



The Great Plain

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Best Places to Eat

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Best Places to Sleep

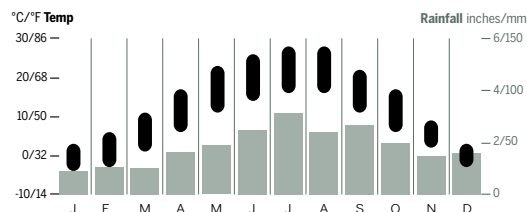
- ➔ Tiszavirág Hotel (p236)
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Why Go?

Like the outback for Australians or the Wild West for Americans, the Nagyalföld (Great Plain) – also known as the *puszta* – holds a romantic appeal for Hungarians. Many of these notions come as much from the collective imagination as they do from history, but there's no arguing the spellbinding potential of big-sky country. The Hortobágy region is where the myth of the lonely *pásztor* (shepherd), the wayside *csárda* (inn) and Gypsy violinists – kept alive in literature and art – was born. The horse and herding show at Hortobágy National Park recreates this pastoral tradition, while Bugac is one of the best places in Hungary to learn about life on the plain. The Great Plain is also home to cities of graceful architecture and history. Szeged is a centre of art and culture, Kecskemét is full of art nouveau gems and Debrecen is the 'Calvinist Rome'.

When to Go

Szolnok



Apr–May

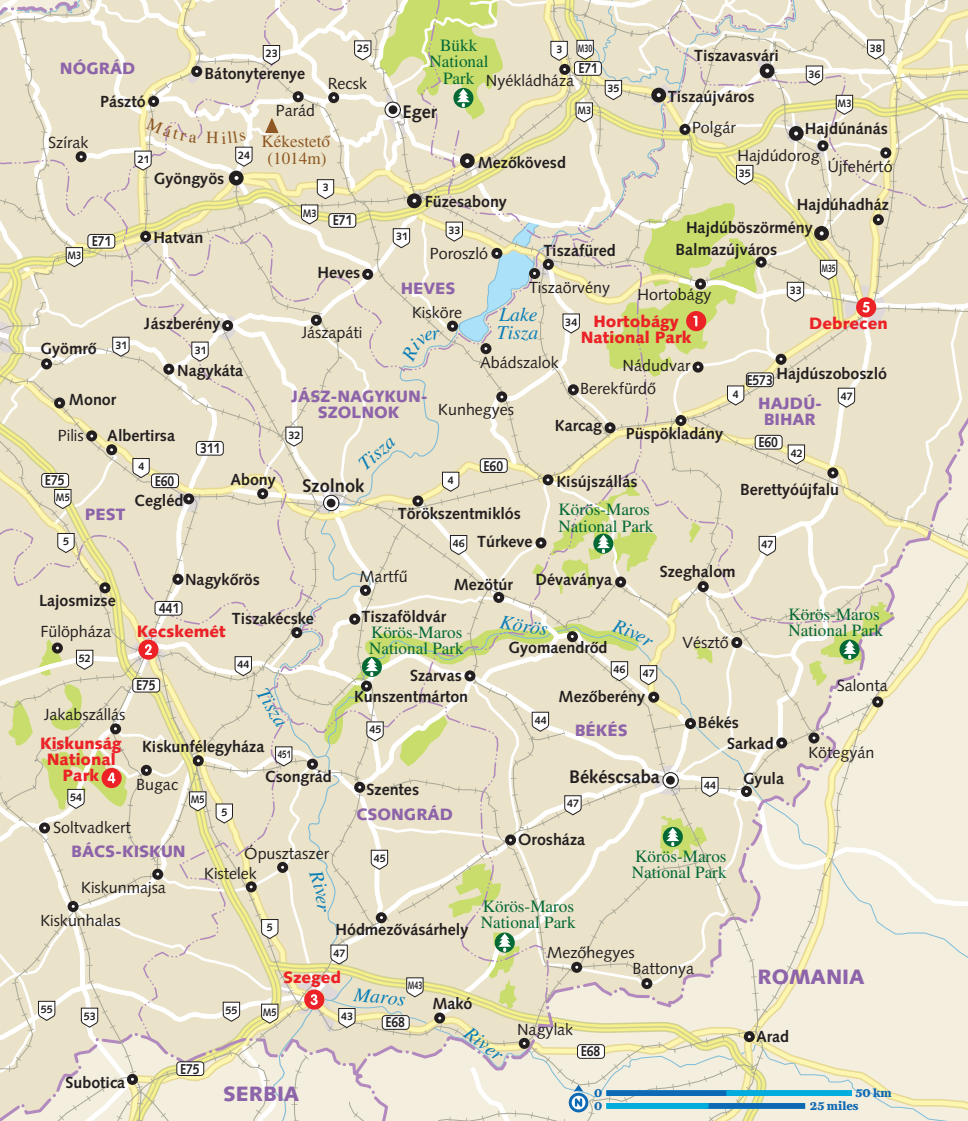
Spring is glorious, with grasslands coming back to life and everything in flower.

Jul–Aug

Warm on the *puszta*, but this is the season for outdoor pursuits and Debrecen's festivals.

Sep–Oct

Excellent birdwatching; Szeged nightlife reawakens with the return of university students.



The Great Plain Highlights

1 Hortobágy National Park (p223) Birdwatching and sampling the namesake meat-filled pancake in a century-old inn.

2 Kecskemét (p225) Enjoying its wonderful art nouveau architecture and pretty pedestrian squares.

3 Szeged (p235) Taking to the Tisza in a boat and seeing this culture-filled town from an entirely new vantage point.

4 Kunság National Park (p232) Feeling the earth move under your feet as a Hungarian cowboy rides by

'five-in-hand' at the park's horse show.

5 Debrecen (p217) Marvelling at the grandeur of the city's iconic Great Church, Hungary's largest Protestant house of worship.