

TRAIN : The Danube Express

JOURNEY : Hungarian Fall Colours

Eastbound Journey Duration : Upto 8 Days

### **Day 1 BUDAPEST**

Arrivals day in Budapest, where you will be met and transferred to the Four Seasons Hotel Gresham Palace (or similar) for a two-night stay.

Enjoy a welcome reception dinner in the elegant surroundings of this art nouveau landmark where you can meet your fellow travellers ahead of this highly anticipated journey.

### **DAY 2 BUDAPEST**

Budapest is two cities separated by the River Danube. The old city of Buda and the imposing Royal Palace, dominates the city with stunning views across the Danube to the commercial heart of Pest. Our city tour includes the Castle District, St. Mathias Church and a panoramic view of the city from Gellert Hill. We will also see the Citadel, the Opera House, St Stephen's Cathedral, Heroes Square and the City Park.

The rest of the day is at leisure where you can stroll along the banks of the Danube, visit the historic Great Market Hall with its endless variety of delicious foods and wines or head to one of the city's famous thermal baths for a rejuvenating dip. Alternatively, you can relax at the hotel and indulge in the hotel's luxurious spa with infinity-edge pool or make use of the state-of-the-art fitness centre.

### **DAY 3 KESZTHELY & TAPOLCA**

Guests are transferred this morning to Budapest Nyugati station to enjoy a drinks reception in the impressive Royal Waiting Room before boarding the *Golden Eagle* Danube Express.

A brass band strikes up as our private train slowly draws into an adjacent platform. The uniformed train staff will then escort you to your private en-suite cabin on board. As you settle in, our train will thread its way out of Nyugati station we'll make our first journey through the autumn landscapes of Hungary to Balaton Uplands National Park. Emerging from the National Park we'll arrive in Keszthely perched at the very western end of Lake Balaton. This picture-postcard town is filled with grand townhouses and famously the site of Festetics Palace, a lavish baroque home fit for royalty where we

will have a short tour of the house and gardens.

From Keszthely we make the short journey by train to nearby Tapolca for the walking tour of the pretty town centre followed by a visit to the town's limestone cave system and the opportunity to enjoy a wonderful personal boating adventure on the crystal-clear waters of Tapolca's Lake Cave.

#### **DAY 4 SOPRON & HOLLOKO**

This morning we enjoy a relaxed walking tour in the historic old town centre of Sopron, with the 13th century Fire Tower as its central landmark. We return to the train in time for lunch on board and spend an afternoon of travelling through the autumnal landscapes of the Hungarian countryside.

Late afternoon we will arrive to the World Heritage Site of Holloko, which is a traditional Hungarian 'Paloc' village of white-washed houses with verandas, wooden balustrades and hipped roofs. We are sure of receiving a warm hospitable welcome from the local residents and will enjoy a special dinner in the heart of the village enjoying a taste of traditional Paloc flavours and cooking.

#### **DAY 5 EGER, LILLAFURED & AGGTELEK**

This morning we visit Eger, a city full of legends, for a walking tour of the town which is best known for its castle, thermal baths, baroque buildings and the northern-most Ottoman minaret. Following our visit to Eger we take a delightful narrow-gauge train ride from Lillafured through the striking autumnal forests of the Bukk National Park, a Hungarian hidden treasure.

We complete the day with an exclusive visit to the UNESCO World Heritage Site cave system at Aggtelek. It is the largest stalactite cave system in Europe, with more than 14 miles (23 km) of charted pathways and its stalactite and stalagmite formations are truly spectacular.

#### **DAY 6 HORTOBAGY NATIONAL PARK & TOKAJ**

In the morning we have an early visit to the Hortobagy National Park, a vast steppe in Eastern Hungary, and where Hungarian native animals such as the grey cattle still live. We will go on an excursion in the area where we get familiar with the traditional pastoral life and, if we are lucky, see thousands of cranes that migrate through the area at this time of year.

Early afternoon we arrive to the Tokaj region of Hungary where we will enjoy a private wine-tasting tour at one of the area's famous cellars. Its wine-making history dates back thousands of years with its cellars and vineyards nestled at the foothills of the

Zemplen Mountains.

## **DAY 7 OPUSZTASZER NATIONAL PARK & SZEGED**

After breakfast on board our private train we arrive to the Opusztaszer National Park where we have the opportunity to view the Feszty Panorama, an oil-painted panorama depicting the 'Arrival of the Hungarians'. It details the beginning of the Hungarian Conquest of the Carpathian Basin in the year 896 and was completed in 1894 to commemorate the 1,000th anniversary of the event.

From here we travel by coach to nearby Szeged to have a sightseeing tour of the city, notable for its pretty squares and tree-lined boulevards. During our tour we will have the opportunity at lunch to taste food specialities of the region in a traditional local restaurant.

Tonight we will enjoy a special farewell gala dinner on board the *Golden Eagle* Danube Express before we arrive back into Budapest and transfer to the Four Seasons Gresham Palace for tonight.

## **DAY 8 BUDAPEST**

Following breakfast in the hotel you will be transferred to the airport for onward departures.

Why not extend your stay in Budapest to explore the Hungarian capital at your leisure? Please contact us for hotel options, touring programmes and rates.

[www.luxurytrains.in](http://www.luxurytrains.in)

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