

# 13<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL ADVISORY FORUM

Visegrád, Hungary 25–27 September 2024



## 13TH ANNUAL ADVISORY FORUM ON CULTURAL ROUTES OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE *Visegrád, Hungary, 25-27 September 2024*

CULTURAL PROGRAMME IN VISEGRÁD

DOCUMENT PREPARED BY THE HUNGARIAN OPEN-AIR MUSEUM

# VISEGRÁD CULTURAL PROGRAMME

## WEDNESDAY 25TH SEPTEMBER

- Free programme
  - Duration: approx. 1.5 hours
  - Language: English
  - The tour departs in 3 groups:
    - 1<sup>st</sup> group: 11:00–12:30,
    - 2<sup>nd</sup> group: 12:30–14:00,
    - 3<sup>rd</sup> group: 14:00–15:30
  - Please select your preferred group and register using the Forum registration form.
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### The Royal Palace

It is well-known that Italy is the eternal centre of Renaissance. It is less known though that the palace reconstructed by King Matthias between 1476 and 1490; the first building of Renaissance art outside Italy, fascinated the whole of contemporary Europe. The royal residence, originally built by Charles I of Anjou, became a sumptuous palace thanks to its reconstruction by Luis the Great and Sigismund of Luxemburg. In the 14th century the building was not only the royal family's residence, but a seat of governmental organisations as well as the location of chivalry. King Matthias Hunyadi had the palace renewed by Italian and Hungarian masters in the late Gothic and Renaissance style.

#### *King Matthias Museum in the Royal Palace*

The museum's main task is to explore, collect, treat, and present the archaeological and historical memories of Visegrád. The exhibitions can be found in the Salomon tower and in the renovated halls of the royal palace. The most important collections are the archaeological collection and the Lapidarium, but the regional history collection presenting 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century is also famous. Besides, there is a significant collection of photos, drawings and textile.

The Visegrád castle complex is one of the most beautiful Early Renaissance buildings of Hungary. Its outstanding natural environment producing a Mediterranean atmosphere, remains of the buildings, statues and fountains give us an idea what King Mathias' (1443-1490) humanist court looked like.

For the first time in Hungary, Visegrád gave home to a complex research in the 1990s, involving environmental archaeology, archeobotany and garden history analogues. Results of the study serve as an authentic basis for garden reconstruction plans today.

The professional tour of the gardens deals with characteristics of gardens in the late Middle Ages and the Early Renaissance period, with emphasis on the reconstruction work.



## The Solomon Tower, where the Middle Ages come to life day by day

When arriving from Budapest, upon crossing the Visegrád town gate, the first thing you see looking up the hill is the Solomon Tower. The lower building of the double castle system built by Béla IV following the Mongol invasion, is officially called the Lower Castle but it is commonly known as the Solomon Tower.

### *Why the name, Solomon Tower?*

Solomon, the grandson of Vazul, the son of King Andrew I, reigned from 1063 to 1074. As a result of struggles for the throne, he became Ladislaus' prisoner. He was only granted pardon and set free when King Stephen, Prince Emeric and Bishop Gerald were canonised in 1083.

### *The prime of the Solomon Tower*

A large-scale transformation of the Lower Castle took place during the reign of Charles I. The inside of the tower was divided into several parts, including a chapel. During the reign of Luis I, a bell foundry in the court of the Lower Castle produced one of the largest bells in contemporary Europe.



## The Citadel

The Citadel – commonly referred to as ‘the Visegrád castle’ – is perhaps the most emblematic mediaeval building in Hungary. The first stones of the Citadel rising on the top of Castle Hill were laid on the rocky peak – accessible only with difficulty – in 1250, and it became one of the most important Hungarian castles for three centuries. The Holy Crown and the Royal Insignia were kept here for several periods.

The terrace overlooking the Danube offers a breath-taking panorama of the river and the mountain range of the Börzsöny Mountains, provides one of the most beautiful views of the Danube.

Permanent exhibitions; including waxworks modelling mediaeval scenes, the exhibitions of weapons and the history of hunting, present an overview of court life in the Middle Ages and the exciting world of chivalry.

