Neighbourhood Top Five

1. Entering the hallowed halls of Parliament (p95), arguably the most iconic of all Budapest’s buildings, and making your way to the Crown of St Stephen, symbol of the Hungarian nation for more than 1100 years.

2. Visiting the Basilica of St Stephen (p97) and Hungary’s most revered religious relic, the Holy Right (hand) of St Stephen.

3. Carousing in and around Nagymező utca, Budapest’s own ‘Broadway’ and home to a plethora of wild and crazy clubs, including Instant (p104).

4. Ogling the sinuous curves and asymmetrical forms of the Royal Postal Savings Bank (p98), one of Budapest’s many incomparable Art Nouveau buildings.

5. Eating at one of the little eateries called étkezde, such as Kisharang (p99), that serve Hungarian soul food.
Explore: Parliament & Around

North of the Belváros, the district called Lipótváros (Leopold Town) is full of offices, government ministries and 19th-century apartment blocks. It’s an easy and fun neighbourhood to explore on foot, and its defining squares are V Széchenyi István tér (sometimes still called Roosevelt tér) facing the river; V Szabadság tér, with the only Soviet memorial left in the city; and V Kossuth Lajos tér, fronted by Parliament. Come to this neighbourhood for exceptional architecture, two of the city’s most important sights (Parliament and the Basilica of St Stephen), some excellent restaurants and cafés and, especially around the Central European University, some very great bars.

The neighbourhood on either side of Teréz körút – Terézváros (Theresa Town) – which was named in honour of Maria Theresa and carries on from Szent István körút as the Big Ring Rd after Nyugati train station, is where to head after dark. More compact than Erzsébetváros and not quite as raucous (and perhaps more attractive for those reasons), Terézváros has no shortage of lively watering holes and raving clubs. Here you’ll also find VI Nagymező utca, lined with theatres and music halls, and home to the city’s largest and most active gay club.

Local Life

- **Entertainment** Everyone goes to the Hungarian State Opera House; dare to be different and take in a very glitzy production at the Budapest Operetta (p105).
- **Museum** The Ethnography Museum (p98) will take you on a colourful tour of the folk-art heritage and traditions across Hungary – without you even leaving Budapest.
- **Eating** If you want to try authentic Hungarian sausage and salami but don’t feel up to eating at food stalls, head for the Pick Ház (p100) outlet near Parliament.

Getting There & Away

- **Bus** V Szabadság tér for 15 to IX Boráros tér and northern Pest; V Deák Ferenc tér for 16 to Castle Hill and 105 to Buda.
- **Metro** M2 Kossuth Lajos tér, M3 Arany János utca and M1, M2 and M3 Deák Ferenc tér.
- **Tram** Antall József rakpart (formerly Pesti alsó rakpart) for 2 to V Szent István körút or south Pest; V Szent István körút for 4 or 6 to Buda or Big Ring Rd in Pest.