

CIEE Study Center in Budapest, Hungary

September 2012

Newsletter 1, Fall 2012

Greetings from Budapest!

We send our warmest greetings from Budapest, where the summer was still here during orientation week, and student could enjoy the sunshine and the hot weather. Students have all arrived safely, begun their classes and they are settling in to enjoy a great semester in Hungary. The first week was very busy with orientation, getting to know the city, discussing goals and expectations, volunteer work or internship opportunities, beginning to learn more about Hungarian culture, meeting the CIEE Faculty members, and finalizing course registrations.

City tour – Heroes' Square

During orientation week we also made a great city tour to get to know Budapest and its transportation system as well. Visiting Heroes' Square was quite popular among students. The monument is part of the World Heritage Site and was built for the 1896 Millennium celebrations, to commemorate the 1000th anniversary of the Hungarians arriving to the Carpathian Basin. Every part of the monument plays tribute to key figures of Hungarian history. In the second week, we left Budapest to see other spectacular parts of Hungary.



Heroes' Square: Our first history class



Walking tour along the Danube with the Buda Castle Hill in the background

Danube Bend: Esztergom and Visegrád

On our very first group excursion we visited two beautiful and historically significant cities, Esztergom and Visegrád. First, we travelled to Esztergom, which is the birthplace of Hungary's first king, St. Stephen and a former medieval capital of Hungary, and also the seat of the Hungarian Catholic Church. The basilica of Esztergom is the country's first, Europe's third largest, and the world's 18th largest church. The altarpiece is the largest single-canvas painting in the world, depicting the Assumption of the Virgin Mary by Michelangelo Grigoletti.



The Basilica of Esztergom

The historical town, Visegrád is located in the Danube bend region. The city has always had an important strategic role in Hungarian history. It used to be Hungary's capital and an important diplomatic center: The first royal summit of the central European countries was held here in the 14th century, and a new Visegrád Treaty was signed here again in 1990. We visited the former royal palace whose golden age was during the rule of the great renaissance king Matthias, and also the 12th century fort on top of the hill overlooking the Danube. Appropriately, our lunch was held in a renaissance restaurant, where we enjoyed a feast befitting royalty.



Group lunch in Visegrád

Upcoming events

Our next group excursion is going to take us to Transdanubia, to western Hungary, where we are going to visit Lake Balaton, the "Hungarian Sea", the 1000-year-old Benedictine Archabbey of Pannonhalma, and also the world famous porcelain factory of Herend. We hope to tell you about those adventures in our next newsletter. Best regards,
CIEE Staff from Budapest