



Self-guided Alternative Tour of Budapest

1 **Franciscans' Square and environs** (Ferenciek tere), Ferenciek tere, Metro 3 stop

Although it is located in Pest's busy inner-city, Franciscans' Square is often overshadowed by its more famous neighbors. That's a shame because it is adjacent to some of the most beautiful architectural wonders in Budapest, including the the Klotild Palace, the Franciscan Church of Pest, and the Elizabeth Bridge. The square is also home to some of the most unique businesses in downtown, including the iconic Jégbüfé, an icecream-shop-meets-confectionary founded in 1952, Centrál Kávéház, a stunning example of the Austro-Hungarian coffee house (minus the tourist crowds), and Ibolya Espresso, a café-bar filled with kitsch from Budapest's "retro" socialist period.

2 **Károlyi Gardens** (Károlyi-kert), Ferenciek tere, Metro 3 stop

This charming park is an oasis of green amid the marble splendor of Budapest's inner city. Come here in the summer to enjoy the colorful flowers and sip a glass of fröccs—a Hungarian take on the wine spritzer—at nearby Csendes Társ Wine Bar and Garden.

- 3 Puskin Cinema**
(Puskin Mozi), Kossuth Lajos u. 18
- This historic cinema dating from the 1920's regularly features the best art and indie films from around the world. After catching a movie in one of the cinema's palatial theaters, I suggest a drink at the in-house café.
- 4 Rumbach Street Synagogue**
(Rumbach utcai zsinagóga), Rumbach Sebestyén u. 11-13
- A few blocks from the famed Dohány Street Synagogue, this lesser-known gem is tucked into the Jewish Quarter's maze of eclectic streets. Built in 1872 by Viennese architect Otto Wagner, the neo-Moorish Rumbach Street Synagogue houses a stunning dome, balcony, and octagonal interior.
- 5 Fogasház,**
Akácfa u. 49-51
- In recent years, Budapest has become well-known for its "ruin pubs"—bars situated in ruined buildings around the city—where you can enjoy a glass of wine amid the crumbling remains of nineteenth century Europe. Although it is sometimes hard to keep track of the array of ruin pubs opening and closing every year in the city, my long-time favorite is Fogasház, an event space, bar, and café located along one of the Jewish Quarter's less-crowded streets.
- 6 Kerepesi Cemetery**
(Kerepesi temető), Fiumei út 16-18, Keleti pályaudvar, Metro 2 and 4 stop
- No trip to Budapest can really be complete without a visit to Kerepesi Cemetery, a remarkable urban necropolis on the edges of Josef Town. A walk through its nearly 140 acres and thousands of graves is a walk through the history of Hungary—its politics, art, tragedies, triumphs, and controversies. Set aside an entire afternoon to wonder its tree-lined avenues and view singular monuments from the nineteenth century to the present.
- 7 Kálmán Mikszáth Square**
(Mikszáth Kálmán tér), Kálvin tér, Metro 3 stop
- In the warmer months, downtown Budapest erupts into a phantasmagoria of colorful outdoor cafes and restaurants. While Ferenc Liszt Square, named for the famed composer Franz Liszt, is the most famous place to enjoy an outdoor meal in Budapest, Josef Town's Mikszáth Square is a local favorite, tucked away into one of the city's most fascinating neighborhoods.
- 8 Great Market Hall Basement**
(Nagyvásárcsarnok pince), Vámház krt. 1-3
- Beyond taking tourists to sites that are off the typical "beaten path," alternative tourism companies also highlight lesser-known aspects of more mainstream tourist sites. The Great Market Hall, with its enormous gallery of shops, is a classic tourist site in the city, yet visitors often miss one of my favorite (if somewhat smelly) "hidden gems" in the city: the basement with its storefronts that specialize in game, an astounding array of pickles, and fish.
- 9 Nagyi Palacsintázója in Batthyány Square** (Batthyány tér), Batthyány tér 5, Tram 19 or Metro 2 stop
- Budapest is home to a vibrant street and fast food scene, with an array of shops serving up everything from classic Hungarian goulash to Syrian-style kabab. If you are a looking for affordable, Hungarian-style fast food in a low-key setting, visit Buda's Nagyi Palacsintázója in Batthyány Square and enjoy some walnut cream-filled pancakes while taking in a view of Parliament.
- 10 Árpád Tóth Promenade**
(Tóth Árpád sétány), Szentháromság tér, Bus 16 stop
- When tourists visit the Castle District, they usually are drawn to the spectacular view overlooking Pest, but the true gem of the neighborhood is the view away from the river, toward the rolling Buda hills. Árpád Tóth Promenade snakes around the back side of Castle Hill and offers gorgeous vistas of Buda and its surroundings. Take a break from the crowds and enjoy the peaceful, hard-to-beat views.