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SmartGuide

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**Bratislava Tourist Board**  
 Primaciálne nám. 1  
 P. O. BOX 349  
 810 00 Bratislava  
 btb@visitbratislava.com  
 www.visitbratislava.com

**Tourist Information Centre**  
 Klobučnícka 2  
 811 01 Bratislava  
 Tel.: +421 2 16 186  
 Tel.: +421 2 59356651  
 touristinfo@visitbratislava.com

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# BRATISLAVA



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# WELCOME TO BRATISLAVA

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Bratislava is the only capital in the world located on the border of three sovereign states – Slovakia, Austria and Hungary. Besides its strategic location on the River Danube, the city takes pride in its rich history. The first Celtic oppidum was founded here in the 2nd century BC. The location at the intersection of two important historical trade routes, the Danube and Amber Roads, highly influenced the development of trade and handicraft. For 247 years was Bratislava the capital of the Hungarian Kingdom (1536 – 1783) and for 267 years also the coronation city (1563 - 1830). It experi-

enced rapid growth under the reign of Maria Theresia crowned the Hungarian queen in 1741 and the Bratislava Castle became a representative royal seat. Not only the Castle, but also the newly built aristocratic Baroque and Rococo palaces enjoyed bustling political, social and cultural life enriched by visits of musical genii, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, Ludwig van Beethoven, Joseph Haydn or Franz Liszt. After the fall of the Iron Curtain in 1989, Bratislava started to profile as a modern European metropolis and an attractive tourist destination.

## *Basic information*

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**Location:** 65 km far from Vienna, 200 km from Budapest and 330 km from Prague. The largest airport in Central Europe, Vienna International, is 40 minutes away from Bratislava city centre by car, and the Bratislava Airport of M. R. Štefánik only 15 minutes away.

**Area:** 367,6 km<sup>2</sup>

**Population:** 476 934 (12/2022)

**Currency:** EURO

*Unique history,  
attractive sights, rich  
cultural life, excellent local  
gastronomy, quality wine  
and modern shopping centres  
make Bratislava an ideal  
city-break destination.*



1.

### Bratislava Castle

← The former seat of the rulers, today the symbol of Bratislava and the seat of the Museum of History. There is a wonderful view of the city and the neighbouring countries from its 47-metre-high crown tower in which royal coronation jewels used to be deposited.



2.

### St. Martin's Cathedral

↑ A three-nave Gothic church from the 15th century and the former coronation church. A gilded replica of the coronation crown fixed on the top of the cathedral tower at a height of 85 metres and weighing 150 kg reminds of this glorious age.

3.

### Old Town Hall

↑ The former seat of the city self-government is since 1868 the seat of the Bratislava City Museum, the oldest museum in Slovakia. After climbing up the narrow stairs leading to its 45-metre-high tower you will be rewarded with a beautiful panoramic view of the Old Town.

4.

### Primate's Palace

← A Classicist palace built in the 18th century in which the Peace of Pressburg was signed after Napoleon's victory at the Battle of Austerlitz between the representatives of the French and Austrian emperors. The Palace houses a gallery depositing a unique collection of six English tapestries from the 17th century and also serves as the seat of the Mayor of Bratislava.





5.

### Eurovea Waterfront

← The combination of the promenade, the Eurovea shopping center, the Danube riverside and the Slovak National Theater is an exceptional urban element. Here you can also find many cafés and restaurants or relax on the Danube riverbank.



8.

### Slavín

→ The largest war memorial in Central Europe is thanks to its height of 52 metres one of the dominating features of the city skyline. It is the burial ground of 6845 soldiers of the Soviet army who died during the liberation of Bratislava in World War II.



9.

### Devín Castle

→ A castle ruin built on a high rock towering above the confluence of the Danube and Morava rivers is one of the most important historical and archaeological localities in Central Europe. Moreover, it offers enchanting natural scenery with unrepeatable views.



6.

### Grassalkovich Palace

↗ A Rococo summer palace from the 18th century used to be known for its rich social life and a famous composer Joseph Haydn also performed here. Since 1996 it serves as the seat of the President of the Slovak Republic.



7.

### Blue Church

→ The St. Elizabeth's church built in the Art Nouveau style at the beginning of the 20th century is remarkable for the blue colour of its façade made with attention to detail with often use of mosaic. It is a popular place for weddings and baptisms.



10.

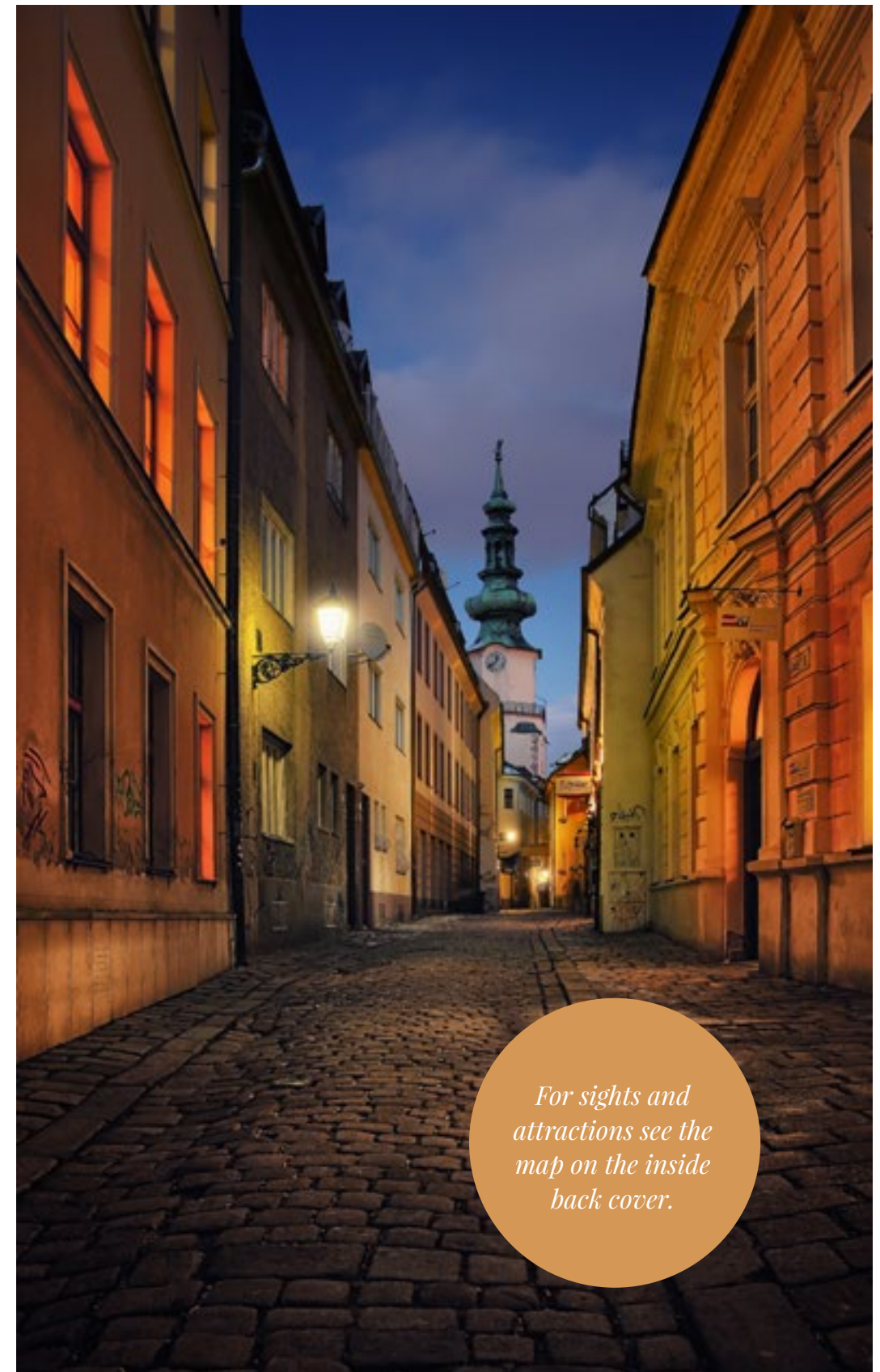
### UFO

← A unique observation deck on the pylons of the SNP Bridge at a height of 95 metres with amazing views of the city and visibility of up to 100 km. It offers the most beautiful sunset combined with a culinary experience.



### *Bratislava Statues*

→ Bratislava's statues are among the most photographed attractions of the city. You can spot an elegant guy Schöne Náci, the curious Čumil, Napoleon casually leaning on a bench, or the statue of H. Ch. Andersen.



*For sights and attractions see the map on the inside back cover.*



# CORONATION CITY

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## The past ...

Short after the Battle of Mohács (1526), ancient Prešporok (present-day Bratislava) became an administrative and later, between 1563 and 1830, also a coronation city of the Kingdom of Hungary and the seat of the king and the archbishop. During 267 years, 11 Hungarian kings (including Maria Theresa) and 7 royal wives were crowned in the St. Martin's Cathedral. Maria Theresa was the only ruling monarch crowned with all honours and ceremonies, namely on 25 June 1741. Under her reign the city enjoyed a construction boom and rich cultural life. She ordered to build a baroque palace Theresianum into the existing castle palace for her son-in-law

Duke Albert of Saxe-Teschen, governor of Hungary, who was a big art lover. The works collected on the Bratislava Castle served as the basis for the collection of the Albertina Museum in Vienna.

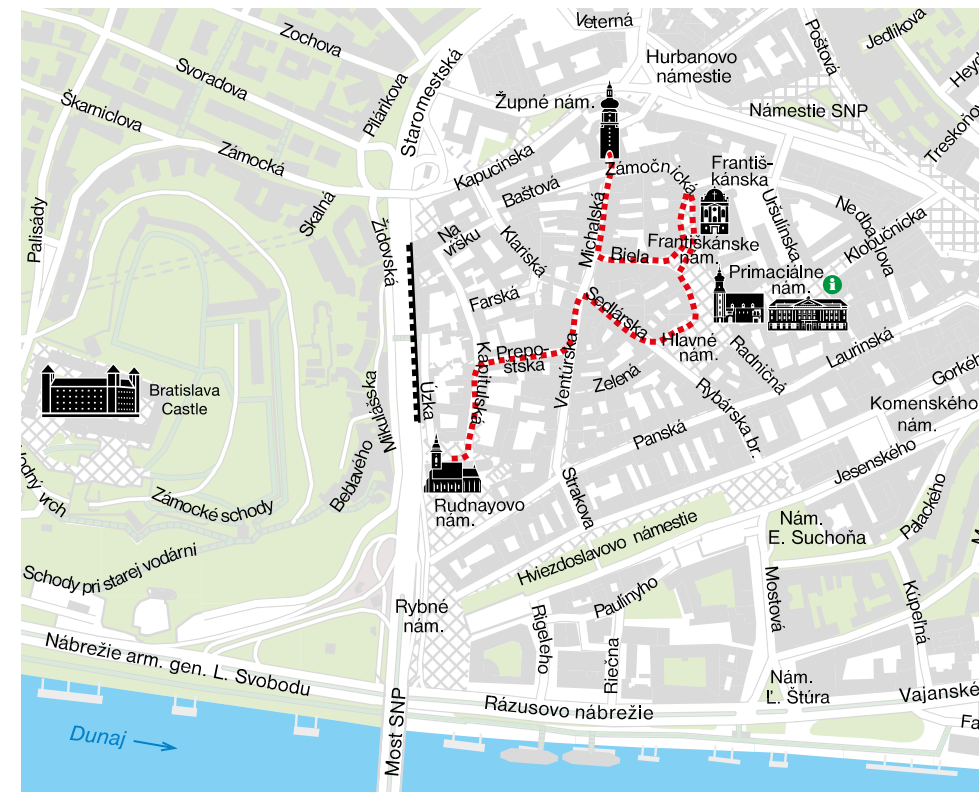
## ... and the present

The coronation tradition comes to life every year in the summer. During the Bratislava Coronation Days, visitors become direct participants in the coronation procession with the participation of historical groups in period costumes. The multiday festivities are accompanied by numerous events, knight games, theater and musical performances, lectures and exhibitions and entertainment for all.





*Follow the route of the coronation procession of Hungarian rulers commemorated with 178 crown-shaped brass plaques set into the pavement.*







# MUSIC CENTER

Bratislava is rightly considered the city of music. In the past, musical geni such as Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, Joseph Haydn, Ludwig van Beethoven, Anton Grigorievič Rubinstein, Franz Liszt or a Bratislava native son and brilliant pianist Johann Nepomuk Hummel used to demonstrate their musical talent here. Antonio Salieri and Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy also honoured Bratislava with their visits. While wandering around the Old Town, do not forget to notice several commemorative plaques placed on the walls of palaces connecting the city with all those representatives of classical music. The current opera ensemble gained the Slovak National Theatre a world-re-

nowned reputation due to a wide range of quality classical performances featuring opera stars such as Pavol Bršlík, Štefan Kocán, Tomáš Juhas, Monika Fabianová, Jolana Fogáčová, Adriana Kučerová and others. The Slovak Philharmonic situated in the Reduta building has been the centre of musical life in Bratislava for more than six decades.

To the most prestigious classical music events held in Bratislava throughout the year belong Bratislava Music Festival, Convergence Chamber Music Festival and Viva Musica! Festival. Jazz lovers should not miss Bratislava jazz days, which is one of the largest events of this kind in the Central Europe.



*Visit the Museum of Johann Nepomuk Hummel housed in a small garden house at Klobučnická Street.*



*For those who wish to learn more about the city's musical history, a guided walking tour Musical Bratislava is an ideal choice.*





# MUSEUMS AND GALLERIES

## Museums

Bratislava is home to many specialized museums. In the City History Museum situated in the Old Town Hall you can find out more about the city history and the daily life of its inhabitants from prehistoric times until the end of the 1930s, while the Museum of History in Bratislava Castle documents history and the ethno-cultural development of the Slovaks, as well as a rich numismatic collection from ancient times to the present.

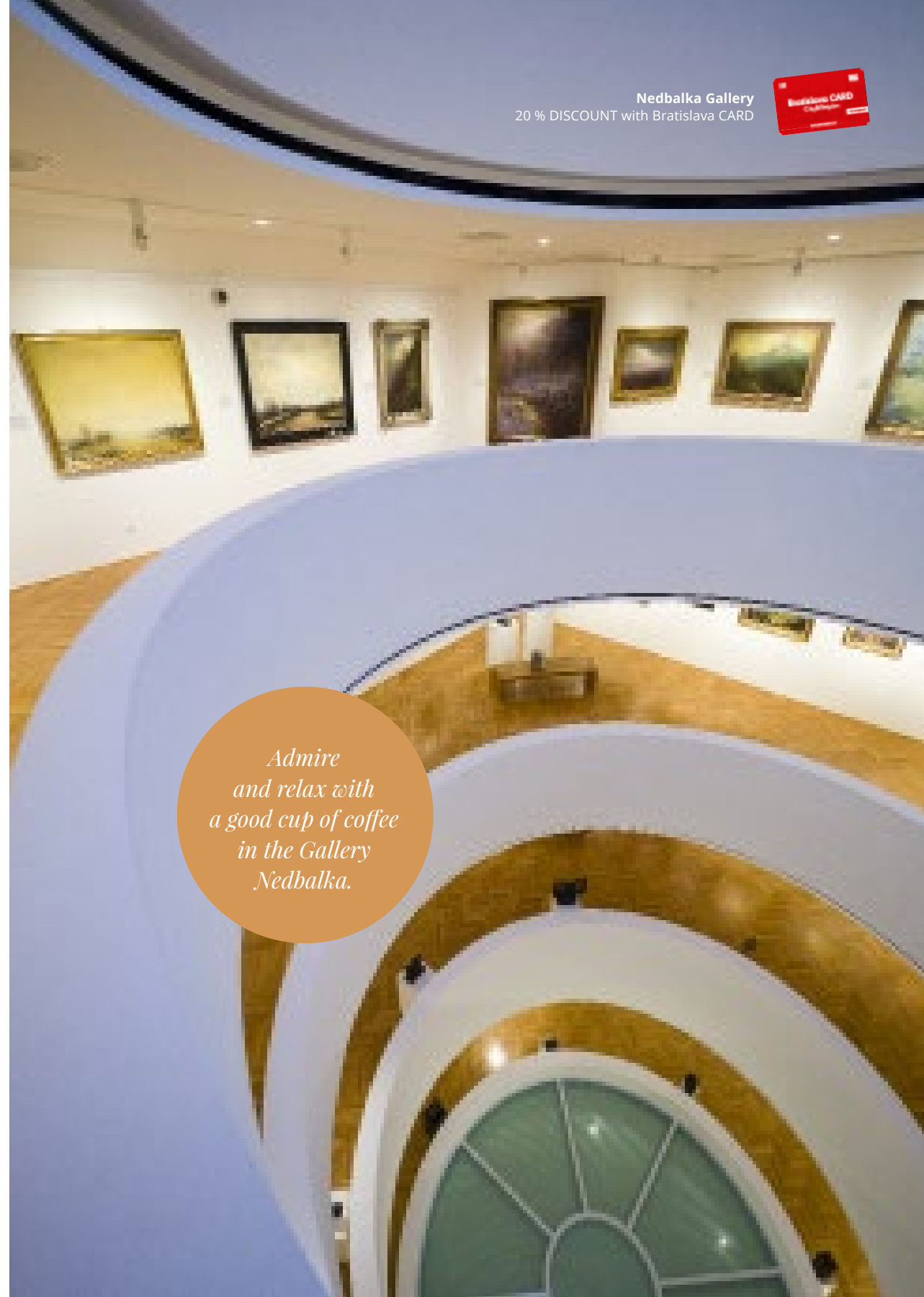
## Galleries

Bratislava is the perfect destination for visual art lovers. Rich collections ranging from medieval to contemporary art are on display in the Bratislava City Gallery and the Slovak National Gallery in their

permanent expositions and temporary exhibitions. There you can also discover several plaster and bronze casts of the Character heads made by the sculptor Franz Xaver Messerschmidt during his stay in Bratislava. The only preserved original, the bust of the Capuchin, is exhibited in the Bratislava City Gallery in the Mirbach Palace.

Best examples of Slovak modern art can be seen in the Nedbalka Gallery with the interior layout similar to the Guggenheim Museum in New York. Less than 20 kilometres away from the city centre is the Danubiana Meulensteen Art Museum, one of the youngest European museums of modern art, offering a unique symbiosis of works of art, modern architecture and surrounding nature.

» [www.nedbalka.sk](http://www.nedbalka.sk)



Nedbalka Gallery  
20 % DISCOUNT with Bratislava CARD



*Admire  
and relax with  
a good cup of coffee  
in the Gallery  
Nedbalka.*



**Danubiana Meulensteen Art Museum**  
20 % DISCOUNT with Bratislava CARD



*A boat trip to Danubiana or a walk through The Passage by Matej Krén in the Pálffy Palace are an unforgettable experience.*



*The life and work of F.X. Messerschmidt in Bratislava can be remembered in a cafe bearing his name.*





# OFFER FOR FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN

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Are you planning a family holiday in Bratislava or are you already here? No problem! The city offers various activities allowing your children to have fun while learning something new. Bratislava has a number of significant public green areas to explore. Sad Janka Kráľa, the oldest public park in Central Europe, is only a short walk from the city centre and during the summer months there is a popular artificial beach with many attractions open in its immediate vicinity. The public transportation system will conveniently take you to the nearby parks Horský Park and Bratislavský lesopark (Bratislava Forest Park). In the latter there are various sporting facilities and possibilities for fishing and rowing waiting for you, or

let a cable car take you up the Kamzík Hill where you can test your courage on the high ropes course or by a ride on a summer bobsleigh track. Because all children love animals, a visit to the Bratislava ZOO is always a good idea. It is home to 185 animal species. Creative children can improve their skills in the International House of Art for Children – Bibiana, while older children will be captivated by an exposition of the Museum of Transport. An indoor centre FUNCITY in the Cubicon Gallery with many slides, climbing frames and other surprises is a good choice to amuse children especially when the weather is not so favourable. Similar facilities can also be found in the shopping centres.



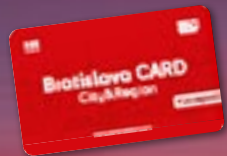
*Bratislava offers a rich program for families with children who like to spend time in nature and in the fresh air.*





*A rich collection of vehicles ranging from bicycles to locomotives can be admired in the Museum of Transport.*





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Try the original Bratislava rolls with a cup of good coffee in the city center cafes.

Traditional Pressburg and Slovak cuisine is offered by the restaurants Zylinder, Bratislavská restaurant, Hradná, Blue star, Savoy and others.



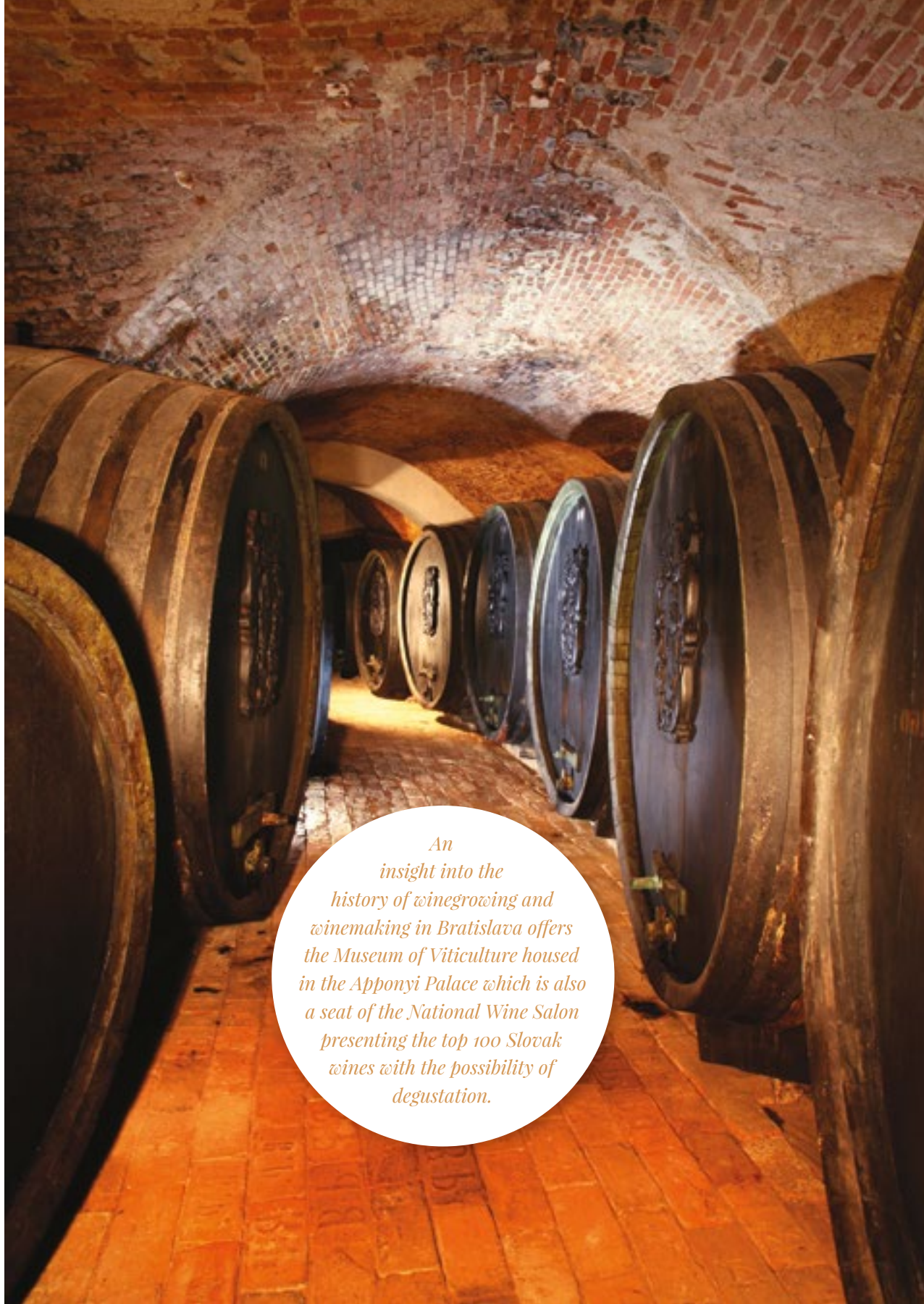


# WINE – ITS HISTORY AND PRESENT

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The history of winegrowing on the territory of present-day Bratislava dates back to the 3rd century AD and is attributed to the Roman emperor Marcus Aurelius. In the mid-19th century two important wine companies were based in Bratislava - Hubert and Palugyay. Still and sparkling wines of the Chateau Palugyay wine brand were enjoyed by members of social elites all over the world, and so deservedly called royal. They were even served on board the Titanic. Maria Theresa's favourite wine Račianska frankovka could never be absent from the emperor's table. The nearby Little Carpathians winegrowing region has an excellent climate conditions for the production of white wines

such as Rhine Riesling, Grüner Veltiner, Chardonnay or new local grape varieties Devín and Pálava. Red wine grape varieties grown here are Blaufränkisch, Cabernet Sauvignon, Alibernet, Dunaj and Blauer Portugieser. International prizes won in world's prestigious contests such as Concours Mondial de Bruxelles and Vinalies Internationales in Paris guarantee the high quality of wines produced in the Little Carpathians winegrowing region. The Bratislava neighbourhood Devín is famous for the production of traditional currant wine made from black and red currants which can be tasted in every local wine pub.



*An insight into the history of winegrowing and winemaking in Bratislava offers the Museum of Viticulture housed in the Apponyi Palace which is also a seat of the National Wine Salon presenting the top 100 Slovak wines with the possibility of degustation.*

*Bratislava is associated with historically known and quality brands of sparkling wines Hubert and Palugyay.*





# OFF THE BEATEN PATH

## **Volkswagen Slovakia**

The Bratislava plant in Devínska Nová Ves is the only automobile production plant in the world that manufactures vehicles of four brands under one roof (Volkswagen, Audi, Porsche and Škoda). Watch the cars being produced on a commentated guided tour.

## **White Water Sport Area**

### **Divoká voda**

The water sport complex in Čunovo built on an artificial canal of the River Danube offers a great opportunity to test your courage and skills not only by traditional adrenaline water activities such as rafting and jet skiing but also by paintball or four-wheel riding.

## **A journey back in time through the socialist-era monuments**

Distinctive socialist architecture has significantly changed the face of the city and influenced everyday life of its inhabitants. Large-scale housing estates are perhaps the best examples of Socialist realism although they used to be downgraded and unflatteringly called “dormitories.” The largest housing estate is Petržalka situated on the right bank of the River Danube with more than 100,000 inhabitants. Since 1989 the housing estates have been transformed to modern, comfortable and functional places to live, work, shop and relax.

*Discover the most important monuments of socialist architecture, the dystopian housing estate Petržalka and the forgotten places of the communist era.*





*Learn about daily life in bunkers of the former defence system in Petržalka during the hour-and-a-half-long excursion in a military car GAŽ 69.*



**Bunkers in Petržalka**

Still rather unknown historic attraction is located in Petržalka neighbourhood just a stone's throw from the former Iron Curtain. Several military bunkers from the original fortification system built in 1938 now house the Museum of Petržalka Fortification. The Museum with preserved original equipment documents history and the defence system of pre-war Czechoslovakia as well as the daily life of soldiers of the border guard.





# AFTER SUNSET

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After the sun goes down, Bratislava truly comes alive. You can start soaking up its evening atmosphere in one of many cosy little cafes set in the historic city centre. During the summer months let yourself be lured by restaurants found on every corner and make yourself comfortable on their terraces to enjoy the culinary delicacies or a glass of quality wine from the Little Carpathians vineyards. A not-to-be-missed experience for true roman-

tics is an unforgettable evening walk by the River Danube with charming views of the illuminated city dominants. The most breath-taking night views of Bratislava offer the UFO observation deck atop the SNP Bridge and the revolving restaurant VEŽA situated in a television tower. Whether you are a music lover or just want to party all night long, there is a wide range of music clubs, bars and discos to choose from.





*Enjoy  
night-time views  
of city's landmarks  
during a sightseeing  
tour.*





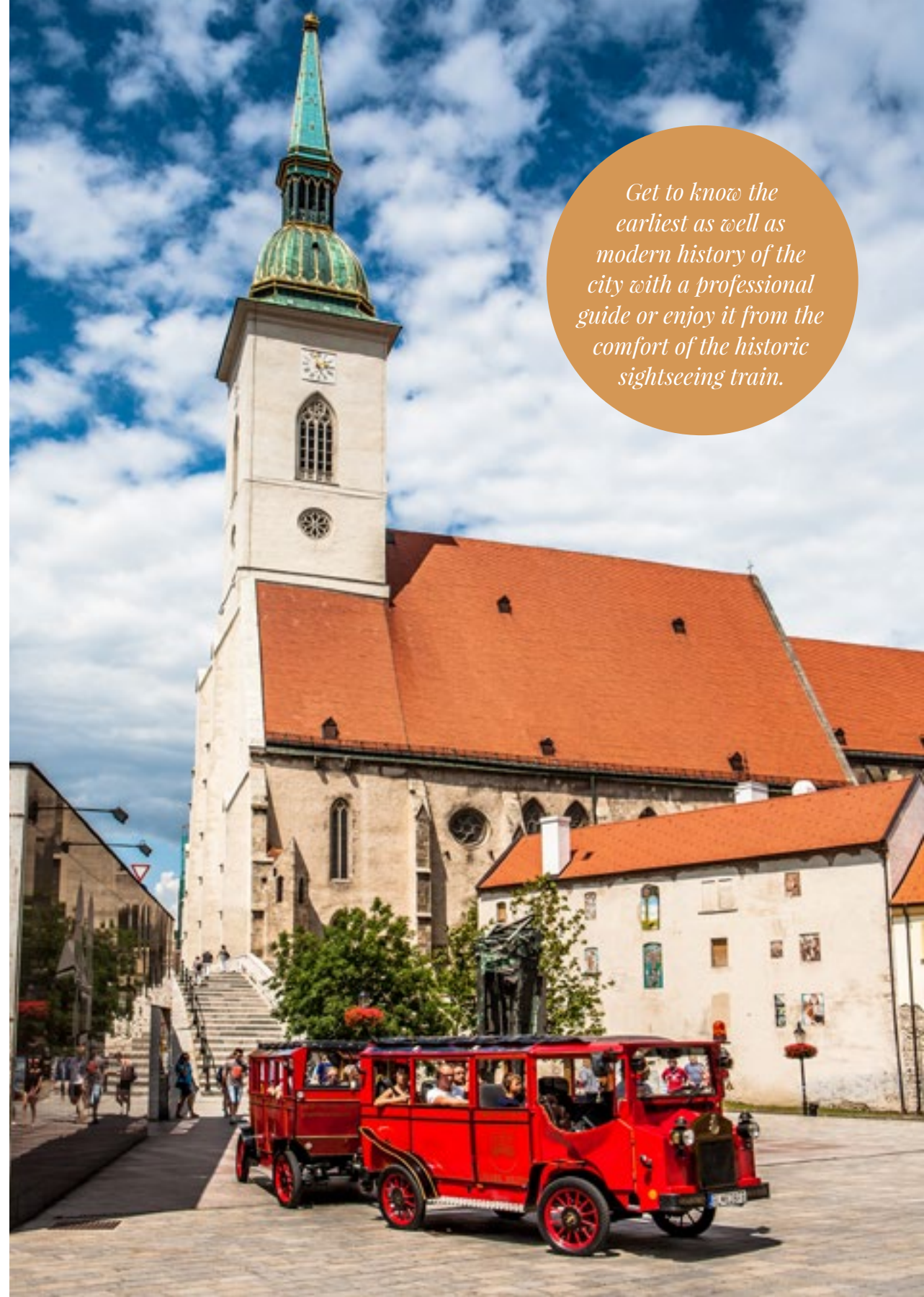
# EVENTS

The city of Bratislava offers a number of events of various focus and content. Events of historical events are particularly dominant – such as the Bratislava Coronation Days, Knights at Devin, Roman Games in Gerulata - Rusovce. Bratislava also offers cultural and musical events

such as the Bratislava Music Festival, Viva Musica! Festival, Bratislava Jazz Days and also many events focusing on gastronomy and sports such as Street Food Park, Young Wine Festival, Bratislava ČSOB Marathon, National Run Devín – Bratislava and many others.







*Get to know the earliest as well as modern history of the city with a professional guide or enjoy it from the comfort of the historic sightseeing train.*



# ACCOMMODATION

Bratislava currently has more than 250 accommodation facilities. Renowned hotel chains such as Marriot, Radisson Hotel Group, IHG, Accor, Hilton Worldwide, Falkensteiner Hotels & Residences, Lindner, NH Hotels, or Vienna House have discovered Bratislava as a modern and charming city. Thanks to its excellent location on the border of three countries and one- to three-hour flight time from most European cities, Bratislava is an ideal place to host

conferences and incentives. Bratislava's four- and five-star hotels offer fully technically equipped conference and meeting premises. More information on accommodation facilities in the city can be found on [www.visitbratislava.com](http://www.visitbratislava.com). For those who are unable to book accommodation prior to their arrival to the city, it can be easily arranged at the tourist information centres.



*Take advantage of hotel packages and let yourself be carried away by the atmosphere of the city.*



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