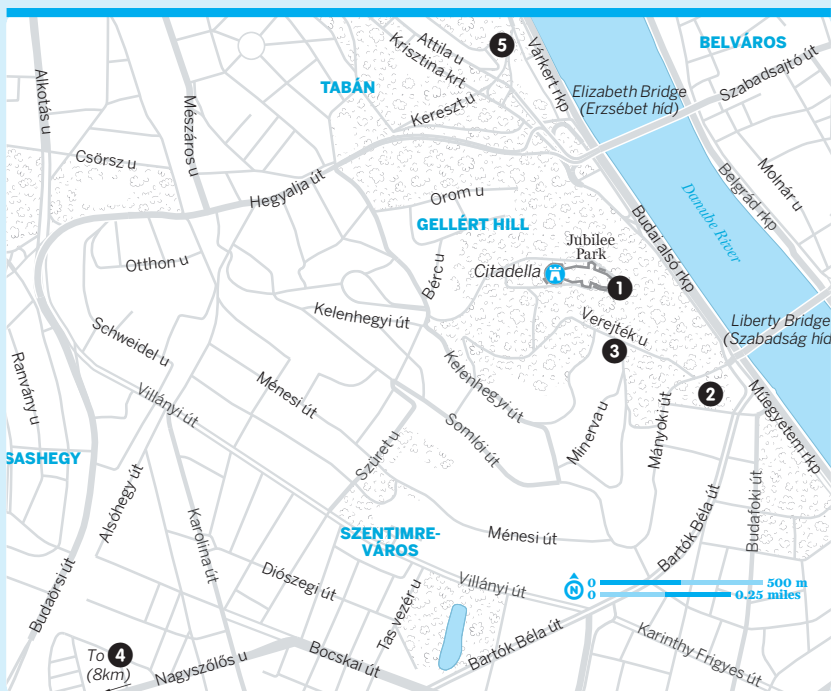


# Gellért Hill & Tabán

## Neighbourhood Top Five

- 1 Taking in incomparable views of Castle Hill, the Danube and Pest from **Liberty Monument** (p65), then moving on to any of those three to look back at Miss Liberty herself, proclaiming freedom throughout the city.
- 2 Soaking in the art nouveau **Gellért Baths** (p66), which has been likened to taking a bath in a cathedral.
- 3 Being moved by the **former Swedish Embassy** (p67) from where Raoul Wallenberg and others rescued thousands of Hungarian Jews.
- 4 Reliving the not-so-distant past by visiting **Memento Park** (p68), a 'cemetery' of Communist monuments.
- 5 Learning more about Hungary's unsung hero, Dr Ignác Semmelweis, at the **Semmelweis Museum of Medical History** (p66).



## Lonely Planet's Top Tip

A couple of thermal spas in this district make good use of the hot springs gushing from deep below, including the Gellért Baths (p66) and the Rudas Baths (p66). If you don't like getting wet or you don't have the time, do what locals do and try a 'drinking cure' by visiting the **Pump Room** (lvócsarnok; ☎11am-6pm Mon, Wed & Fri, 7am-2pm Tue & Thu), which is just below the western end of Elizabeth Bridge. A half-litre/litre of the hot, smelly water, which is meant to cure whatever ails you, is just 60/30Ft.

## Best Places to Eat

- ➔ Tabáni Terasz (p68)
- ➔ Hemingway (p69)
- ➔ Marcello (p69)

For reviews, see p67 ➔

## Best Places to Drink

- ➔ Hadik Kávéház (p69)
- ➔ Café Ponyvaregény (p69)
- ➔ Kisrabló Pub (p69)

For reviews, see p69 ➔

## Best Places to Relax

- ➔ Gellért Baths (p66)
- ➔ Rudas Baths (p66)
- ➔ Tranzit Art Café (p69)

For reviews, see p66 ➔

## Explore: Gellért Hill & Tabán

Gellért Hill (Gellért-hegy) is a 235m-high rocky hill southeast of Castle Hill. Crowned with a fortress of sorts and the Liberty Monument, it is Budapest's unofficial symbol. You can't beat the views of the Royal Palace or the Danube and its fine bridges from Gellért Hill, and Jubilee Park on the south side is an ideal spot for a picnic.

The Tabán, the leafy area between Gellért and Castle Hills, and stretching northwest towards Déli train station, is associated with the Serbs, who settled here after fleeing from the Turks in the early 18th century. Plaques on I Döbrentei utca mark the water level of the Danube during two devastating floods in 1775 and 1838 that hit the area particularly hard.

The Tabán later became known for its restaurants and wine gardens – a kind of Montmartre for Budapest. Most of these burned to the ground at the turn of the 20th century. All that remains is a lovely little renovated building with a fountain designed by Miklós Ybl in 1878, known as the **Castle Garden Palace** (Várkert Palota; I Ybl Miklós tér 9), which was once a pump house for Castle Hill and is now a conference/events venue; try the door to see if it's open. The steps and archways across the road are all that is left of the Castle Bazaar (Várbaázár) pleasure park.

## Local Life

➔ **Views** If you walk west for a few minutes along Citadella sétány north of the Citadella (p65) itself, you'll come to a lookout with the best vantage point in Budapest.

➔ **Táncház** For the best *táncház* (traditional Hungarian music and dance) in town head for the Municipal Cultural House (p70).

➔ **Architecture** Not just a great place to soak away your cares and aches, the Rudas Baths (p66) boasts some of the best Turkish architecture in Hungary.

## Getting There & Away

➔ **Bus** XI Szent Gellért tér can be reached from V Ferenciek tere in Pest on bus 7, and from points in Óbuda or south Buda on bus 86. Bus 27 runs almost to the top of Gellért Hill from XI Móricz Zsigmond körtér.

➔ **Tram** XI Szent Gellért tér is linked to Déli station by tram 18, and to I Batthyány tér by tram 19. Trams 47 and 49 cross over to Pest and follow the Little Ring Rd from the same place. Trams 18 and 47 run south along Fehérvári út – useful for several folk-music venues mentioned in this chapter.