

THINK HUNGARY, MORE THAN EXPECTED



NORTHERN
HUNGARY





Feast in a border fortress

BY NATURE...

ROAMING IN NORTHERN HUNGARY

The unique nature, untouched in many places, offers numerous opportunities for complete relaxation, active leisure time and even extreme sports with its mountains, forests, rivers, lakes and wide pastures.

You can join a hunting or fishing tour in the region, get familiar with domestic animals, or take snapshots of rare species of animals and plants.

Civilizations have inhabited



Tokaj wine

this area since prehistoric ages and created traditions well known all around the World its wealth of distinctive forts, castles, homes, treasures and artefacts.

All over this territory thermal springs gush up from the depths of the earth, providing relief for body and soul. Its soil and climate are excellent for vine growing as well at the hands of expert viticulturists, making some of the most renowned wines in the country, such as the Bull's Blood of Eger and Tokaj Aszú.

This region also hides plenty of unknown treasures: the oldest caves, the most famous fort, the longest chair lift, the unique villages at the northern border of the country, the most famous pilgrimage site, the most colourful folklore, the smallest and oldest settlement, the only natural cave bath, and the climatic health resort with the cleanest air in Hungary. It is no accident that most of Hungary's UNESCO World Heritage sites and assets can be found here.

Winter activities have increased dramatically in recent years. New ski courses have been developed; dog sled races, horse sleigh programs, charming Christmas fairs and an aspic festival, draw visitors to this region even on cold days.

People living here value good food, too, verified by a large number of restaurants providing versatile culinary delights to their guests. They serve the genuine dishes of their ancestors in many places even today.

Hospitable local people await visitors with plenty of accommodation options, and the traveller can go to sleep in a contemporary farmhouse, comfortable private pension, an elegant hotel or castle.

NÓGRÁD AND THE REGION

THE PALÓC MIRACLE

The little hamlets hidden in the valleys, the geological rarities, the living traditions, colourful clothing and delicious food provide the opportunity to live a more traditional life, often missed in our everyday routine in the fast paced world today.

Salgótarján commemorates the mining past of the settlement with the first underground mining museum in the country presenting the past, and the technical monuments of the Nógrád coal basin. The intact gallery system of the former inclined Joseph pit in the heart of the town has been declared an industrial monument. The town has a unique position by the Mountains of Karancs and Medves, both of volcanic origin, and also the northern foothills of the Matra mountains.

The Salgó fortress dominates in the nearby town, the steep hillside is worth climbing for the beautiful views. The fortress of Somoskő is situated along the Hungarian-Slova-



Somoskő fortress

The fortress hill of Salgó is an excellent example of the “wool sack” crumbling of basalt stone. The fortress of Salgó



Fortress of Somoskő

kian border. A basalt spill, a sight of European fame can be visited in the neighbouring country with its 8-9 m high basalt “cascade” standing like organ pipes on the hillside. The Medves plateau is the largest basalt plateau in Central Europe. Walking on its top makes you feel like walking in a plain, while fauna characteristic to different climate zones can be observed in the same place. The wonderful environment and the natural peculiarities make the Medves plateau an excellent terrain for hiking, cycling and horse riding.

Szécsény is worth visiting for its castle, beautifully preserved and renovated on the territory of the former fortress constituting the historical core of the town. The building erected in rural Baroque style accommodates a museum; and its park is under natural protection. The fire tower was built in the center of the town, which is obviously slanted, tilted to the north.

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Silence, peace, closeness to nature, fresh air and opportunity for unforgettable experiences, all this is offered to you by Nógrád and its district.

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Balassagyarmat is the capital of Palóc land. The Palóc people have a deserved reputation for their valuable and special folk art and clothes which are presented in the Palóc museum and in its park. The most beautiful building of the town is the former county hall built in classicist style. The orthodox Jewish cemetery was the first to be drawn under protection in Hungary.



From a bird's eye view the fortress of Hollókő is like a snail shell with the pentagonal old tower in its centre.

Hollókő, a Palóc settlement preserved most homogeneously is one of the UNESCO world heritage sites. Walking around the 58 protected buildings of the old village and the small church, you may feel as if you were walking in the past. Nevertheless, this part of the village is inhabited even today. Reminders of the rural culture including traditional activities are presented in the houses: pottery, weaving and basket weaving amid the rich folklore characteristic to the region. In the fortress erected above the village, fortress tournaments are performed to entertain visitors in summer time.

Have you ever walked on the bottom of a sea in the middle of Europe? If you want to, you have to visit Ipolytarnóc where the flora and fauna of an ancient sea from 20 million years ago has been preserved for us by a volcanic eruption. A unique thematic trail has been constructed in the place

called the “Palóc Pompeii”. On the 800 metre long tour, you find yourself in a place with an unprecedented abundance of residue of an ancient world, including the footprints of a large number of ancient animals, shark teeth, petrified trees and plant prints. One of the renowned sights is the petrified pieces of a 20 million years old ancient pine 8 metres in circumference and 100 metres long.

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**Szentkút is a
national shrine,
a pilgrimage site
in Palóc land.**
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Fortress of Hollókő

The settlement Kazár is situated in a quiet valley several kilometres away from Salgótarján, where you can see the most beautiful farm houses with knotted and saddle roofs, porches, and the most colourful female clothes of Palóc land. At the border of the settlement, a volcanic formation unique in Central Europe can be seen on an area of one hectare. This wonderful natural sight is rhyolit tuff erosion resembling a moon landscape.

At Kozárd the green valley, the hillside covered with juniper, apricot and cherry orchards, apple woods and “mangalica” pig farms as preserved relics of rural life, as well as the delicacies of Palóc and rural Hungarian gastronomy await the traveller.

The traveller can find an excellent four-star hotel in the castle of Szirák.



GYÖNGYÖS AND THE MÁTRA REGION

MÁTRA, EXPERIENCE IN ANY SEASON

The surroundings of Gyöngyös have been inhabited since ancient times. Civilization has created numerous monuments in the small town, thus it is rightly recommended to travellers.

A conspicuous building in the centre of the town is the church in Baroque style. Its treasury hides Renaissance liturgical objects of considerable value. The precious monuments of the town include the Franciscan church and monastery. The only feudal library in the country can also be seen in

gone complete reconstruction; it accommodates the Mátra Museum today.

The southern slopes of the volcanic Mátra mountains provide ideal conditions for the largest historical wine district of the region, the Mátra Wine District. This is why Gyöngyös has become a town of vineyards and wine. Aromatic nectars have deserved being tasted in the wine cellars of Farkasmály, lined up at the edge of the town. In the winery of Nagyréde, in the historical cellar of Gyöngyöstarján as well as in the press houses hollowed out in the tuff of Gyöngyöspata.

Mátra is an emblematic mountain in Hungary since it is the highest peak in the

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The world of beech forests cool in the summer, foggy peaks mysterious in autumn, and the possibility of skiing in sparkling sunshine in the winter attract thousands of tourists to the versatile Mátra Mountain.

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the monastery that has functioned without interruption since the middle ages with 14 thousand volumes, including 200 incubula.

The stone lions guarding the gate of the Orczy castle are considered the symbol of Gyöngyös. The castle building has under-



country, the 1014 metre high Kékestető, which can be found here along with the adjoining second highest point, Galyatető. This region is a climatic health resort because of its crystal clear air. Mátra with its signposted and marked hiking trails is a paradise for hikers.



The church of Gyöngyöspata with its unique decoration can be proud of its wooden Jesse altar unprecedented in Europe. A copy of the Nekcsei Bible can also be seen in the church.

Two modern ski centres have been constructed on its slopes in recent years, Kékestető and Mátraszentistván, where well-maintained, snow-gunned ski tracks with healthy clean air welcome the skiers. The mountain is a preferred place for cyclists, as well, a site of national and international cycling races. Csókakő and Báránkő in the Mátra Mountain representing an outstanding climbing school are well known among rock climbers. The mountain can also be reached by the romantic narrow-gauge railway from Gyöngyös.

A 930 metre long bob track functions in the quarry of Sástó, while the adventure park is exciting with its rope tracks and suspended bridges. If you are after the highest lake in Hungary, you have to visit Sástó as well, where angling and boating provide entertainment for you.

In Mátrafüred adventurous tourists can join guided Segway and Nordic Walking tours through the forest.

The highest situated villages of the country, Mátraszentlászló, Mátraszentimre and Mátraszentistván are here, and close to them at Piskéstető there is an observatory. Nearby Fallóskút is a preferred place of pilgrimage.

Parászasvár is famous for its wonderful romantic Károlyi hunting lodge providing an elegant castle hotel. The well-known carbonic mineral water of Parád containing hydrogen sulphide, called “csevice” by locals, rushes up from the earth here. People have been drinking the water here for 200 years to relieve various stomach disorders.

Natural carbon dioxide gas spills from the earth at Mátraderecske caused by volcanic post-activity, and it is used for healing



Skiers in the Mátra Mountain



after having been “domesticated”. The only dry bath of the country with natural carbon dioxide, ‘the mofetta’, functions here and provides complementary therapy for cardiovascular and musculoskeletal diseases.

Starting out from the northern slopes of the Mátra, following the Palóc route, you can experience live traditions of people in more than 30 settlements. Rural architecture, artisan workshops, gastronomic specialties and sincere hospitality awaits visitors here.

Verpelét, Markaz, Abasár and Kiskánya are worth visiting because of their excellent wines typical to the district. The renovated fortress ruins at Kiskánya and Sirok are scenes of colourful castle tournaments and gastronomic programs in the summer.

Among the architectural monuments of Hatvan along the route of the river Zagyva, you will find the beautiful Grassalkovich castle and the buildings of the Baroque farmstead represent considerable value.



The hot spring rushing up from the depths of the earth at Egerszalók counts as a real curiosity. Hot water of 68 degrees and unique composition rushes up from a depth of nearly four hundred metres with salt segregation unprecedented in Europe and transforms the surface into a moon landscape. Similar phenomena can only be witnessed in Pamukkale, Turkey and in the US.

View of Eger from the fortress

EGER AND ITS SURROUNDINGS

STAR REGION – ADVENTURE AND RECREATION

A wide choice of opportunities and experience is available for visitors who enjoy hiking, horse riding, gastronomic events or relaxing in a thermal spa.

Eger has been one of the most frequently visited towns of Hungary in the recent years. It used to be the site of many important events in the course of centuries and is a symbol of heroic firmness, persistence and patriotism for every Hungarian. An example of this was provided by István Dobó and the defenders of the fortress

The town “inherited” an advanced bath culture from the Turks represented today by the Turkish Bath, recalling the architectural style and the unique atmosphere of that age along with other thermal baths and historical monuments of the town. The medicinal water in the spas contains radon and efficiently cures musculoskeletal disorders.

Tourists can take a romantic walk in the zigzag streets in the Baroque downtown under the fortress. The main square of the town is Dobó Square decorated with one of the most beautiful Baroque churches of Europe. The Liceum is also worth visiting where you can scrutinize the sky from a magic tower and vis-



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Excellent catering establishments, cafés, confectioneries, interesting museums and exhibitions – this is what invites guests to Eger.

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of Eger during the famous Turkish siege, successfully repelled in 1552. Due to this and the famous novel by Géza Gárdonyi titled ‘The Stars of Eger’, immortalizing the memory of the heroes, this fort and its exhibitions are among the most-visited museums of the country.

it the Diocesan Library to see the first printed Hungarian book, the Buda Chronicle from 1473 kept here together with many codes. In the second largest church of Hungary, the Basilica built in classicist style, you can enjoy the wonderful sounds of the organ in the middle of the day during the main tourist season.

The Marzipan Museum and many varied exhibitions of the synagogue attract numerous visitors to the town.

Besides the already known and preferred art and gastronomy festivals, Kaláka Festival, is the largest folklore festival in Hungary, and is organized in Eger at the end of June.

Eger is the centre of a historical wine region of five thousand hectares where one of the most renowned Hungarian wines, the Bull's Blood of Eger is produced. The romantic taverns of the town, the restaurants offering dishes cooked with the "juice of the hill", and the wine cellars surrounding the town, including Szépasszony Valley, must not be missed. The fiery and deep red cuvee, the Bull's Blood of Eger is the flagship of the wine district but the aromatic white Egri Leányka and the wines made from new grape varieties are becoming popular too. The viticulturists of Eger created the white counterpart of the Bull's Blood in 2010, calling it the Star of Eger, which expresses the peculiarities of this vine growing area and reflects the versatility of varieties cultivated in the district. It has become very popular.

A real curiosity is the thermal spring at Egerszalók rushing up from the depths of the earth. The spa and the hotel built for utilizing the medicinal water of the hot spring offer excellent therapy for rheumatic diseases and for post-operational rehabilitation.

The beehive stones carved in rhyolitic tuff, the caves and the cave homes at Egerszalók serve as spectacular sights for tourists and can be visited like a village museum.



Row of vine

The historic wine region of over five thousand hectares is the cradle of the most reputable red wine of Hungary, the Bull's Blood of Eger.



Wine cellar

The information centre in the middle of the settlement serves as farmers' market every Saturday morning. In the terraced spa tiled with beautiful mosaic situated in the splendid thermal valley of Demjén, there is an opportunity for a romantic bath at night, every day of the year. Guests can select from the abundant accommodation options in the settlements of the Thermal Valley from simple cottages to four-star wellness hotels.

Numerous vine hills can be seen around the settlements where you have opportunity to taste the fine wines of renowned vine growers in the wonderful rhyolitic tuff cellars. A number of gastronomic events await guests beginning with the Boros-Toros (wine and food) days in Egerszalók through the "Italian" Riesling Festival at Egerszólát and the Day of Cabbage Dishes at Demjén up to the Borkorcsolya (bits to relish wine) days in the Valley of Thermal Waters.

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The surroundings of Eger are also a paradise for anglers; you have to visit the water reservoir at Egerszalók and Ostoros, as well as the fish pond of Bélapátfalva with a fishing rod!

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Szilvásvár is one of the preferred holiday resorts of Hungary since the Szalajka valley is one of the country's most beautiful areas.

The Veil Falls, the open-air forest museum, the trout ponds, the protected ancient beech wood and the cave of the prehistoric man at Istállókő can be visited by hikers, but you may choose the narrow-gauge forest railway, a horse ride, or



Szilvásvár is home to the world-famous Lipizzaner stud.

a carriage or horse-drawn sleigh. Posted trails and maps support hikers in finding their way. The “black gold” of kitchens, truffles, grow in the woods of the district. Truffles are “hunted” in the autumn with dogs playing the main role. In the restaurants you can taste dishes prepared with the valuable truffle and the special trout dishes. One of the most beautiful riding centres in the country has been constructed in the village and the only Lipizzaner stud maintained as a gene bank can be found here, too.

Bélapátfalva is in the western gate of the Bükk Mountains situated at the western foot of the Bélkő hill. Numerous hiking trails await hikers and cyclists here, including the thematic trail of Bélkő. The Cistercian abbey founded in 1232 in the depth of the valley with a cross-shaped church built in Romanesque style still exists together with its undercroft.

Felsőtárkány is the western gate of the Bükk National Park, and an exhibition in the visitor centre presents the flora and fauna of the Bükk Mountain to the tourists. You can leave the settlement by the romantic narrow-gauge railway towards the inner parts of the mountain. Tourists on horseback and on bicycles find excellent forest terrains here. Hikers can use the thematic trail with 21 stations.

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The fields around
Noszvaj are
considered the best
habitat of the Eger
wine region.
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Studs grazing in the Bükk Mountain

The memories of rural life are truly preserved in Noszvaj, local specialties are baked in the oven, and traditional plum marmalade is cooked in a cauldron making the settlement a popular place for rural tourism. The proportional building of the De la Motte castle built in Baroque style and the garden surrounding it are spectacular.

Szomolya is famous for the special variety of black, crunchy cherries grown only here and for the local dishes cooked from them. Homes cut in the hillside can also be seen here. Several beautiful examples of beehive stones (geological formations) characteristic to the foot of the Bükk can be found near the village.

Bogács has become a popular recreation resort in the recent years. Its spa utilises the thermal water, which is 76 °C, and is a great place to visit in both summer and winter to



bathe in its open pools. Besides bathing, guests relaxing here enjoy the beauty of the landscape, taste the excellent wines pressed from the grapes grown on the local hillsides, and visit the beehive stones.

Cserépfalu lies by the Hór valley, one of the most beautiful valleys of the Bükk Mountain, and is a good starting point for excursions.

The nearest interesting sight is the Suba hole where the traces of cavemen pertaining to the Neanderthal culture were found with stone tools and the bones of animals from the ice age.



Easter at Mezőkövesd

Mezőkövesd owes its fame to the colourful “matyó” embroidery and the medicinal water of the spa.

The world-famous matyó heritage is not only our national legacy but a part of the intellectual world heritage of UNESCO as well. An exhibition in the centre of the town offers insight into the life of the matyó people, displaying colourful traditional costumes as well. Representatives of applied

arts, work in the rural historical houses in the “Hadas” part of the town, resemble a museum village, where visitors can learn the secrets of furniture painting, weaving, gingerbread and pottery making amongst other arts and crafts. A museum of European reputation displaying agricultural equipment is nearby.

The largest spa of Northern Hungary has been established at the edge of the town. The sulphuric water is suitable for healing rheumatic diseases, arthritis, and for the post-operation treatment of orthopaedic complaints. 21 pools are available on an area of 11 hectares including indoor and open-

The renovated spa at Bükkszék awaits those who wish to swim, bath and recover. Guests enjoy the curative effect of the water of 39 °C and the special atmosphere of the village alike.

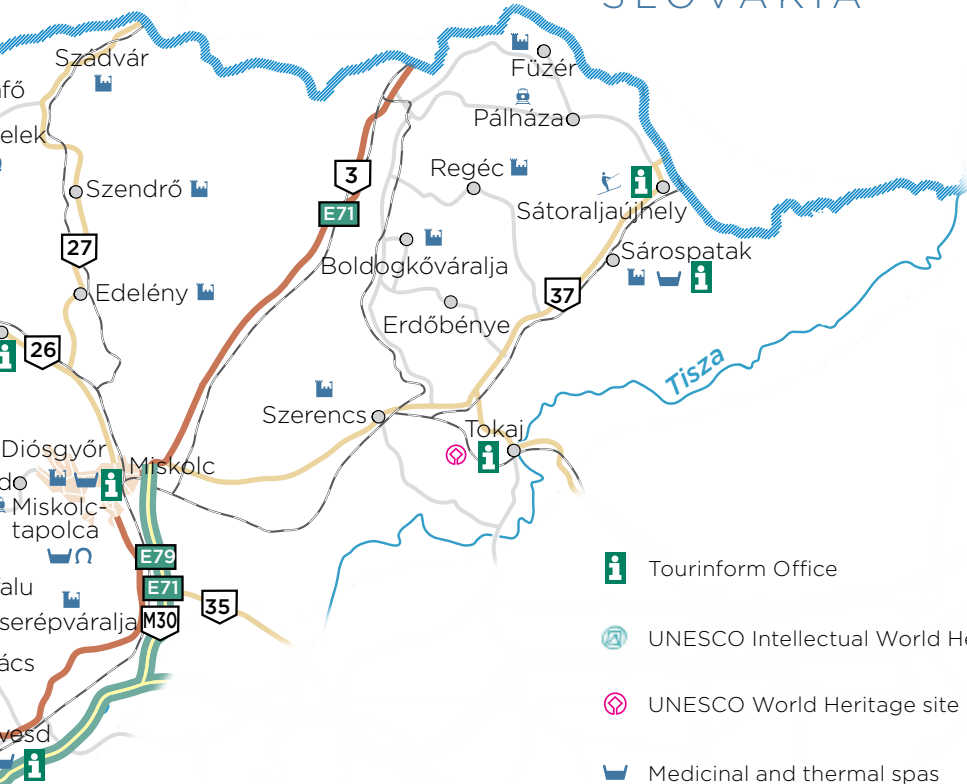


Bükkszék

air pools for medical treatment and for entertainment, children's pools, a wave bath and an indoor swimming pool.

Many visitors prefer Bükkszék for its 30-40 °C medicinal water. The medicinal water of the spa has enjoyed a country-wide reputation since 1930 and the water is bottled under the name Salvus, and offers alleviation of stomach disorders, diabetes and respiratory diseases.

SLOVAKIA



Tourinform Office



UNESCO Intellectual World Heritage



UNESCO World Heritage site



Medicinal and thermal spas



Fortress



Ski course



Cave



Narrow-gauge railway

MISKOLC

GOOD TIMES AROUND MISKOLC

If you are interested in history, music, fine arts and architecture; if you enjoy hiking or extreme sports, or wish to cross the forest on two wheels; or you just want to relax, Miskolc is your town.

This is the fourth largest town in Hungary and the Ávas hill in the downtown area have been inhabited for 70 thousand years. The fortress of Diósgyőr is one of the oldest and most significant monuments of Miskolc. The Renaissance fortress was a wedding gift for queens, a witches' scaffold, its walls witnessed no military life but high spirits with lute music. The Middle Age Festival, recalling the age of Louis the Great organised each summer, reflects this atmosphere, where guests meet with Louis denarius during their travel through time and have opportunity to visit the historical exhibition displaying most wax figures in Central Europe. The fortress is currently awaiting renovation. In the framework of a re-



The first full-figure statue of Kossuth

In sunny weather you should visit the sundial behind the Kossuth statue in Erzsébet square, and you will be the hand of the clock.



Fortress of Diósgyőr

construction historical truth will be taken into account in places and reconstructed sympathetically, which will make Diósgyőr fortress even more popular. The knight hall and the chapel will be reconstructed and lookout terraces will be built at the top of the towers. With a field for knight tournaments and the market place new scenes will be attached to the fortress.

The Szinva stream splits the downtown and makes the squares and terraces of the town very romantic. The Ávas hill determines the town's layout, with hundreds of wine houses and cellars in its hillside. The Ávas lookout shows the wonderful view of Miskolc and its surroundings. The town has plenty of historical and cultural values; you can find here the most complete mineral collection of Hungary and the richest collection of Hungarian paintings of the countryside.

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The sculpture of the Girls of Miskolc and the bronze statute of Mancs, the famous rescue dog on the Bridge of Lovers can be good subjects for photographers.

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The most significant late Gothic monument in the country is the reformed church on the Avas hill. The 16-metre high iconostas of the Greek Orthodox Church is the most beautiful wall of icons in the country and the largest in Central Europe. The Calvinist church built of timber is a true curiosity. The largest functioning synagogue of the region is the most beautiful synagogue interior in Hungary. The first



In Miskolctapolca both the outdoor pools and the indoor halls of the cave bath offer a unique spectacle and eventful relaxation.

stone theatre of the country playing in the Hungarian language was opened in Miskolc in 1823, and today hosts one of the most significant musical events in the region each year, the Opera Festival. The theatre today is one of the largest performance establishments in Central Europe and is a suitable venue for most types of performance.

Have you ever bathed in a cave? This can come true in Miskolctapolca. The water of the spa complex and its cave atmosphere favourably influence heart diseases, motion and respiratory problems. Visitors can choose a pool with thermal water, pond, and cave pool. You will have the opportunity to try the largest adventure park of Northern Hungary constructed in a natural environment, and one of the most exciting bob tracks of the country open throughout the year. At the edge of the town hundreds of animals can be observed in the zoo and

cultural park. In good weather animal feeding, animal shows and a petting zoo, or horse riding make the observation of animals more exciting. A thematic trail facilitates the observation of the fauna and flora of the surroundings where you can look round from a high-stand or pass the viaduct.

Miskolc is embraced by the Bükk, the mountains that are an integral part of the life of the town and its surroundings.

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Lillafüred is the true pearl of Miskolc, a recognized climatic health resort.

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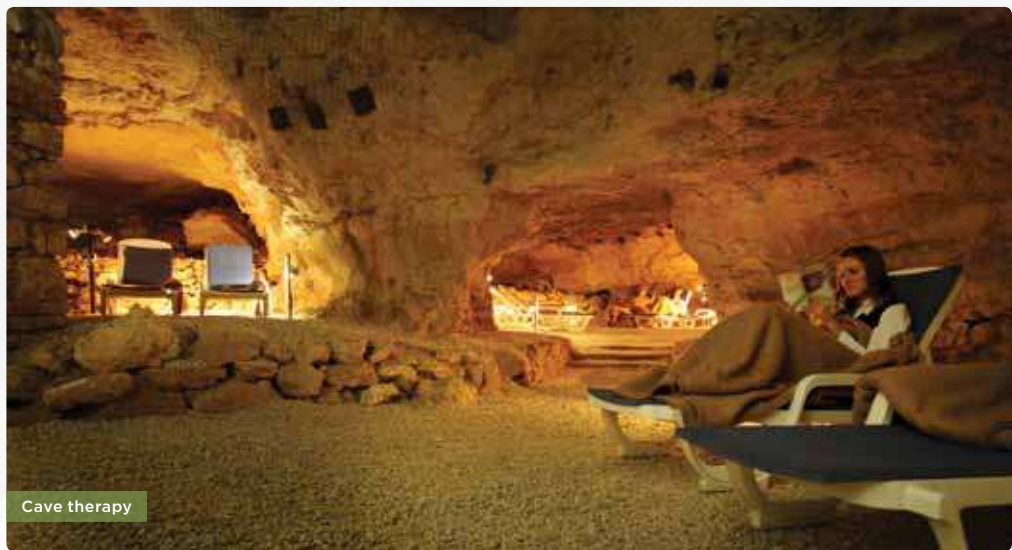


Lillafüred belonging to the town is a mountain resort of nation-wide reputation where you can boat in the deep-green Hámori Lake. The suspended garden of the hotel erected on the hillside in a wonderful location awaits guests for a walk with a great view from its terraces. The water fall of the Szinva stream can be seen here, the rumbling of this natural spectacle belongs to the atmosphere of Lillafüred.

The flavour of smoked trout consumed at the trout farm of Garadna cannot be compared to anything else. At the farm developed on the water of the Margit spring indigenous brown trout breed in 18 pools, are also kept as a gene bank. Trout fishing is worth trying in the mountain stream meandering between bold cliffs in the Garadna valley. A romantic program is to visit the valleys of the Bükk on the narrow-gauge forest railway started nearly eighty years ago. The

train drawn by a special locomotive with a hybrid drive goes from Diósgyőr via Lillafüred to Garadna. An eco-tourist centre in the building of the Lillafüred railway station presents the flora and fauna of the Bükk, as well as the narrow-gauge railways of Hungary.

The mountain is a region of Hungary rich in caves, too. The St. Stephan cave by Lillafüred has a well-deserved reputation for dripstones. It functions as a climatic health resort as well. The Anna cave attracts curious travellers by its calcareous tuff formations of European significance. Remains of cavemen were first found in Hungary in the Szeleta cave.



Cave therapy

The 90 metre long duct of the cave under special protection accommodates several protected species of bats. The nearby Fehérkőlápa, ruins of the Pauline monastery at Szentlélek, or the Seeing Rocks offering wonderful views to the valleys around and are excellent destinations for hiking.

Those who enjoy spending their time doing recreational activities should visit the Bükk Mountain as its a paradise

for cyclists and hikers in the summer, plus a well-maintained ski slope welcomes ski fans after the first snow fall at Bánkút.

In Bükkzentkereszt you can visit Uncle Gyuri, the only herb-man in Hungary, and join him on his herb collecting tours. The holiday resort is renowned for its crystalclear air, horse farm, and an exhibition presenting local glasswork. A walk to the healing stones at the edge of the village or riding on a horse-drawn sleigh in the winter is popular among tourists. The walls of the mediaeval fortress of Ónod are surrounded by a moat, and the fortress wall offers a wonderful view at the bend of the Sajó River. The historical sig-

The legend says that Virgin Mary appeared at Bükkzentkereszt in the past. She walked through the wood, along the hamlet and when she got tired she rested on a stone. The place is called by the locals the stone of the Blessed Virgin and considered a sacred and healing place.



nificance of the fortress dates back to the time of the Rákóczi war of independence, this was one of the headquarters of Ferenc Rákóczi II. The dethronement of the Habsburg was announced on the national assembly held on the field by the fortress in 1707. A memorial column erected on the 200th anniversary of the national assembly of Ónod in 1907 stands in front of the reform church.

THE CARST OF AGGTELEK AND ITS REGION

NATURE UPPER DEGREE

The Carst of Aggtelek hides numerous treasures on and under the surface. The region offers a unique experience for tourists seeking recreation or for adventurous explorers.

Nearly 300 caves can be found on the territory of the Carst of Aggtelek, listed by UNESCO World Heritage since 1995. The longest cave in Hungary, the Baradla cave,

with a total length of over 25 km and even-crossing the country border, can be found here. This is the most popular cave in Hungary and the richest in stalactites and stalagmites. On the short tour in the Aggtelek cave, visitors may witness a music performance with light effects in the Concert Hall with excellent acoustic, where various kinds of concerts are organised on a regular basis. The Hall of Giants, can be seen on the Vöröstó medium tour and the Jósvalfő short tour. A peculiarity of the Vöröstó medium



Vörös Lake visitor centre

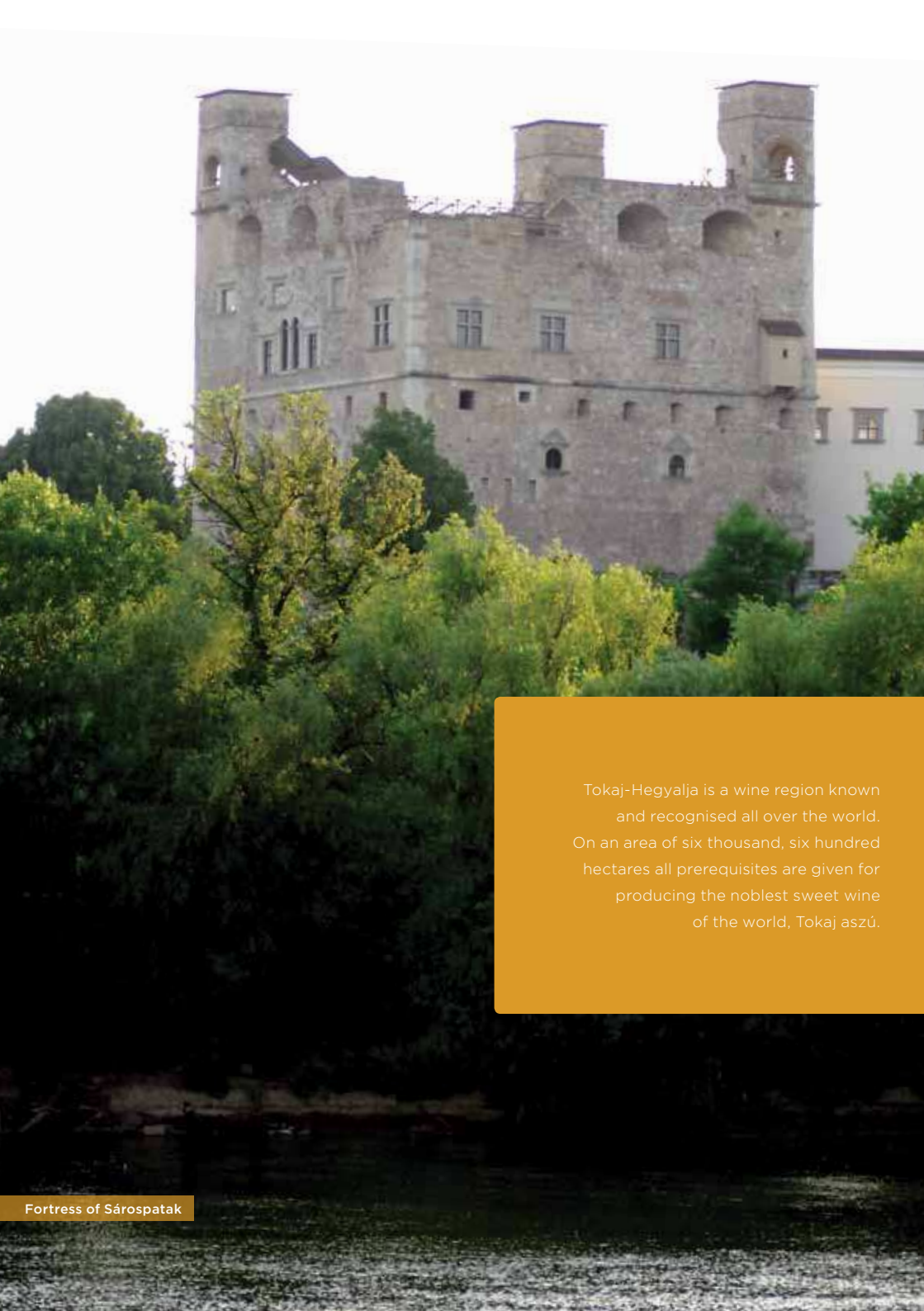


tour is that the highest stalagmite of Hungary, with a 20 m high “Observatory” of around 900 tons can be seen here. Besides Baradla, five additional caves await guests eager to discover the secrets of the deep.

Hiking or cycling the thematic trails in Aggtelek National Park, visitors will see lots of interesting natural, cultural and historical sights along the way.

Once you are in this region of caves, it is worth seeing the water mill at Szinpetri, with the Guinness-recorder Largest Book of the World, and Tornakápolna hidden in the hills several kilometres away from here. The latter is the smallest settlement of the country with just 11 permanent inhabitants, and attracts a lot of tourists with its precious church and a lookout providing excellent panoramic views.

The only “Hucul” horse stud of Hungary bred for the purpose of gene preservation is kept at Jósavfő.



Tokaj-Hegyalja is a wine region known and recognised all over the world. On an area of six thousand, six hundred hectares all prerequisites are given for producing the noblest sweet wine of the world, Tokaj aszú.

TOKAJ-HEGYALJA AND THE ZEMPLÉN

WINE, CULTURE AND ADVENTURE

Travellers have not only visited Tokaj today, but as early as in the 18th century many of them wanted to see where and how Tokaj wine was made.

Little needs to be said about the noble nectars of Tokaj since everyone knows the intoxicating sweetness of 3-, 5- or 6-butt aszú wines, the unique Szamorodni, the fragrant Furmint and yellow Muscat wines. The produce of viticulturists of the wine region has been recognised by gold and silver awards at numerous world contests.



The world-famous Tokaj wine

Besides Hungarians, various groups of people like Armenians, Jews, Germans and Poles settled down here and enriched the region by their religion, architecture and traditions. As a result, the century-old cellars, old buildings, excellent wines and the picturesque landscape together provide an exceptional ex-

perience for visitors today. These are the values by which 27 settlements in the wine district have deserved the title of World Heritage.

The town of Tokaj gained its present image in the 19th century, when the houses of Greek merchants were built around the current Kossuth Square, and the emblems of the merchants can still be seen on the house gates. A speciality of the town is the synagogue built in the late 19th century, serving as a cultural and conference centre. today, Entertaining performances can also be enjoyed in the theatre adjacent to it. The system of cellars extending beneath the downtown is several hundreds of years old and in some

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You can obtain evidence on the professionalism, affection and tradition of the people of Hegyalja in the course of wine tasting in larger and smaller, even in family wine cellars.

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of these cellars wine was stored already in the 15th to 16th centuries. Rákóczi cellar in the main square of the town is most conspicuous where according to tradition János Szapolyai was elected King in 1526.

Among the settlements of the region, the traditions of Tokaj linked to wine culture

are the most significant. The grape harvest was celebrated as early as in the 18th century, and from the early 19th century local students marched in the streets of Tokaj singing wine songs and escorting the statute of Bacchus in vintage times. The current march and festival has developed from this tradition luring a mass of guests to the town each year.



Two types of barrels have become typical to Tokaj-Hegyalja: the cask of Gönc and the cask of Szerednye. The former is an oak barrel of 136.6 litres and the latter of 220 litres.

Large wineries have been established on the hillsides of the wine region, where guests can taste a variety of Tokaj wine in the cellars. Lovers of wine and landscape can hire bicycles or scooters in the (wine) tour centre. At weekends tourists can reach the cellars by a small rubber-wheeled train, while the wine bus transports the guests to the wineries of the district.

Szerencs is built at the gate of the wine region representing a new chapter in the economy of the wine district since the late 19th century, when the then-largest sugar mill and refinery of Europe was put in operation in 1889, followed by a chocolate factory. The third-largest sugar museum of the world enjoys an international reputation and can be visited here. The third largest picture postcard collection in the world is also worth seeing as part of the Zemplén Museum among the walls of the

medieval fort. The old Art Nouveau bath has been restored in Szerencs as well, and is worth seeing

In the workshops of coopers in Erdőberény, Gönc and Szerednye casks typical to Tokaj-Hegyalja are made according to old traditions even to date.

Sárospatak used to play the most important role in the history of the region. St. Elizabeth from the Arpad House,

”

**Nagy-Kopasz hill,
a symbol of the
wine district.**

”



Nagy-Kopasz Mountain

daughter of King Endre II, was born here in 1207, and this was the scene of a national assembly as well. The dissemination of reformation has been facilitated by the Reformed College of Sárospatak functioning even today, and contributed to the evolution of the intellectual and religious identity of the region through centuries. One of the largest ecclesiastic collections of Hungary is safeguarded in its library. Tourists visiting the town can also relax in the renovated bath.

Sátorlajújhely used to be the capital of the old Zemplén County. The legend says that Moses Teitelbaum living here and respected as the “miracle rabbi” cured Kossuth, and his grave is visited by foreigners, too, on a regular basis.

The wine specialties of Hegyalja can be tasted in the “stomach” of the Magas hill in Zsólyomka Valley and on the Ungvár row of cellars. During regular cellar tours guests can



sample some extra-special distillates in the 800-year old enchanting cellars in order to regain the harmony of their body and soul.

The centre of active recreation in Zemplén is on Magas hill. The longest rolling slalom bob in Central Europe is here, as well as being the fastest in Europe, and the longest chair lift of the country is here, plus in winter and summer a skating-rink and a wild park as well. The marked thematic trails and the new lookout tower provide an unforgettable experience, too.

Széphalom, several kilometres away from Sátoraljaújhely, is one of the most frequently-visited places of literary



Fortress of Füzér

pilgrimage. The Museum of Hungarian Language can be visited in the park of the former family mansion.

The fortresses in Upper Hungary are popular destinations for tourists, including the most renowned Boldogkőváralja, Regéc and Füzér. The latter is the most beautifully-situated fort of the country and the place where the Hungarian Royal Crown was kept, in the past.

Thanks to the cycle track, constructed between Sárospatak and Kassa, the walking and cycling track crossing the country border, as well as the embankment crown of 24 km length passing through Cigánd, Pácin, Nagyrosvány and Ricse in the Bodrogek, Zemplén and the Bodrogek are considered a real paradise for cyclists. Whilst cycling this section visitors can witness the enchanting landscape, the historical memorials, fortresses, architectural and natural heritage, as well as protected birds, sheep and cattle herds. In Károlyfalva, halfway between Sárospatak and Sátoraljaújhely, a unique spectacle, the former mill stone quarry, the tarn of Megyer

The Zemplén landscape is extremely rich in cultural, historical memorials and sights, and offers a large number of sports and recreation opportunities.



Cyclists at the fortress of Sárospatak

should definitely be visited. Progressing to the north, leaving behind Sátoraljaújhely and Széchalom you can render homage to culinary pleasures (pork dishes, gnocchi, wine, Hungarian brandy) in the environment of the renovated row of cellars and the “pálinka” house at Mikóháza. The oldest narrow-gauge forest railway of Hungary starts from Pálháza, the town at the northern border of the country, which takes you

through the picturesque Kőkapu (stone gate) to the tourist lodge of Rostalló. Popular hiking trails, criss-crossing North Zemplén, converge here.

Hikers and mountain bikers find downhill trails, and even the fans of rock climbing will find ideal terrain in the romantic wild landscapes of the Zemplén Mountain and Nagy-Milic. The noted rocks such as Sólyom-kő, Pengő-kő, Kerek-kő and the Nagy Péter-mennykő (“thunderbolt”) present dazzling views for tourists hiking and climbing here. The romantic Károlyi castle and the botanic garden with giant plane trees at Füžérvány offer attractive scenes as well. Hollóháza is famous even behind the country borders of its porcelain products. The factory and the Porcelain Museum attached to it are worth visiting. The hills of Western Zemplén hide Vizsoly, where the first complete printed Hungarian bible was issued, while its fortified church is a unique architectural monument. Gönc used to play an extremely important role in trading with the wines of Tokaj-Hegyalja evidenced by the fact that the cask of Gönc of 136.6 litres has become a measurement unit. The town has earned its reputation with the world-famous apricot pálinka of Gönc, plus the only preserved Hussite house of the country stands here as well. A rural-bourgeois interior reflecting circumstances of the second half of the 19th century has been arranged in the former house.

Telkibánya has preserved the memorials of gold and silver mining, and is a paradise for mineral hunters. The spe-



Tisza shore at Tokaj

When you have the opportunity to embark on a boat, there is nothing else than the miracles of water, the touch of wind, the vibrations of life on the shore, and the flying birds and clouds.



Grey heron at the Tisza River by Tokaj

cial view of the cemetery with wooden headboards reminds you of the past. The flora and fauna escorting the wonderful rivers and streams lift you out of the rush and noise of everyday life and lures you into a boat or canoe. The nearby Hernád River offers a lot of excitement with its pebbly riverbed and fallen trees to those having sufficient exercise and experience. Bodrog with its slow flow, on the other hand, can be recommended to beginners as well. Starting out for a boat trip from Sárospatak or Tokaj you can simply enjoy the touch of the water or join a boat excursion with wine tasting. Fish ponds exist in several places in the region at the edges of Mád, Tarcál and Erdőbénye. The bird life of Bodrogzug is also outstanding with rare birds of prey as well as numerous water and wading birds living here and the tide land which is an important station for bird migration as well.

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The wonderful fauna and flora escorting rivers and streams tear you away from the rush and noise of everyday life and lure the traveller into a boat or canoe.

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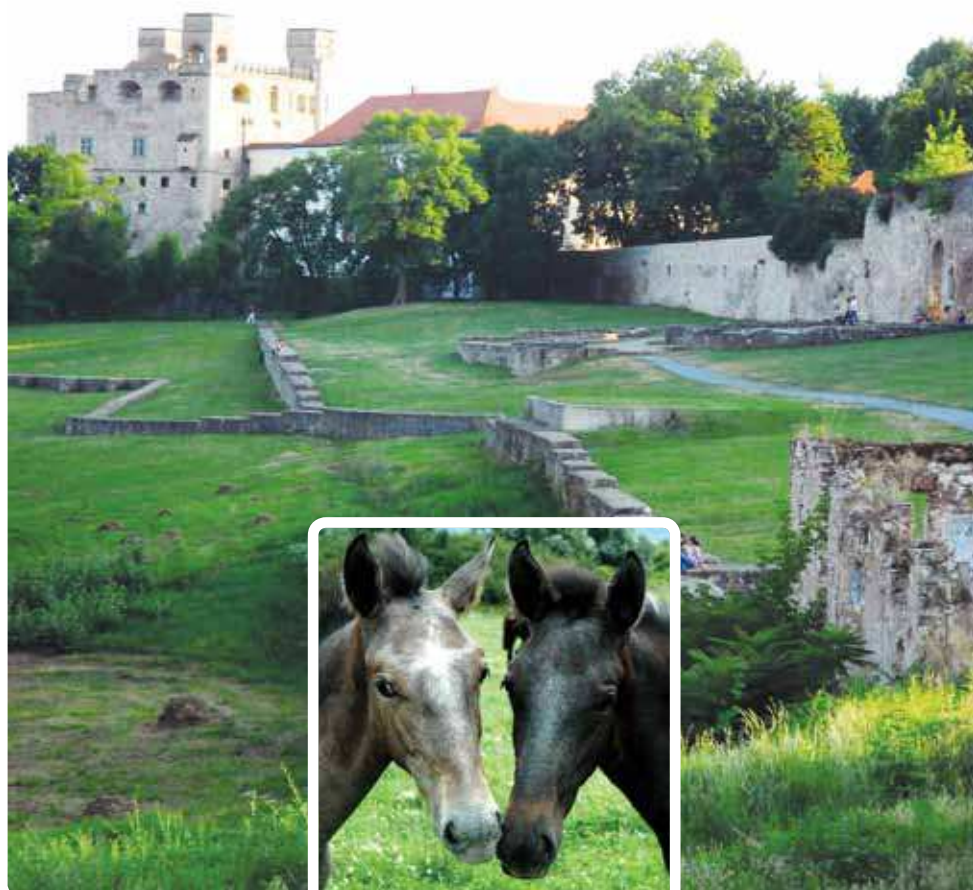
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