

ESSENTIALS FOR BUDAPEST

RESTAURANTS

The following are real “musts” for eating out in Budapest:

Arany Szarvas (The Golden Boar - pronounced “orange sarvash”)

At Szarvas Tér (pronounced “sarvash teer” where “tér” means Square) : 6C on the map in “*Where*” magazine: a 3 minute taxi ride from the Gellért Hotel, and a 20-25 minute (very welcome) stroll back.

Beautiful panelled room restaurant with excellent wild game dishes. Not on the tourist trail and not too expensive

Kárpátia (The Carpathia)

At Ferenciek tere: at 5/6D on the map in “*Where*” magazine:

Referred to in “Budapest Hello” on page 20 - slightly gloomier than depicted but great food - they also do a wonderful hot buffet lunch on Sundays 11.00 to 3.00pm where you can sample many different Hungarian dishes (*a must*: try the Cabbage pasta squares, the marrow/dill vegetable sauce, and the cucumber salad)

Múzeum

Next to the National Museum on the “Múzeum krt.” (“krt.” short for körút (circular road) - pronounced “ker oot”) at 6E on the map in “*Where*” magazine: a 7 minute walk from the Gellért Hotel - see advert in “*Budapest Hello*” page 24

Truly authentic Hungarian atmosphere as well as superb Hungarian cooking

Articsóka (The Artichoke)

Just behind the National Opera House on Zichy Jenő u. (“u.” or “út” short for “utca” (street) pronounced “ootsa”) : D4 on the map in “*Where*” magazine: see entry in “*Budapest in your Pocket*” page 26

Ideal for after the Opera, especially if you want a choice of Mediterranean dishes as well as excellent Hungarian food : friendly, cheerful and reasonably priced

Barokk (The Baroque)

Behind the National Opera House on Mozsa u.: E4 on “*Where*” magazine map.

Ideal for after the Opera, especially for an elegant, cosy and romantic dinner “à deux”: excellent Hungarian cuisine in slightly different style, served by waiters in 18th Century dress. A little pricier than others

Kis Pipa (Small Pipe - pronounced “keesh peepa”)

Off the beaten track: small working class bistro in the back streets of Budapest, with excellent authentic food - and piano player: ask the hotel to book and order a taxi to take you there - and back

Fatál (Wooden Table - pronounced “faa taal”)

Off the Váci u. (pronounced “Vahtsi ootsa” - the Bond Street of Budapest) not be confused with Váci út (oot) in the heart of the “West End” shopping mall: D5 on the map in “*Where*” magazine:

Suitable perhaps for a late lunch after strenuous shopping in the Váci utca - but only if you have a huge appetite: enormous portions of great food, relatively simple surroundings (see entry in “*Budapest in your Pocket*” page 21)

Fortuna Passage Restaurants

Fortuna Passage is opposite the Hilton Hotel in the Castle area (the “Vár” pronounced “vaar”) : the passage has 2 restaurants: the one on the left is an excellent “bierkeller” type restaurant with a terrace at the back - reasonably priced and highly recommended, with probably the best goulash soup in town; the restaurant on the right in the passage is an exclusive, pricey restaurant with an excellent wine list - and a champagne cellar where, if you ask, they will show you their ancient champagne bottling and corking plant, deep in the cellars several floors below the restaurant

Gerbeaud (Coffee House, not a restaurant)

In Vörösmarty Tér (at the end of the Váci utca): D5 on the map in “*Where*” magazine: Famous coffee house with superb patisserie and elegant 19th Century atmosphere. Ideal for coffee before or after - or instead of - ex(t/p)ensive shopping in the Váci utca

PLACES OF INTEREST

In addition to the usual tourist attractions (such as the Castle and Royal Palace area, the Citadella, Liberty Monument, Váci utca, Parliament, St. Stephen Basilica, etc) you should see the following:

Covered Market

Just across the *Szabadság* (Liberty) Bridge in front of the Gellért Hotel: E7 on the map in “*Where*” magazine - amazing building with extraordinary array of Hungarian foods - salamis, paprika, goose liver etc, as well as tablecloths, wooden toys, clothing etc etc. Go on Saturday morning! (closes 1.00pm)

Gellért Baths

Below the Gellért Hotel): if resident in the hotel, go simply in bathrobe provided in the room, take lift (accessible from the hotel second floor landing) to ground floor and go through public area to pool. Obtain plastic hat from pool reception and enjoy the waters - then go into the thermal baths - separate for men/women - and also try the steam baths - a wonderful experience and great panacea for many ailments!

Rock Church

Beautiful labyrinthine Chapel built into the rocks on the hill next to the Gellért Hotel: D7 on the map in “*Where*” magazine

Mátyás Church (pronounced “maatyaash” - St Mathias)

Huge church in the Castle area, next door to the Hilton!! Try on a Sunday morning from approx 10.30am to hear a service - usually a wonderful choir and superb music

City Park

Enter the park via the *Hosök* Monument (pronounced “hershuk” (Heroes)) on Millennium Square : G2 on the map in “*Where*” magazine. Lovely walks. Have coffee in the coffee house next to the “Robinson Restaurant” overlooking the lake.

MISCELLANEOUS

Airport Procedures

- Use 50 *forint* piece for a trolley in Customs hall - (retrieve it on returning trolley outside).
- Change money *after* Customs at Budapest Airport - avoid getting *forints* in the UK!
- Use an Airport Minibus for transfer to the Hotel - purchase a *single* ticket outside Customs Hall. (The return journey is usually better taken by taxi (only about £10.00) as the Minibus calls at the hotel excessively far in advance of check-in).

Wines

Wines are a problem in Hungary if you don't know them. European and New World wines are difficult to find on most menus and very pricey if you do. Ask the waiter, but if hopelessly in doubt choose a *Villányi* or an *Eger* wine. The Chardonnays are usually good, as are the Cabernet Sauvignons and the Merlots.

Taxis

You shouldn't normally hail a taxi in the street. However, all restaurants and other establishments will call one for you, and they generally arrive within 2 minutes!! They are very cheap, but have different rates, and so a hotel taxi (especially the Gellért) should be relatively safe from rip off.

Food

If you want to try authentic Hungarian dishes, in addition to the traditional goulash soup (*Gulyás leves*), you should not leave Hungary without having tried the following:

- *Borjú pörkölt* - veal goulash (often translated as “veal stew”)
- *Paprikás Csirke* - paprika chicken served with *galuska* (gnocchi/egg dumplings)
- *Libamáj* - goose liver, either served cold as a pat,, or hot fried in slices
- *Hortobágyi Palacsinta* - (a starter) pancakes with mincemeat and paprika sauce
- *Kacsa* (duck) roast (*sült*) - most duck and goose dishes are excellent
- *Fogas* - (fish) pike perch either fried (*rántott*) or grilled (*roston*)
- *Túrós rétes* - (dessert) strudel with cheese and raisins