

# Margaret Island & Northern Pest

MARGARET ISLAND | ÚJLIPÓTVÁROS



## Neighbourhood Top Five

- 1 Revisiting Budapest's medieval past on Margaret Island by strolling from the ruins of the **Franciscan church and monastery** (p110), past the one-time **Dominican convent** (p110) where St Margaret is buried and on to the Romanesque **Premonstratensian church** (p110).
- 2 Pampering yourself at the **Danubius Health Spa Margitsziget** (p110), one of the most modern spas in town.
- 3 Paying homage to the heroic Raoul Wallenberg at his statue in **Szent István Park** (p111).
- 4 Exploring the length and breadth of Margaret Island on two or four wheels with a **rental bicycle** or **pedal coach** (see Top Tip, opposite page).
- 5 Getting behind the wheel of one of the big locomotives at the **Hungarian Railway History Park** (p111).

For more detail of this area, see Map p248 ➔

## Explore: Margaret Island & Northern Pest

Neither Buda nor Pest, though part of district XIII, 2.5km-long Margaret Island (Margit-sziget) in the middle of the Danube was always the domain of one religious order or another until the Turks arrived and turned what was then called the Island of Rabbits into – appropriately enough – a harem, from which all ‘infidels’ were barred. It’s been a public park open to everyone since the mid-19th century.

The island is not overly endowed with important sights and landmarks. But boasting a couple of large swimming complexes, a thermal spa, gardens and shaded walkways, it is a lovely place to head on a hot afternoon. Cars are allowed on Margaret Island from Árpád Bridge only as far as the two big hotels at the northern end; the rest is reserved for pedestrians and cyclists.

Szent István körút, the northernmost stretch of the Big Ring Rd (Nagykörút) in Pest, runs from Margaret Bridge to Nyugati tér. The area north of Szent István körút is known as Újlipótváros (New Leopold Town) to distinguish it from Lipótváros (Leopold Town) to the south of the boulevard. A wonderful neighbourhood with tree-lined streets, boutiques, restaurants and cafes, it’s best seen on foot.

## Local Life

➔ **Music** The incomparable Budapest Jazz Club (p113) is now wowing Újlipótváros with its big international and local talent gigs.

➔ **Eating** Outside the hotels catering is limited on Margaret Island, so visit Gasztró Hús-Hentesáru (p76) opposite the tram stop (4 or 6) on the Buda side of Margaret Bridge to stock up on edibles.

➔ **Sport** The Alfréd Hajós swimming complex (p111) is a good spot to catch some of the ‘almost national’ game of water polo.

## Getting There & Away

➔ **Tram** Both districts served by trams 4 and 6. Tram 2 to XIII Jászai Mari tér from the Inner Town.

➔ **Bus** 26 covers the length of Margaret Island running between Nyugati train station and Árpád Bridge. Újlipótváros via bus 15.

➔ **Trolleybus** 75 and especially 76 excellent for Újlipótváros.

➔ **Metro** The eastern end of Újlipótváros best reached by metro (M3 Nyugati pályaudvar).

## Lonely Planet's Top Tip

The variety of moving conveyances available on Margaret Island knows no bounds. You can hire a bicycle from one of several stands on the northern end of the athletic stadium as you walk from Margaret Bridge. Long-established **Bringóhintó** (Map p248; ☎1-329 2073; [www.bringo-hinto.hu](http://www.bringo-hinto.hu); mountain bike per 30/60min 690/990Ft, pedal coach for 4 people per 30/60 2180/3480Ft; ☀8am-dusk) rents out all kinds of equipment from the refreshment stand near the Japanese Garden in the northern part of the island.

## Best Places to Eat

- ➔ Firkász (p112)
- ➔ Pozsonyi Kisvendéglő (p112)
- ➔ Laci Konyha (p113)

For reviews, see p112 ➔

## Best Places to Drink

- ➔ Holdudvar (p113)
- ➔ Budapest Jazz Club (p113)
- ➔ Dunapark (p113)

For reviews, see p113 ➔

## Best Places to Take the Plunge

- ➔ Danubius Health Spa Margitsziget (p110)
- ➔ Palatinus Strand (p111)
- ➔ Aquaworld (p111)

For reviews, see p110 ➔