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Travel To Budapest: A Marriage Made In Danube

By Frank Johnson

What makes this Hungarian capital an endlessly diverse adventure is the fact that in 1873, two

towns (yes, Buda and Pest) on opposite sides of the Danube River united to become known as the Queen of the Danube and one of the largest cities in the European Union today. Brace yourself for the most unique experience in Eastern (or all) Europe as Hungary is an outpost of cultural and linguistic distinction that stands abruptly apart from its Slavic and Germanic neighbors. The Magyar stronghold of Budapest, established around 900 AD by the formidable clan from Central Asia, became the center of the Kingdom of Hungary capable of withstanding the carelessly blundering Ottomans, Habsburgs and Nazis. Discover the grandeur of one of the oldest and most established cities in Eastern Europe!

Take a Bath with the Queen

A great place to start your Hungarian journey is on the Western Bank of the river in Óbuda, the very oldest part of Budapest. Two thousand years of human life surround the excavated Roman city of Aquincum where Europe's largest open-air amphitheater remains. Main Square is beyond charming with taverns and quaint single story houses and shops. From Óbuda to neighboring Buda, the hilly landscape is sprinkled with ancient Roman and Turkish Baths, fed by some of the 100 thermal springs that run through the area. The Art-Nouveau Gellért Baths in Buda are the most famous to relax in, although the Rudas and Rac baths, build by the Turks 400 years ago, are more interesting and less crowded. All three are located on top of scenic Gellért Hill inside the Citadel, an old military fortification from the 1800s. The pinnacle of Buda is the eponymous Castle Hill where the 14th century Baroque Royal Palace presides imperially over the city.

Grandeur in the City

Cross the historic Széchenyi Chain Bridge, the oldest of nine, and enter Pest, the more compact and metropolitan eastern side of the Danube. A walk along the regal Andrassy Boulevard past stunning mansions will lead to the Hungarian State Opera House, a true gem of acoustic and neo-Renaissance architectural prowess in all of Europe. While in the center of town, visit the noteworthy Inner City Parish Church, which happens to be the first church built in the city. On a grander scale, the enchanting Jewish quarter is home to the largest synagogue in Europe, the Dohány Street Synagogue, complete

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with an extensive Judaic art collection and Holocaust Memorial. Another monumental must-see is Budapest's neo-Gothic Parliament building, Europe's largest and arguably most beautiful. Take a peek at King Stephen's legendary crown jewels that have been stolen and moved in and out of the country a near comical number of times.

Budapest is truly a traveler's city. The enormous size offers experiences on every level, from simply local, musical or explorative to historic, artistic or commercial. Budapest is particularly noteworthy for its exceptional array of museums and galleries that litter the city, particularly the Hungary National Museum on Castle Hill, the Museum of Fine Arts, and the Antique Picture Gallery, with the most extensive Spanish collection outside of Spain.

For more information, visit

<http://www.cfares.com>

Budapest And The Hungarians

By Arpad Domonkos

Budapest is located in Middle Eastern Europe and it surrounded by Austria, Slovakia, Ukraine, Romania, Yugoslavia, Croatia and Slovenia.

Budapest is the capital city of Hungary. Hungary is frequented visited by US tourists and.

This is a friendly city with about 2 million citizen.

Budapest is split right through by the great River Danube, like a hyphen in the city's very name. Just as a Danube divides Europe into East and West, so it divides this city's west-bank Buda district from the east-bank district of Pest. East and west, the city has been tugged in both directions for almost its entire history.

Budapest is the largest city in Central Europe, Budapest is also one of its loveliest, hugging the curve of a wide band in the Danube. Along the west bank, the city climbs quickly up to Castle Hill, site of the former Royal Palace and the medieval village of Buda.

On a flat, low-lying plain across the river is Pest, the modern administrative and commercial hub of Budapest. An admirable example of town planning, the so called Inner City is distinguished by board, leafy boulevards, continental cafes and handsome baroque, neo-classical and novo buildings. The city's grand look, fin-de-siecle look has prompted many to call Budapest "the Paris of the East."

The point where the two sides face each other, across the Danube is what defines Budapest best. Lining the left bank of Pest is the palatial neo-Gothic Parliament building a whole city block of white spires, topped by a neo-Renaissance red dome. Just as famous is the 19th-century Chain Bridge

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regally guarded by four stone lions and linking (along with seven other bridges) the two banks of the city.

For photos about Hungarian Parliament and Chain bridge and other interesting places in Budapest you can visit my Budapest Photo blog.

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