



**BUDA
PEST**

*Queen
of the Danube*

BUDA PEST

*Queen
of the Danube*

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Dear Reader,

Budapest has become the main symbol of Hungary across the world. With its unique location, scenic riverbank, lively culture and abundance of natural, thermal and mineral water resources, it is also known by many as ‘the Queen of the Danube’. Buda, with its hills to roam, and Pest, with its buzzing city life, are the perfect pair that make up one of Europe’s greatest attractions today.

However, there are numerous other attractions worth seeing to truly experience Hungary, such as the idyllic Danube Bend, the shores of Lake Balaton or one of the country’s many wine-growing regions. The country has many faces, yet the most important feature you will experience through exploring Hungary is its hospitality.



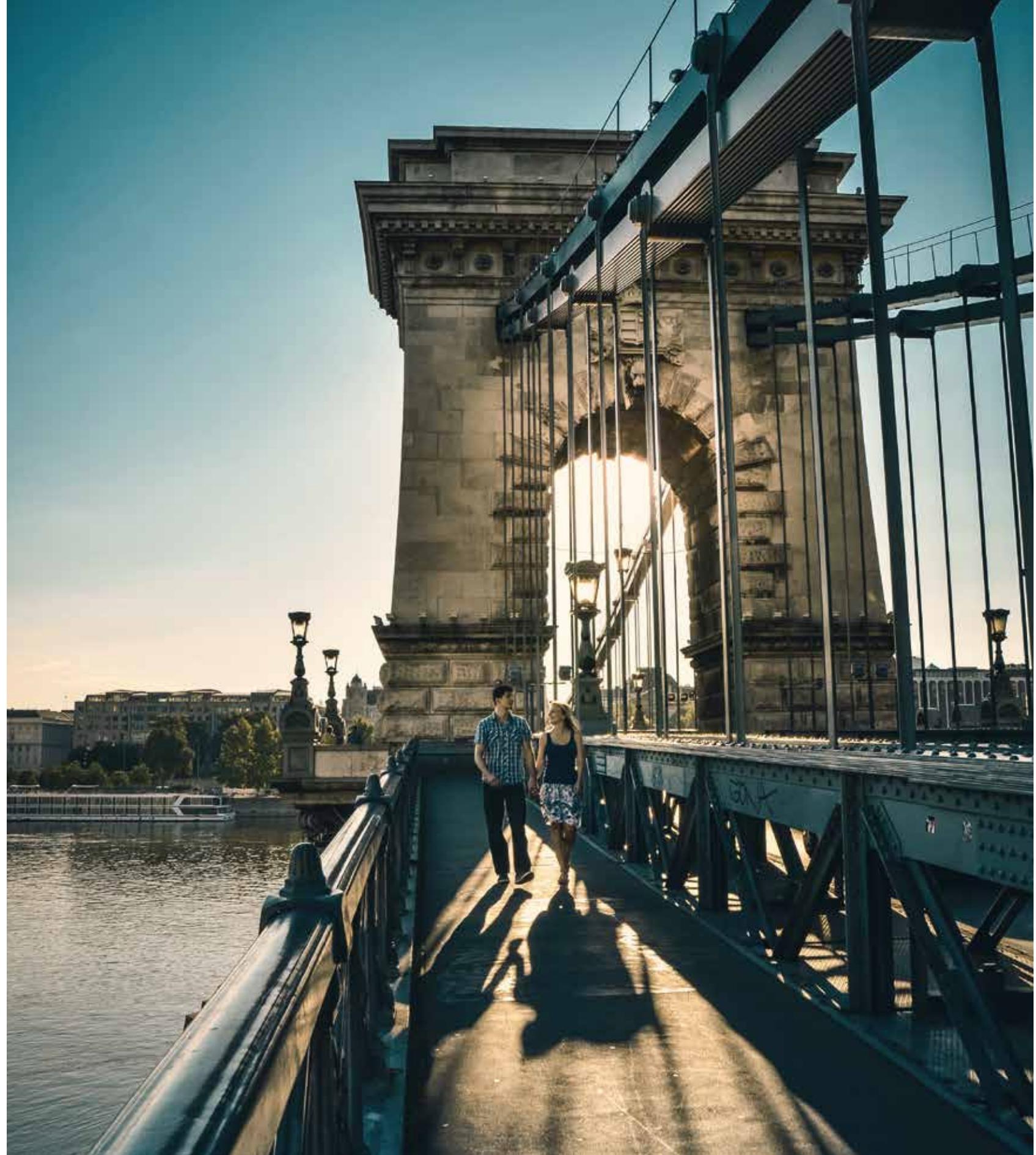
That is what ‘Queen of the Danube’ publication offers a taste of, highlighting the atmosphere and the cultural and natural heritage of which we Hungarians are extremely proud. It is difficult to describe a country’s atmosphere in words, so I sincerely hope that the urge to explore will bring you here to discover it for yourself! I hope you enjoy our publication!

*Dr. Zoltán Geller
Chief Executive Officer
Hungarian Tourism Agency*

BREAKING

RECORDS

*It is always exciting to discover what
others think of you, and it is a pleasure
to see that, in recent years, Budapest
has won many top awards and attracted
an increasing number of tourists.*

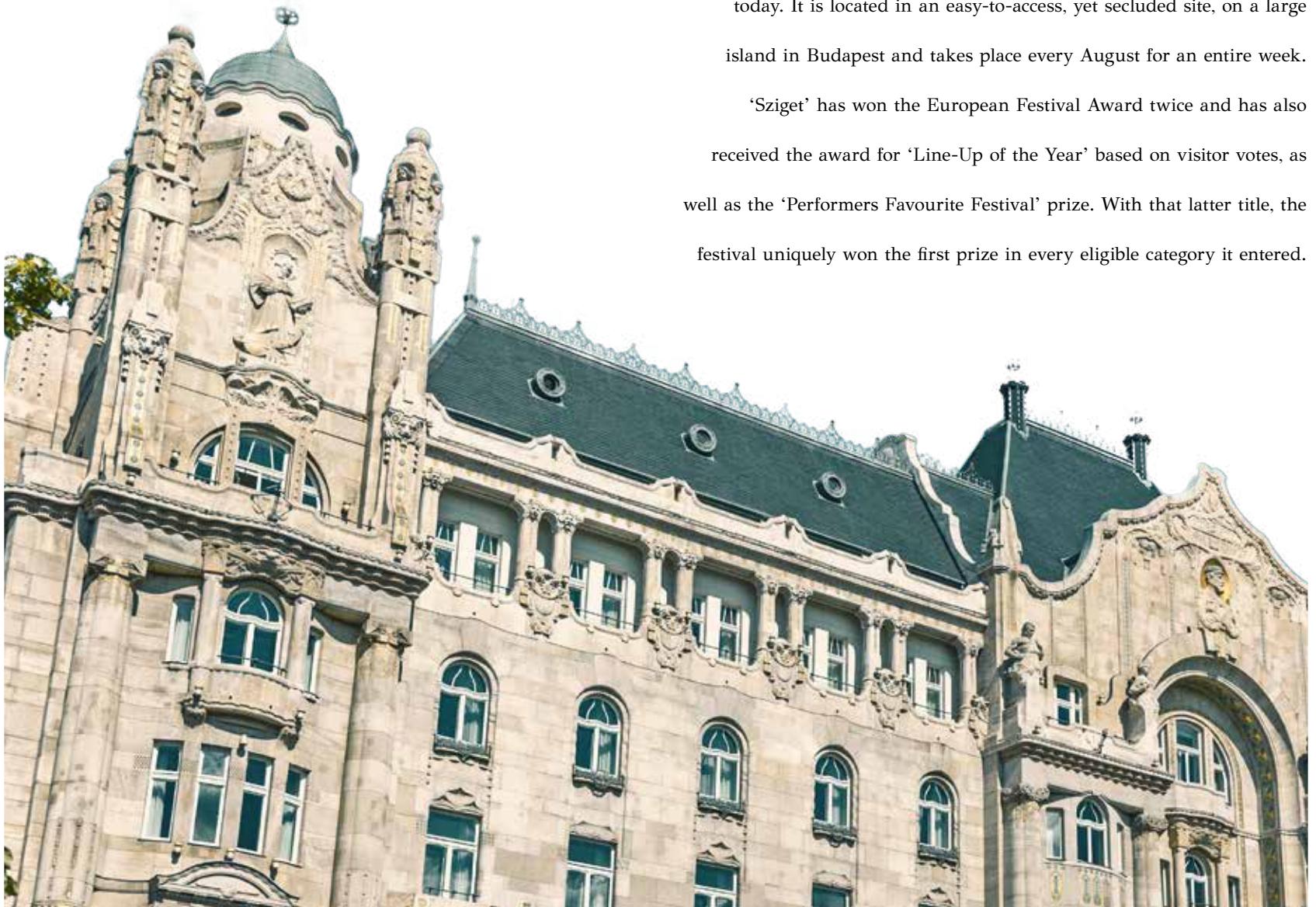


CHAIN BRIDGE

Voted Europe's best festival time and time again

'Sziget', a festival that showcases world-class stars and celebrates diversity, has become the leading example for festivals in Europe today. It is located in an easy-to-access, yet secluded site, on a large island in Budapest and takes place every August for an entire week.

'Sziget' has won the European Festival Award twice and has also received the award for 'Line-Up of the Year' based on visitor votes, as well as the 'Performers Favourite Festival' prize. With that latter title, the festival uniquely won the first prize in every eligible category it entered.



THE 17TH FINA WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS

"The best world aquatics championships of all time"

FINA President Dr Julio C. Maglione declared the 17th FINA World Championships organised in Budapest and Balatonfüred in July 2017, "the best World Championships ever in FINA history". Hungary had only two years to prepare for the event, after the withdrawal of Mexico, the country that was originally nominated to host the event in 2015. More than 485,000 people cheered on the athletes at various competition venues during the two weeks of the World Championships, with most of the foreign fans coming from France, Germany, Great Britain and the United States.

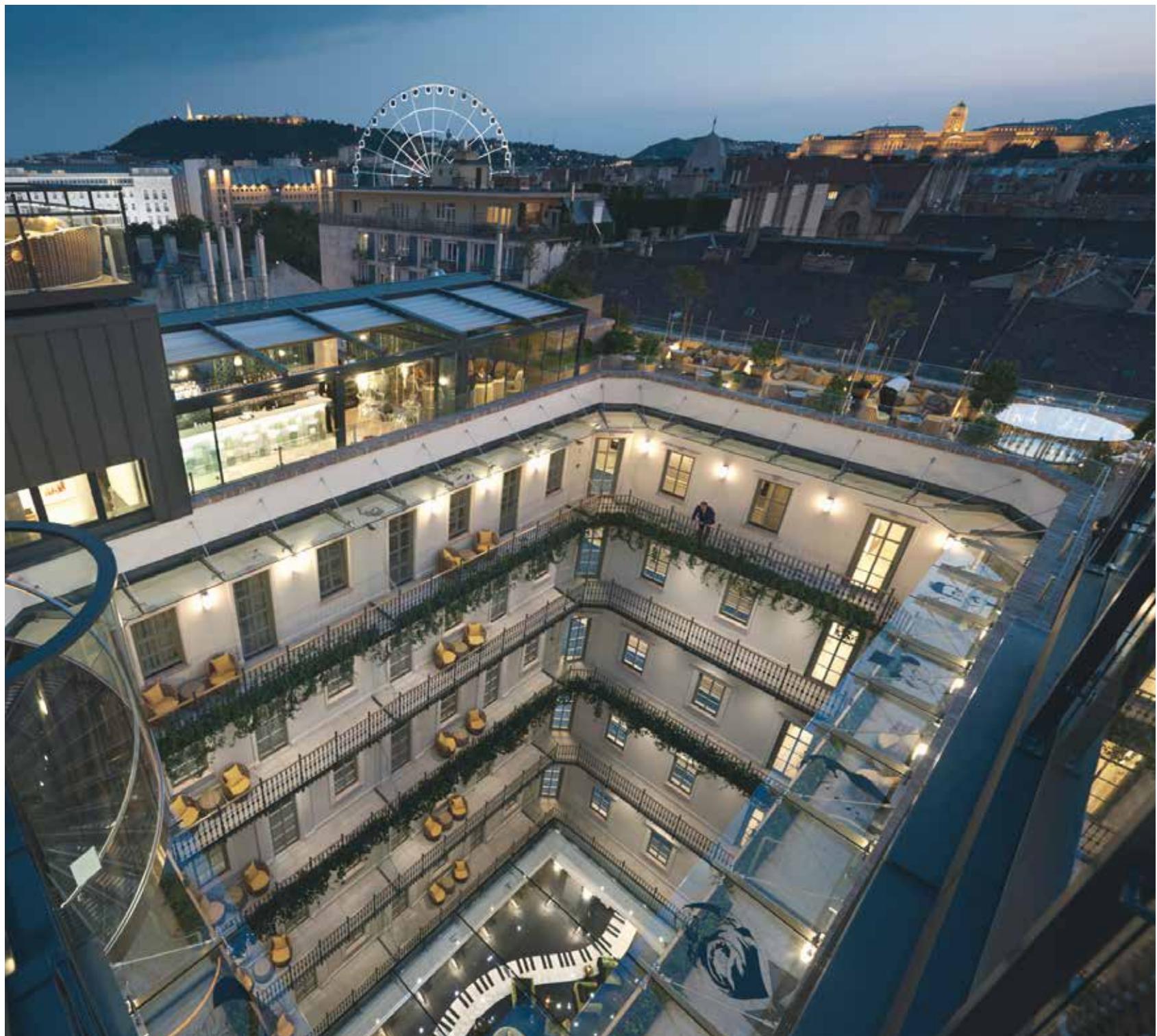
FOUR SEASONS HOTEL GRESHAM PALACE

Europe's best hotel

This hotel is the choice of 'Travel+Leisure' magazine readers. The location of the hotel, its services, the quality of the food and its value for money were among the features assessed. The building, which is more than one hundred years old, is one of the outstanding works of European Art Nouveau and is listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The Site preserves the grandiosity of its history and art, while remaining full of life and cutting-edge. Budapest was ranked fifth among the top cities by the American magazine.

FOUR SEASONS HOTEL GRESHAM PALACE





ARIA HOTEL BUDAPEST

ARIA HOTEL BUDAPEST

The world's best, according to travellers

This hotel had only been open for eighteen months, yet it already received the #1 Hotel in the World award from TripAdvisor in January 2017. They claim that the success of the hotel comes from “excellent facilities and layout, perfect location, helpful staff, brilliant and modern spa services and breakfast fit for a king”. An interesting feature of the hotel is that it was converted from a classical palace and the interior design was influenced by music. From the lobby to the bedrooms, every room honors a musical legend and the four wings evoke four different music genres. What many visitors remember fondly is that there are regular yoga classes on the panoramic rooftop bar of the hotel, looking over the city.

FILMTOURISM IN BUDAPEST

A popular place for shooting

Budapest has also been Buenos Aires, Moscow and even Berlin, naturally only on the screen. Since the city has a thousand and one faces, many (more than two-hundred) international and Hollywood productions have been filmed here in recent years. According to ‘Time’ magazine Budapest is the second most popular European filming location after London. Those who like to relive their favourite movies can choose from the many different themed city tours in Budapest (walking in the footsteps of Tom Hanks, Ryan Gosling, Jennifer Lawrence, Robert Pattinson, Madonna or even Brad Pitt) and those who are truly lucky might even bump into a film set, since there almost isn’t a single day here that goes by without a Hollywood production being filmed in some part of the city.

HUNGARIAN STARTUPS

Successful new ideas

Budapest is also the city of innovative and successful startups, many of which have grown into internationally renowned companies in just a few years. ‘Prezi’, for example, in the IT field, has revolutionised the preparation of presentations, and ‘LogMeIn’ is used by millions

to facilitate easier communication between computers. In Hungary, the increasing number of new and exciting startups are assisted in their establishment and growth by incubator programmes.

SPA

There is no other capital city in the world with so many thermal springs bursting to the surface as Budapest. Whether you wish to treat an ailment, or just simply relax it is worth devoting at least half a day to experiencing one of the city's baths. In the world's other capitals, tourists typically seek out castles, art galleries or historical exhibitions to learn more about the past, whereas here in Budapest, visitors primarily choose the baths as their target. This is not by chance!

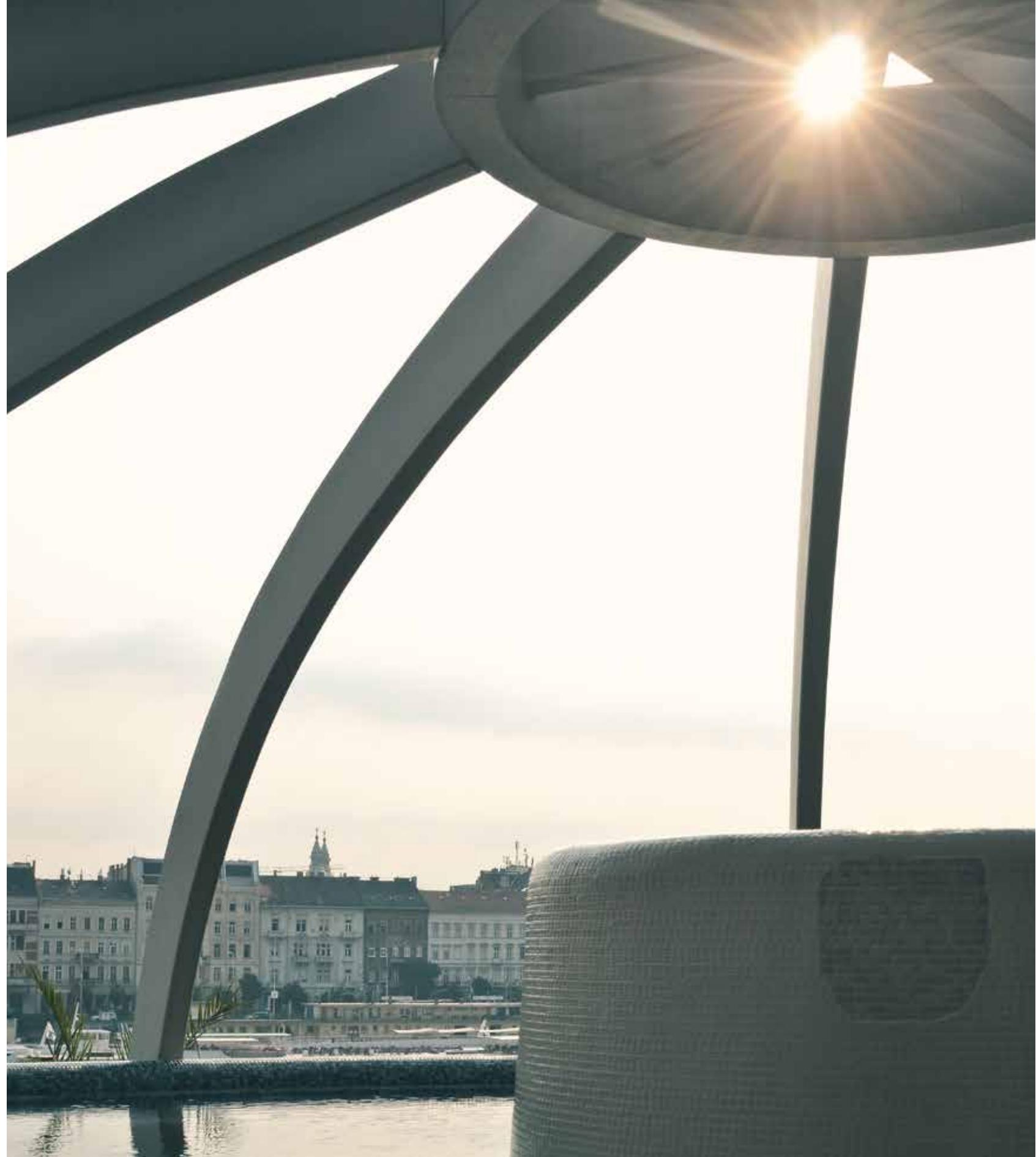
CAPITAL

OF

THE

WORLD

The baths are guards of a cultural legacy of the past two millennia, and their surroundings can even evoke the feeling of bathing in a museum. There are not many places in the world where one can find such ancient, historical baths that were first used by the Romans and then assimilated into the bathing culture of the Turks. All of this in the centre of a metropolis where the most modern holistic treatments are also available!



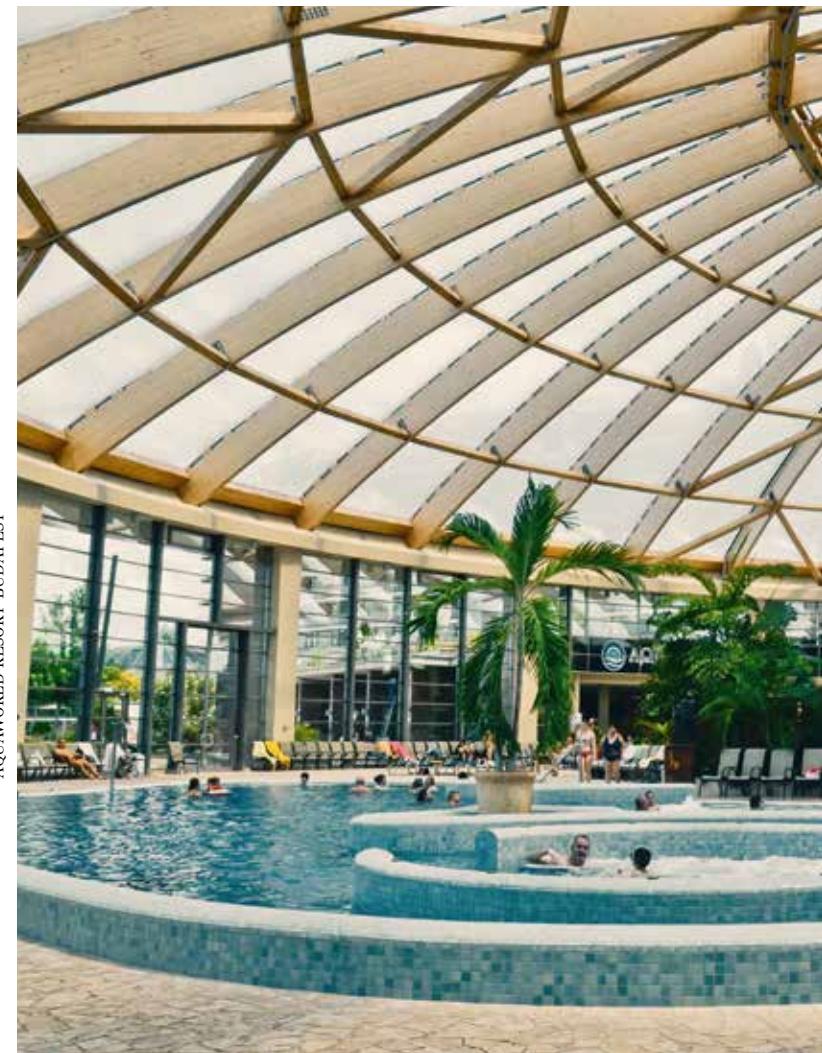
RUDAS THERMAL BATH



GELLÉRT THERMAL BATH

It is no mere coincidence that the Gellért Thermal Bath is the favourite of many. With its Art Nouveau surroundings, this prominent building on one of the most beautiful stretches of the Danube bank has been providing seekers of refreshment and relaxation with that special experience since 1918. In its outdoor pools, the chirping of local birds still sound amidst a thriving metropolis, while the indoor pools, with their Art Nouveau interior, have served as a backdrop on numerous occasions, inspiring film directors and the world's greatest fashion photographers.

Lukács Thermal Bath is one of the most efficacious thermal waters on the Buda side of the city, and has become a serious social institution. Mementos of actors, writers and artists, who began every morning with a swim and the latest news and gossip, can be seen here on the walls even today. The Veli Bej Bath is located nearby, which retains features from the Turkish era in its wonderful mosaic ornamentation.

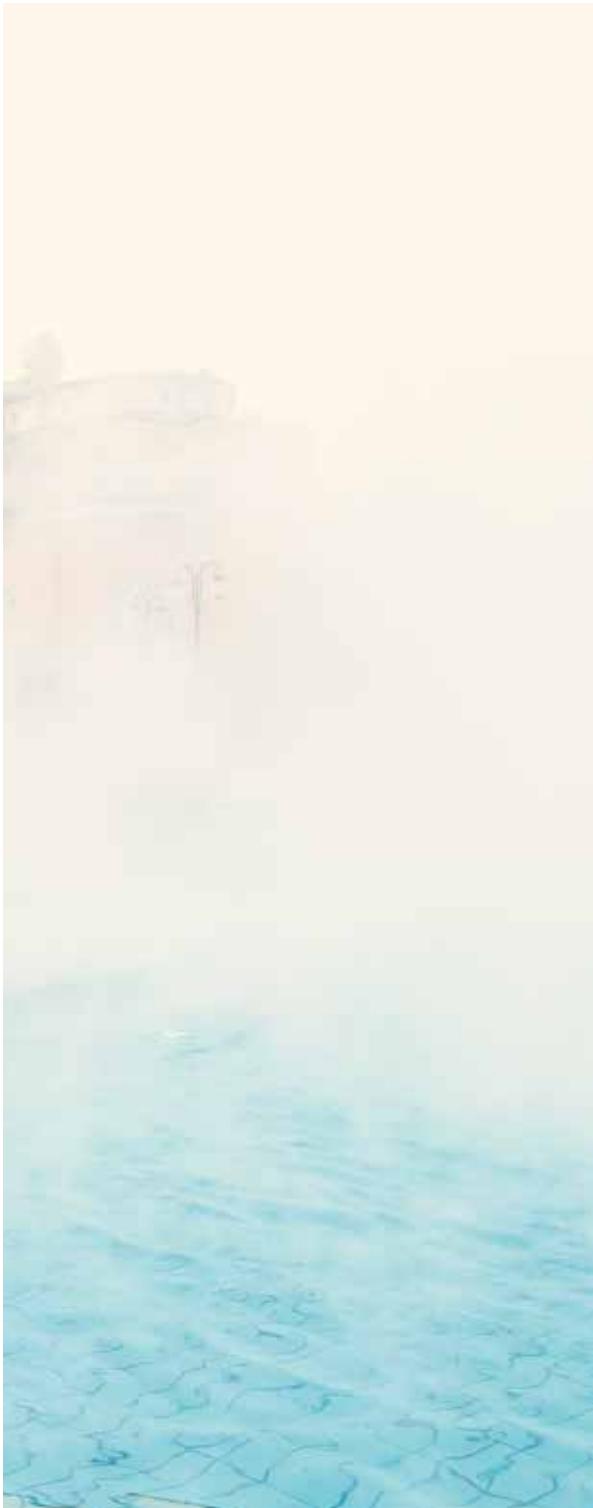


AQUAWORLD RESORT BUDAPEST

Aquaworld, the largest aquapark in Central Europe, is in Budapest. The diameter of its gigantic dome is 72 metres and it was made of special materials developed in space research. Fifteen thermal water pools have been created in this complex, which is open all year round. Its interior rekindles the atmosphere of the temples of Angkor in Cambodia. Amongst its services, attractions for both adults and children abound (there are swimming corridors, slides and even a surfing facility) and those seeking complete relaxation will find a range of treatments (both ancient and modern) in the separate spa centre.



SZÉCHENYI THERMAL BATH



The Széchenyi Thermal Bath forms one of the largest bathing complexes in Europe and sits in Városliget (City Park) in Pest like a neo-Renaissance palace from the era of the Monarchy. The complex has twenty-one pools, three of which are open-air. It is an especially great experience to bathe in those in winter because, instead of the inner domes decorated with spectacular mosaics, here the sun or the stars shine down on you. To relax, it is enough to just soak while travelling back in your mind to the sparkling years of the Belle Époque, when the ambitious citizens of the age, who truly believed in development and the power of art, spun their dreams. The outdoor pools have long been the haunt of chess players of both sexes, and it is fascinating just to watch them play (this generic scene has inspired many photographers in the past). Let us not forget that these waters have healing powers too. At Széchenyi Bath, the thermal water is full of minerals and erupts to the surface from a depth of more than a thousand metres. This is the hottest thermal spring in Europe, at a temperature of 77 °C (170.6 °F).

Rudas Thermal Bath was built more than 450 years ago. Its recently constructed panoramic rooftop pool, which is occasionally used at night, offers an unrivalled view of the steep Gellért Hill and the Pest side of the city. Also located on the Buda bank of the river is the smaller, yet more popular Király Thermal Bath, a remnant from the world of the medieval ‘hammams’, built inside the castle wall to enjoy the blessing of the water during a possible siege. Now you can understand the importance of Budapest’s bathing culture!

ARCHITECTURE

AND

HISTORY

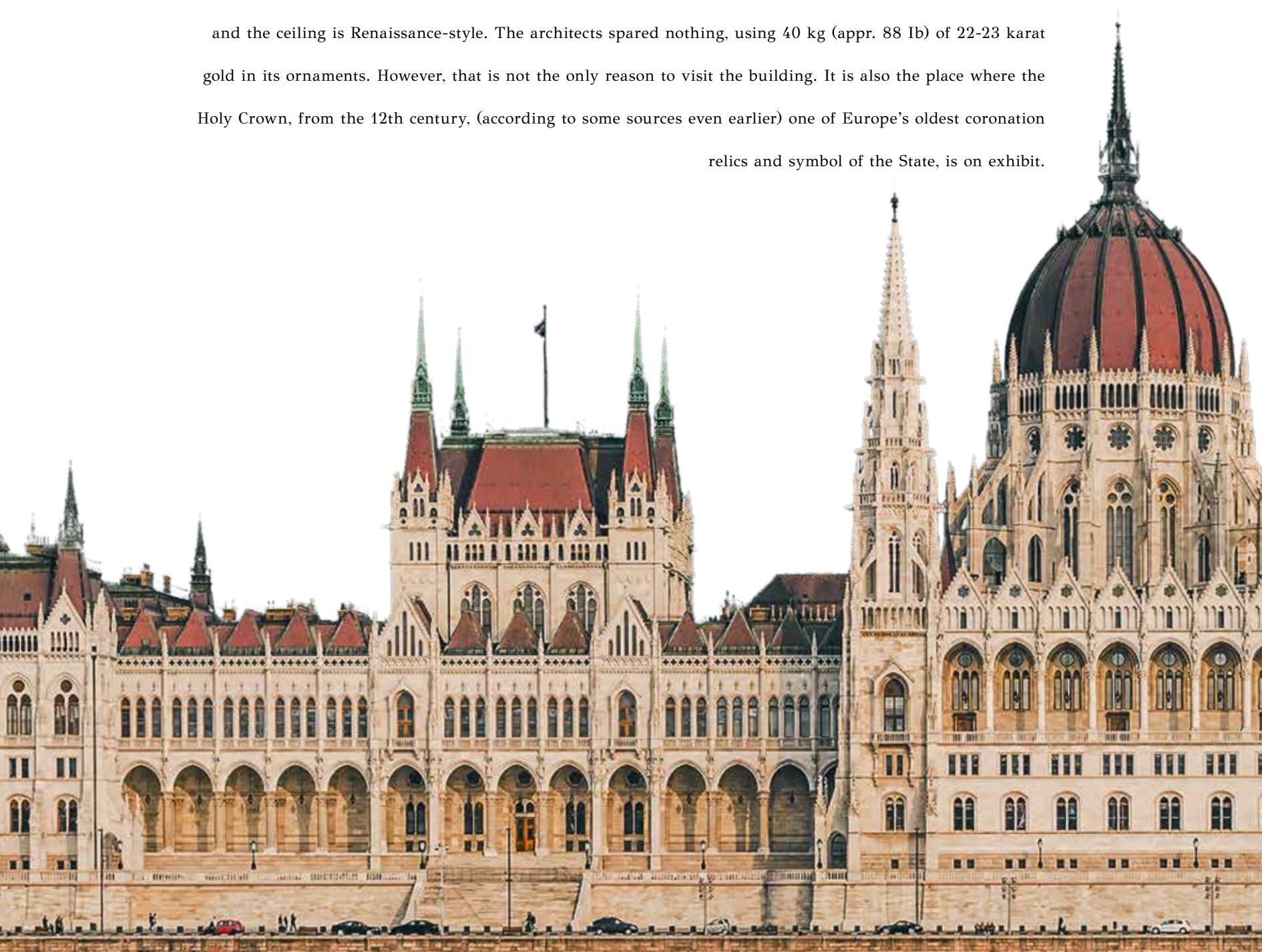
The graceful bourgeois palaces, the prevalent neoclassical architecture, the bank buildings of Pest that serve as the hubs of commercial life of what was once Europe's second largest city – these buildings create a friendly and familiar atmosphere that makes Budapest a location everyone from Europe wants to visit. In addition to visiting the obvious, guidebook-recommended attractions, it is very important, almost compulsory to continually gaze upwards while walking the streets of Budapest and admire the upper levels of the buildings with their artistic facades, colourful mosaic windows and the charming reliefs and sculptures of trendy apartments.

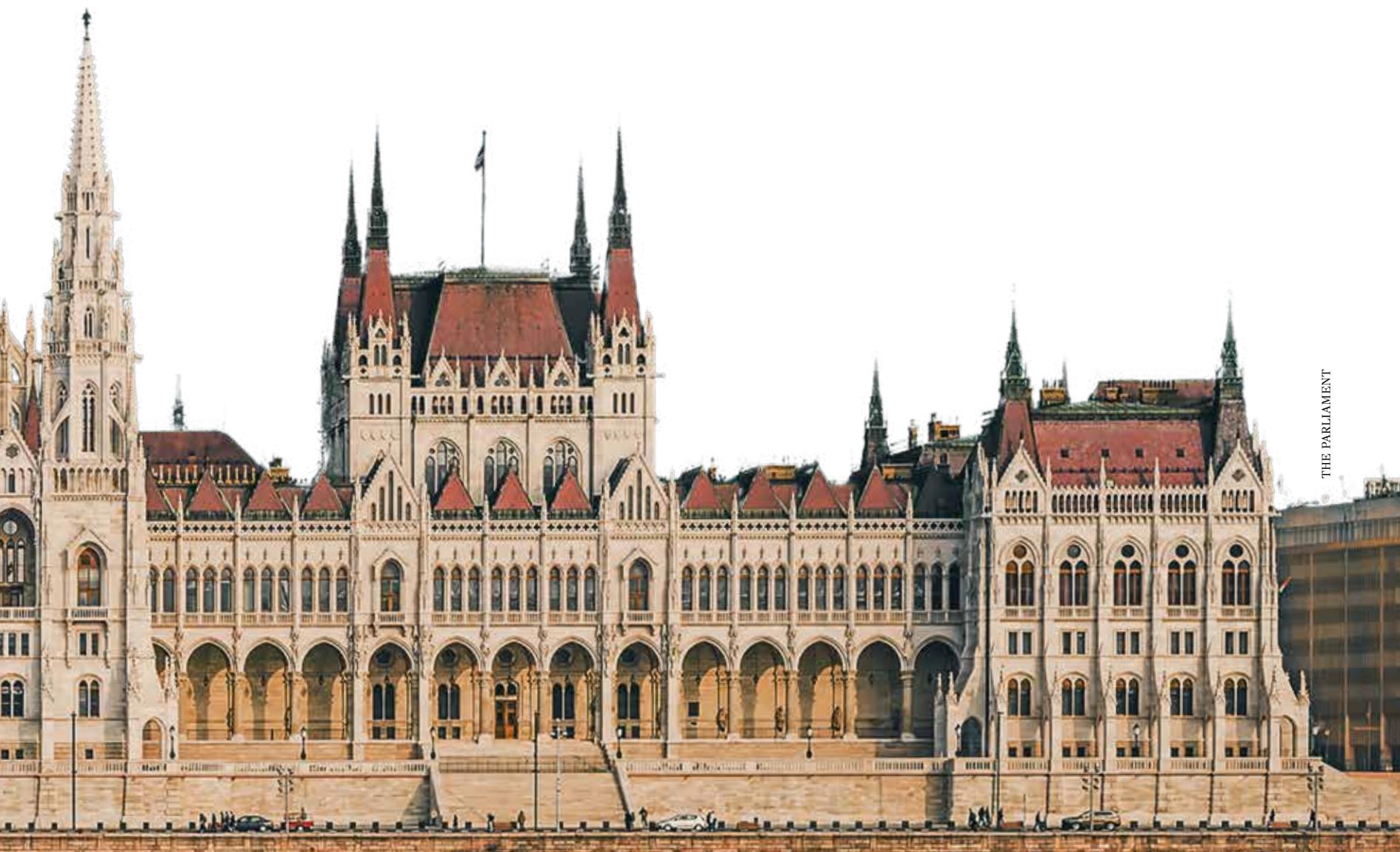
FISHERMAN'S BASTION



THE PARLIAMENT BUILDING

This impressive work of art built at the end of the 19th century is a UNESCO World Heritage Site. It is the third largest parliament building in the world and the largest building in Hungary. The Parliament is a place everyone must see (at least once from the Margaret Bridge in the evening when illuminated, and once from up close, both inside and out). It is a blend of many different styles: the base layout is Baroque-style, the facade is neo-Gothic and the ceiling is Renaissance-style. The architects spared nothing, using 40 kg (appr. 88 Ib) of 22-23 karat gold in its ornaments. However, that is not the only reason to visit the building. It is also the place where the Holy Crown, from the 12th century, (according to some sources even earlier) one of Europe's oldest coronation relics and symbol of the State, is on exhibit.





THE PARLIAMENT

BUDA CASTLE QUARTER

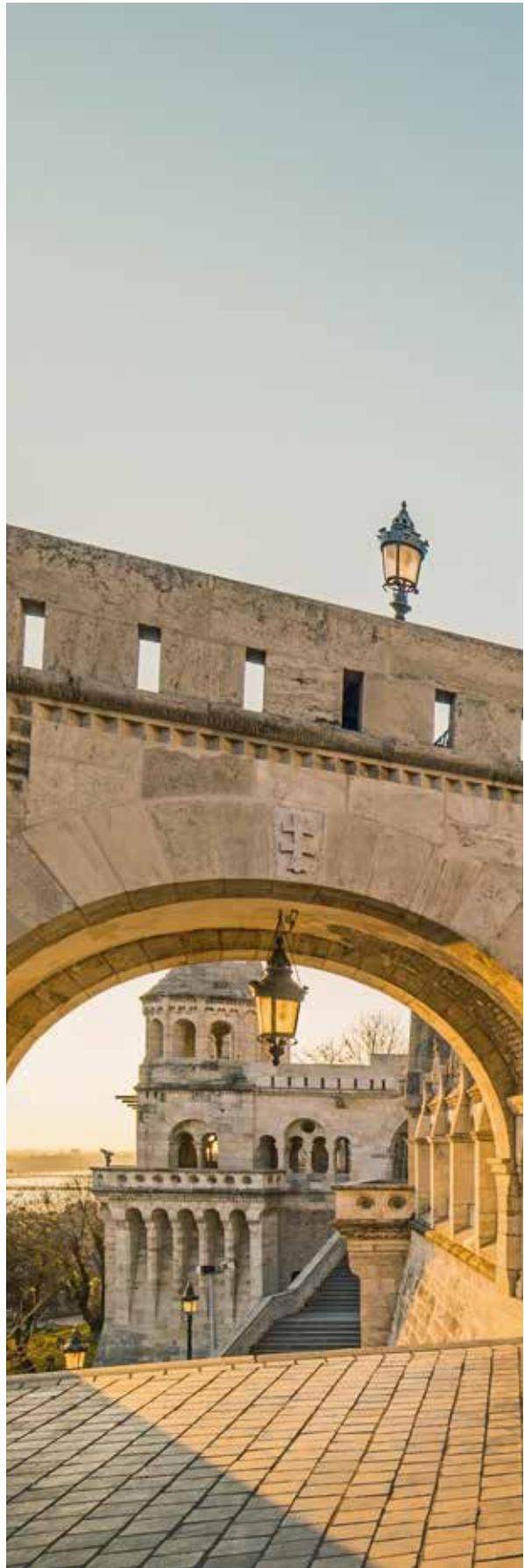
Although almost all the architectural masterpieces of the past centuries remain untouched, the Castle District is not only a monument, but also a living and thriving complex of buildings. The tall medieval houses in the cobbled streets are still visible in this UNESCO World Heritage Site.

FISHERMAN'S BASTION

The view from the neo-Romanesque terraces of the Buda Castle Quarter across the Danube and the Parliament is spectacular. The Fisherman's Bastion was named after the fishermen's quarter that once spread out below it, and the Fish Market where fishermen would sell their catch, located next to the Matthias Church.

MATTHIAS CHURCH

The Church of Our Lady, the Coronation Church of Buda Castle, (also known as the Matthias Church) stands on Holy Trinity Square. The church, founded in 1015, received its neo-Gothic form at the end of the 1800s during a large-scale construction. Two reigning couples were crowned in its walls: Franz Joseph I and Elizabeth, as well as Charles IV and Zita, the last emperor and empress of the Habsburg dynasty.



FISHERMAN'S BASTION



MATTHIAS CHURCH



ST. STEPHEN'S BASILICA

ST. STEPHEN'S BASILICA

The monumental Basilica is the country's second tallest building. It can hold up to eight thousand people, so it might be of interest if you would like to have a large wedding! This is where the mummified right hand of Saint Stephen is kept, after being found more than nine hundred years ago during an exhumation. A climb up to the dome (where the country's largest bell chimes) is well worth the effort, from which point there is a spectacular panoramic view over the city.

DOHÁNY STREET SYNAGOGUE

Europe's largest Synagogue in the centre of Budapest is situated in the old Jewish quarter, which is one of the liveliest parts of the city today. The Synagogue is not only an important symbol for Hungarian Jews, but also plays an active role in the capital's cultural life and hosts a range of outstanding concerts and festivals.

The building was constructed in the Moorish style, with a special stone plaiting running across its exterior facade, while its dome is covered with fabulous ornamental decoration. The building's beautiful architecture and its magnificent dimensions attract hundreds of thousands of visitors each year.

THE BUILDINGS ALONG ANDRÁSSY AVENUE

The more than two-kilometre long elegant avenue is also known as the ‘Champs-Élysées of Budapest’.

On one end of the avenue, there is a row of famous brand shops around the Opera House and the ‘Broadway of Pest’, while on the way to Heroes’ Square, walking under the rows of trees, we can find the iconic House of Terror Museum and some of the most beautiful Art Nouveau villas and palaces in the city. Many of these palaces are now the embassies of various countries. Built at the end of the 19th century, the avenue is a World Heritage Site, as is the Millennium Underground Railway that runs beneath it (the continent’s oldest metro line still carrying passengers).

VÁROSLIGET (CITY PARK)

What Central Park is for New York and Hyde Park is for London, that is what Városliget (City Park) is for Budapest (though ours is older than the former two). The park was used as far back as the Middle Ages, and it began to take its current form at the beginning of the 1800s. The huge park is not only family and pet-friendly, but is also popular with sports enthusiasts. The park is dominated by the Széchenyi Thermal Bath on one side and Vajdahunyad Castle on the other. The latter is one of the most beautiful examples of romantic architectural history and presents the thousand-year-old history of Hungarian architecture in a single building. The castle, presenting the Romanesque, Gothic, Renaissance, and Baroque styles, sits alongside a lake on which you can go boating in the summer or skating in the winter. The more than 150-year-old Zoo, partially built in the Art Nouveau style, is also located on the edge of the park and is interesting from an architectural perspective as well. It houses animal species in a richly decorated, historical building that is unique in the world.



VAJDAHUNYAD CASTLE

HŐSÖK TERE (HEROES' SQUARE)

The square, which serves as a Hungarian national pantheon, is one of the favourite relaxation (and selfie) spots for tourists and, essentially forming the entrance to Városliget, can be seen from a distance when walking down Andrassy Avenue. The statues of important historical figures stand here, the city's most spacious square, with the statue of the Archangel Gabriel in the centre, which won the Grand Prize at the Paris World Exhibition. The two sides of Heroes' Square are bordered by the Museum of Fine Arts, where international works of art are exhibited, and the Hall of Art, showcasing contemporary works.





HOSÓK TERE (HEROES' SQUARE)

HUNGARIAN

CULTURE

Even the residents of Budapest have trouble choosing where to go in their free time as there are festivals, concerts and new exhibitions on practically every corner throughout the whole year. The streets of the city are always packed with both Hungarians and foreigners hungry for culture.

AND

ART



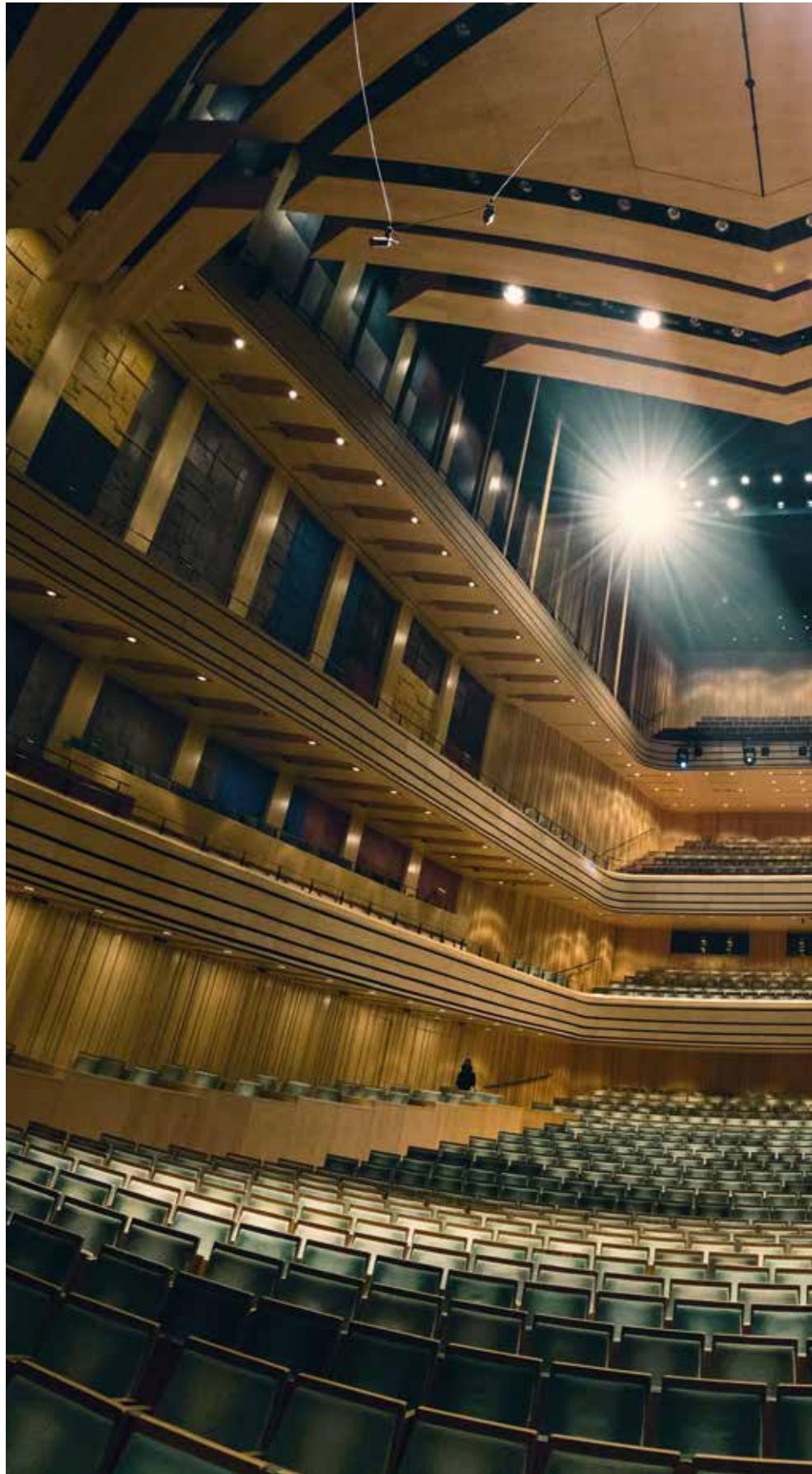
HUNGARIAN STATE OPERA HOUSE

The cultural life of Budapest has had a legendary reputation since the 19th century, and the world's best classical and modern music performers are regular guests here. During your stay, you might catch a masterpiece of one of the great Hungarian composers, Franz Liszt, Béla Bartók or Zoltán Kodály at the Liszt Ferenc Academy of Music, Müpa (Palace of Arts) or even in Buda Castle. Concerts with a unique atmosphere and English-speaking performances are held in the latter on a regular basis.

"Müpa strives to offer the best quality in every art sector."

Csaba Káel,

the managing director of Müpa





MÜPA = BARTÓK BÉLA NATIONAL CONCERT HALL

Not many people know that the predecessor of the Academy of Music, with its special acoustics, was established in the second half of the 19th century in the apartment of Franz Liszt. Perhaps you have heard that the Opera House in Budapest is the most beautiful in the world according to Plácido Domingo. The above-mentioned Müpa is a multifunctional establishment in a modern building on the riverbank, providing a home for lovers of music, theatre and the visual arts, while regularly staging English-speaking performances.

The Budapest Music Centre (BMC) is not only popular due to the classical, contemporary and jazz concerts held in this five-storey modern building, but also because the cultural institute has taken it upon itself to collect the history of Hungarian music and make it available online, while its travelling pavilion is introducing our music to the world.

HUNGARIAN STATE OPERA HOUSE





The Budapest Spring Festival attracts many foreigners to the city, with almost 200 programmes at more than 50 locations during the last two weeks of March. In addition to the concerts of world-famous classical and modern musical performers, it also hosts a number of English-speaking theatrical performances and open-air programmes.

You don't always need to buy tickets; sometimes it is simply enough to dive into the nightlife. Small designer shops in the city centre, contemporary art galleries, night concerts, lively club life and unique theatres provide momentum and a dynamic to the already vibrant creative life of Budapest.

"For me, the violin is a perfect tool to communicate and connect with people."

*Roby Lakatos,
world famous violinist*

IN

FASHION

*It is by no means an exaggeration to state that Budapest is
a frontrunner for winning the title of Fashion Capital of Central Europe.*

AND

*The clothes of Hungarian designers are worn from Hollywood to Tokyo,
and the careers of models Barbara Palvin, Vanessa Axente and Enikő Mihalik,
all of whom promote Hungarian beauty, style and creativity on the pages of
international fashion magazines, were launched in Hungary.*

STYLE



MAISON MARQUISE

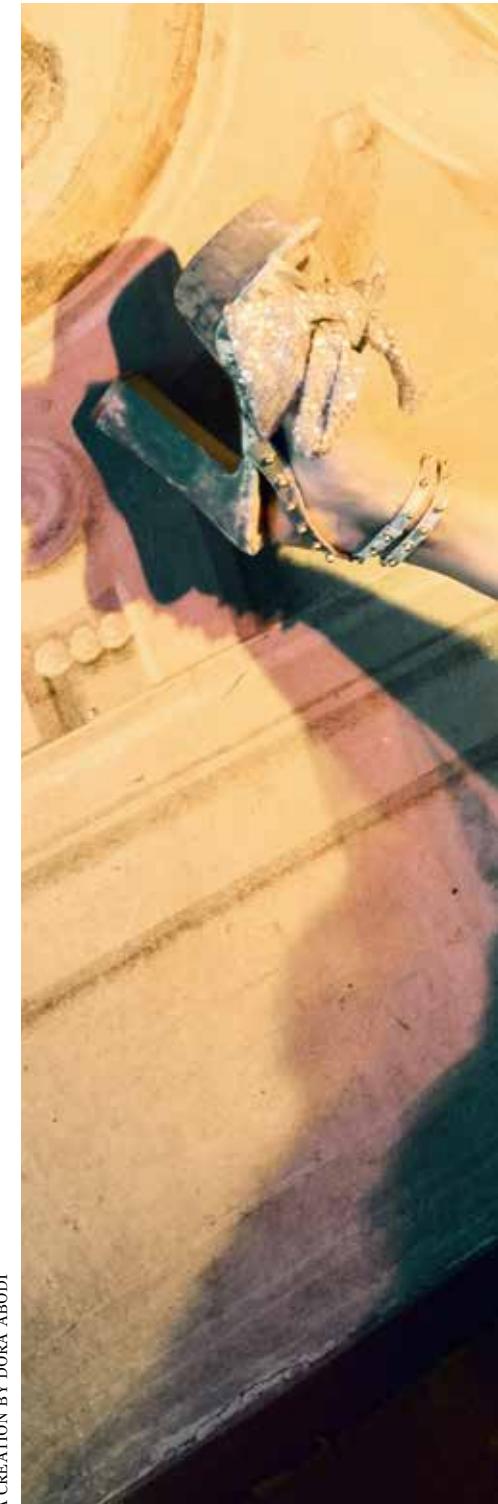
The creative industry is dizzyingly vibrant and diverse in Budapest: walking the streets of the city alone, in the vicinity of tourist routes, you will continue to stumble across multi-brand shops that double up as art galleries where you can find clothes, accessories and unique designs of young Hungarian designers that make ideal quality souvenirs.

In recent years, the names of Hungarian fashion designers have been increasingly featured in the international press, including the biggest fashion magazines. Dora Abodi represents the extravagant, yet sophisticated luxury prêt-a-porter line and stars like Taylor Swift, Gwen Stefani, and Lady Gaga wear her clothes at gala events and on the street.

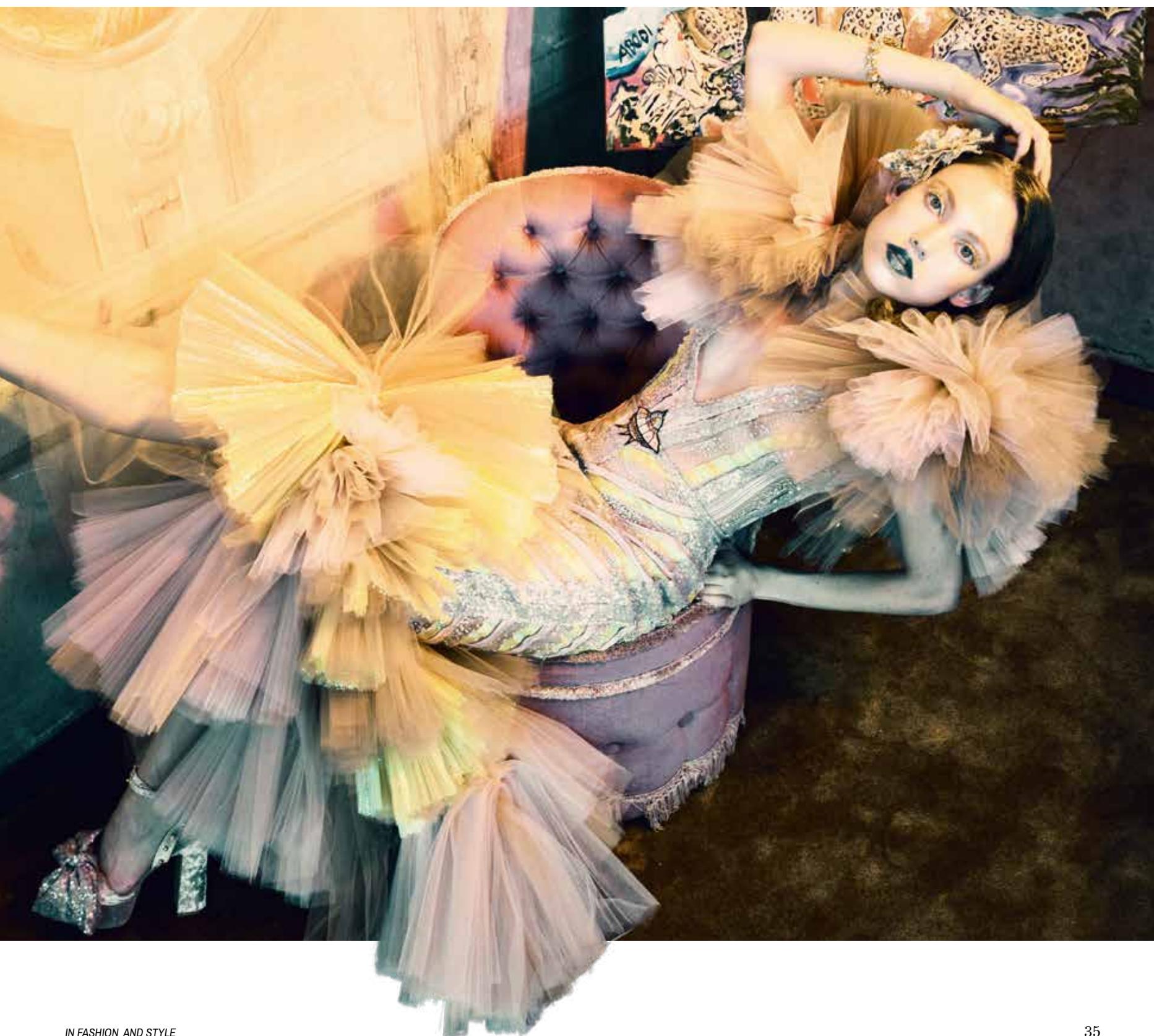
The designer of Nanushka, representing both functionality and intuition, is a popular brand amongst international fashion bloggers and is sold in thirty countries around the world. Áron Eszter's career started a few years ago and her brand, the Aeron is already catching the attention of many people.

Her designs have been featured in several places from Vogue to the American Forbes magazine.

Kati Zoób, an ambassador of Hungarian culture, is a multiple international award winner, including at the Best Natural Fashion Awards and the Most Modern Creative Awards. Her extensive collection presented at the opening ceremony of FINA 2017 perfectly represents the diversity of the light industry. Silhouette patterns presenting 200 years of fashion history were exhibited on the catwalk, an admirable celebration of the co-existence of traditions and the latest, innovative spirit.



A CREATION BY DORA ABODI





EXQUISITE

ACCOMMODATIONS

Our most famous hotels not only offer rooms but a vibrant experience of historic monuments in which iconic artists have stayed and many legendary evenings have been spent and perhaps, just like a century ago, are still inspiring world-changing events. Do not miss out on the adventure, though we know it is not easy to choose from such a fantastic selection!



BOSCOLO HOTEL BUDAPEST





FOUR SEASONS HOTEL GRESHAM PALACE

The Four Seasons Hotel Gresham Palace was transformed into a hotel only a few years ago and voted ‘Europe’s Best Hotel’ in 2015 on TripAdvisor. It is now a symbol of the city, which adds to the glow of the Chain Bridge.

In every detail, the hotel reflects the explosive development of the century. The greatest artists of the era worked on the building’s lyrically beautiful glass windows, mosaics and wrought iron details and the ceramic ornaments were made by the artists of the world-famous Zsolnay factory.

Hotels rising up on the city’s boulevards have the same appeal, in which almost every prominent European figure and brilliant mind has stayed. One of these hotels is the Corinthia Hotel Budapest that inspired Wes Anderson’s Oscar-winning film ‘The Grand Budapest Hotel’.

The New York Palace Hotel Boscolo dominates the boulevard in Budapest when illuminated at nighttime. This effect continues inside too, where the coffeehouse was the haunt of poets and writers of the 20th century.

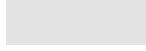
According to legend, the famous Hungarian writer, Ferenc Molnár once asked for the keys to the coffeehouse and then tossed them into the Danube so that this magical place would never close.

The Kempinski Hotel Corvinus, located on the central boulevard, has a presidential suite revisited repeatedly by many celebrities, who leave their marks in a book that is kept there. The book is a new copy of a Medieval Hungarian Codex, which was originally only placed there as a decoration, though celebrities have made it their own in a creative (to some, mischievous) way, making it truly special. Queen Elisabeth II of Great Britain and former American President George W. Bush also stayed in the legendary historic building of the Ritz-Carlton Budapest, which was built during World War I as the headquarters of an insurance company, then later became the police headquarters, and eventually a luxury hotel. Located in the city centre, it has been operated by Ritz-Carlton since 2016. An interesting feature in the rooms is that guests can find typical Hungarian souvenirs, which may also be purchased.

ÉS BISTRO – HOTEL KEMPINSKI

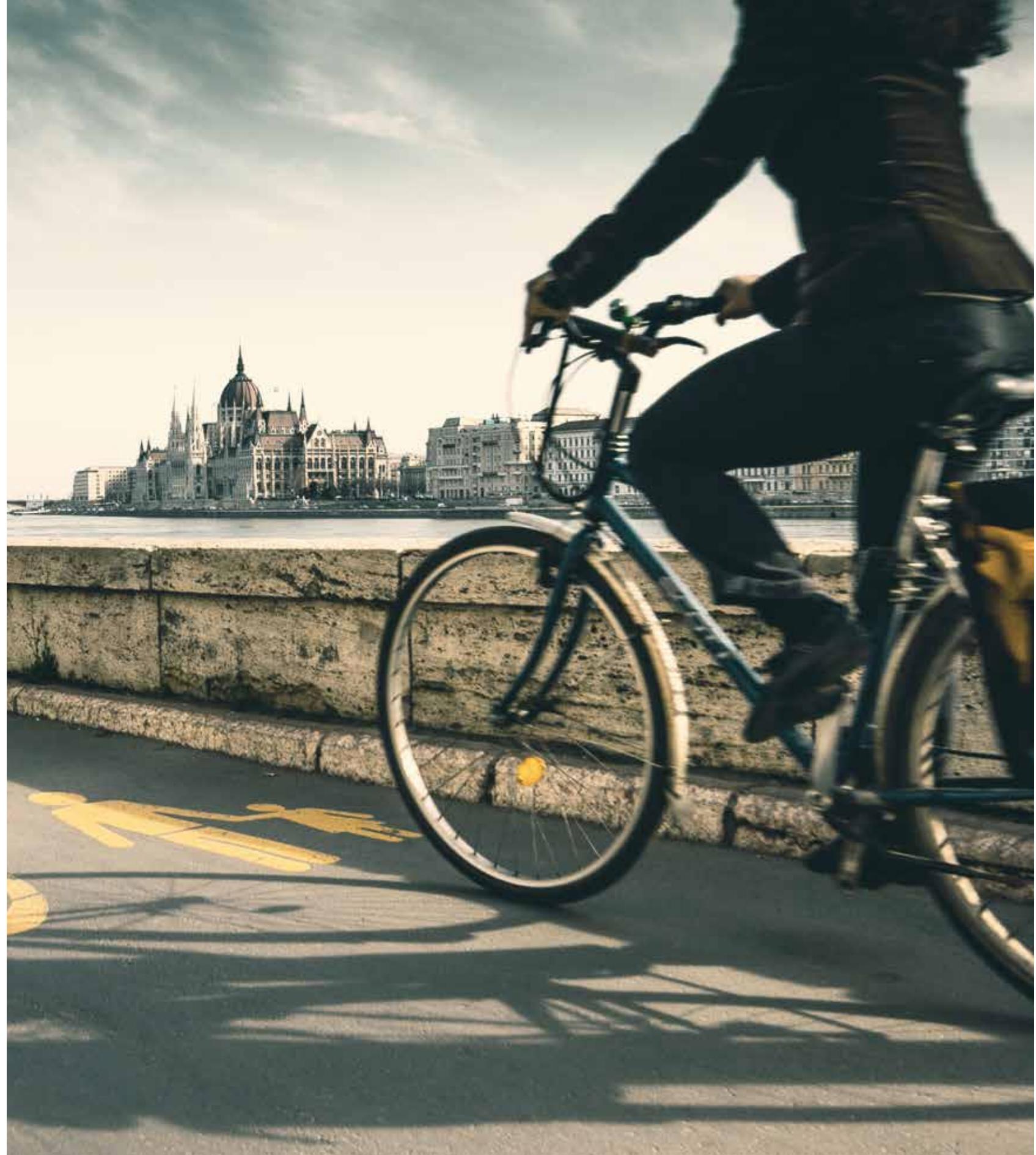






URBAN ADVENTURES

If you have done enough walking and would like to try something a bit more adventurous, there are many options to choose from. There are numerous different modes of transport and award-winning river excursions that make Budapest stand out even more on the colourful map of Europe.



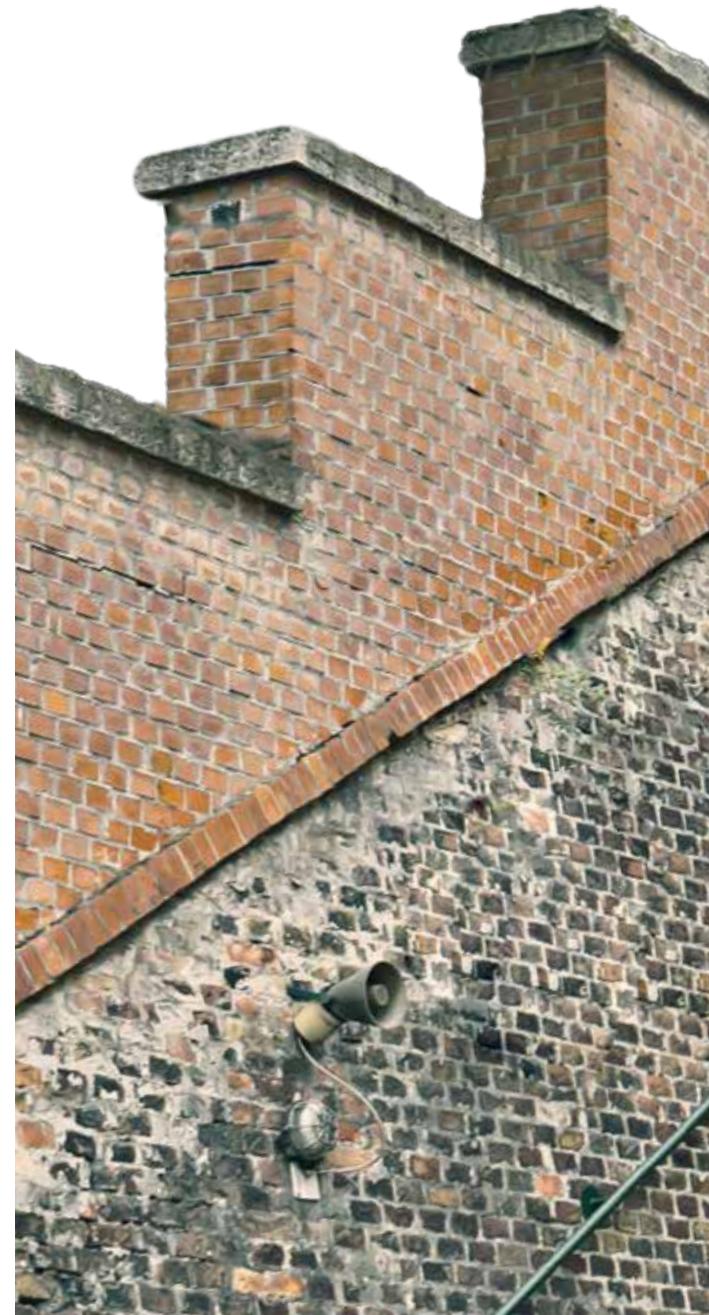
DANUBE EMBANKMENT

The cogwheel railway, the funicular, the chairlift: how many of these modes of transportation have you experienced?

You can enjoy the scenery of Budapest City Centre from any one of them. The cogwheel runs on a track suitable for climbing steep terrain, with stations built in a style similar to those in the High Tatra Mountains.

The Budapest Castle Hill Funicular is Europe's second oldest conveyance of its type. The funicular has two carriages that are connected by a pulley. While one car is taking visitors up to Buda Castle, the other is on its way back down to the river. The 95-meter-long track is on the right side of the Danube, opposite the Chain Bridge and Gresham Palace, so the view during your trip is quite impressive!

It is possible to rent bicycles at very friendly prices everywhere around Budapest. The green bikes (Bubi) can be picked up in one location and returned to any other. A very nice trip to take is a ride along the right bank of the Danube, in Buda. While admiring the view of the Parliament on one hand and the Castle on the other, it is an experience that is highly treasured even by the residents of Budapest.



FUNICULAR



The Danube winds through Europe on a long route, but we can state without bias that it doesn't shine as bright as in Budapest anywhere else. This is evidenced by the entire Danube bank panorama being declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site. To travel around this area or to the neighbouring historical cities by boat is an experience you will never forget. It is no wonder that this year, due to its rich historical and architectural attractions, the readers of 'Cruise Critic' chose Budapest as the most beautiful boat trip destination in Europe over Paris, Vienna or Prague. If you prefer longer boat trips, you may choose from the many luxury trips that depart from Budapest and journey to Nuremberg, Passau, Bratislava, Cologne, or even Amsterdam.

The small-gauge forest railways running in the capital and its surroundings offer a very special experience. The tracks wind through mountain valleys and across sloping plains, often accompanied by the sight of wild animals. For more than half a century, the 'Children's Railway' in Budapest, where children play the role of cashier, train driver, ticket inspector and even traffic controller, has been providing fun trips for the whole family.

It is also worth taking a ride on one of the country's oldest forest railways, the 'Királyrét Forest Railway', which runs from Kismaros to Királyrét along the valley of Morgó Stream, or even one of the newest, in the valley of the Vál, between the Alcsút Arboretum and Felcsút.



BOAT TRAFFIC ON THE DANUBE

THE

SURROUNDINGS

OF

Regardless of the number of days they stay, tourists often say that if they had an extra day in Budapest, they would have been able to see everything worthwhile. Now, the truth is, even an extra day might not be enough, as the neighbouring settlements also offer adventures that are hard to find anywhere else in the world.

BUDAPEST



DANUBE BEND



SZENTENDRE

SZENTENDRE

Arriving in Szentendre, located to the north of the capital, you will feel that you have entered a vibrant impressionist painting in pastel colours. Here you can find everything a romantic soul needs, with narrow pathways, cobbled streets, old churches and handicraft workshops. The numerous pedestrian streets leading from the main square welcome visitors with hidden coffeehouses, little shops selling traditional folkwares and a number of special

museums lined next to each other (including the Szamos Marzipan Museum and a Christmas museum that is open all year round). The Skanzen in Szentendre, presenting Hungarian life as it was in the olden days, is Hungary's largest open-air collection. The town has been home to a thriving colony of artists for many years and their artwork is displayed in regular exhibitions.

Distance from Budapest: 22 km/13 mi (30 minutes by car)



ESZTERGOM

ESZTERGOM

The blend of the river and the hills creates a picturesque landscape at the western gate of the Danube Bend. This is the location of the former capital, Esztergom, an important site in the history of the Hungarian nation. The first archbishopric in Hungary was founded here and the coronation ceremonies were also held here for many centuries. The monumental Basilica towering above the Danube is one of Europe's largest cathedrals and considered spectacular not only because of its size but also because the world's largest altarpiece painted on a single canvas

can be found there. Since the 9th century, the castle hill has played an important role in the history of Hungary and the lives of its Christians. Over the years, seven churches have been built on the hill, but centuries of storms damaged the earlier examples, leaving only traces of the early medieval, Gothic and Renaissance church buildings. The monumental, though people-friendly, Primatial Basilica of the Blessed Virgin Mary Assumed Into Heaven and St Adalbert, which still stands today, has remained the centre of the Roman Catholic Church in Hungary.

Distance from Budapest: 52 km/32 mi (1 hour by car)



GÖDÖLLŐ

The romantic Baroque castle, originally the residence of the Grassalkovich family then later one of the favourite retreats of the Habsburgs, is the most famous attraction in Gödöllő. The Viennese ruling family spent most of their Christmases here. Queen Elizabeth (loved by the people and known as ‘Sisi’) sometimes upset the upper classes by inviting commoners

and gypsy musicians to the castle. This building now functions both as an event centre and a museum, and attracts fans of Queen Sisi from far afield – to them Gödöllő is the second most important pilgrimage site after Schönbrunn in Vienna.

Distance from Budapest: 31 km/19 mi (35 minutes by car)

*“Pannonhalma is both a spiritual and cultural place
– which makes it a special part of the world.”*

Asztrik Várszegi,

the Archabbot of Pannonhalma Archabbey, 1991-2017

PANNONHALMA

The Archabbey of Pannonhalma, standing for more than a thousand years, is one of Hungary's most outstanding historical monuments and a centre for spirituality and art history. The Arboretum and the Herb Garden of the Abbey are interesting at any given time, not only in the autumn, and the interactive guided tour will tell us all we need to know about the herb garden and its medieval layout, as well as the plants it contains and their health-preserving properties. The Benedictine monks of the abbey lead an active life, and the monastery has many varied exclusive products ranging from luxurious quality chocolates to herbal creams and great wines. Many people visit Pannonhalma for contemplation, though there is much more to do here.

In the Herb Garden, you may create your own special blend of tea and then in the Labyrinth, you can contemplate the mysteries of life. In the centuries-old Abbey cellars, you may try the Tricollis or the Hemina, among other excellent wines, and we have still not mentioned one of the best restaurants in the country, the Viator. The cuisine of the restaurant is concurrently traditional and modern. The chef is keen on using local ingredients and relies heavily on Benedictine raw materials, including seasonal plants from the herb garden and the wines of the abbey. Guests' unmistakable favourites include the 'Duck liver with Sage and Thyme' and the 'Nougat Cake'.

Distance from Budapest: 132 km/82 mi (1 hour and 20 minutes by car)



PANNONHALMA

WONDERFUL

LAKE

BALATON

Can you imagine a sea where the water does not seem infinite, yet the sunsets are still breathtaking? Where you have no jellyfish or dangerous cliffs, and the water is gently caressing and ideal for every generation? This is what Lake Balaton, Central Europe's largest lake, happens to be like.



TIHANY PENINSULA – BALATON

The ‘Hungarian Sea’, as the locals call Lake Balaton, is located in the western part of the country. On the southern bank, the water is shallow and ideal for bathing, while on the northern side, where ridges, hills and valleys dot the scenery, the water is deeper and better for sailing.

Among the annual sailing events is the ‘Blue Ribbon International Sailing Competition’, which is one of the most prestigious events of Lake Balaton and Europe’s largest lake circumnavigation competition. If bigger boats are what you prefer, visit the harbour of Balatonfüred on the northern banks and take a break under the hundred-year-old plane trees lining Tagore Promenade. Drink fine wines and admire the lines of the classic sailing boats or the futuristic looking carbon fibre catamarans.





BADACSONY - BALATON

Another reason to visit the Hungarian sea is that the traditions of the two-thousand-year-old Roman viticulture are still alive in this region, meaning that impeccable local wines are made here. The wines from the royal and baronial estates of Balaton were so popular in the Middle Ages that they were shipped to many Western European cities too. Due to the microclimate created by Lake Balaton, the tempered atmosphere of the region is an ideal place to grow grapes. The flavours and aromas of the wines produced here, the most popular being the fruity or a bit salty but always flavoursome local varieties, such as Olaszrizling, Kéknyelű, Juhfark and Furmint, in some appellations are heavily influenced by the volcanic rock and red soil. It is worth visiting local winemakers and producers, many of whom have their own wine terraces or restaurants, where they not only give their maximum attention to their wines and their dishes made from Balaton fish and other local ingredients, but to the guests too. The locals are always willing to give good advice to those who seek it and to entertain visitors with their tales. (Yes, they generally love to talk as much as they love to eat!)

TOKAJI ASZÚ:

THE

INIMITABLE

SWEET

WINE

No matter where in the world the name 'Tokaji Aszú' is mentioned, there is an immediate sparkle in the eyes of wine connoisseurs. And it is not without a reason. The naturally made sweet wine from the UNESCO site Tokaj wine region is undoubtedly the most concentrated sweet wine of the world and still extremely pleasurable. The 1999 Tokaji Esszencia, which is the pure juice of the hand selected botrytised grape berries, was the first wine to be awarded 100 points by the respected 'American Wine and Spirit Magazine'.



CELLARS IN TOKAJ





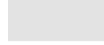
TOKAJ

Tokaji Aszú (which is the top of the Tokaj wines) won a place on the tables of European leaders back in the Middle Ages and was highly praised by famous poets, musicians and clerics all around the continent. The volcanic soil, the sunshine, the special microclimate encouraging the development of the noble rot, called botrytis, on the berries guarantee the uniqueness of Tokaji Aszú. The botrytised berries are carefully picked by hand between the end of October and mid-November and are added to the fermenting base wine. After at least two years of ageing in oak barrels from the Zemplén forests, the result is a very rich but elegantly balanced sweet wine, which develops in the bottle for decades.

The Tokaj wine region is a UNESCO World Heritage site. In fact, it is the world's first closed wine region. The town of Tokaj, which is the "capital" of the wine region is spread over a romantic landscape in the north eastern part of the country between cellar labyrinths, vines, and slopes. However, there is just as much top quality wines in its less famous sister town, Mát. Around 400 BC, the settlement, which is slightly to the north of Tokaj, was involved in wine production. A very special synagogue can also be found in Mát, built in the Baroque style, and is also a 'Europa Nostra Award' winning monument.

If you are already in Tokaj for its world-famous wine, visiting the treasures of the Zemplén Hills is a must. There are centuries-old castles, including the fabulous Füzér Castle, the castles of Tolcsva and the unique formation in a former quarry, the Megyer Hill Tarn, where the 70-metre-high cliffs rise up dramatically from the water's reflection.

TASTING

 **THE**

Immaculate cleanliness is not the only thing that makes premium restaurants in Hungary great today. Their secret lies in quality raw materials, friendly service, and memorable interiors.

| FUTURE





FINE DINING

"In today's world it is a necessary requirement in gastronomy for the kitchen to have a personality."

Tamás Széll, the winner of the Bocuse d'Or European final competition 2016

At the end of the 1930s, the New York Times wrote that the restaurants of Budapest brought greater fame to the city than a whole stack of tourist brochures. That statement remains true today, since there is a real gastronomic revolution taking place in the country, with classic Hungarian dishes undergoing major and minor transformations and being presented at the table in reconceptualised ways that still represent our traditional roots.

The culinary development is also shown by the fact that in 2018 Michelin chose Budapest to host the Michelin Guide awards ceremony and the launch of the Main Cities of Europe 2018 publication. Not only has the Hungarian capital “merely” kept all its 4 Michelin stars, but Onyx, one of the restaurants, received its second Michelin star from the globally renowned restaurant guide.

It is not easy to book a table in the city's four Michelin star restaurants ('Borkonyha', 'Costes', 'Costes Downtown' and 'Onyx'), and the bistros, wine bars and trendy street food outlets are also most often full to the brim. Of the latter, the stand of the Downtown Market in Hold

Street, where the Bocuse d'Or cooking competition European Final Winner, Tamás Széll, opened a bistro, is outstanding. And the Michelin Guide agrees: in March 2018 the Michelin-star bistro received another recognition: the Bib Gourmand.

'Borkonyha' is a Michelin star restaurant we can go to without being stressed. It is a cross between a French bistro and a contemporary Hungarian restaurant, made complete with the representative Hungarian wines on offer.

Master of flavours, artistic presentation, attention to detail, polite service and out-of-this-world flavours, not to mention a world-class environment. In short, this is 'Costes'!

'Viator' which means 'traveller', is a gastronomic docking place for both tourists and pilgrims. The prism-shaped, light, contemporary building, with glass walls on Kosaras Hill in Pannonhalma offers a perfect view over the monastery buildings.



DOUBLE SHOT

'Onyx' is an incredibly high standard workshop in this small, intimate restaurant that offers a real feast. Its space radiates the lavishness of aristocratic saloons.

The 'Kistücsök Restaurant' in Balatonszemes was named after the crickets chirping in its garden. The chef offers dishes made of seasonal vegetables, fruit and herbs and makes a point of putting together the menu with seasonal products readily available from local farmers.

The first grand coffeehouses opened in Budapest more than a century ago and were the watering holes for the great thinkers and artists of the era. Many poems and world famous novels were born in these buildings next to the steaming black coffee and a slice of the walnut and vanilla flavoured 'Esterházy Cake'. Today, this kind of clientele is attracted to the smaller, new wave coffeehouses, where the baristas will converse with anyone truly interested in their coffee's origin, the age of its plantation and the processing and grinding of the coffee beans. 'Printa', 'My Little Melbourne' and 'Tamp & Pull' are the pioneers of the new wave coffeehouses, though 'EspressoEmbassy', 'WarmCup', 'DoubleShot' and 'Stremhouse Café' are also part of the coffee revolution.

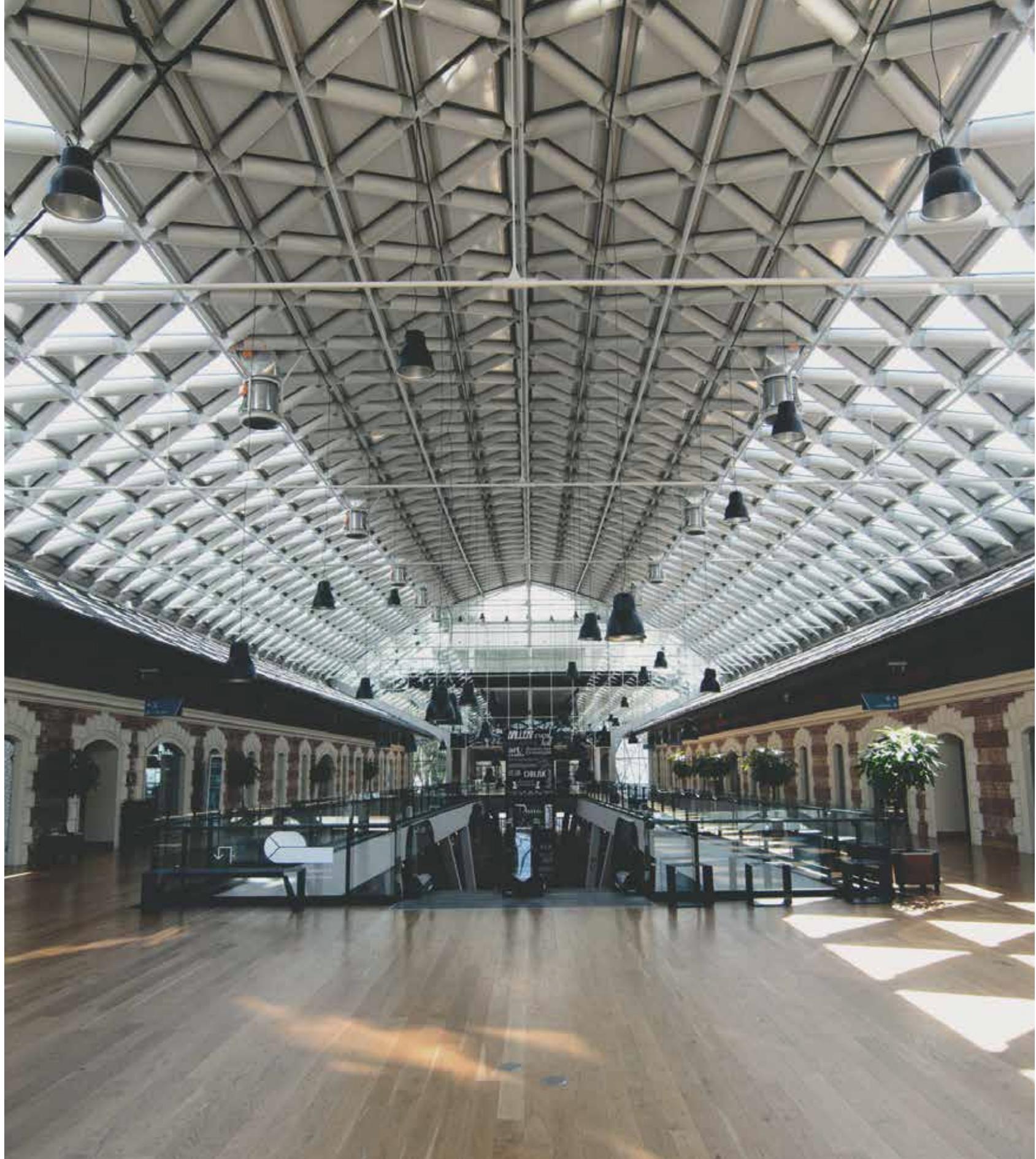


ONYX

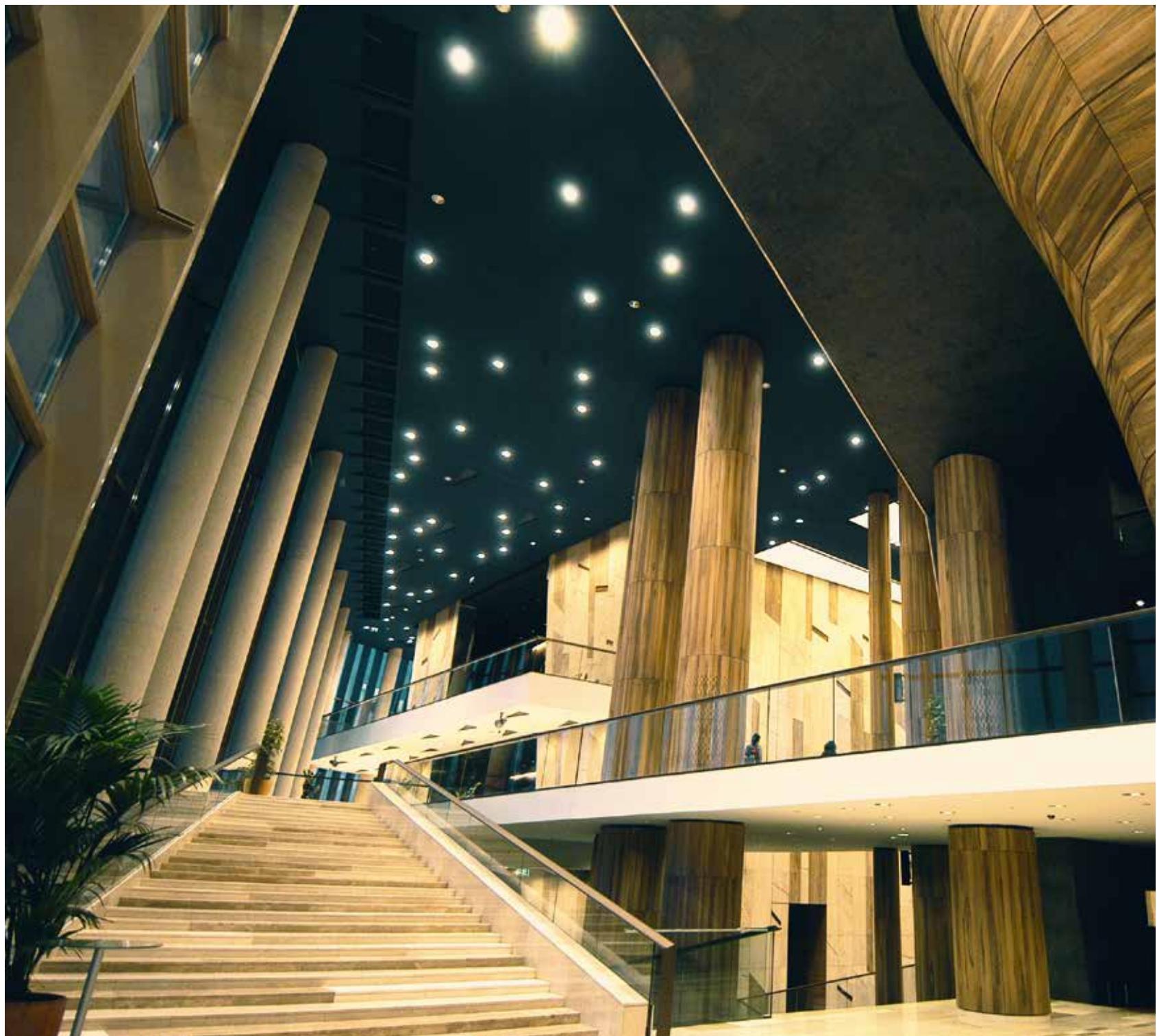
EVENT

HUB

Budapest is increasingly popular as a business tourism destination, and the number of trade exhibitions is rising year by year. This is illustrated by the professional ranking of the city, and the number of events and visitors. Aside from how simple it is to reach the Hungarian capital within hours from anywhere in Europe, it is a highly attractive destination due to its diversity, its affordable prices and its business tourism opportunities.



BALNA CULTURAL & ENTERTAINMENT CENTRE



MUZA - PALACE OF ARTS

In 2016 Budapest was ranked 16th on the list of the ICCA (International Congress and Convention Association) beating Stockholm, Hong Kong and Rome. It is ranked 12th in Europe. The popularity of the city shows in the trade figures. Last year more than 1.3 million people visited Hungary for business tourism purposes and almost 3,600 events were held here.

Eighty percent of the business events organised in Hungary are held in hotels, most of which are able to welcome business tourists with professionally equipped conference rooms. Hotels like the ‘Ritz-Carlton’, the ‘Hilton’, the ‘Marriott’ or those of the Danubius Hotels Group are available to business tourism visitors and the trendy, boutique hotels guarantee a creativity-enhancing environment.

In addition, the city has conference centres, event boats with beautiful views over the River Danube and classical villas, as well as many museums and elegant restaurants that are available to lease for various event organisation purposes.

Numerous service providers specialising in business travel in Budapest offer unique pre- and post tour and incentive programmes, such as exploration of the vibrant city centre, top-quality wine and gastronomic experiences, thermal spas and country excursions as additions.

NO

LIMITS

IN

SPORTS

EVENTS

*Hungarians are not only ambitious
on the field. Among their
many Olympic medals, World
Championship titles and records,
they also have been proving their
abilities in a broad range of recent
sporting events.*



HUNGARORING

Moreover, not without results! Among the five most important world sporting events is the Aquatic World Championships, which were held in Hungary in 2017.

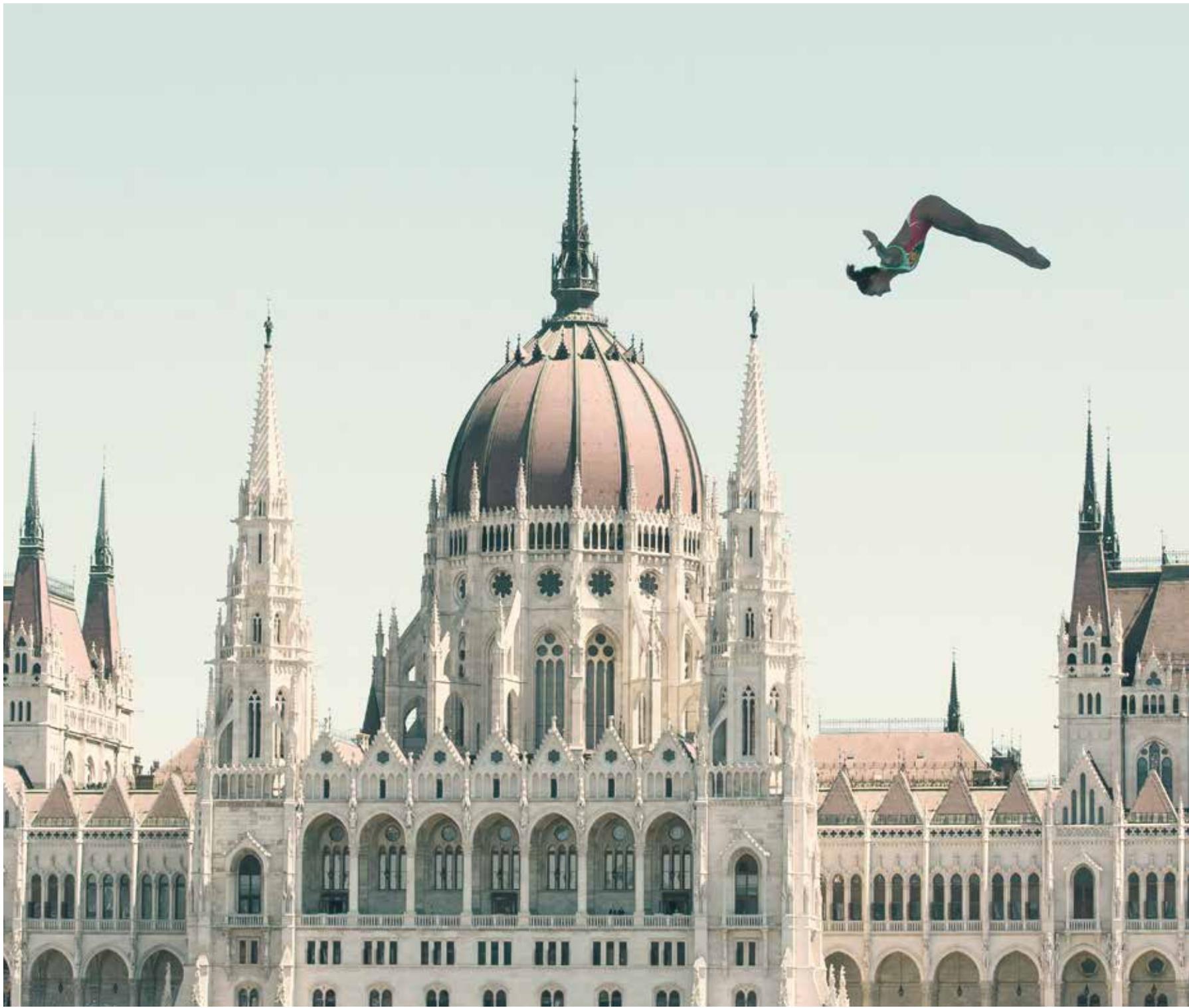
According to the FINA executive committee, it was the best FINA World Championships of all times.

How did the FINA event go? Many people who watched it live or on TV are still talking about it to this day. The high divers jumped from a platform built out on the River Danube with the beautiful building of the Parliament in the background. The water polo competition was held at the Hajós Alfréd Swimming complex on Margaret Island, and the synchronised swimming was held in a pool erected in Városliget (City Park) next to the yearround attraction of Vajdahunyad Castle, so millions of people watching the competitions were able to admire some of Budapest's iconic tourist attractions.

2017 was the year of sport in Hungary. This is where the 14th Summer European Youth Olympic Festival, the Judo World Championships and the Motorboat World Championships were organised, with the same exceptional success.

For more than 30 years, the 'Formula 1 Motor Racing Hungarian Grand Prix' at the Hungaroring in Mogyoród, near Budapest, has been a traditional part of summer and popular with fans who often combine the event with a longer trip to Budapest.

The Duna Arena, which was the main venue of the 2017 FINA World Championships, is the latest attraction in Budapest. It has two Olympic swimming pools in a modern, world standard swimming and aquatic sport complex capable of accommodating more than 12,000 spectators. Duna Arena is open to visitors in between competitions.



5 AMAZING

FACTS

*Rubik's Cube, Goulash,
Houdini. Everyone knows
they came from Hungary.
However, have you heard
of these fascinating facts?*

HUNGARY



CSIKÓS HUNGARIAN HORSE RIDER

1.

Hungarians love to invent new things. Inventions such as the Rubik's Cube (which was invented in the 1970s by Ernő Rubik, the acclaimed sculptor and professor), the first moving picture, the first colour television, the computer, the ballpoint pen and the hologram can all be linked to Hungarian scientists. It is no mere coincidence that Hungary has an exceptional number of Nobel Prize laureates (in every category, apart from the Peace Award).

2.

Hungary has its own cowboys as well, but they are called 'csikós'. Their spectacular horse shows of ancient origin can be seen at ranches on the Great Hungarian Plain.

3.

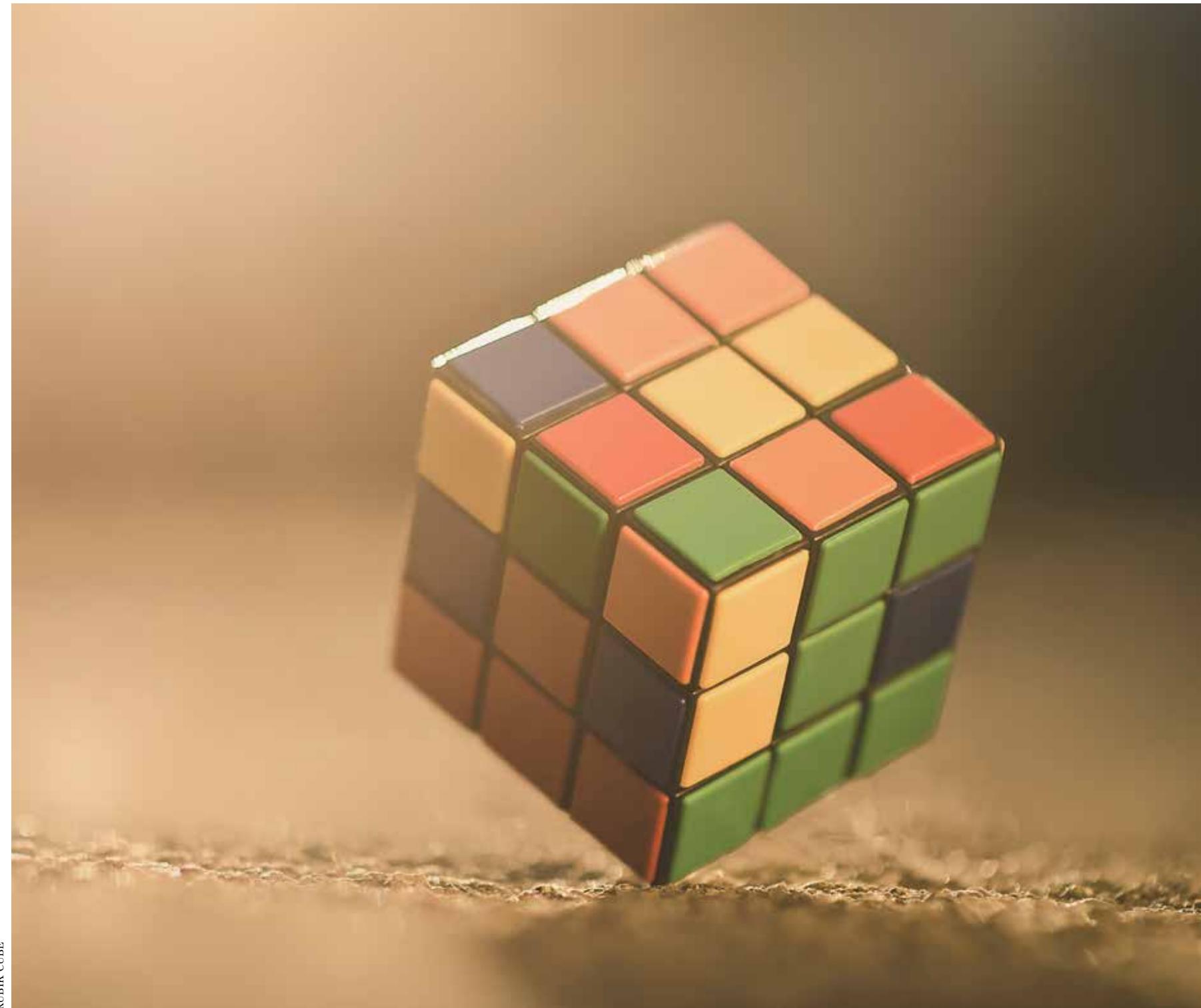
According to foreigners, the Hungarian language is very difficult! However, for us it works very well, and we respect those who successfully conquer the language, which, although being a part of the Finno-Ugric language family, is unlike any other. For example, the Russian language is closer to the English language than it is to Hungarian. The most diverse forms of greetings in the world are expressed in the Hungarian language.

4.

Hollywood would be a totally different place without the Hungarians. "It's not enough to be Hungarian, but it helps a lot", said the message on the door of Adolph Zukor, the founder of Paramount Pictures. Vilmos Fried (better known as William Fox), the founder of Fox Film Corp (known as 20th Century Fox today), also emigrated from Hungary, and many Oscar award-winning artists, such as Michael Curtiz, director (*Casablanca*); George Cukor, director (*My Fair Lady*); Vilmos Zsigmond, cameraman (*Close Encounters of the Third Kind*); as well as László Nemes Jeles, director (*Son of Saul*) are also Hungarian.

5.

The world's best female chess player is Hungarian. Her name is Judit Polgár and she was a Grand Master by the age of 15 (which is still a world record today).



RUBIK CUBE



PRACTICAL

INFORMATION

AIRPORTS:

Budapest Ferenc Liszt International Airport
Debrecen Airport
Hévíz-Balaton Airport

INFORMATION:

Hungary is a Schengen Area country. To enter Hungary, you require a Schengen Visa and a valid form of identification. A visa may be obtained at the Hungarian Embassy.

Area: 93,036 km²

Population: 9,855,571 (2015)

Form of government: Republic

Official language: Hungarian

Time zone: GMT + 1 hour

Currency: Forint (HUF)

CLIMATE:

Hungary has a moderate, continental climate.

The coldest month is January (average: -1 °C),

and the warmest month is August (average: 21.3 °C).

DISTANCES BY AIR:

Paris – 2.5 hrs	Tel Aviv – 3.5 hrs	Dubai – 5.5 hrs
London – 2.5 hrs	Baku – 4 hrs	New York – 8.5 hrs
Moscow – 2.5 hrs	Saint Petersburg – 4 hrs	Berlin – 1.5 hrs
Madrid – 3 hrs	Doha – 5.5 hrs	

THE PERFECT GIFT TO BRING HOME:

A bottle of Tokaji Aszú

BUDA PESZT



*Queen
of the Danube*



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