



Danube Bend

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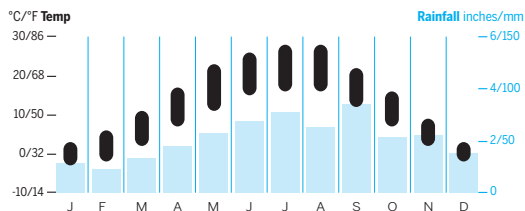
Why Go?

The Danube Bend is a region of peaks and picturesque river towns to the north of Budapest. The name is quite literal: this is where hills on both banks force the river to turn sharply and flow southward. It is the most beautiful stretch of the Danube along its entire course and should not be missed.

Four historical towns vie for visitors' attention. Szentendre has its roots in Serbian culture and became an important centre for art early in the 20th century. Today it's a tourist hotspot with cobbled streets and a profusion of church spires. Round the bend is tiny Visegrád, Hungary's 'Camelot' in the 15th century and today home to Renaissance-era palace ruins and a forbidding hilltop fortress. Esztergom, once the pope's 'eyes and ears' in Hungary, is now a sleepy town with the nation's biggest cathedral, while Vác is a lovely spot with a laid-back attitude and a macabre crypt of mummies.

When to Go

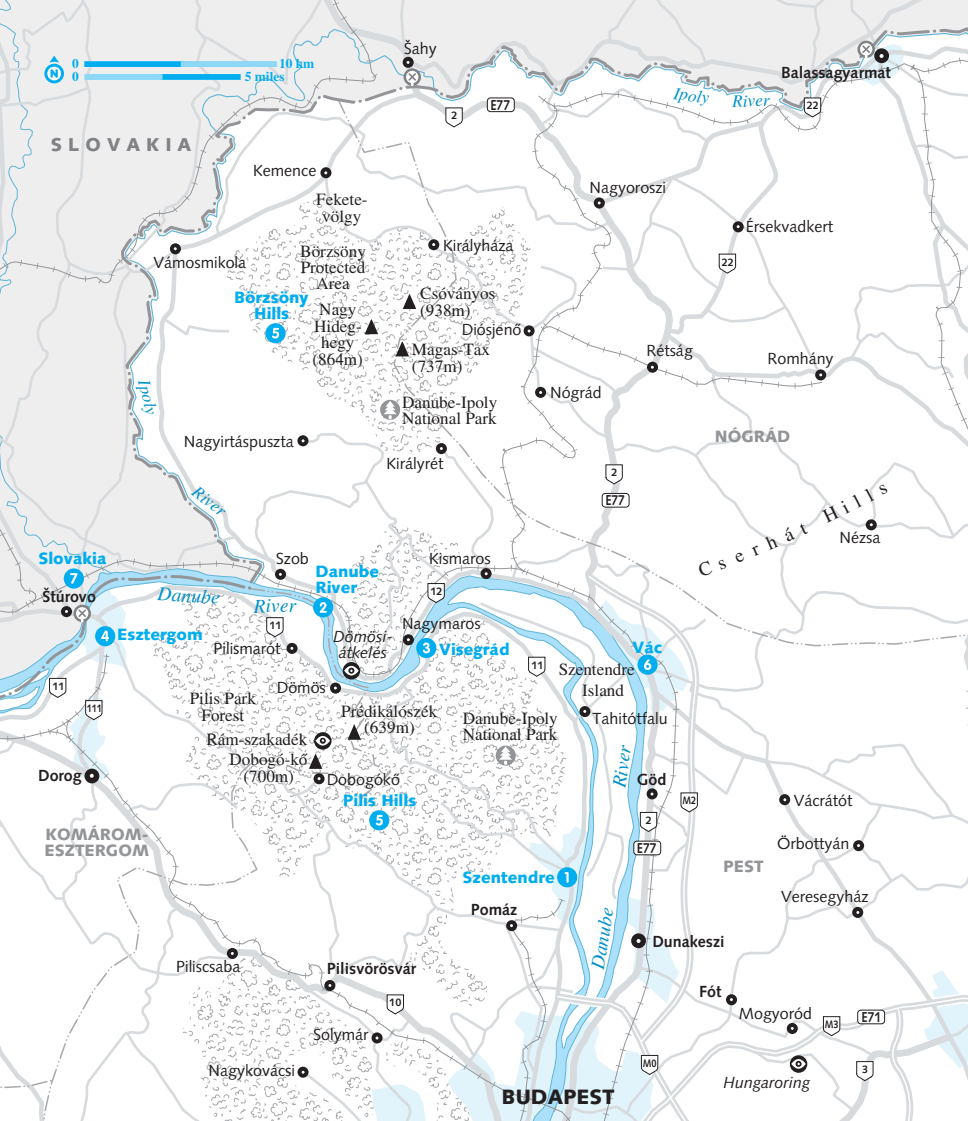
Vác



Mar–Apr Easter is the most important time of year in Orthodox Szentendre and Catholic Esztergom.

May & Sep Avoid the tourist hordes by visiting Szentendre and Visegrád in early spring or autumn.

Dec Winter is cold but atmospheric and you may even spot some ice floes in the Danube.



Danube Bend Highlights

- 1 Stroll the cobbled back streets of **Szentendre** (p97), where life remains largely untouched by the town's tourist tumult
- 2 Make a day of it on the **Danube**, cruising to Szentendre, Visegrád or even Esztergom by ferry or hydrofoil
- 3 Climb up to the medieval hilltop **citadel** (p105) at Visegrád and enjoy the wonderful views of the Danube
- 4 Marvel at the splendid Gothic altarpieces and paintings at the **Christian Museum** (p108) in Esztergom
- 5 Pick a path for a pleasurable hike through the verdant **Börzsöny** (p104) or **Pilis Hills** (p106)
- 6 Scare yourself half to death at the **Memento Mori** (p102) display in Vác
- 7 Visit Slovakia via a short stroll over the **Mária Valéria Bridge** (p109) in Esztergom