

48 HOURS IN BUDAPEST

With an all but indecipherable language and abundance of restaurants, choosing the right destination in Budapest requires some local knowledge

Budapest is just two and a half hours from London, but Hungarian cuisine remains little-known. Hearty dishes like gulyás (goulash) and chicken paprikás are still commonplace, but more modern bistros are championing inventive food made with great local ingredients. For more dining tips visit chew.hu. Return flights (easyjet.com) start at £55, including tax and charges. Or try ba.com, airfrance.com, jet2.com or malev.hu.



CASH



CHEQUE



CREDIT

LUNCH

Kádár Étkezde on Klauzál tér serves great bean stew. Mains £2-3. (Lunch only, Tues-Sat; 00 36 1321 3622).



Go to Fülemlé Étterem for Jewish-accented Hungarian dishes and specialties such as crispy goose leg with potato latkes. Mains £4-10. (fulemule.hu)

Try traditional Hungarian dishes at Centrál Kávéház. Mains £4-10, but the excellent wine list will increase your bill. (centralkavehaz.hu)



DINNER

A few steps from the Opera House, Klassz (VI. Andrassy út 41) is a stylish bistro with a frequently changing menu and a brief but lovely wine list. If duck breast is on, try it. Mains £3-10.



Café Kör has long been a favourite among foodies for its consistently good, updated Hungarian classics such as roasted goose liver served a variety of ways. Reservations essential. Cash only. Mains £5-10. (cafekor.com)

Discover Hungary's increasingly good wines at the Maligán Boréletterem. A big red by Ferenc Takler from the Szekszárd region goes amazingly well with local rare-breed meats such as Hungarian Grey beef. Mains £8-13. (maligan.hu)

DRINK

Don't be put off by the unmarked doors at Kuplung (VI. Király utca 46), a former garage that's now a bar, where local beer Dreher is the drink of choice.

Shop for bottles at Bortársaság (V. Szent István tér 3) or In Vino Veritas (VII. Dohány utca 58-62). Try a distinctively Hungarian wine such as furmint from Tokaj or juhfark from Somló.



Look at the Basilica while sipping cocktails or Hungarian wine at smart Negro Café, V. Szent István tér 11 (00 36 1302 0136).

MUST-DO



Visit Budapest's famous food markets: Central Market Hall (IX. Fővám tér), or Fény utcai Piac (II. Lövőház utca 12).

Unwind with a soak in one of Budapest's many thermal baths. The art nouveau Gellért baths are the most opulent choice, while the Széchenyi spa is known for its steamy outdoor pool. (spasbudapest.com)

Head to the fifth district's Falk Miksa utca, known as Budapest's 'antique row', to buy treasures such as Zsolnay or Herend porcelain, folksy pottery, handmade linens and silver.

HOTEL

In Buda's quiet Water Town, under the castle district, Hotel Astra has just 12 rooms in a 300-year-old building. Rooms are spacious, and most overlook the peaceful central courtyard. Doubles from £65. (hotelastra.hu)

One of Budapest's few boutique hotels, The Andrassy has a creative, Asian-inspired restaurant. Doubles from £100. (andrassyhotel.com)



The restored Four Seasons Gresham Palace has perfect views of the Chain Bridge and the Castle. Have cocktails at the piano bar and dine at one of the two fantastic restaurants. Doubles from £216. (fourseasons.com/budapest)

