

THINK HUNGARY, MORE THAN EXPECTED



LAKE BALATON



# WELCOME

# AT LAKE BALATON

text and photos » Hungarian Tourism Ltd.

Balaton is not only a summer holiday resort, it also offers delightful experiences throughout the year in the form of active programs, prestigious events, excellent health facilities and great wines.

Balaton is more than a lake as a number of family-friendly beaches offer carefree summer relaxation. In addition to safe bathing, you may also enjoy several water sports at Lake Balaton. Balaton is more than a beach to have fun on as you are free to choose from program options, both at the beach and further off. You can cycle around the lake and visit sites of natural beauty via hiking trails. Events like Bala-

ton Sound, one of the most popular music events in Europe, high-quality art-festivals and intimate wine festivals can make your stay at Balaton even more colorful. Balaton is more than summer as the region offers a variety of therapeutic, beauty and wellness treatments throughout the year through the spas and the harmony provided by the lake and surrounding nature. Fine wines, all-year-round open wine

cellars and wine terraces await visitors to Lake Balaton. Everyone can find the most suitable accommodation tailored to their individual needs: campsites, high-standard private accommodation, apartments, guest-houses, three- and four-star urban hotels and wellness resorts are all available for our guests. For further information please visit [www.gotohungary.com](http://www.gotohungary.com).

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Biking or  
bathing - it is all  
the same, both  
can be enjoyed  
by the Lake



# THE BALATON EXPERIENCE

## WATER EVERYWHERE...

text and photos » Hungarian Tourism Ltd.

The Balaton region would be inconceivable without Lake Balaton, and Lake Balaton is unimaginable without the beaches and everything they have to offer.

From spring to autumn, regatta sailors conquer Lake Balaton day by day. The 596 km<sup>2</sup> surface of the lake is a real paradise for lovers of sailing, perhaps the most popular water sport at Balaton, with nearly 100 ports available for yachts and dinghies. The most prestigious event is the Blue Ribbon Regatta, the longest round-the-lake race in Europe, organized every July. Scheduled boat traffic starts at Easter each year. Pleasure and tour boats also offer an amazing experience from early spring to autumn. Balaton, as a natural lake, offers pleasant fishing opportunities almost all year round; typical Balaton fish are carp, zander and bream (especially common bream), but there are large stocks of Volga pikeperch, silver bream, eel and sabre-fish here as well.

Lake Balaton is a paradise for sailors and all kind of boats

Information about territorial licenses, fishing tickets, size limits and ban periods can be obtained from the website of Balaton Fish Management ([www.balatonihal.hu](http://www.balatonihal.hu)). The main season for water programs is naturally summer. A large number of renovated, family-friendly beaches offer many children's and sports programs as well as Wi-Fi access. The water quality is excellent, and the standard of services on the beaches improves year by year, therefore, a large number of beaches are awarded the "Blue Wave Flag" prize. The Balaton-shaped pool in Keszthely and Wonderful Water Spider, the kids' water world of the spa in Zalakaros, opened in 2012, are very popular among families. In many places lido-like shores are available for small children.

In order to meet the demands of the younger generation, more and more beaches offer volleyball and soccer fields, basketball and handball courts. Those on sandy beaches or grasslands are as popular as the ones built in the water. For guests looking for more exciting adventures, water-ski courses are available in Balatonfüred, Vonyarcvashegy and Siófok, where kite-surfing is also worth trying. In addition to beach programs, water sports events should not be missed either. The best known among these is Lake Balaton Cross Swimming from Révfülöp to Balatonboglár, which takes place in July of each year. It is also worth looking for local and/or regional discount-cards, providing discounts among others on beaches.

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## ACTIVE BALATON

# BALATON NATURALLY!

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Lake Balaton has been blessed with an abundance of beauty. A wide range of unique natural formations can be found in the Balaton Uplands National Park.

The Tihany peninsula, the pearl of Balaton was the first landscape protection area in the country. You can learn about the once raving world of volcanoes and the culture of lavender cultivation in Tihany in the Lavender House. The basalt columns of Hegyestű, the 337 meter high former volcano between Zánka and Monoszló, the gatekeeper of the Káli basin, offer a view unique in Hungary. Tapolca basin with its spectacular buttes, swamps

and marshlands also represents an outstanding asset. Visitors are mesmerized by the peaceful atmosphere of the nearby Káli basin. The so-called Kőtenger (Sea of Stones) on the border of Szentbékállya and Mindszentkállya is a unique formation with Ingókő (Rocking Stone), which – though it weighs several tons – can be moved even by one man. Kis-Balaton (Little Balaton) has been a natural conservation area since 1951. About 232 bird species nest

here. The visitor centre of the area, Kányavár Island is open for walking. The Buffalo Reserve in Kápolnafüzes is open all year round. The Balaton region is an ideal cycling destination also for families with small children, since there are no significant level differences and plenty of interesting sights can be visited within a short distance. There are many opportunities to cycle: along the recommended hiking trails or even the 210 km Balaton Bike

There are magnificent panoramas from the hills all over the Lake





Endless fun on the beaches



Carefree recreation either in on a golf course or on a yacht

Ring around the lake. Excellent horse trekking routes are available in the territory of the Balaton Uplands National Park. It is also worth visiting one of the numerous adventure parks, where you can try horseshoe tossing, archery, and also the bob-sled track, wire rope slide, paintballing, adventure track or water bumper cars. The Balaton region

offers the opportunity to have a go at special, even extreme activities like hot air ballooning in Western-Balaton. If you prefer paddling to bathing, you can go canoeing from spring to autumn in Nagyberek near Balatonfenyves or on the Zala River in the summer and, in the winter, on the Hévíz Stream, which never freezes. For golf lovers the

tournament courses of Balatonudvari and Balatongyörök offer the opportunity for sports with a wonderful view in a wonderful landscape. Nordic walking is also gaining popularity in the region, you can try it in many places such as Zalakaros, Hévíz, Keszthely, Badacsony, Szigliget, Balatonfenyves, in the villages of the Balaton Riviera and in Balatonfüred.







# HEALTH FROM SUMMER TO WINTER

## PAMPERING TREATMENTS

text and photos » Hungarian Tourism Ltd.

The nature and the lake radiate infinite harmony. Thermal, mineral and spring water surface in many places in the Balaton region.

Lake Hévíz, the earth's largest, biologically active thermal lake can be found at a distance of 6 km from Lake Balaton. The sulphuric and slightly radioactive water of the lake is excellent for healing rheumatism, musculoskeletal and neurological diseases. The type of medicinal mud covering the lake bed is unique in the world. Among the therapies applied at Hévíz, drinking cure is less-known, even though this treatment is extremely efficient in chronic cases of gastro-enteritis and indigestion. Thermal water rises from a depth of 2,500 meters at Zalakaros. This family-friendly bath complex offers an unforgettable experience for all ages. The outdoor water world and the indoor water world for children – the latter opened

in 2013 – have become the meeting point for generations. The thermal water at Zalakaros facilitates the healing of patients suffering mainly from fatigue, musculoskeletal problems, chronic inflammatory problems and arthritis. The waterpark in Siófok was opened in 2006. The thermal waters of Nagyberény supply the indoor waterpark and wellness centre, named after a Roman emperor, which is open all year round. Rheumatic, neurological and gynecological complaints can be successfully treated with the thermal water of Marcali, while the thermal water of the Siófok spa is recommended for healing musculoskeletal problems, gynecological and urological disorders, dermatological disorders as well as for the post-

treatment of accidental injuries and orthopedic surgery. At several wells in Balatonfüred you can taste aerated spring water, which is also applied in the form of water therapy mainly for treating cardiovascular diseases and for the treatment of the overall exhaustion of the body. As a drinking cure, it is effective in treating gastritis, gall bladder and intestinal disorders, and even diabetes. Beneath the town of Tapolca, there is a captivating cave system divided into several sections. Next to the Lake Cave, therapeutic activities are carried out in another part of the cave system. The pollen-free air in the cave is at a constant temperature, and has proven therapeutic effects on asthmatic diseases, bronchitis and allergic respiratory diseases.

Physical and  
spiritual revival  
at one of the  
healing places  
at Lake Balaton

# ADVENTURES IN THE REGION

## NOT TO BE MISSED

text and photos » Hungarian Tourism Ltd.

The land of volcanoes offers special dishes and spicy wines for the culinary delights lovers, but there are many of cultural sights and events as well. You must not miss them!

Unique wine specialities and tasty dishes



**Cheers! »** The lake attracts those seeking culinary pleasures with many kinds of fish; the region's forests are full of game, and the gardens have great soil and provide excellent fruit. Among the meals typical of the Balaton region, priority should be given to fish, in particular to Balaton walleye, while the unique Balaton fish soup deserves special attention too – the more kinds of fish it is made of, the tastier it is. Gastro-hint: when eating at the lakeside, you must not miss lángos (a deep fried flat bread), pancakes and rösti (potato pancakes). Farmers' markets opening one after another recall the atmosphere of old times: here you can find everything from homemade goat and sheep cheese to delicacies baked in a wood-fired

oven. Balaton wines are inseparable from tasty regional dishes. The historical wine regions are proud of their excellent wines, viticulturists and winemakers. It is recommended to taste Grey Monk (gris) in Badacsony, Cabernet Sauvignon at South-Balaton, Rhine Riesling in Zala county, Cserszeg Spicy in the Balaton Uplands region, Chardonnay in Balatonfüred, and you should definitely drink some Furmint around Somló!

**This is interesting... »** The meeting of cultures and ages, the encounter of man and nature. Anywhere in the Balaton region, you can witness this with every step. Where should you go? Visit Tihany, where a church and monastery already



The most picturesque areas belong to the Balaton-Uplands National Park, volcanic cones and castle ruins are favourite places of excursions

in existence nine centuries ago. The royal charter issued in 1055 contains the oldest written words in the Hungarian language in a Latin context. Having seen the undercroft of the Benedictine Abbey in Tihany and the majestic baroque church, it is also worth visiting the modern visitor centre constructed under the name Porta Pacis,

i.e. the Gate of Peace. The fascinating, sometimes even legendary medieval fortress ruins – like the fortresses of Szigliget and Nagyvázsony as well as the ruins of Csobánc, Tátika, Rezi and Zádor – and the Benedictine Abbey at Somogyvár, our national memorial, are worthy guardians of the Middle Ages. You may become familiar with the military

” Summer festivals in castles and ruins are popular



Festetics castle  
in Keszthely



traditions of medieval warfare at the Castle Games in the summer. Among the memorials of folk architecture, the folk house of Buzsák is renowned for its embroidery, the country house at Vörs, the folk house at Zamárdi and the folk house of Balatonkenese, which was awarded the Folklore House of the Year prize in 2011, are the most outstanding.

**Places you must definitely visit! »** Although, the entire Balaton region is wonderful, there are several sites, sights and exhibitions that everyone has to see – once, or even several times! It is not difficult to find the viewpoint Szépkilátó (“beautiful lookout”) at Balatonyörök, you only need to look for the place with the most beautiful view of Lake Balaton.

One of the main sights of Tapolca, the picturesque little town in the neighborhood of the butte hills, is the Lake Cave, where a unique 300 meter section is available for a boat trip in the underground tunnels. Keszthely and the baroque Festetics Palace are inseparable. In the beautiful baroque palace, besides an aristocratic library of nearly one hundred thousand volumes, you

will see several permanent exhibitions, the Carriage Museum, the Hunting Museum, the Palm House in the castle garden, all offering great experiences, while the sand table of the Historical Model Railway Exhibition is outstanding on a European level as well. The thermal lake supplied by the Hévíz spring is unique not only in Hungary but also worldwide. The biologically active thermal lake of 4.4 hectares offers its healing water as a natural spa. You may take advantage of the opportunity for a pleasant and therapeutic bath in every season. The bath culture of Balaton started flourish-

ing in Balatonfüred in the 17th century. The town has been completely renovated in recent years, the district reminiscent of the Reform Era has become filled with new life. The City Museum recalls the atmosphere of this era, while the grand Vaszary Villa hosts exhibitions, literature and music events. Siófok is the most significant town on the southern shore of Balaton, its 17



km long shore is divided between many beaches and hotels. Imre Kálmán, the renowned operetta composer was born here. The 45 m Water Tower, erected in 1912, stands in the middle of the town. Siófok is the boating centre of Lake Balaton. Its exclusive places of amusement offer a wide selection of entertainment opportunities for each generation. The reconstructed Kisfaludy lookout at the top of the 437 meter high Badacsony hill offers a remarkable view. The house of József Egry, the most famous painter of the Balaton region, can also be found in Badacsony and is a museum to-

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Renovated  
symbol of Siófok:  
Water-tower  
in the centre

day. A particular sight at Badacsonytomaj is the basalt church dedicated to Prince St. Imre.

### From program to program »

Where else would you meet your friends who you have not seen for a long time – perhaps visiting from abroad – if not at Lake Balaton? An excellent opportunity for this can be a joint family vacation or even high-quality,

## USEFUL INFORMATION

# GOOD TO KNOW

text and photos » Hungarian Tourism Ltd.

**Access »** By airplane: Budapest, Liszt Ferenc International Airport (distance from Siófok: 120 km, distance from Keszthely: 203 km). Sármellék, Hévíz Balaton Airport (distance from Siófok: 86 km, distance from Keszthely: 12 km). By car: From Budapest, on Road 7 and/or Motorway M7. For the northern shore you should leave the motorway at the Balatonakaratya junction or take the Szántód ferry at the Zamárdi or Kőröshegy exit. The main road along the northern shore is Road No. 71. From the direction of Western Hungary, you can reach

the lake on Road No. 84 (distance between Sopron and Keszthely: 128 km). Scheduled boat services: Balatoni Hajózási Zrt. operates at 22 ship ports at Lake Balaton. More information can be found on: [www.balatonihajozas.hu](http://www.balatonihajozas.hu).

### **Lake Balaton in numbers »**

Length of the lake: 78 km (Fenékpusztá - Balatonakaratya); maximum width of the lake: 12 km (Siófok - Alsóörs); distance from Budapest: Keszthely: 187 km, Siófok: 104 km; distance from Vienna: Keszthely: 202 km, Siófok: 254 km

### **Be careful during storms! »**

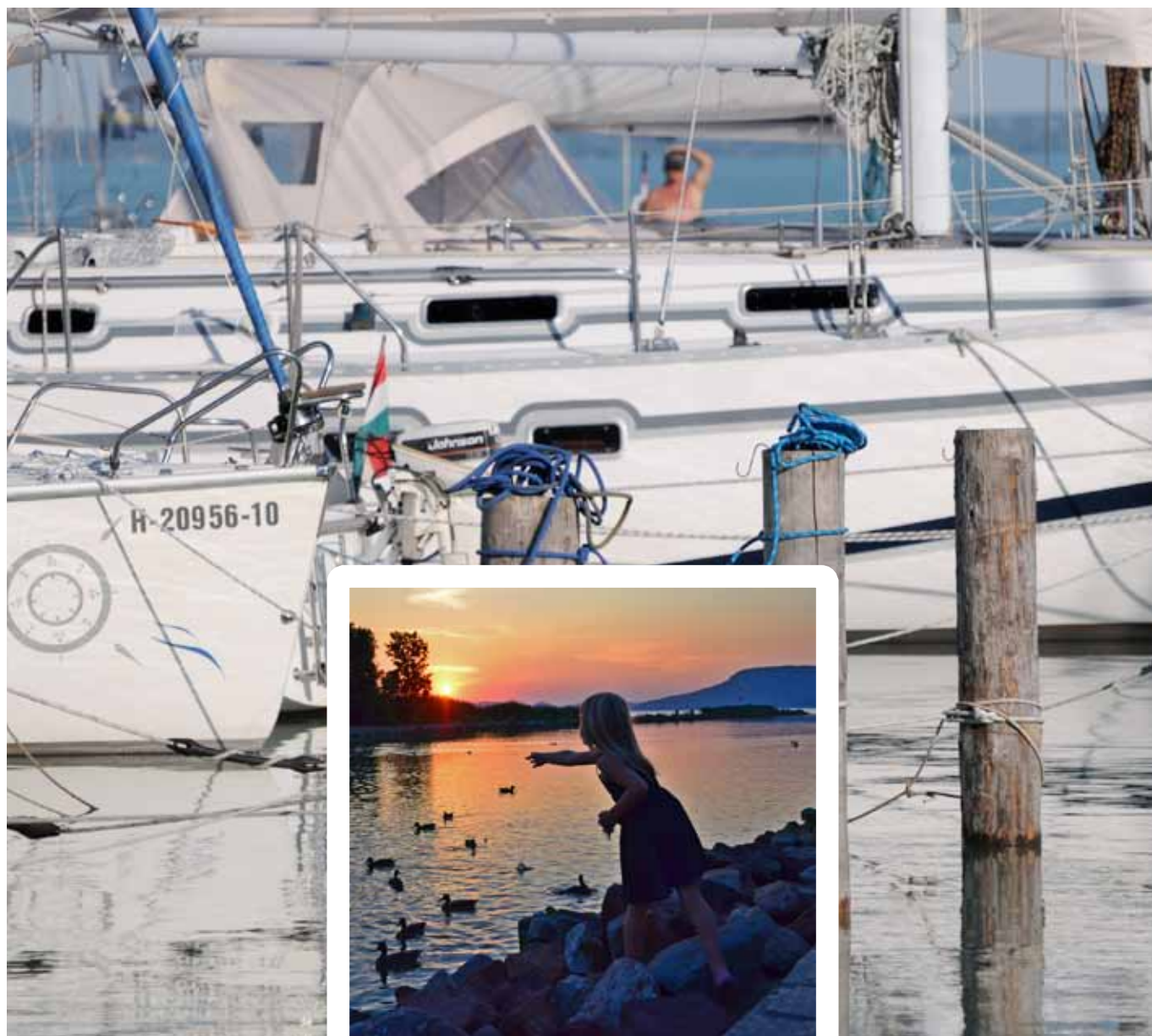
Each year between April 1 and October 31, a storm forecast service operates at Lake Balaton. In the case of storm forecast stage 1 – i.e. a yellow light, flashing 45 times a minute – you are allowed to bathe or use a pedal boat only within the buoyed areas of the designated beaches. In the case of storm forecast stage 2 – i.e. a yellow light, flashing 90 times a minute – you are NOT allowed to bathe or use any craft in the water.

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Holiday for the whole family







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LAKE BALATON  
AND ITS FASCINATING  
SURROUNDINGS ARE  
WAITING FOR THE GUESTS  
ALL YEAR ROUND



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