



Tempting flavours of

**HUNGARY**





Dear Reader,

Hungary is a country of hospitable people who take great pride in their food and wine to which they feel a strong cultural attachment. This promises you the kind of culinary experience which is best enjoyed in the authentic environment of the country itself. Gastronomy has always played an important role in Hungarian culture. It is characterised by both tradition and innovation, as well as creative ideas and solutions inspired by a heritage of many centuries. Throughout history, the diversity of the peoples and cultures of the Carpathian Basin has created original and unique dishes, cooking methods and folk traditions in Hungary. High-quality and diverse ingredients are provided by the region's wonderful geographic location and climatic conditions.

We are experiencing a period of gastronomic evolution in Hungary: new restaurants, bistros, street food outlets and wine bars have opened both in the capital, Budapest, and right across the country. The significant development which Hungarian gastronomy has seen over the last decade has resulted in accomplishments on an international level for Hungary: the first Michelin-starred restaurant in Hungary was followed a few years later by another three, while in 2018, a Budapest restaurant was awarded two Michelin stars – the first in Central and Eastern Europe to achieve this. In 2019, a further two restaurants were added to the ranks of such prestigious Hungarian restaurants, so Budapest now boasts six Michelin-starred restaurants with a total of seven Michelin stars.

Quality ingredients, unique wines and imaginative recipes all come together in Hungarian gastronomy – whether you are talking about an entire tasting menu paired with the best Hungarian wines, a bistro dinner or even breakfast at a farmers' market. In addition, the country has a wide range of culinary options to offer visitors, from its marvellous wine bars, unique and creative cookery courses to food festivals.

Hungarian wine culture is one of the cornerstones of Hungarian gastronomy and the country's 22 wine regions all have special, unique experiences to offer. Centuries of winemaking culture is an integral part of the diverse landscapes and grape varieties as are the many historical winemaking families representing this. Our wine regions each have their own, individual style, whose diversity is well worth experiencing. I'd encourage you to visit a wine festival during your travels in Hungary, to follow a wine route, to visit wineries and speak to our winemakers and taste one of the world's most unique sweet wines, Tokaji Aszú, produced in the Tokaj wine region, a World Heritage site!

The aim of this publication is to provide an insight into the diverse world of Hungarian gastronomy, thus inspiring travellers to discover the Hungarian countryside, its touristic experiences and the unparalleled combination of the country's wine regions and gastronomy. Wherever you may go, I hope that you will experience our country's variety of countenances and see its most intrinsic one – Hungarian hospitality.

Kind regards,  
Dr Zoltán Guller  
Chief Executive Officer  
Hungarian Tourism Agency

## *Tempting flavours of* **HUNGARY**

Hungarian hospitality is legendary, but what is the state-of-play for contemporary Hungarian gastronomy? We can answer this question with pride: after all, in a short time, this industry has undergone such a quantum leap in its development that, similar to tourism, gastronomy has become a driving force in the Hungarian economy. One could even say that a visitor who has not become acquainted with Hungarian gastronomy has not seen the real Hungary as yet.

Nowadays, a new approach has crystallised in top Hungarian restaurants: the daring use of top international gastronomic

technology and the level of professionalism is world class. Yet at the same time, they are capable of striking an independent note, unfettered by international icons and formulas, while reinventing Hungarian traditions in a contemporary style, with relevance to the present day. Not so long ago, it would have been unthinkable for a country-style, typical Hungarian dish to sneak its way on to the menu in a top class restaurant; yet nowadays, ground-breaking Hungarian chefs reinvent such traditional recipes with pride.

Gastronomy has become pivotal to the Hungarian economy and culture and so it is attracting an increasing number of young people as a career path. At the same time, Hungary is developing an increasingly high international profile as a culinary destination: partly due to the Michelin-starred restaurants and the catering businesses recommended by the Michelin Guide. One of the country's top chefs, Tamás Széll, has also done much to raise the profile of this new gastronomic wave in Hungary. First, through his victory as European champion at the Bocuse d'Or in 2016; then in 2018, the announcement of Onyx at the Michelin Main Cities of Europe Award Gala in Budapest as the first two-star Michelin restaurant in the Central and Eastern European region. Most recently in 2019, for the first time, two Hungarian restaurants were awarded Michelin stars at the same time: Stand and Babel, thus joining the ranks of Michelin-starred restaurants.

This February, the "Made in Hungary" Top Gastronomy Association was set up to help communicate Hungarian contemporary gastronomy's message. Within this framework, chefs from the top 20 Hungarian restaurants (according to the newest top list of the only Hungarian nationwide restaurant guide) create dishes using two outstanding Hungarian ingredients. In 2019, the dish with the "Made in Hungary" seal of quality was made from two main ingredients: duck liver and the world-renowned Hungarian wine speciality, 6 puttonyos Tokaji Aszú. The result: a forward-looking, modern version of a dish consisting of two classic Hungarian ingredients, as a figurehead for contemporary Hungarian gastronomy.

# The birth of flavours – FARMERS AND BREEDERS IN HUNGARY

## THE MAIN CHALLENGE FOR CONTEMPORARY HUNGARIAN GASTRONOMY

After decades of socialism in Hungary, state-organised agriculture came to an end and a new era dawned. Since then, Hungarian restaurants have been able to work with an increasing number of local producers and now Hungary boasts food producers of international standing. The greatest challenge has been sourcing ingredients of consistent quality on a regular basis, a fundamental prerequisite if modern Hungarian agriculture is to provide a solid foundation for gastronomy. Nowadays, there are producers working to the highest standards, who can supply the ingredients to Michelin-starred and other top class restaurants.

## CENTRE STAGE IN EUROPEAN GASTRONOMY WITH THE HUNGARIAN INGREDIENTS OF BOCUSE D'OR

Legendary chef Paul Bocuse famously said, “you cannot make a good meal without good ingredients”. It was a symbolic momentum, when the European part of the Bocuse d’Or competition was held in Budapest in May 2016, providing an opportunity to showcase Hungarian ingredients of outstanding quality. The Danube sterlet and its caviar played a leading role in the ingredients of the competition, as did venison from young red deer, as the European teams of elite chefs prepared their plates for the competition from these ingredients.

## THE FUNDAMENTALS OF “MADE IN HUNGARY”

The “Made in Hungary” Top Gastronomy Association founded in 2019 with the notion of duck liver and Tokaji Aszú could not have come about without Hungarian ingredients of outstanding quality. The duck liver suppliers of the top 20 restaurants and the 6 cellars producing Tokaji Aszú are at the forefront of this project nationally and the association makes no secret of its ambition to place Hungary’s culinary treasures on the international stage.

## EXCITING TIMES: FULL OF CURIOSITY AND EXPERIMENTATION

Now that every chef and caterer striving for quality has recognised the importance of local, seasonal ingredients, the interest in products made from indigenous Hungarian breeds has also increased. Over recent decades, the best chefs have been working with these ingredients in a great spirit of experimentation. Thanks to natural animal husbandry methods, these products are generally of very high quality. The newly rediscovered stars among Hungarian ingredients include mangalica pork, lamb from Kelemér and rainbow trout, which are served in top class restaurants. Another two Hungarian classics are excellent quality goose and duck liver, while native fish, such as pike-perch, are popular in top gastronomy, as are naturally produced organic ingredients such as game, particularly venison from red and fallow deer as well as wild boar.



## *A national treasure –* **THE HUNGARIAN MANGALICA PIG**

“Mangalica is the Kobe beef of pork” was the comparison drawn by the prestigious international online magazine *Finedininglovers.com*. The writer was referring to the texture of the meat: purebred mangalica pork is absolutely unique and defies comparison with any other kind of pork; generously marbled, it is rich in flavour and healthy, unsaturated fats. Thanks to pastures dense with herbs, to traditional, regionally produced fodder and also to being raised naturally, the meat of these animals (which are kept according to strict rules) is mature and high in nutrients.



## *The pantry of* **EUROPE**

From time to time throughout the centuries, Hungary has acted as a kind of pantry of Europe. Embraced by the Carpathian Basin and blessed with a favourable climate, it is a land that can produce a wide range of fruits and vegetables. Perhaps the most characteristic types of fruit are the Szatmár plum, Szabolcs apple, Gönc apricot, Káli almond and Órség pumpkin seed. Hungarian woodlands and meadows are particularly rich in edible mushrooms, which are frequently used in Hungarian dishes, either as ingredients or for seasoning, and there are no fewer than 250 kinds of edible mushrooms to be found in the Carpathian Basin.

# Authentic sources – MARKETS IN HUNGARY

Farmers' markets represent the most authentic source of food supply in all corners of the country. This is how farmers in a given region reach their customers in the shortest way with their own produce and handicraft products. In most parts of the country, these are small markets, well-known to locals, that operate without much publicity and connect producers with conscientious buyers seeking authentic flavours. However, Hungary has also seen a range of markets develop that, beyond mere shopping, represent an experience unto themselves. Along with local farmers, more and more rural newcomers are appearing amongst the traders; tasting the street food sold at the market is what really makes the programme complete. The most popular farmers' markets are found around Lake Balaton.



ŐRSÉG FARMERS' MARKET



LILIAMKERT MARKET



THE GREAT MARKET HALL



FONYÓD MARKET AND FAIR



TIHANY MARKETPLACE



CITY CENTRE MARKET HALL





## Full of originality – HUNGARIAN CULINARY SPECIALITIES

### GOULASH SOUP AND FISH SOUP: MERELY THE CREAM OF HUNGARIAN SOUPS

Hungarians say that they are a “nation of soup eaters”. While in many countries, soups are relegated to mere starters, traditionally for Hungarians, if you haven’t had a bowl of soup, then you haven’t had a meal. That said, we differentiate between light vegetable soups and more substantial soups with meat and pasta. The iconic goulash and fish soups belong to the latter category and are prepared in a myriad of different versions, both in restaurants and at home. There are two main schools of Hungarian fish soup: named after the towns of Baja and Szeged. While Baja fish soup is traditionally made from carp and with a simpler method, Szeged fish soup is made from various kinds of fish and passed through a sieve. Yet another speciality from Hungarian cuisine is the sweet fruit soup, served cold. But in any event, the soup served often reflects the season; they will be made of seasonal vegetables, fruits, or from game or fish of that particular hunting or fishing season.

### THE MAGIC OF CAULDRON STEWS

“Pörkölt” – a dish of stewed meat – is an archetypical Hungarian dish. Its precise preparation is the subject of passionate debate: ask a handful of Hungarians and you’ll get at least a dozen opinions. Traditionally, you begin by frying chopped onions in lard, then this is cooked with the cubed meat and showered with paprika. Quite apart from conventional cuts of beef, mutton, pork or chicken, it is often prepared with offal, such as tripe or gizzards, or game. In restaurants, it is often served with a hot side dish, but homemade style, it is eaten with bread and pickles.

### MAIN COURSE OR DESSERT?

If you query whether a sweet pasta dish can really be the main course, Hungarians may insist that pasta is often the main dish, sweet or not. In many countries, there is no tradition of serving hot, sweet pasta as a main course, but it is very popular here; for example, pasta with ground walnuts or poppy seeds served with icing sugar. A similarly simple, everyday dish is semolina pasta served with jam, or even pasta with white cabbage and sugar, which many visitors consider to be a strange combination, but is a very popular meal in Hungarian home cooking.

### DUMPLINGS AND PANCAKES

Pancakes are a popular dessert, served with jam, sweet cottage cheese, or perhaps walnut filling or cinnamon and icing sugar. Sweet dumplings are also well-loved in Hungarian cuisine, often as one of those sweet main courses to follow a substantial Hungarian soup. The most popular is cottage cheese dumplings, served with sour cream and sprinkled with icing sugar; in this case, the cottage cheese is mixed with the dumpling dough. Then there are dumplings stuffed with fruit, usually plum or apricot, served sprinkled with a mixture of cinnamon and icing sugar.



#### THE OLD-FASHIONED DISH WHICH IS AHEAD OF ITS TIME

“Főzelék” is a vegetable-based main course, which puts Hungarians ahead of their time: it is not only a light, healthy dish, but also suitable for vegetarians. In fact, depending on the method used to thicken it, it can even be part of a vegan diet. “Főzelék” is a truly seasonal dish, best when prepared using fresh produce such as green or yellow peas, spinach, green beans, potato, lentils or even Savoy cabbage.

#### LAYERED DISHES: HUNGARIANS’ ANSWER TO LASAGNE

For non-vegetarians, other great favourites of home-style cooking are baked layered dishes containing meat, such as “rakott burgonya” (layered potato), “rakott káposzta” (layered cabbage) or even layered cauliflower. All three are usually served with lashings of sour cream, which is perhaps Hungarian’s favourite dairy product - creamy, smooth and sourish. Bocuse d’Or Europe winner, Tamás Széll’s signature dish is the layered potato served at Stand25, which has a Bib Gourmand-rating from the Michelin Guide. In fact, it was with this dish that Tamás Széll began bringing classic, homemade tastes into high-level gastronomy.



#### HUNGARIAN GRANDMOTHERS’ TAKE ON THE GLOBAL CRAZE FOR FERMENTED FOOD

Primarily thanks to the influence of Scandinavian cuisine, fermentation has become a big hit in modern gastronomy, top class gastronomy included. In Hungary, it is rather the pickling process that is widespread, a process using vinegar, no salt, while fermentation involves lactic acid. A whole range of vegetables is pickled, the favourites being cucumbers, beetroot and apple paprika. Two old-time favourites, however, are “kovászos uborka”, a type of leavened cucumber, and a cucumber salad made with vinegar and some sour cream on top.



#### UNMISSABLE STREET FOOD

Several Central and Eastern European nations claim “kürtőskalács” (chimney cake) – a kind of tube-shaped cake, cooked by grilling – as their own. Either way, it is a big tradition in Hungary and a real favourite with tourists. Making it is a ceremony in itself: the dough is wrapped around a cylinder and rolled in sugar which caramelises to crispness as it bakes. Cinnamon or ground walnuts are often added. Another classic Hungarian street food is “lángos”: this is basically a flat round of dough, deep-fried in oil and traditionally topped with garlic, sour cream and cheese.

## Tamás SZÉLL



**The most successful Hungarian chef. Winner of the 2016 Bocuse d'Or Europe competition, chef and owner of the Bib Gourmand-rated Stand25, and one-star Michelin restaurant, Stand**

“When bistros began appearing in Hungary, it was the birth of a new trend, because this type of restaurant is particularly appealing to those who prefer a laid-back dining experience and don't need silver service. Even the Michelin-starred Borkonyha describes itself as a bistro, showing that you can produce uncompromising dishes in a relaxed atmosphere; this philosophy is embodied by Stand25, too. Bistro style can be an exciting dining experience: it's no coincidence that this type of restaurant is extremely popular in France.

“In Hungary, it was at top restaurants where you first saw the change in mindset, which started the ball rolling for Hungarian gastronomy, while, on the other hand, simpler eateries got left behind. That said, nowadays there is great momentum in the latter category, too. Good restaurants are opening one after another, with colourful and varied menus. On a positive note, this appeals to tourists as well as locals. On the other hand, many places open up and then close down, so this segment is still very much in its infancy. The range of street food on offer is developing very fast and playing an important role in making this change of mindset in customers. If people who don't usually go to restaurants see that for the same money, or maybe just a little more, they can get much better quality street food than the unrelentingly awful gyros or pizza slices of the past ten years, then demand for quality will increase at all levels.”

## Zoltán HAMVAS

**A leading person in contemporary Hungarian gastronomy and president of the Hungarian Academy of Bocuse d'Or**

“For decades, communism laid waste to Hungarian gastronomy. Consequently, Hungarians found themselves at a great disadvantage when they started taking part in the Bocuse d'Or competitions. So, it was a fantastic result back in 2012, when Tamás Széll reached 9th place in the European round and 10th in the world finals in Lyon; the first Hungarian to take part in the competition. Then, four years later, he made history. The 2016 Bocuse d'Or Europe was an exceptionally important milestone in Hungarian gastronomy because tremendous shared efforts brought the competition to Budapest. This brought numerous internationally renowned chefs to the city, along with other figures from the industry, who were then introduced to Hungarian ingredients and wines. The competition itself was also a success story, as we organised an event which would have graced any country in the world, even before the Hungarian team's victory turned it into a euphoric event. People celebrated the team in every corner of the country and what was more, many young people decided to train as chefs because of Tamás Széll. There was a shift in perspective: a new generation grew up which was open to international influences and rather than just training as chefs because they didn't know what else to do, they actively chose that path.”



## László RUPRECHT

Founding president of the Stílusos Vidéki Éttermiség (Association of the Top Restaurants of the Countryside). Gastronomy consultant, schemer and dreamer for bringing together quality gastronomy and boat trips on the Danube

“Every nationality with a highly developed gastronomic culture has based that culture on regional cuisine.”

“A good countryside restaurant is never autotelic: it takes into account the demand in the local area and tries to reinvent it for the modern day. It integrates local ingredients or its own produce into the range of dishes on offer.

“Our principles: to discover local producers, with good quality Hungarian ingredients, integrate them into our day-to-day work and share them with our guests. We maintain the relationship with our guests through special events, where we can assess demand or introduce the kind of countryside gastronomy we represent.

“We see Hungarian cuisine as a cuisine which is based around fresh, local ingredients with elements from the cooking practices of the nationalities who have lived in our homeland for centuries; this includes the harmonious use of fresh herbs, savoury and sweet, sour and bitter flavours of the Hungarian kitchen.

“Hospitality in the Hungarian countryside is undergoing a great wave of development: in many places, merging new technology and knowledge with traditional gastronomy have encouraged restaurants to use quality regional ingredients and base their menus around these on a daily basis. Every nationality with a highly developed gastronomic culture has based that culture on regional cooking and this is what top gastronomy is built upon. Currently, Hungary is undergoing this innovative transformation process.”



## Balázs CSAPODY



President of the Pannon Gasztronómiai Akadémia (Pannonian Gastronomic Academy); owner of a renowned restaurant at Lake Balaton, gastronomy expert

“A good country restaurant shows a region’s face at its most beautiful.”

“The massive improvement of the catering industry in Budapest has had a very positive influence on catering outside the capital. It has set an example for eateries which were trying to raise standards and were aiming for high quality. Hungarian gastronomy is also making progress because of the contemporary views held by the younger generation.

“A good, countryside restaurant shows a region’s face and flavours at their most beautiful. It takes into account the opportunities on

offer in its home region and the guests themselves. It places the guest at the centre of its hospitality and helps them become much better acquainted with the region: be that with its culture, arts, gastronomy or the beauty of the landscape.

“Hungarian cuisine is not primarily about specific dishes or recipes. Rather, it reflects our traditions, memories of family meals and especially seasonal and regional ingredients. It shouldn’t be confined to dishes from the last 50 to 70 years, we should reach back much further into the past. What kind of dishes were people eating, what kind of ingredients, what kinds of fresh herbs and spices, meat and fish were they using 150 years ago? Or even 200 and 300 years back? This is a major part of the spirit in which we run our restaurant, imbued with the flavours from my mother’s and grandmothers’ tables.”



## A brief history of HUNGARIAN WINE



Sustainable grape production and winemaking have been around for centuries in the Carpathian basin. Archeological findings relating to the first vines and wines in the country date back to the first century BC and to the Celts who found particularly favourable conditions for the further development of their vine culture in the Balaton highlands and the Srem regions.

After the medieval efflorescence, the one and half centuries under the Turkish thralldom made a serious dent in Hungarian wine production. It was only during the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy (1867-1918) that wine production gained new momentum, with new markets also opening up for Hungarian wines. From the 1870s, the disaster of hylloxera, which decimated Europe's vineyards, did not spare the Carpathian Basin either. By the beginning of the twentieth century, the majority of the vineyards had been lost. The solution was the propagation of noble European canes grafted onto American rootstocks. The refoundation of domestic breeding and grape and wine culture can be linked to the name of

Zsigmond Teleki in Villány. The primary objective of large-scale agriculture was to achieve as great a quantity as possible, leading to a decline in quality.

The change in regime and the legal and economic regulation which came with membership of the European Union also encourages producers to make continuous improvements. Hungary is now also part of the uniform European system. Hugh Johnson, one of the world's most respected wine writers, mentions Hungary alongside France and Germany as a depository of European winemaking traditions in many of his works. Besides the world's most famous sweet Tokaji, light, fruity wines, full-bodied dry white wines, Kadarka with its pleasant acidity or Cabernet Franc with great longevity all make their home in this region. Our wonderful traditional method sparkling wine is also increasingly finding its way into the glasses of discerning domestic and foreign consumers.



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# Map of Hungarian WINE REGIONS

## UPPER PANNON WINE REGION

- 1 Etyek-Buda
- 2 Mór
- 3 Neszemély
- 4 Pannonhalma
- 5 Sopron

## BALATON WINE REGION

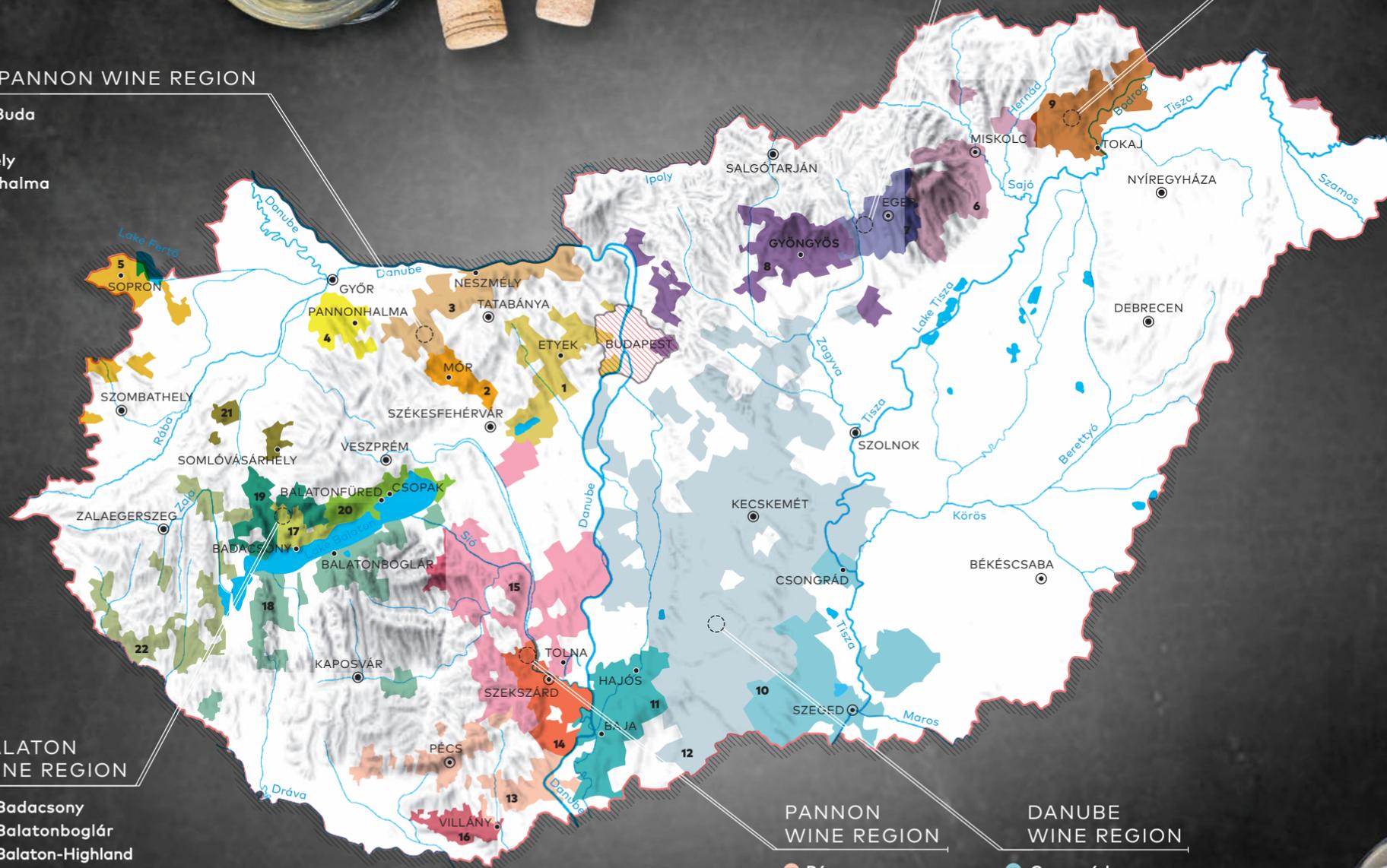
- 17 Badacsony
- 18 Balatonboglár
- 19 Balaton-Highland
- 20 Balatonfüred-Csupak
- 21 Nagy-Somló
- 22 Zala

## UPPER HUNGARY WINE REGION

- 6 Bükk
- 7 Eger
- 8 Mátra

## TOKAJ WINE REGION

- 9 Tokaj



## PANNON WINE REGION

- 13 Pécs
- 14 Szekszárd
- 15 Tolna
- 16 Villány

## DANUBE WINE REGION

- 10 Csongrád
- 11 Hajós-Baja
- 12 Kunság

## *Tokaji Aszú* **AT THE PINNACLE**

### **THE WINE WITH THE WORLD'S MOST EXPENSIVE WINEMAKING PROCESS**

Tokaji Aszú is one of the world's best-known naturally sweet wines. Specific descriptions of the production of sweet wines and the vineyard areas most suited for producing the raw materials essential for making Aszú were already being written down in Tokaj in the 16th century. Tokaj was the first wine region in the world to also fix the origins of grapes and wines in regulations. We can call it the most ancient system of origin protection known today. Our ancestors made Aszú within a strict framework, striving for the best quality.

Aszú itself is no other than a base wine to which individually hand-harvested aszú berries are also added during or after fermentation. So, the wine is fermented twice, endowing it with unprecedented richness and variety of flavours. The aszú berries, which are picked over the course of weeks (one person can collect 12-18kg of aszú berries a day) are stored in vats with a hole at the bottom until the end of the harvest. The very high sugar juice, the eszencia, which is squeezed out of the berries as a result of their increasing weight, can drip out from here. Most of the eszencia is added back to the already fermenting Aszú wines while small quantities are occasionally bottled independently.

Not every production area is suitable for making wines like Aszú. It also needs a unique climate, mainly the presence of large bodies of natural water. Tokaj is located at the confluence of the Bodrog and the Tisza, so humid autumn air is guaranteed for producing the wine. What do you need for good Aszú wine? It's a rot, named *Botrytis cinerea*, commonly called grey rot that creates this special raw material. Perfectly ripe, healthy grapes are also a prerequisite for the spread of the noble rot on the clusters.



## Volcanic wines and the BALATON UPLANDS

Hungary may no longer have active volcanoes, but it does have a spectacular volcanic history. Nestled in the embrace of the Carpathian mountains, the Pannonian basin was an area of hyperactive volcanism from shortly after dinosaurs roamed the earth to just a couple of million years ago. The country's countless volcanic hills, mineral springs and natural thermal pools are reminders of this past.

The great Hungarian Sea, Lake Balaton, is what's left of the much vaster ancient Pannonian Sea. For centuries, the spectacular scenery along its north shore has been considered the most beautiful in Hungary. It also offers evidence of once-rampant volcanism in the form of queer, trapezoidal-shaped mounds of basalt that rise off the plains. Over 50 eruptive centres are documented in what geologists call the Bakony- Balaton Highlands Volcanic Field.

Balaton-felvidék (Balaton Highlands) is the official appellation that covers this northwestern section of the lake, with the smaller appellation of Badacsony nestled within it. Balaton-felvidék's best wines come from the hills surrounding the Kál Basin, especially the Fekete-hegy, a promontory of lava that juts into the basin like a volcanic peninsula. Badacsony is more tightly delineated, named for the town and vine-covered hill of the same name. Vineyards on neighboring volcanic hills are also included; some of the best known, Szent György, Szigliget, Csobánc, Gulács, Hörög, and Tóti, can also appear on labels, although they're not official sub-regions.

In addition to mineral-diverse basalt soils, the warm, shallow waters of the lake are critical for quality, creating a quasi-Mediterranean climate where olive and fig trees thrive, and grapes ripen to perfection.

Olaszrizling is the calling card, a full and round, grapefruity wine, gentle and approachable, but the Queen of volcanic grapes is Kéknyelű or "Blue Stocked", an extraordinarily smoky, flinty, honeyed expression, with sizzling acids and chewable extract. Rajnai Rizling is the Hungarian name for true (Rhine) Riesling, made in a mostly dry, medium-full style, while Szürkebarát (Pinot Gris) is a historic Badacsony specialty, particularly fleshy, and savoury.



A short drive north of Lake Balaton lies the straggling volcano of Somló. Rising in solitude above the surrounding flat farmland, it has been given the nickname of Witness Mountain, alone bearing witness to several million years of history as all else around its hard basalt cap crumbled to dust. It has also witnessed wine-growing on its flanks for the last 2000 years, where some of Hungary's most

distinctive white wines are made. Somló is Hungary's smallest appellation, and covers white wines, dry and more rarely sweet, produced on Somló Hill itself. Vineyards cover all sides, though historically the southern slope has been considered the best, with crus such as Szent Ilona, Apátság, and perhaps the most famous, Aranyhegy, garnering praise over centuries.





## *A country of* **FESTIVALS**

Every year Hungary abounds with food and wine festivals, with gastronomic events awaiting discerning tourists all around the country. Programmes are usually built around the theme of traditional Hungarian food, meat, cheese, vegetables and fruit; there are wine, beer, and pálinka festivals and events dedicated to the typical local food and drink of a region or town.

For example: the Debrecziner Gourmet Sausage Festival in Debrecen, the Csaba Sausage Festival held annually in the town of Békéscsaba for the last 20 years; the Szeged International Tisza Fish Festival, which revolves around fish and Szeged fish soup; the Szeged Wine Festival where you can taste styles and wines from all the country's wine regions in one place; the Orfű Wild Garlic Festival, which focuses on the herb and dishes made from it; the Balatonfüred Wine Weeks where you can find the best wines from the Balatonfüred-Csopak wine district; the Tihany Garda Festival; the Szigliget Pike-perch Festival or the Győr Wine Days. The events are usually accompanied by cultural activities, art programmes, craft fair or musical productions,

which further enhance the experience of these festivals. The most important wine festivals for international visitors are the very popular Budapest Wine Festival, the Budafok Sparkling Wine and Wine Festival, the Szeged Wine Festival, the Balatonfüred wine Weeks and the Egri Bikavér Festival. Other festivals with large numbers of visitors include the Etyek Picnic organised four times a year, Rosalia, the Miskolc Avasi Borangolás or the Bor, Mámor, Bénye Festival in the Tokaj wine region.

There is also a special category of events which give the wineries the opportunity to present themselves to both wine professionals and the general public, and where visitors can deepen their knowledge through workshops and thematic tastings: the Winelovers and Bourjour events as well as VinCE Budapest are the most popular of these. Last but not least; the really sporty can combine their passion for wine and running at the Szekszárd Wine Region Half Marathon, the Palkonya Vineyard Run or the Villány Rosé Marathon.





## *Wine* **IN THE CITY**

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Budapest has become a very popular tourist destination in recent years, not least because of its effervescent cultural life and diverse gastronomic options. For example, one local peculiarity is the world of ruin pubs (former residential buildings and their courtyards that have been turned into atmospheric pubs and bars) which means the discovery of a really exciting milieu. Similarly, the wine bars in the capital and other cities have become sought-after venues, welcoming guests who are interested in wine in extremely tasteful surrounding and offering a diverse range of wines. What's special about these places is that they satisfy the needs of both wine experts and the average wine drinker, as their wide selection usually includes not only local specialities, top wines from outstanding wineries and, in many cases, exclusive wines only available in limited quantities, but also more popular wine styles and varieties typical to each wine district. An integral

part of the service in the wine bars is that they don't only serve the wine, but also provide the consumer with information on the wines tasted, their characteristics, how they were produced and, of course, the producers themselves, helping to invoke the atmosphere of visiting and tasting at the winery itself. Wine bars sometimes offer themed evening programmes and invite winemakers along too, smuggling the experience of touring the wine region and meeting the winemaker into the cities, whereas many places also put together a very impressive selection by focussing on one wine region, wine style or grape variety. Whether you participate in an organised wine bar event or just spend a pleasant afternoon chatting with friends over a glass of special Hungarian wine, a visit to a wine bar is definitely a unique way to spend time.



## Beyond A GLASS OF WINE

The relationship between Hungarians and their wines is traditionally very special. It has inspired numerous poets and writers and the wines have been praised in a multitude of literary works.

Hungarians are proud of their hundreds of years of wine culture, a striking example of this is the fact that the verses of the National Anthem refer to wine, namely its lines refer to Tokaj nectar. Given the appreciation of this wine, naturally Tokaji Aszú may not be absent, for example, from any festive table in Hungary. However, this does not mean that the bottles and glasses will be brought out only on important occasions. Wine also appears when socialising, at social events, conversations with friends or at festivals, and there are many alternative opportunities for drinking wine.

Wine spritzer, fröccs, is the laid-back companion for a chat or get-together with friends. This refreshing, sparkling drink made from soda water mixed with wine in varying ratios is almost considered a national drink in Hungary. Today, rosé fröccs is one of the most popular drinks at festivals, concerts and nightclubs, and there are also many flavoured versions of this drink. However, the basis of a fröccs is traditionally dry white wine.

You can order a fröccs at practically any bar, café or restaurant, you can find it everywhere. You can also taste such specialities as rosé fröccs with lavender cordial or white fröccs with elderflower cordial in some wine bars. However, the wine bars are not popular because of this drink, rather because of their impressive range of high-quality wines. Budapest's wine bar culture has also developed hand in hand with the growing interest in quality wines. Visitors can go on a real tasting journey in these upmarket spots as they typically also carry less well-known wines from the country's smallest wine districts, sometimes accompanied with tasty snacks.



A cool, refreshing fröccs goes down well in the summer heat whereas when you are strolling amongst the wooden huts at the Christmas markets in the snowy winter, there's nothing like the tempting spicy aromas of mulled wine. Mulled wine can be made from red, white or even rosé wine; its cinnamon, clove and honey flavours play an indispensable role in the winter season. As winter draws in, you'll find mulled wine on the drinks list of almost every bar and café as well as at the Christmas markets.



## Hungarian wines – HUNGARIAN FOOD

Hungary's 22 wine districts provide a very varied and exciting selection, so there's a Hungarian wine to pair with almost any dish. It's worth experimenting with this diversity and finding the best combination to suit your own taste. There are, however, classic pairings which make a good starting point for this tasting journey.

### ETYEKI CHARDONNAY SPARKLING WINE

Thanks to its cool climate and intriguing calcareous soil, the Etyeki wine district provides the perfect base for traditional method sparkling Chardonnay. With its elegant, lively character and long ageing on the lees, this sparkling wine is a great accompaniment for various fresh water fish. It is particularly appealing with trout, as the sparkling wine's fresh acidity and complex, yet light flavours wonderfully balance the richness of the fish and the crunchy, pleasantly sweet and sour character of the root vegetables.

*Try it paired with whole baked trout served with root vegetables.*

### SOMLÓI JUHFARK

Somló is one of our most extraordinary volcanic wine regions, whose wines are characterised by savoury minerality. The wine district's classic is Somlói Juhfark, which can be paired with more distinctive starters and cheeses thanks to its fresh acidity, more neutral character and minerality. The rich taste of the goat's cheese harmonises with the Somló minerals while the characteristic flavours of the aubergine tartare are enhanced by the Juhfark's neutrality, taking it to a whole new dimension.

*Dishes made with mountain cheese, such as the goat's cheese and aubergine tartare, are also a great accompaniment for Juhfark.*

### BALATONI OLASZRIZLING (WELSCHRIESLING OF BALATON)

One of Hungary's most popular grape varieties can be found in many wine regions, but the variety's great classic is Balatoni Olaszrizling. Its pure, light, vibrant flavours are characterised by a pleasant almond note on the finish, making it the perfect pair for light poultry dishes and salads. It's also the perfect choice with a Dörgicse chicken soup where the vegetables, the crunchy freshness of the peas and the sour cream's pleasant sourness also harmonise with the structure and flavours of the wine.

*Its pure, light, vibrant flavours are characterised by a pleasant almond note on the finish.*





#### **TOKAJI 6 PUTTONYOS ASZÚ**

Tokaji Aszú itself can equal any dessert. Its unique, especially rich yet not heavy flavours make Aszú one of the best dessert wines in the world. Its characteristic dried apricot, honey, floral flavours and concentration go extremely well with quince and walnut squares. However, it doesn't just pair perfectly with desserts but also with goose liver and blue cheese.

*Excellent partner for quince and walnut squares.*



#### **TOKAJI FURMINT**

Furmint is the Tokaj wine region's flagship white wine. Its rich, complex, mineral character means it can also hold its own alongside hearty meat dishes, so you can happily serve it with a crispy roast pork tenderloin and duck liver combo served with wild mushroom sauce and apple. The wild mushroom sauce harmonises with the Furmint's buttery notes while the wine's mineral saltiness and lively acidity are in perfect harmony with the richness of the roast pork and duck liver and the apple's pleasant sourness.

*Its rich, complex, mineral character means that it can also hold its own alongside meat dishes.*



#### **SZEKSZÁRDI KADARKA ROSÉ**

Szekszárd Kadarka rosé is a good wildcard choice with pork spare ribs. Its light fruitiness, playful spiciness and restrained tannins are just as perfect with the crispy loin as with the Palóc salad. The Kadarka rosé emphasises the pork's delicious spicy notes and is a harmonious accompaniment to the flavours of the salad.

*Szekszárdi Kadarka rosé can also hold its own alongside pork spare ribs.*

**EGRI BIKAVÉR**

Our Egri Bikavér is an easy-drinking, fruity yet fiery wine, which we can happily recommend with even the heartiest of dishes. It pairs perfectly with a combo of duck leg and duck breast served with sweet potato dumplings and Jerusalem artichokes. The wine's full body, generous tannins and complex, spicy flavours balance the dish's distinctive flavours and meatiness perfectly.

*Duck leg with sweet potatoes goes well with fruitier Bikavérs.*

**VILLÁNYI CABERNET FRANC**

Villányi Cabernet Franc is a full-bodied, appealing wine which is an excellent companion for traditional Hungarian meat dishes. It is a truly harmonious duet when served with spicy stewed pigs' trotters. The richly sauced meat is in perfect harmony with the spicy, fruity flavours of the wine.

*Wonderful accompaniment for stews.*





## Made in HUNGARY

In 2019, the “Made in Hungary” Top Gastronomy Association picked out two Hungarian ingredients which are served in Hungarian homes on days of celebration and holidays. They appear together in dishes at the country’s top restaurants made by their chefs, or at various wine cellars producing excellent quality, 6 puttonyos Aszú. The 20 restaurants of the association devised 20 dishes based on duck liver and Tokaji Aszú. Its message is the same as that underlying contemporary Hungarian gastronomy: let’s put transparently sourced, top quality Hungarian ingredients at the forefront and focus on the Hungarian gastronomic scene. The association provides an opportunity for outstanding chefs to showcase their knowledge, talent and creativity. Equally important is that it demonstrates the power of solidarity. After all, the progress in Hungarian gastronomy has arisen out of the achievements of individuals working for a common goal and with a common will.

## Hungarian GASTRO GLOSSARY

### EGÉZSÉGEDRE! (CHEERS!)

When the Hungarian raise a glass in toast, they say “to your health”, i.e. may the content of the glass turn into good health for you. Non-Hungarian speakers may not find it easy to pronounce, but Hungarians are always touched by any attempt they make to do so.

### NOKEDLI (DUMPLINGS)

This is a distinctive Hungarian pasta made from just flour, eggs and salt and cooked in sparing amounts of water. This is the most popular side dish for that iconic Hungarian culinary delight, chicken paprikash, a type of chicken stew.

### PÁLINKA

This is a strong alcoholic drink, which is made only in Hungary and only from fruit or grape marc produced in Hungary; it has to be fermented and distilled using traditional methods. Every Hungarian will announce with conviction that the best ever pálinka is distilled by one of their relatives. The clearer and fruitier it is, the better the quality of the pálinka.

### KÖRÖZÖTT (COTTAGE CHEESE SPREAD)

Cottage cheese spread is a mixture of cow’s milk or even sheep’s milk cottage cheese, paprika and ground caraway seeds: this is a favourite at the Hungarian breakfast table or at teatime.





**SZALONCUKOR (CHRISTMAS FONDANT)**

This is, by contrast, a Hungarian creation: a characteristic sweet, dipped in chocolate and wrapped in tissue paper or colourful foil to hang on the Christmas tree. Nowadays, they are made with all kinds of fillings, but the more traditional ones are filled with marzipan or jelly.

**RÉTES (STRUDEL)**

Served for dessert, this is a stuffed flaky pastry, which is actually not an original Hungarian recipe, but the Hungarians have commandeered it as their own. Most commonly, the pastry is filled with poppy seeds, sweetened cottage cheese, apple or sour cherries, but potentially with any combination of these.

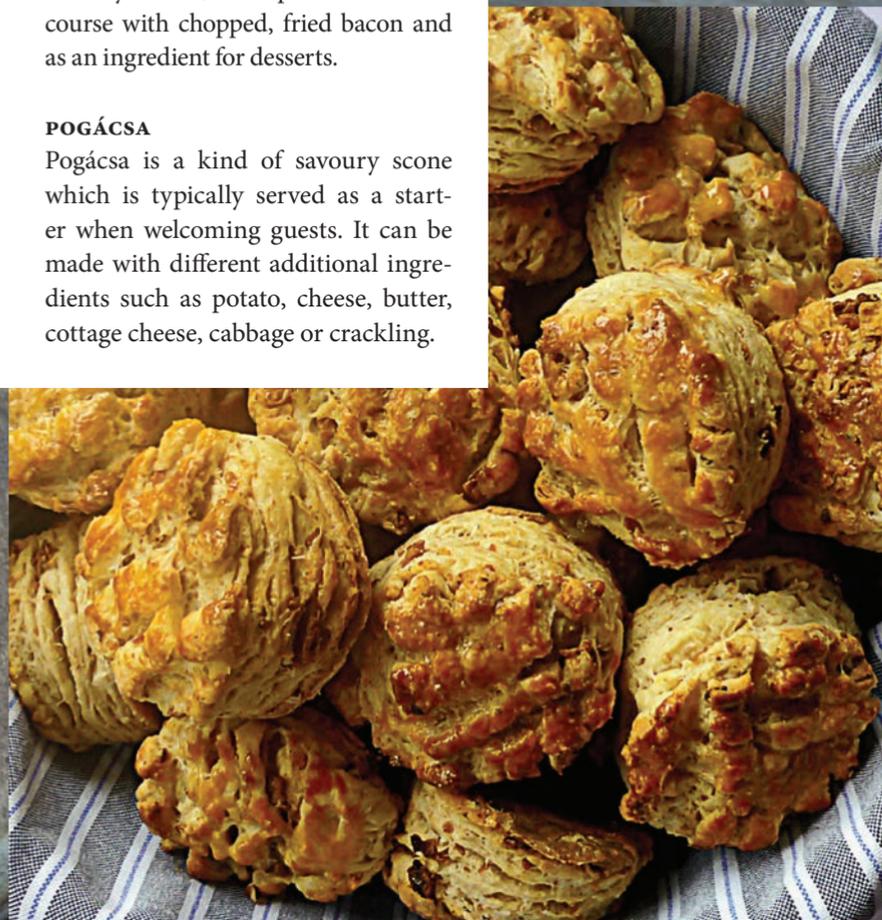


**TÚRÓ (COTTAGE CHEESE)**

Cottage cheese is made from milk and is basically a freshly made cheese, white in colour, with a lumpy, crumbly texture and a sour flavour. Hungarians are enthusiastic consumers of “túró”, be it made from cow’s or sheep’s milk. It finds its way into sweet as well as savoury dishes, onto pasta as a main course with chopped, fried bacon and as an ingredient for desserts.

**POGÁCSA**

Pogácsa is a kind of savoury scone which is typically served as a starter when welcoming guests. It can be made with different additional ingredients such as potato, cheese, butter, cottage cheese, cabbage or crackling.



**FRÖCCS (WINE SPRITZER) GLOSSARY – WINE AND SODA AS A PRECISE SCIENCE**

(1 decilitre = 100 ml)

- KISFRÖCCS (SMALL SPRITZER):** 1 dl wine + 1 dl soda water
- NAGYFRÖCCS (BIG SPRITZER):** 2 dl wine + 1 dl soda water
- HOSSZÚLÉPÉS (LONG STEP):** 1 dl wine + 2 dl soda water
- HÁZMESTER (JANITOR):** 3 dl wine + 2 dl soda water
- VICEHÁZMESTER (VICE-JANITOR):** 2 dl wine + 3 dl soda water
- HÁZIÚR (LANDLORD):** 4 dl wine + 1 dl soda water
- SPORTFRÖCCS (SPORT SPRITZER):** 1 dl wine + 4 dl soda water

With respect to Hungary’s wine and soda traditions, the wine is often served with soda water, which is called ‘fröccs’. In fact, making a “fröccs” with mineral water is a big faux pas, because depending on the mineral content, the water has its own taste, which can have an impact on the taste of the fröccs itself.





ONYX



COSTES



BORKONYHA WINEKITCHEN



COSTES DOWNTOWN



BÁBEL



STAND RESTAURANT



# Budapest GASTRONOMY MAP\*



- |                           |                                     |                             |
|---------------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1 ONYX 🌸🌸                 | 10 ALABÁRDOS 🍴🍷                     | 19 OLIMPIA 🍴🍷               |
| 2 COSTES 🌸                | 11 TIGRIS 🍴🍷                        | 20 ZONA 🍴🍷                  |
| 3 BORKONYHA WINEKITCHEN 🌸 | 12 BOCK BISZTRÓ PEST 🍴🍷             | 21 BALTAZÁR 🍴🍷              |
| 4 COSTES DOWNTOWN 🌸       | 13 SALON 🍴🍷                         | 22 VENDÉGLŐ A KISBÍRÓHOZ 🍴🍷 |
| 5 BÁBEL 🌸                 | 14 FAUSTO'S 🍴🍷                      | 23 MÁK 🍴🍷                   |
| 6 STAND RESTAURANT 🌸      | 15 CSALOGÁNY 26 🍴🍷                  | 24 BARAKA 🍴🍷                |
| 7 FRICSKA 🍴🍷              | 16 ARANY KAVIÁR 🍴🍷                  | 25 TEXTÚRA 🍴🍷               |
| 8 STAND 25 🍴🍷             | 17 NOBU BUDAPEST 🍴🍷                 | 26 ASZÚ RESTAURANT 🍴🍷       |
| 9 PETRUS 🍴🍷               | 18 ST. ANDREA WINE & GOURMET BAR 🍴🍷 |                             |

\* The restaurants featured on the map and in the list were recommended in the Michelin Main Cities of Europe 2018 publication.

# Gastronomy MAP

## MEAT AND FISH ○

- 1 Mangalica pork
- 2 Mutton
- 3 Goose
- 4 Duck
- 5 Game (deer, wild boar, roe deer)
- 6 Hungarian fleckvieh
- 7 Hungarian grey cattle
- 8 Carp
- 9 Trout
- 10 Catfish
- 11 Rooster

## MUSHROOMS ●

- 12 Cep
- 13 Champignon
- 14 Truffle

## FRUITS ●

- 15 Black-heart cherry
- 16 Sour cherry
- 17 Apple
- 18 Chestnut
- 19 Apricot
- 20 Pear
- 21 Quince
- 22 Almond
- 23 Watermelon
- 24 Walnut
- 25 Plum

## VEGETABLES ●

- 26 Paprika
- 27 Onion
- 28 Garlic
- 29 Horseradish
- 30 Potato
- 31 Pumpkin
- 32 Cabbage
- 33 Wild garlic
- 34 Asparagus
- 35 Squash
- 36 Carrot
- 37 Celery





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# HUNGARY, THE WELLSPRING OF WONDERS.

Just go with the tide and let every path  
take you to a new wonder. Breathe with  
nature and get a taste of Hungarian cuisine.



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