THE TALES OF THE PASS

Sopron is a Museum Town. How appropriate this remark is! The variety of colours and lights give the Main Square (Fõ tér) a unique atmosphere. It is most beautiful on a sunny spring morning or a golden autumn afternoon. It is worth walking around the historic downtown without any guidebook first, letting our impressions overcome us, peeping into the inner courtyards of the buildings. The remains of various styles and eras immediately enchant the visitor. The valuable exhibitions of the museums and collections offer a multi-faceted picture of the historic past, rich culture, and vivid artistic life of Sopron. Longer or shorter excursions promise an enjoyable way of spending time. You are invited to "meet" the 'greatest Hungarian', István Széchenyi in Nagyzenik. After taking a look at the evocative traditional houses of the village museum in Fertőszéplak, you can enjoy a visit to Fertőd, to the beautiful palace of the Esterházy family, getting acquainted with their luxurious way of life. Starting the tour in the other direction, you can discover the World Heritage Fertő Region, including the stone quarry of Fertőrákos, which originates from Roman times, and the Mithras sanctuary near the border.

Surrender yourself to the unique sights, and have a closer look at our information booklet!
We hope it will be your perfect guide during your tour.

FIREWATCH TOWER
Sopron, Fõ tér

The symbol of the city of Sopron is the Firewatch Tower. Its cylindrical lower part was built on the remains of the Roman town wall, and served as the north tower of the city from the 13th century onwards. The tower acquired its present form with its Baroque balcony and helm roof after the great fire of 1676. The tower guards fulfilled a most important role: watching the area, they indicated the position of the fire with lanterns at night and colourfull flags in the daytime. They also warned the inhabitants of the city of foreign soldiers or wine coaches approaching the town. They showed their musical talent as well, providing music at weddings, funerals, and town festivals, based on contracts with the city council. They drew the attention of the people to the passing of time by sounding their trumpets from the balcony every quarter of an hour, and from the 16th century they also handled the tower clock. The double-headed eagle was a gift from King Ferdinand II and Queen Eleanora for the parliamentary session and queen’s coronation, both held in Sopron in 1622. However, it was placed on top of the tower only after the great fire, an Emperor Lipót’s nameday. The foundations of the tower were damaged during the demolition of the old City Hall in 1893. To recover their stability, the wide main part was built, based on the plans of Frigyes Schulek.

The Firewatch Tower is the symbol of faithfulness. In a referendum held on December 14th, 1921, Sopron and eight neighbouring villages expressed their wish to remain part of Hungary. In memory of the referendum, a Baroque door-frame and a sculptural group entitled "The people of Sopron paying homage to the mythological figure of Hungary" were created, designed by Rezső Hikisch and Zsigmond Kisfaludy Strabl. After climbing nearly 200 spiral stairs, a splendid view of the monument town can be enjoyed from the balcony of the tower – the former post of the guards.

Opening hours: January-March: 10.00-16.00
April: 10.00-18.00, May-September: 10.00-20.00
October: 10.00-18.00,
November-December: 9.00-17.00 (Closed on Monday!)
Phone: +36 99 311 327
www.muzeum.sopron.hu
STORNO HOUSE, STORNO COLLECTION
Sopron, Fő tér 8.

The castle-like Baroque corner house is one of the most attractive sights of the Main Square. In the 15th century it was the property of the Haberleiter family, and provided accommodation for King Matthias in 1482–83, when he assaulted the town of Vienna. The building became the property of the Festetics family in the 18th century, when it got its final shape. The Storno family purchased the building in 1872. It was the venue of two concerts played by Franz Liszt, in 1840 and 1881. The most eye-catching characteristics of the building are the closed, round, two-storey corner balcony with its rich ornamentation, the basket-arched gate with the Festetics family’s coat of arms, between the two Tuscan half pillars, and the door knockers with their pelican motifs. Sopron’s first apothecary, the Black Elephant (Fekete Elefánt) was operating in this building in the 15th century.

The Storno family originates from Tessin Province in Switzerland. Ferenc Storno the elder was born in Kismarton (Eisenstadt) in 1821, and grew up in Landshut. His drawing talent was revealed very early, but this poor family of chimney-sweeps could not afford to finance his education. He was forced to continue his father’s profession but he spent all his leisure time drawing. He settled in Sopron in 1845, and soon after he found a job with a master chimney-sweep. After the master’s death, he married the widow to carry on the business. He soon became the most popular picture restorer of the Monarchy, thanks to his mentors, who recognized and appreciated his talent. He had the opportunity to work in Vienna for a few months in 1850. He dealt with the valuation of monuments and the design of objects for Prince Leopold Habsburg. He started working in Hungarian monument research in 1860.

He took part in the restoration of the St. Mihály Church in Sopron and the reconstruction of the crypt and the church in Pannonhalma Abbey. From the 1870s onwards, he worked with his sons, Ferenc and Kálmán. In accordance with the family traditions, the boys were chimney-sweeps by profession, but also studied art at foreign academies. Ferenc Storno was the saviour of a lot of art treasures, which served as the basis for the famous Storno Collection. The rooms, decorated with antique furniture as well as the works of family members, give a true picture of interior design at the end of the 19th century. The collection comprises valuable items of furniture, weaponry, china and glass art, which can be seen on the second floor, where the family lived from 1875 to 1984.

EXHIBITION OF REGIONAL HISTORY
Sopron, Fő tér 8.

The exhibition on the first floor of the Storno House presents the history of Sopron County. The authentic documents and relics collected since 1867 are the illustrations of the time which has elapsed ever since. Visitors see the complete history of the Sopron area, with all its periods of development. While the 17th century was mainly characterized by fights against the Turks and the Habsburgs, this period was one of Sopron’s golden ages. During this period, five parliamentary sessions and the coronations of two queens and a king were held in the town, as shown in the first room.

Regulations and master books prove the establishment and dynamic development of the independent guilds of several trades. The jugs, pistols, sabers, guns, and suits of armour make the collection really spectacular. A rich butcher of the time found his son’s musical education so important that he requested the Lutheran cantor to teach him. To aid his teaching, the cantor, János Wohlmuth, wrote a piano practice book for the boy, thereby creating the first course book of this kind in Hungary.

The prevalence of the Baroque style in the 18th century is exemplified by a unique Bethlehem the size of a wardrobe. Among the 19th century documents there are parliamentary reports of Lajos Kossuth, with handwritten copies of the originals, István Széchenyi had also close connections with the town. He was one of the main supporters of the construction of Hungary’s second railway line between Sopron and Bécsüjely (Wiener Neustadt), which was completed in 1847. The composer Franz Liszt gave several concerts in Sopron. As a momento of these illustrious events, there is a poster of a concert. It was attended by Sándor Petőfi, who escaped from his barracks in order to be present. The Endre Csákvári memorial room was established in memory of the greatest art historian of the region. He was awarded the Kossuth Prize.
One of the most interesting features of the building is the Roman bath discovered by archeologists in the basement of the building. Back in the 16th century, there were two buildings on the plot; the one at the back had three stories. The Gothic hall is a wonderful piece of architecture, but the loggia in the courtyard and the Gothic and Baroque cellars of the rear building also deserve special attention. The owners of the building were always rich citizens and traders with high ranking social positions. The house is named after one of the owners, mayor and magistrate Endre Fabrićius, who purchased the house in 1806. He was a friend of the poet Sándor Petőfi, who changed his clothes in this house after escaping from his barracks to attend the concert of Franz Liszt. The building hosts three exhibitions.

The cellars remain from Scarbanita, the Roman town: headstones, altar stones, statues, sepulchral urns of stone, and sarcophagi. But what can these boring stones tell us about Roman times? For the interested visitor they begin speaking: A whole life can be gathered by reading the notes of a headstone. The oldest item of the collection is a piece of Marcus Vibi's' headstone (found in 1541); the lower part of it was destroyed during the fire of 1676. The city council found it very important to preserve this precious relic, so the original text on the stone is perfectly legible, although the copy is far from being an accurate replica. The impressive hall of the medieval cellar is a worthy environment to accommodate the several meter high sculptures of the Capitoline Gods. The sanctuary of the great marble statues of Jupiter, Juno, and Minerva, which are fascinating, even in their torno form, originally stood on the forum of Scarbanita. The richly ornamented marble headstone of Cassius Sexilius Senecio and the relief from the altar of the Mithras Sanctuary are also exceptionally valuable.

The archeological exhibition "Three thousand years on the amber road" can be seen on two floors at the back of the building. The rich findings demonstrate the life and culture of the former Illyrian, Celtic and Roman populations of the area, the way of life of the conquering Hungarians, as well as the process of Sopron becoming an important town. There is also a world famous find from the early Iron Age - the Sun Disk. The original function of the disk is still unknown. It is worth visiting the Illyrians' sepulchral urns decorated with black runic scripts, the fireogs, and the Celts' coins and jewels. The amber jewels and the gold and silver objects for everyday use demonstrate the unbelievable richness of the Roman period. The most valuable piece of the migration period is the Cuman Goblet, with its estimated age of 1,200 years.

The rooms on the first and second floors of the front building show the changes in interior design between the 17th and 18th centuries, by presenting objects and furniture of the time. We can witness the shift from more puritan pieces of furniture to more decorative items.
PHARMACY MUSEUM
Sopron, Fő tér 2.

The first Hungarian "monument protection" is related to this house. During the reign of King Lajos II, the City Council wanted to destroy the building in order to enlarge the square, but the King denied his approval, claiming that the demolition of the house would disrupt the architectural unity of the Main Square. The former Angel Apothecary operated in the house from the middle of the 17th century, and it was home of a number of families of chemists and doctors. The most famous inhabitant of the building was Adam Gensel (1677-1720), doctor and meteorologist, who detected the influence of weather fronts on the human body.

The house had arcades until its reconstruction in 1850, when the Gensel family extended the house by bricking up the arcades and the corridor. Since the renovation of 1966-67, the building has been the Pharmacy museum. The exhibition takes the form of an old chemist's shop, with an original counter, cabinets, and beautiful dishes from the beginning of the 19th century. There are especially beautiful Alhŭren-style china gallipots with their angel-head decoration and phials with alchemist-markings. Another curiosity is a midwife's certificate signed by Ignác Semmelweis. Besides relics of traditional medicine and pharmacy, there are items based on superstitions, such as amulets to fight the evil eye, or a hat against child epilepsy. The valuable collection of books covers medical and healing sciences, e.g. Paracelsus' Colligatum from 1572, and Agricola-Poppius' Observationes from 1638.

Phone: +36 99 311 327
www.muzeum.sopron.hu

FORUM OF SCARBANTIA
Sopron, Új ut 1.

Scarbantia (the Roman name of Sopron) was one of the border stations of the Province of Pannonia in the former Roman Empire. It was important because of its location on the Amber Road, an important commercial route. The centre of the town, the present downtown was surrounded with a wall and a moat. The structure of the fortress also influenced the pattern of the streets. The center of the Romanoppidum was the Forum. The most important building on the Forum, the Capitolium Church, was discovered in the winter of 1893, during the construction of the City Hall. The exact size and position of the Forum was finally determined during the excavations between 1960 and 1970. The flat paving stones of the earlier square were made of Lajić limestone delivered here from the Ferőércos quarry. The pedestals of three bronze equestrian statues were found on the southern part of the square. Altars to different gods were discovered on the sides of the Forum. The temples of the three main gods – Jupiter, Juno and Minerva - were situated at the highest point of the town. These buildings had large spaces between their columns to provide a view of the gladiators’ games and upper balconies. There were exchange offices in the peristyles. Scarbantia was a true Roman town. Travellers from Italy could find everything they expected here: a crowded market, sanctuaries of their gods, a comfortable bath, and naturally, gladiator games. The exhibition of the monumental architectural work recalls life in the former Roman town. Note that the Forum in Sopron is the only one in the former Province of Pannonia which was built in the Roman style.

Phone: +36 99 508 825
Guide: +36 20 364 2263
www.scarbantia.com

MEDIEVAL SYNAGOGUE
Sopron, Új u. 22.

We do not know the exact date of the Jews' settlement in Sopron, but it is sure that about 10-16 families lived in New Street (Új utca) as early as the 13th century. Although the Jews of the town dealt primarily with commerce and finance, they were not really rich. Still, their Gothic synagogue built at the beginning of the 14th century, is a unique piece of architecture in Eastern Europe. The Jewish religion says there is only one church where God is truly present, the Church of Jerusalem. Therefore, the synagogue is a house of prayers, a place for congregations, and a school. Near the synagogue there used to be a hospital providing accommodation for
wanderers, and a ritual bath, which is open to visitors today. A corridor from the entrance leads to the main hall. Its main door is decorated with a tympanum, and two side consoles date from 1300, the time of construction. The two focal points of the synagogue are the Aaron alcove and the pulpit. The Aaron alcove is decorated with a richly-ornamented stone frame and a tympanum, with motifs of grapes and leaves fashioned in the colours of nature. Only the foundation of the hexagonal pulpit is original, but its layout, stairs, high railings, and reading-stand orientated to the East follow the original design. Women had their own house of prayers, which was equipped with its own exit. They could follow the events in the main hall only through narrow window slots. Another exciting part of the museum is the ritual bath. The Jewish religion has always differentiated between clean and dirty things, so baths have always played an outstanding role in the spiritual life of the Jews. The laws of Moses ordained submergence in clear running water, but here there was only the natural water of the fountain. After the expulsion of the Jews from Sopron in 1526, the synagogue started to fall into decay, later it was converted into private homes. The building regained its original beauty during the restoration work of 1967.

Opening hours: May-October: 10.00-18.00
Closed on Monday!
Phone: +36 99 311 327
www.muzeum.sopron.hu

The Central Museum of Mining, the largest and most comprehensive mining collection of Hungary, is outstanding among the dozens of exhibitions in Sopron. The Baroque Esterházy Palace is a worthy venue to house this valuable collection. The bulbwork garden behind the Museum and its small Baroque music pavilion make an ideal resting place for the weary visitor. The exhibition was awarded the title “Museum of the Year” in 2001. There are relics of Hungarian precious metal mining, which was famed throughout Europe for many centuries. The exhibition also demonstrates the results and technical achievements of the last century. The most interesting part of the exhibition is a life-sized minershaft from the beginning of the 20th century, which visitors can enter. They can also take a look at an ancient flint-mine reconstructed in its original size, experience the narrow shafts of medieval mines, and observe the greatest technical innovation of the last century, the hydraulic buckler, with all its internal parts and pieces. Besides the miniature working models of the machines, the valuable collection of shiny minerals is also noteworthy. During the summer, educational and feature films are shown in the cinema room. The exhibition presents the history of Hungarian mining over a thousand years, offering an unforgettable experience to Hungarian and foreign tourists, with signs in German, English and Slovakian.

Opening hours:
April-September: 10.00-18.00
October-March: 10.00-16.00 Closed on Monday!
Phone: +36 99 312 667
www.kbm.hu

Have you ever seen equipment of forestry, carpentry tools and devices used in land-surveying and cartography, produced at the turn of the 19th–20th centuries? You may see them all at the Collection of Forestry. The collection includes a number of curiosities, which are of great interest for every visitor: pieces of fossilized wood millions of years old, a map from 1656, documents and modelling boards from the end of the 19th century, insectaria from 1870, wooden tools and household equipment from the last century, and models of machines. Besides the permanent exhibition, there are miscellaneous temporary exhibitions as well. The palace of the Esterházy family, which hosts the exhibition, was the scene of a notable event in 1921. This was the place where the representatives of the Triple Entente established the final result of the referendum held in Sopron, which resulted in Sopron staying a part of Hungary.

Phone: +36 99 338 870
www.erdmuz.enk.nyme.hu
SOPRON COLLECTION OF THE NATIONAL LUTHERAN MUSEUM
Sopron, Templom u. 19.

The history of the Lutheran congregation in Sopron dates back to the time of the Reformation in Hungary. The Lutheran church of Sopron is the oldest, most outstanding architectural work of the period after the issue of the Edict of Tolerance. There are frequent organ concerts here. The huge instrument has an unforgettable tone. The Members of the congregation have always contributed to the rich collection of Hungarian and foreign ecclesiastical objects which can be seen in the treasury of the church. The Communion goblets, jugs, ciboria, candlesticks and altar cloths are all masterpieces of ecclesiology. The Library with the collection of more than 6000 books, handwritten Holy Bibles and books on theology is at the researchers’ disposal. We get a view of the congregation’s life through paintings, handwritten documents, books and prints. The Portrait Room sums up the activity of important personalities up to the 20th century. The former vicarage is located near the Church. The two-storied Baroque palace is the seat of the Sopron Collection of the National Lutheran Museum. The Library holds documents from the middle of the 16th century onwards. In the library of over 6000 books, handwritten Bibles and basic theological works are available for interested researchers.

Phone: +36 99 523 002
www.sopron.lutheran.hu

Opening hours: May-October
Tuesday: 14.00-16.00, Thursday: 9.00-11.00
Phone: +36 99 312 221
www.gyor.egyhazmegyeikincstar.hu

JÓZSEF SOPRONI HORVÁTH COLLECTION
Sopron, Hátsókapu 2.

The history of art has awarded József Horváth (1891-1961) titles such as “the great painter of Sopron”, “the classic of aquarelle” or “the poet of aquarelle”. The artist later received the honorary name “Soproni” from his beloved town. He was not actually born in Sopron, but he dedicated all his artistic activity to this town. Sopron owns and hosts his life’s work, which provides a basis for this permanent aquarelle exhibition as well. The artist studied at the University of Fine Arts and in Nagybánya. He was a pioneer of aquarelle painting. The most meritorious achievement of his life’s work is raising the aquarelle technique to an equal rank with oil painting. He delivered his messages by natural means. His themes bear evidence of deep human emotions. His technique uses the spiritualization of the material as a starting point. All his masterpieces are of enduring value, but he achieved real fame and success by his incomparable nudes and portraits. These valuable paintings are the manifestations of his unique and unparalleled artistic performance. His inheritance can now be seen in the Caesar House, in an exhibition that was established by his widow.

Opening hours: January-December
Thursday-Sunday: 10.00-13.00
In the main season (May-September) is open on Saturday afternoon, as well: 15.00-18.00
Phone: +36 99 313 540

COLLECTION OF ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH ART
Sopron, Várkerület 25.

The collection is owned and run by the Catholic Convent. Its founders collected, and thereby saved damaged objects of church art, renewed them, and made them available for art historians, researchers and the public. The rich collection can be seen in the oratory of the former Ursuline monastery. The material helps us to create a more accurate picture of Sopron’s Baroque art. The sacral objects, mainly fashioned in a Baroque style, are ordered into thematic groups, and complemented by earlier and 19th century relics.

Phone: +36 99 313 540

Opening hours: January-December
Thursday-Sunday: 10.00-13.00
In the main season (May-September) is open on Saturday afternoon, as well: 15.00-18.00
Phone: +36 99 313 540
More than 120 years ago there was a young man, who had to make a choice: to be a painter or to carry on the business in the distillery and vinegar factory founded by his family in 1844. The young Gusztáv Zettl (1852-1917), chose the latter out of respect for his parents, but he never gave up his dreams concerning his artistic career. He was a very talented student at the Painters’ Academy in Vienna, and his enthusiasm for painting endured all through his life. The experiences he collected during his foreign studies had a great influence on his professional development. Being a noble-minded amateur, he became addicted to real grand-style art, and began to collect antiquities from the ever-growing profits of the family business. He got enthusiastically involved in the archeological work carried out in Sopron, where rich finds were revealed during the foundation stage of every new building. The civilian homes of the last century were equipped with a large variety of Biedermeier furniture, antique pictures, as well as dishes made of tin and china. Gusztáv Zettl was destined for a long life, so besides his enthusiasm for painting he continually expanded his collection. His artistic and intellectual inheritance is handled by his descendants (his greatgreat grandchild and his family, who still live in Sopron) as well as a public foundation. The collection of civilian homes has been exhibited in an unchanged form since 1955. The family members introduce the history of Sopron and its surroundings through the remains of the Paleolithic, Medieval, and Modern Age. The windows display the high level of glass art in the area, and the wood-inlaid ceiling gives the interior a unique, romantic atmosphere. Visitors are sure to enjoy the large ground-glass surfaces, the beauty of the contemporary furniture, the haban cracks, the faience and china dishes, the unique weapons, the trade-signs, the tin objects, the books, and the valuable pictures.

The working room of the artist has been left intact since his death; it shows how to create a cozy home using unique solutions.

Opening hours:
April - October: 10-12.00  Closed on Monday!
November - March: 10-12.00 - only on Friday, Saturday, Sunday
Phone: +36 99 311 136

Farmers and craftsmen who lived in the outskirts of the town were protected by city walls during the centuries. Taking a walk in Balfi, Bécsi, Fővénynémedi or Halász streets, you can almost touch the unique atmosphere of the former farmers’ district. The Bakery Museum is located in the building which used to be the oldest bakery in town. This function of the building is shown by the coat-of-arms on the front of the house with lions breaking a piece of pretzel. Between the years 1686-1970, the owners of the house were bakers. After that, the City Council decided to open an exhibition in the building, keeping the entire interior untouched.

The actual bakery can be found in the right wing of the house. In the heating room there is a huge furnace while the baking room accommodates a bread-bin, leavening cabinets and dough-baskets, almost ready for immediate use. The former flour storeroom was transformed into a sweet shop at the end of the 19th century, in keeping with the needs of Sunday afternoon walkers. Because the master was not allowed to leave the workshop for longer periods even during the night shift, a small wooden chamber was separated for him to take short naps. The room facing the street used to be the bakery shop. It was later divided into two to form a sweet shop. The interior of the sweet shop is original, too. The baker’s family home can be accessed from the right side of the arch gateway. Its furniture exhibits the typical interior design and way of life of craftsman and farm families in the 19th century.

Phone: +36 99 311 327
www.muzeum.sopron.hu
besides the man-made values of sopron, the picturesque natural environment also touches the visitors. sopron is situated at the meeting point of three different botanical and zoological regions which explains the extreme richness in species of the nearby forests. walking on the dense network of paths, we can discover numerous wonders of nature. in the centre of this area, the first wooden lookout tower was constructed by the city planner károly konvalter, at his own expense in 1876. the newer 23 meter high lookout tower is made of quarry-stone. on the first floor, there is a highly interesting exhibition of the activity of three natural scientists of european fame - pál kitaibel, enedre gombocz and zoltán körösi. it also shows the main characteristics of the sopron nature conservation area. there is a splendid view of sopron from the tower’s two upper storeys; with the szárhalmi forest in the background, and the shimmering water of lake fertő in the distance. the spectacular view is topped off by the silhouette of the wienerwald on the left and the snowy mountain blocks of the schneeberg on the right.

opening hours: march: 9 - 17.00
april + october: 9 - 18.00, may-august: 9 - 20.00
september: 9-19.00, november-february: 9 - 16.00

the memories of mining of brennbergbánya
brennbergbánya, öbrennbergi u. 14.

for more than 200 years the village of brennbergbánya was one of the most significant coal mines in hungary. the first-class coal production wanted miners to be prepared for heavy physical work. the work for the miners of brennbergbánya was particularly difficult, because this was the deepest mine of hungary with the highest pressure, raising difficult technical problems. according to a legend, in 1753 a shepherd from bánfalva saw a miracle: burning stones. george john rieder angle smith was not afraid from the vision he brought home the stones and used it. then was the coal in brennberg discovered. multiple prosperities, failures, restarts, shutdowns, frequent tenant changes after 1789, with the company of vencel schneider, the continuous coal mining was started finally. over the years the tenants and the owners were often changed, but the mining of high standard and professionalism was permanently expanded. the increase in production inevitably increased the number of workers. in 1952, the mine was said to be inefficient and uneconomic, so it was closed.

the museum takes place in the engine house of the first hoisting shaft operated by a steam engine. the exhibition shows the years of the development of coal mining, mining equipments and a miner’s house as well.

opening hours of the exhibition:
every day 10.00-18.00
phone: +36 99 505 895
www.banfalvakolostor.hu
MITHRAS - CHAPEL

Opening hours:
1-14th May and 1-30th September
Friday-Sunday: 10.00-16.00
15th May – 31st August
Daily: 10.00-18.00 (Closed on Monday!)
www.fertorakos.hu

One of the most interesting attractions of Fertorakos is the open-air museum of the beautiful stone quarry. It is part of the Fertő Region World Heritage and gives us a chance to discover the wonders of both the natural and the man-made environment. It is hard to believe, but once upon a time this area was covered by sea. The existence of the former Pannon Sea is attested by the ancient remains of plants and animals on the walls of the quarry. The Romans exploited the 10-12 million-year-old Lajta limestone to build the walls of Sopron, which they called Scarpanta. This stone was a popular building material in the past few centuries because it was easy to carve. Quarrying the stone created vast empty spaces. The remaining unusable layers overlie the halls like enormous ceilings. The interior of the halls remind us of ancient Egyptian rock temples. Their excellent acoustics create a unique atmosphere for the concerts held in the Cave Theatre every summer. The lookout point of the quarry offers an unforgettable view of the huge area of Lake Fertő. The Buckthorn Study Path, presents unique values of fauna and flora, and leads us to the Pan-European Monument. The metal sculpture, representing a piece of the ‘iron curtain’, recalls the memory of the border opening on 19 August, 1989. The open-air museum invites us to an exciting journey through time. The Mithras Sanctuary near the Austrian-Hungarian border was discovered in 1866, but it was completely destroyed after World War I. However, the verifying excavation and the careful reconstruction work carried out in 1990-91 brought this strange mystery religion closer to us. In the Provinces of the vast Roman Empire, the only career for men was joining the Legion. After 20-25 years of service, they obtained Roman citizenship and land. Naturally, they also brought their culture and religion with them from their distant homeland. The Persian soldiers stationed in the nearby Carnuntum erected a chapel in the 3rd century for Mithras, the invincible God of Sun, the symbol of light and life. Mithras kills the bull, the symbol of darkness and evil, in the cave. The main cultic picture opposite the entrance of the cave-like sanctuary shows this moment. The raised benches along the longer sides of the chapel were built for the initiated participants, while the ceremony itself was held in the middle.

MINERALMUSEUM

Opening hours:
April-May: 9.00-17.00, June-August: 9.00-19.00
September-October: 9.00-17.00
November-March: in case of registration
Phone: +36 99 355 286
www.kalcitkristalyok.hu

The Széchenyi Mausoleum in the village cemetery is the most sacred place of pilgrimage for Hungarian people. It is not only a memorial place of national identity, but also an invaluable piece of art, with its unique architecture and interior. The Classic chapel is the family grave of the Széchenyis, providing a worthy environment for its ‘dwellers’ with its artistic and emotional unity. The mausoleum is the final resting place of Count Ferenc Széchenyi, the founder of the Hungarian National Museum and his son, Count István Széchenyi, the outstanding politician of the Reform Age.

FERTŐRÁKOS

One of the most interesting attractions of Fertőrákos is the open-air museum of the beautiful stone quarry. It is part of the Fertő Region World Heritage and gives us a chance to discover the wonders of both the natural and the man-made environment. It is hard to believe, but once upon a time this area was covered by sea. The existence of the former Pannon Sea is attested by the ancient remains of plants and animals on the walls of the quarry. The Romans exploited the 10-12 million-year-old Lajta limestone to build the walls of Sopron, which they called Scarpanta. This stone was a popular building material in the past few centuries because it was easy to carve. Quarrying the stone created vast empty spaces. The remaining unusable layers overlie the halls like enormous ceilings. The interior of the halls remind us of ancient Egyptian rock temples. Their excellent acoustics create a unique atmosphere for the concerts held in the Cave Theatre every summer. The lookout point of the quarry offers an unforgettable view of the huge area of Lake Fertő. The Buckthorn Study Path, presents unique values of fauna and flora, and leads us to the Pan-European Monument. The metal sculpture, representing a piece of the ‘iron curtain’, recalls the memory of the border opening on 19 August, 1989. The open-air museum invites us to an exciting journey through time. The Mithras Sanctuary near the Austrian-Hungarian border was discovered in 1866, but it was completely destroyed after World War I. However, the verifying excavation and the careful reconstruction work carried out in 1990-91 brought this strange mystery religion closer to us. In the Provinces of the vast Roman Empire, the only career for men was joining the Legion. After 20-25 years of service, they obtained Roman citizenship and land. Naturally, they also brought their culture and religion with them from their distant homeland. The Persian soldiers stationed in the nearby Carnuntum erected a chapel in the 3rd century for Mithras, the invincible God of Sun, the symbol of light and life. Mithras kills the bull, the symbol of darkness and evil, in the cave. The main cultic picture opposite the entrance of the cave-like sanctuary shows this moment. The raised benches along the longer sides of the chapel were built for the initiated participants, while the ceremony itself was held in the middle.

NAGYCENK

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It is worth entering the Széchenyi Castle, the former seat of the family, through the wrought-iron gate, protected by guardhouses, across the French garden. In spite of its humble exterior, the castle is one of the most beautiful country mansions of Hungary. The family’s coat of arms is displayed on the front balconies supported by Tuscan pillars. Its library, its collection of 6,000 maps, and its numismatic and mineral collections were nationally famous during Ferenc Széchenyi’s life, but its golden age came in the period when it was owned by Count István Széchenyi. The István Széchenyi Memorial Museum presents the life and work of the ‘Greatest Hungarian’. A stud farm, an open-air locomotive museum and a Nostalgia Train were established in Nagycence to express the country’s appreciation of Count Széchenyi and his varied political and economic activity, all aimed at the development of his beloved nation. The Nostalgia Train rattles through the beautiful area in high season. A pleasant park promenade opposite the castle, bordered by lime trees, still exists, delighting every visitor who enters it. The trees were planted by Zsuzsanna Barkóczy, the wife of Antal Széchenyi, the castle’s builder. The inhabitants of the village may also be thankful to Széchenyi’s widow (Countess Crescentia Seilern), who had a beautiful neo-Romanesque church designed and built by Miklós Ybl. The statue of István Széchenyi is standing in the park outside the Church.
The ancient seat of the Széchenyi family had been in Fertőszeplak until the end of the 18th century, when they moved to Nagycenk. The family built the village church, consecrated to All-Saints. The interior of the church was prepared with meticulous craftsmanship which was characteristic of Baroque architecture. The main street of Fertőszeplak with its uniformly laid-out herringbone houses has been included in every serious book on folk architecture since 1930. Today the five old buildings host an open-air ethnographic museum. The buildings are prominent examples of peasant-Baroque architecture.

The exhibition shows the history, life, folk art and everyday tools of people living in the Fertó region. Every single house is a treasure in itself, the result of the carefule, invaluable and enthusiastic work done by the collectors.

The collection also introduces the characteristic changes in interior design between the years 1850-1950, as well as the inventiveness of farmers in improving their methods, in order to keep up with modern times.

**Village Museum**

Phone: +36 99 370 918 or +36 30 442 4125

www.fertozeplakita.hu

**Railway Light Museum**

Opening hours: May-September

Tuesday-Saturday: 11.00-17.00

October-April: In case of registration!

Phone: +36 99 340 556

www.vasutilampamuzuem.lks.hu

**SZÉCHENYI MEMORIAL MUSEUM**

Opening hours:

April-October: 10.00-18.00,

November-March: 10.00-17.00. Closed on Monday!

Phone: +36 99 360 023

www.nagycenk.hu

**MAUSOLEUM**

Opening hours:

April-October: 10.00-18.00. Closed on Monday!

November-March: In case of registration!

Phone: +36 30 308 4800

www.szechenyimauzoleum.hu

The Eszterházy Castle is the third biggest historical building complex in Hungary. The Baroque castle, also known as ‘the Hungarian Versailles’, was built by Miklós Eszterházy the ‘Glorious’ between 1763 and 1766. He and his high-spirited wife, Countess Margit Cziráky, rebuilt the 20-roomed hunting lodge of József Eszterházy, transforming it into the family’s favourite home. This was the golden age of the building, between 1768 and 1790. After the owner’s death, it lost its prominent role, and during World War II it fell into ruin. The facade of the castle has almost every ornamental element of the Baroque style. The symmetry of the building, along with the richly ornamented arched stairs leading to the Music Room and the Ceremony Hall, are a fascinating sight. The main characteristic of Miklós’s court was its high level of culture. The marvellous interiors and the plentiful decoration of the 126 rooms will amaze every visitor. As a generous Maecenas, the owner transformed his court into a true cultural centre. Joseph Haydn, the outstanding musician of the period, served the family for 30 years. The opera performances were often held in the presence of the royal family. Haydn composed a large number of his masterpieces here; the momentos of his life’s work fill three rooms. The famous Gallery of the castle, with its 348 paintings, provides a basis for the National Gallery. The arch-shaped castle complex surrounds a ceremonial courtyard built in Baroque-Rococo style. At the end there is a magnificent three-arch wrought-iron gate. The permanent exhibition of Fertőd’s regional history is in the former residence of Haydn.

**ESTERHÁZYPALACE**

Opening hours:

March-October: 10-18.00

November-February: 10-16.00 – only on Friday, Saturday, Sunday

Closed on Monday!

Phone: +36 99 337 640

www.eszterhaza.hu
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