

ITINERARY FOR BUDAPEST, HUNGARY

This itinerary should be read in conjunction with the online map which includes more details on landmarks, tram and walking routes etc.

Days: 4/5 (This itinerary is organised based on the 4/5-days-trip assumption. Feel free to edit it to suit your purposes)

Recommended location of accommodation: Next to Erzsebet Square. In close proximity to the airport (30 min drive) and two central train stations & the Jewish Quarter and Ruin bars (a neighbourhood full of restaurants and bars).

A nice-to-visit place if you have more time: A day spent in the rural suburbs is a day well spent. Szentendre, in my personal opinion, takes the prize. Located by Danube River, it is a town known for its baroque architecture, churches, colourful houses and narrow, cobbled streets. The main square and the alleyways around it are lined with art galleries, museums and shops. In addition to this, the train route to this village offers pleasant views to the rural countryside and the residential developments on the outskirts of Budapest completing the whole experience that one should have in this city.

Day 1: Being a tourist in the city/ Pest side

HISTORIC CORE: The first day in Budapest should be spent on the Pest side where one can experience the city vibe, the activity, the movement, the wide roads (even heavy traffic), as well as the architectural beauty of the historic centre. Long-distance views also allow for spectacular vistas towards Buda side.

SIGHTSEEING THROUGH DIFFERENT ARCHITECTURAL PERIODS AND STYLES: Making a list with all the landmarks to visit and planning a route would be useful and save lots of time. *Extra tip: The landmarks illustrated in the online map are the most characteristic examples of each architectural period including gothic, renaissance, art nouveau, baroque, romantic, classical, neoclassical and contemporary architecture, as well as examples of Muslim influences.*

Day 2: Meeting the natural beauty/ Buda side

TRAM EXPERIENCE: To enter the Buda side, tram is the recommended means of transport, after walking, that can give someone a panoramic view of the city. *Extra tip: The online map shows the recommended tram route (lines 47 & 49) to cross to Buda side. Then, one can start his/her walk to the north.*

BUDA/BAROQUE DISTRICT: This beautiful district is characterised with narrow meandering lanes that have grown organically within the urban fabric, hilly landscape and great architecture. Every street reveals architectural gems, whilst the street layout allows for evolving perspectives. *Extra tip: The online map shows the main landmarks in the area, the recommended tram route (line 41) to use to experience the riverfront and the recommended walking route to ascend Castle Hill.*

Day 3: Getting closer to the water

MARGIT-SZIGET: Visiting the island offers a different experience compared to walking in Buda or Pest side. The rich vegetation in the island blocks the views to the mainland offering a feel of remoteness. There is a number of things to do on this island; walk along the riverfront, hire bikes to go around the whole island, go swimming at the pool or have drinks/a bite at the available bars/restaurants. *Extra tip: The online map shows the recommended tram route (line 2) to reach Margit-Sziget island and offers a view along the riverfront.*

EXPERIENCING THE RIVERFRONT: The riverfront, on the Pest side, is not continuous but, due to the presence of the tram line and main road, it is either offset from the river and elevated or adjacent to the riverfront. This constant change of levels and thus, interaction with the river is quite interesting, sometimes annoying, but overall worth experiencing. *Extra tip: The online map shows the recommended walking route from Margit-Sziget island to the south (up to Balna shopping centre) to fully experience the riverfront (e.g. have an immediate interaction via the improved public realm along the riverfront or an 'elevated' experience via the offset promenade).*

RIVER CRUISE BY NIGHT: One of the must-do things when visiting Budapest. I would highly recommend the night cruise, because the lighting during the night gives a different, and more spectacular, dimension to all the historic landmarks on both sides. The river cruise nicely completes the full experience of the river. *Extra tip: Better to book your cruise online beforehand.*

Day 4: Bath time

SZECHENYI THERMAL BATHS: Coming towards the end of the holiday trip, there is nothing better than treating yourself with a whole day in the thermal baths, which is another important part of the history of Budapest. *Extra tip: There are many baths in the city, I personally chose this one but do make sure you do your research and book in advance. I would recommend a less touristic one, although the prices might be higher.*