals of Pannonia.

5th century to 9th century – The Roman era ends in the 5th century and the age of Huns begins. Attila, King of the Huns, builds a city for himself here according to later chronicles. Following the Huns several tribes (Lombards, Avars and Slavs) pass through Hungary until the arrival of Magyars.

### **Arrival of the Magyars:**

The Hungarian tribes arrived to the Carpathian Basin in 896. Árpád, leader of the Magyars, settled on Csepel sziget, an island in the southern part of Budapest.

### **Medieval Budapest:**

1000 – St. Stephen is crowned; he becomes the first king of Hungary. Hungary converts to Christianity and becomes an independent kingdom.

1046 – Bishop Gellért dies at the hands of pagans on present-day Gellért Hill in the fight against Christianity.

12th century – The development of Buda and Pest starts thanks to the French, Walloon and German settlers who migrate here and work and trade along the banks of the Danube.

1241-42 – The Mongolian invasion destroys both cities.

1248 – King Béla IV builds the first royal castle on Castle Hill in Buda and city walls surround Pest.

14th century – The Angevin kings from France established Buda as a royal seat, building probably the largest Gothic palace.

### **Renaissance Budapest:**

1458 – The noblemen of Hungary elect Matthias Corvinus as king. Under his reign, Buda becomes a main hub of European Renaissance. It is truly an age of prosperity. He dies in 1490, after capturing Vienna in 1485.

### **Turkish Budapest:**

1541 – The beginning of the Turkish occupation. Multiple mosques and baths are built in Buda; churches (such as Matthias Church) are converted. The Turkish occupation lasted almost 150 years.

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<sup>3</sup> <http://visitbudapest.travel/guide/budapest-history/>

## **Habsburg Influence:**

1686 – Buda and Pest are re-conquered from the Turks with Habsburg leadership. The Habsburg rule begins. Both towns are destroyed completely in the battles.

1773 – Election of the first Mayor of Pest.

1777 – Maria Theresa of Austria moves the first University to Castle Hill.

1783 – Joseph II places the acting government to the city of Buda.

1825 – Pest becomes the cultural and economic centre of the country. The first National Theatre is built, along with the Hungarian National Museum and the Széchenyi Chain Bridge (Lánchíd).

1838 – The year of the biggest flood in recent memory. The entire Pest side is under water.

1848-49 – Revolution and War of Independence. Pest replaces Bratislava as the new capital of Hungary and it becomes the seat of the first prime minister, its government and the Parliament.

1849 – The Austrians occupy the city and the Habsburg army captures the two towns. Lajos Batthyány, the first Hungarian Prime Minister is executed on the present-day Szabadság tér.

1867 – The Austro-Hungarian Compromise, beginning of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, followed by unprecedented civic development, resulting in the style of present day Budapest.

1873 – The former cities Pest, Buda and Óbuda are united, and with that the Hungarian capital is established with the name of Budapest.

1896 – Year of the Millennium, celebrations are held all over the city. The Millennium Underground is inaugurated, and the Franz Josef Bridge (today's Liberty Bridge) is opened.

1910 – According to census the population of Budapest is 880,000

1918 – World War I ends the Austro-Hungarian Empire and the development of Budapest is slowed down by political upheavals.

## **Budapest in the 20th Century:**

1918-19 – Revolution in Budapest and the 133 days of the Hungarian Soviet Republic. This was the first Communist government to be formed in Europe after the October Revolution in Russia.

1919-44 – Status quo was restored by a charismatic leader in the person of Admiral Horthy a self-appointed regent for the exiled King Karl IV. Hungary was a kingdom without a king.

1920 – The Trianon Treaty re-sized Hungary. Three-fifth of the country was assigned to surrounding successor states.

1924 – the Hungarian National Bank is founded.

1941 – Entry into World War II as an ally of Germany.

1944 – Budapest is occupied by the Germans. At the time of the occupation, there were around 200,000 Jews in the city. Fewer than half of them survived the following 11 months.

Dec. 1944 - Feb. 1945 – Soviet and Romanian troops besiege Budapest. The retreating Germans destroy all Danube bridges. The Buda castle falls. World War II took the lives of close to 200,000 Budapest residents and caused widespread damage to the buildings in the city.

1945-48 – Hungary is declared a republic, practicing a multi party parliamentary democracy.

1948 – A Soviet friendly Communist government takes over and Hungary is declared a People's Republic.

Oct. 1956 – The Hungarian Revolution of 1956 breaks out, ending in the invasion of a large Soviet force, killing civilians and damaging buildings in Budapest (traces of the gunfire can still be seen on the façades of several buildings).

1956-58 – Revenge and forceful restoration of Soviet power.

1960s – Conditions normalize; reforms create a so called 'Goulash Communism' in Hungary, a Communism with elements of free market and improved human rights. Wartime damages are largely repaired; the Elizabeth Bridge is finished in 1965.

1970-72 – Construction of the East-Western Subway line (M2) begins.

1982 – Construction of the North-Southern Subway line (M3) begins.

1987 – Buda Castle Hill and the banks of the Danube are added to the UNESCO World Heritage Sites.

1989-1990 – The 'changes', transition to free elections and a democratic government. Hungary's changeover to a Western-style democracy was one of the smoothest among the former Soviet bloc.

1990 – According to census the city is home to 2,000,000 residents.

### Present day Budapest:

2002 – Andrásy Avenue is added to the World Heritage Sites, along with the Millennium Underground Railway, Heroes' Square and City Park.

2002 – Inauguration of the new National Theatre.

2004 – Hungary joins the European Union.

2008 – According to census, Budapest is home to 1,700,000 residents.

2010 – Inauguration of Budapest's 'Mainstreet' (a Belváros Főutcája), a project that re-shapes a 1.7-km stretch of downtown Pest from Kálvin tér to Szabadság tér.

2011 – Margaret Bridge reopens after extensive renovations.

2014 – Construction of the fourth subway line (M4) is finished. Many streets in the downtown are renewed

