

Keszthely All Year Round

Seeking adventures by Lake Balaton? Do not settle for less!
Discover the rich heritage of the Festetics family,
and find inspiration in Keszthely, the capital of the Lake Balaton area.

Beyond bathing and water-based pleasures, Keszthely offers a wealth of cultural and recreational experiences throughout the entire year!
It is the Balaton region's most historically and culturally significant town, set amidst the landscapes of exceptional beauty and diversity. Its stately avenues captivate visitors from afar, announcing with serene grandeur: *you have arrived*.

This picturesque town lives in harmony with the many-faced lake, the Balaton, and with the Festetics legacy, from which every nook radiates an enchanting atmosphere.

A romantic stroll through the castle gardens in spring,
a fine dinner in the historic town center,
a cruise aboard the *Helka ship*?,
an unforgettable concert at the *KeszthelyFest*,
a bicycle ride along the autumnal chestnut avenue,
or a cheerful sip of mulled wine at the Advent market –
all these are integral parts of the Keszthely experience in every season.

Heritage Comes to Life

Keszthely is often called *the town of museums*, offering an abundance of fascinating exhibitions. Here stands Hungary's most visited palace – the Festetics Palace – the symbol of the town, which from the mid-18th century served as the residence of one of Hungary's most renowned noble families for two hundred years.

The palace acquired its present look during the time of Count (later Duke) Tasziló Festetics II at the end of the 19th century. Its ten-hectare park is a protected natural area. Today the palace functions as a museum, hosting permanent and temporary exhibitions and high-rank events. It also houses Hungary's only surviving aristocratic private library, which contains over eighty thousand volumes and preserves its original furnishings.

During the 19th century, the Festetics stud farm at Fenékpusztá became one of the principal centers of the Hungarian horse breeding and the equestrian sport. Following a long and eventful history, the once world-renowned estate reopened in December 2023 as a complex leisure centre. The Fenékpusztá Manor evokes the golden age and equestrian traditions of the Festetics family within its authentically restored surroundings.

In addition to the spectacular palace and gardens, the Festetics legacy includes the Georgikon – Europe's earliest institution of higher agricultural education, the magnificently restored Fenékpusztá estate, the Georgikon Farm Museum, and the remarkable *Fenyves Allée*, the country's longest double row of black pines.

The cultural patronage of Count György Festetics I lives on through the *Helikon Celebrations* – a festival of over two centuries' standing, revived for the modern age. Held

biennially, it is the largest art event for secondary-school students in Transdanubia, where young talents compete in twenty artistic categories.

Tip:

Discover the antique carriages of the aristocracy in the Carriage Exhibition and the Amazon House Visitor Centre! After exploring the vast palace park, step through the rear gate to find the buildings housing the Hunting Exhibition and the Historical Model Railway.

The oldest building in the town is the *Church of Our Lady of Hungary*, a Gothic parish church from the late 14th century, home to Hungary's largest Gothic frescoes. Keszthely also takes pride in its bourgeois-era heritage. This is reflected in the landmarks of the major urban significance such as Lake Balaton's only island bath to have survived intact and been restored to its original condition, the Goldmark House on the pedestrian street, and the iconic buildings of the Main Square. The town is also home to the Balaton Museum, whose collections uniquely present not only the history of our local area but that of the entire region, along with the lives, customs, and artefacts of our forebears.

Tip:

Explore Keszthely's other year-round museums and attractions!

Keszthely in Bloom

In spring, the town transforms into a garden of flowers.

The blossoming chestnut trees, lavish tulip beds, and the magnolia of the palace park alone are the sufficient reason to set out and visit Keszthely.

Do not miss the *Helikon Park* beside the palace gardens – the town's largest green space – with its domed *Helikon Memorial*, erected in honor of the Helikon Celebrations.

The iconic *Fenyves Allée*, the protected chestnut avenue, and the ash trees of the promenade are places of joy – the living arteries of the town that bind us together and lend every season its own distinct charm.

Tip:

Add the Keszthely Ferris Wheel to your list – from fifty meters above, you can admire a magnificent panorama of western Lake Balaton!

Active Keszthely

Thanks to its natural surroundings, Keszthely offers countless opportunities for active recreation even in autumn: sailing or kayaking in the bay, a lively tennis match at the renovated *Helikon Tennis Centre*, hiking in the Keszthely Hills, jogging through *Helikon Park*, cycling along the *Balaton Cycle Route* starting from Keszthely, a carriage ride under the pines of the *Fenyves Allée*, or a leisurely walk beneath the chestnut trees. Sounds inviting, doesn't it?

Dive into Summer!

The *City Beach* awaits visitors with Lake Balaton's largest water adventure park, sports courts, and giant slides. During the summer months, you can also enjoy a beach library and the "Active Beach" event series.

The family-friendly *Libás Beach* – the youngest in town – lies in the eastern district of Zámor beside the marina. Its shady trees, sandy shore, and excellent playgrounds have made it a favorite among families. If tranquility is what you seek, *Helikon Beach* is your place – the most peaceful of all Keszthely's beaches.

And for pet lovers, *Keszthely Dog Beach* at the lake's westernmost point provides a dog-friendly bathing and recreation area.

Tip:

Join the Hello Keszthely Facebook group and share your most beautiful cycling or walking photos with the community!

The highlight of Keszthely's summer is *KeszthelyFest* – a must-visit at least once in your lifetime! This multidisciplinary festival brings people together, offering both locals and visitors the chance to enjoy the town's culture and art while spending unforgettable days in the enchanting setting of Keszthely.

In addition to its festivals, the town offers a wealth of entertainment venues open all year round.

Tip:

Stay up to date with all events in Keszthely! You'll find a full calendar of programs on keszthely.hu.

Events Throughout the Year

The *Goldmark Károly Cultural Centre* and the *Balaton Theatre* enrich the cultural life of Keszthely all year round. The theatre hosts season-ticket and independent performances, classical and popular music concerts, as well as civic celebrations, conferences, and regional art gatherings.

Keszthely welcomes visitors to a series of iconic events:

the *Carnival of Farsang*, *Helikon Celebrations*, *Balaton Season Opening*, *Pentecost Regatta*, *Keszthely Triathlon*, *Keszthely Town Day*, *Night of Museums*, *KeszthelyFest*, *Keszthely Kilometers Run*, *Saint Stephen's Days*, *Wine Days of Keszthely*, *Dance Panorama*, and *Keszthely Advent*.