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Destination Details – Visiting Budapest



Things to do, places to eat, trips to make when visiting Budapest May 1, 2026

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Budapest for River Cruise Guests

The Pearl of the Danube

Few cities pair so perfectly with a river cruise as Budapest. Ships dock right along the Danube in the city center, placing you steps from grand architecture, historic cafés, and vibrant neighborhoods. Whether you're starting or ending your journey here, Budapest rewards a 2–3 night stay to truly take it in.

Where to Stay (Pre & Post Cruise)

For convenience, stay on the **Pest side**—flat, walkable, and closest to most cruise docks.

Luxury (5★)

Four Seasons Hotel Gresham Palace – Iconic Art Nouveau landmark overlooking the Chain Bridge

Matild Palace – Elegant, historic palace with modern luxury touches

Upscale (4–4.5★)

Aria Hotel Budapest – Music-themed boutique hotel with a rooftop bar

Hotel Clark Budapest – Stylish, quieter option on the Buda side

Boutique & Value

Casati Budapest Hotel – Charming and central

Bohem Art Hotel – Trendy and arts-focused near the river

Dining Highlights

Budapest offers some of the best dining value in Europe, blending hearty Hungarian classics with modern cuisine.

Traditional Hungarian

Hungarikum Bisztró – Classic dishes like goulash and paprikash

Gettó Gulyás – Casual, authentic comfort food

Modern & Fine Dining

Borkonyha Winekitchen – Michelin-starred, wine-focused dining

Stand Restaurant – Elevated Hungarian cuisine

Casual & Unique

Mazel Tov – Lively ruin-bar setting with Middle Eastern flavors

New York Café – Famous historic café—go for the ambiance

Top Things to Do

Even if you see Budapest from the water, exploring on land is essential.

Must-See Landmarks

Hungarian Parliament Building – One of Europe’s most stunning government buildings

Buda Castle – Historic complex with panoramic views

Fisherman's Bastion – Fairytale terraces overlooking the Danube

Széchenyi Chain Bridge – Iconic link between Buda and Pest

Signature Experiences

Soak in the thermal waters at Széchenyi Thermal Bath or Gellért Baths

Take an **evening Danube cruise** for illuminated views of the skyline

Explore the Jewish Quarter’s famous ruin bars

Easy from the Ship

Walk the Danube Promenade

Visit Central Market Hall

Ride tram line 2 along the river

Day Trips from Budapest

Perfect additions for pre- or post-cruise stays.

Danube Bend Highlights

Szentendre – Charming, artistic riverside town

Visegrád – Hilltop castle with sweeping river views

Esztergom – Home to Hungary’s largest basilica

Closer Escape

Margaret Island – Peaceful green oasis in the middle of the Danube

Suggested Stay

Pre-Cruise (2 nights): Recover from travel, explore Pest, enjoy a night cruise

Post-Cruise (2–3 nights): Visit Buda Castle, relax in thermal baths, and take a Danube Bend day trip

Why Budapest is Perfect for River Cruisers

Ships dock right in the city center

Highly walkable and scenic

Stunning day and night river views

Exceptional value compared to Western Europe