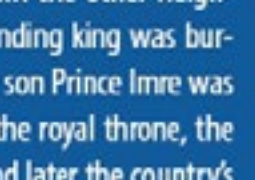


SZÉKESFEHÉRVÁR



www.turizmus.szekesfehervar.hu



Silver herma, 1777.

ROYAL RECEPTION

Székesfehérvár is one of the oldest Hungarian cities; it was built on the hills of a swampy plain, as a vantage point easy to defend, in the junction of natural roads. It was at this excellent strategic point that Prince Géza set up his imperial seat, the forerunner settlement of today's Székesfehérvár. He also built the **first stone church of the Hungarians** (3) here around 997, which later served as his burial place, as well. The open gates in the coat-of-arms of the city symbolize that it is still open to every visitor!

The city became a really important center under St. Stephen, who built a private church here, the Holy Mary provost church, the future coronation church. In fact, Székesfehérvár is called the **city of St. Stephen**; because it was from the king that it received its free city title and

privileges that distinguished it from the other neighboring settlements. Our state-founding king was buried in Székesfehérvár, and his only son Prince Imre was born here. This was the home of the royal throne, the coronation regalia, the treasury and later the country's archives. According to medieval customary law three factors were required to make royal power legitimate: the coronation had to take place in Székesfehérvár, it had to be performed by the archbishop of Esztergom and the crown of St. Stephen had to be used for it. Forty-three of our kings were crowned here, and apart from St. Stephen, eight kings from the Árpád house and seven from mixed houses chose the coronation church of Székesfehérvár as their final resting place.

Today, only the ruins remain of this once magnificent building, which used to be considered outstanding by European standard too. The **Ruin Garden** (8) in the heart of the city takes us back to the middle ages, heralding the magnificence of the one-time coronation town. The mausoleum near the Ruin Garden houses the finely carved sarcophagus made for the canonization of St. Stephen, and a mural by Vilmos Aba-Novák depicting the story of the Holy Right Hand and the Holy Crown. The **Bishop's Palace** (9) located near to the Mediaeval

SZÉKESFEHÉRVÁR – THE CITY OF KINGS

Foundation: Prince Géza set up his royal seat here in 972.

Location: At a strategic point, by the junction of land roads in the Central Transdanubian region, halfway from Budapest to Lake Balaton. By car you can reach it on main road no. 7 or on motorway M7. It remains an important road and railway junction till this day. A city with county rights, the seat of Fejér county.

Area: 170.89 km²

Population: 102 035

Origin of its name: There exist two explanations for the Fehérvár (White Castle) name: one suggests that it comes from the „Fehér” tag in the names of some members of the ruling house (András I), the other implies that the building stones of the royal castle and palace built by Géza, or the whitewashed walls of the castle lent it the name. Later, the prefix „Székes”, meaning the seat of the king, was added to the suffix Fehérvár.



Ruin Courtyard was built from the stones of the former coronation church. The construction work lasted more than twenty years, so the basically Baroque building contains some Louis-Seize style decoration motives, too. The inscription on the **Orb** (10) in the middle of Városház square stands evidence of the pride of the citizens. Fehérvár, free city by the grace of St. Stephen.

The church buildings authentically convey the experience of destruction and revival. King Béla IV built the magnificent towers of the **episcopal cathedral** (4). Later the **silver herma containing the head of St. Stephen**, was kept here. Today, together with the other treasures of the church, it is on display in the **Székesfehérvár Diocesan Museum** (11).

The also medieval **crypt of the cathedral** (5) holds the tomb of Béla III and his wife, Anna of Antiochia, with the embossed figures of the monarch and his wife on the marble stone covering of their tomb.

Those who like the ornate, virtuoso creations of late Baroque should not miss the **Seminary** (1) and **Cistercian church** (16). Maulbertsch's pearlescent, lace-fine vision of heaven on the ceiling of the Seminary and the carved wood furniture of the vestry of the Cistercian church stand without an equal in Central Europe and will surely fascinate them.

BUSTLING CULTURE

After the devastating rule of the Turks Székesfehérvár enjoyed a new golden era in the 18th and 19th centuries. The Inner City retained its medieval street structure, its ornaments being primarily the Baroque churches, the Rococo and Zopf style buildings and palaces. Education, cultural and intellectual life thrived inside its walls. The country's first stone theater building, the **Vörösmarty Theater** (19), was



Vörösmarty Theater



Historical Cavalcade



City Gallery

built up here. The visitor to the city can feel this buzzing cultural life till this day. Székesfehérvár is still uniquely rich in museum relics, art creations, rarities. Visitors can explore Roman-time stone relics, sarcophaguses, bricks with initials printed in them (in the **exhibitions of King Saint Stephen Museum** [17]), works of art in the galleries (**City Gallery - Deák Collection** [14], **István Csók Gallery** [15], **New Hungarian Gallery** [2]) or the fascinating porcelain dolls in an exhibition which certainly stands without an equal (**Hetedhét Toy Museum** [13]). Our cultural programs will entertain audiences of all tastes all year round.

The recently completed reconstruction of two monuments in the City recalls the world of civic Fehérvár. One of them is the **Hiemer-Font-Caraffa house** (12) in Városház tér, a Baroque building of outstanding value consisting of three blocks, the renovation of which was fully completed in 2011.

The art nouveau **Árpád Bath** (7) built in 1905, which radiates the incomparable atmosphere of the age, is a real gem of Székesfehérvár.

TIME TRAVEL

Székesfehérvár derives its unique bustling atmosphere of, beyond the just 'decor', from the many little details. When you will ramble around in the city you will pass ornate Baroque churches, buildings teeming with balconies and impressive palazzos in classic style, and come across time and again the remains of the medieval city wall or age-old buildings. Its numerous and boldly placed public statues will recount the entire history of a city, that was devastated several times over the centuries and rose again to thrive. It is worth getting off the beaten track of the Main street and making a time travel through the closed courtyards and the smaller alleys. Clocks play a distinguished role in the life of the city: the **Flower Clock** (18) tells time on a face dad in colorful flowers, and the **Animated Clock Tower** (Órajáték) (6) parades prominent and symbolic figures of Hungarian history to wonderful tunes every two hours.

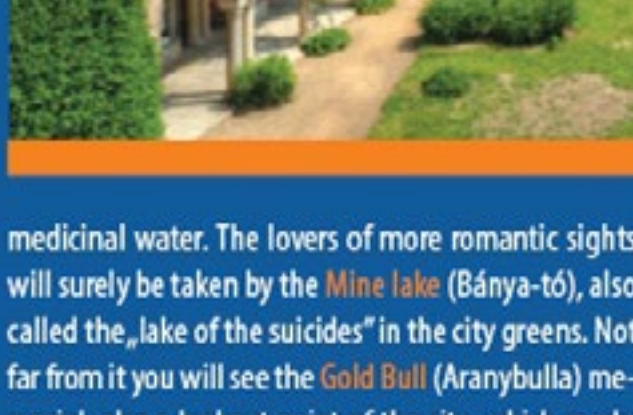
After a walk in the Belváros (Inner City) you can rest your feet in cool and shady groves with little lakes in them, which incidentally hold new marvels too, in the form of a **music pavilion** (20) from the era of the first Millennium, or a music well that yields



Animated Clock Tower



Hetedhét Játékmuzeum (Toy museum)



Bory castle

medicinal water. The lovers of more romantic sights will surely be taken by the **Mine lake** (Bánya-tó), also called the „lake of the suicides” in the city grounds. Not far from it you will see the **Gold Bull** (Aranybulla) memorial, also a lookout point of the city, which marks the date of the proclamation of the Bull in 1222.

Perhaps the most strange edifice of the city is the **Bory castle** (21). This 20th century romantic knight's castle was built by painter and sculptor Jenő Bory. A memorial to his love for his wife, the castle was designed and built by the artist himself with 36 years of unremitting effort. Apart from the numerous works of the artist couple, their valuable art collection can also be seen in the city gallery.

CITY OF CHAMPIONS

After the second world war Székesfehérvár grew into one of the most significant sport cities of the country. In four team sports its teams are in the top league and in the 2010/2011 season the prides of our

city bagged two championship golds and a silver: the Hungarian champion football team **Videoton FC** and the **Sapa Fehérvár AV 19** ice hockey team took the gold, the **Alba Fehérvár** men's basketball team earned the silver medal, and the **Fehérvár KC** women's basketball team finished in the 5th place of the chart.

We are certainly not short of outstanding athletes: pentathlete **Zsuzsa Vörös** of **Alba Volán-Berica SC** is our Olympic champion, and two European champion ice hockey players of the city are members of the Toronto Hall of Fame.

The relics of the biggest are kept with veneration: the suit of **Gábor Ocskay**, who died a sudden and tragic death in 2009 and the hockey stick of **Krisztián Palkovics**. We also remember with pride such sport history moments as the **1985 UEFA Cup** finals, when our football team the "Vidi" fought a memorable battle with Real Madrid.

You can always count on some great match moments with us! Do not miss them!



Videoton FC



Sapa Fehérvár AV 19



TOURINFORM OFFICE AND SOUVENIR SHOP

Accommodation-, tour guide-, interpreter mediation • Preparation of tourist offers • Souvenirs and gifts

Székesfehérvár, Oskola u. 2-4. • Telefon: 00 36 22 537 261 • 00 36 22 537 603 • Fax: 00 36 22 340 330

Email: szekesfehervar@tourinform.hu • www.szekesfehervar.hu

Operator: Turisztikai Közhaszú Nonprofit Kft.